

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 501: Life and Death

Inside a dark forest that seemed far away from Death Valley but in fact was very close to it in a straight line.

Lucien and Natasha observed the sky that was blocked by clouds through the leaves. There were neither stars nor the silver moon tonight. One could barely see one's own fingers. The deepest fear and panic were brewing.

"Our zone of activity has been minimized. It seems that we need to return to Death Valley." Leaning against a tree, Natasha sighed at the horizon with Lucien next to her. "It's almost dawn. Aunt Camil should've arrived at the Metarin oasis. It's a pity that we have to wait another day before reinforcements arrive. I wonder if we will ever see the sunrise again?"

The two of them were caught by Congus approximately one day later. Then, they killed him and forced him to spend more than one and a half days to rebuild his body and return to the main material world. After that, they had hidden themselves around Death Valley for more than half a day. Therefore, it had been more than three days since they left Camil. Even taking the time of her recovery into consideration, she should've already arrived at the Metarin oasis.

"We will certainly see the sunrise together." No frustration could be found on Lucien's face. The more dangerous there was, the more determined he would be. His face was beaming with a hopeful, gentle smile.

Natasha was the same kind of person. She soon grasped her longsword, as resolute and confident as ever.

She looked at Lucien's left hand with a smile. "After the morning outbreak, the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls must've been controlled by the silver moon. The frequency of loss of control is getting lower and lower. Perhaps, it will be one day later next time. If we can get away from Demigod-lich this time, he will not necessarily be able to find us again, even if we do nothing but hide.

At dawn, the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls had the greatest rampage so far. Not only was Lucien frozen, but even Natasha, who was next to him, was also affected. She felt that two years had passed. Thankfully, it was only two minutes in reality, and no other accidents happened. Ever since then, the gap between loss of control was longer and longer, and the last loss of control was in the morning, which exposed their location and allowed Congus to reduce their range of activities.

"Alterna said that the most ferocious phase of a counterattack has passed. Next, it's time to digest the cake. However, isn't the mysterious existence of the World of Souls slightly weak? Even though he hasn't restored his consciousness, he is still rather vulnerable since he is absorbed by an existence of the same level in only seven days." Lucien expressed his confusion.

Natasha sniffed, "Is that so? If he persists for a few more days, we would be sent to the World of Souls by Congus as specters. Alterna definitely knows more about demigod stuff than you do. If she says that it's fine, there shouldn't be a problem."

Lucien was about to reply, when the last light in the forest went out. It sank into the purest darkness.

“Stop hiding. Come on out obediently, and I’ll grant you peace after your death.” Congus’s voice that sounded like the frigid wind in hell came from the other side of the dark forest. “How much longer do you think you can hide?”

“He is less than a thousand meters from us.” Lucien and Natasha looked at each other. They left the tree quietly and returned to Death Valley according to the planned route. They detoured on their way back in order to avoid the whole mountain of spectral slaves.

The scene around them was a vivid demonstration of ‘scourge of the dead’.

Congus sneered, “I know that you are hoping that ‘Blue Tide’ has already arrived at the Metarin oasis and informed the old pervert Storm and Hathaway to rescue you. However, do you think I’m such an idiotic and imprudent person?”

Natasha came to an abrupt halt, her face pale. Aunt Camil?

“It’s alright. If Aunt Camil were killed or captured by him, he would’ve shown it to us to sway us.” Lucien patted Natasha’s shoulder and comforted her gently.

Natasha soon realized it and regained her resolution. She nodded at Lucien and sped up.

Congus’ voice got closer and closer. “While I was in too much of a hurry to catch you two rats to deal with ‘Blue Tide’, I changed the contact in the Metarin oasis into my loyal subordinate. Rehau has always been a secret student of mine. Do you think your cry for help can be delivered to the other side of the ocean?”

Lucien's face slightly changed. It had been more than two months since Congus started to monitor him. He must've made arrangements regarding everything. However, while he lost that hope, he was still far away from desperation. Just like what Natasha said just now, if they could get rid of him this time, the remains of the mysterious existence would not run out of control easily, and they would be safe again. By the time Alterna recovered, the roles of the hunter and the hunted would be swapped.

Natasha took a breath in relief. She said to Lucien in the telepathic bond with a smile, "He indeed failed to capture Aunt Camil. Since Grandma Hathaway and the Lord of Storm asked me in private to search for you in the areas under the control of the church, they must've sent secret contacts specifically."

That's good. Lucien put on a smile, too.

Having no doubt that the two of them were around, Congus intimidated them with words and suddenly turned into grey smoke that was filled with countless weird bugs.

The bugs were of the same color as the smoke, but their heads were twisted human faces, which were so illusory that they seemed to be made of souls. Humming, they spread out of the grey mist and soon covered the area. In less than twenty seconds, they finished the search in the area. Then, the smoke floated forward and covered a new area.

Seeing that, Lucien and Natasha accelerated again. They passed through a secret cave and returned to the entrance of Death Valley. Leaving blurred shadows behind, they rushed into the valley.

"Hum! Hum! Hum!" The upsetting noises of bugs suddenly echoed.

“Crap!” Lucien secretly exclaimed. He hurried to hold Natasha next to him with his left hand. Then, both of them blinked and disappeared.

The legendary sorcerer had too many uncanny methods. He had discovered the two of them in advance!

A green ray shot where the two of them were previously at only one second late. The stones, the mud and the plants all turned into green spots of light, and a gigantic pit that was enough to bury dozens of people appeared.

Congus cackled. “Got you two rats! Let’s see how you get away this time!”

His voice was brimming with intense hatred. It was the greatest humiliation that a Demigod-lich could be killed once by two ‘kiddos’ who hadn’t even reached the ninth circle!

Teleporting into Death Valley, Lucien and Natasha went at full speed and swooshed past the deep darkness, arriving at the area that they had prepared in advance.

“A divine domain?” Congus floated above Death Valley instead of acting recklessly this time. “You want to team up with a fake god to deal with me, and to weaken and restrain me with the enhancement of the divine domain and the magic circles you set up in advance?”

“Hehe. Let me show you what a sorcerer should be like!”

Congus raised his hands, and seven minor meteorites fell from the sky surrounded by fire. Illuminating the dark night, they smashed into Death Valley.

“Damn it! A massive attack!” While Lucien was braced for it, he was still shocked by Congus’ cautiousness and decisiveness this time and cursed. In the telepathic bond, Natasha exclaimed in ways not expected of a ‘lady’, too.

“Hide!” Lucien and Natasha rushed to the place they prepared, while they asked Ell and the fake angels under their control to dodge.

The meteorites almost hit Death Valley at the same time. Under the stimulation, divine defenses immediately showed up, but they were soon shattered by the Meteor Swarm. After the attack, the defense of the divine domain was already ragged.

However, Congus did not stop. He raised his hands again, and another seven meteorites fell simultaneously.

Time seemed to have slightly halted. After a boom, a minor mushroom cloud rose from the valley. The overwhelming smoke deprived the area within several hundred kilometers of their original colors.

Inside the divine domain, the city decorated in agates and jade was half-collapsed by the blast. The parts that were directly hit were even razed to the ground. The vines that had blocked the sky in the past were broken and burnt. The pure souls and angels were blown away by the wild wind, not to be seen again. The holy halo was eclipsed by the rampant dust. The magic circles deployed in advance were riddled with holes, and dilapidated walls were the only things that could be seen.

It was not until five consecutive ‘Meteor Swarms’ that Demigod-lich Congus descended and searched for Lucien and Natasha.

Below the ground of the divine domain, Lucien and Natasha hid inside a ‘fortress’ while they listened to the incessant collisions outside.

“Thankfully, you prepared this bomb shelter in advance.” Sensing the violent quakes and the dust that was sprinkling from the ceiling, Natasha raised her thumb at Lucien.

Lucien smiled and said wisely, “It is common sense to be prepared for air raids. It’s good that they are just small meteorites.”

“But the magic traps you set up have been rendered useless.” Natasha looked rather solemn.

Lucien nodded his head. “Most of them, yes. However, a tiny proportion of them are rooted in the divine domain, which will not be completely destroyed as long as Ell is not dead. I hope that some of them are still functional.”

The explosions outside stopped. Lucien hurried to reach out to Ell and confirm their location for the upcoming counterattack.

Congus landed inside Death Valley. Looking at the messy ruins, he searched for Lucien and Natasha through magic methods. In the meantime, since the holy halo was not entirely gone, he was aware that the master of the divine domain hadn’t perished yet, and therefore was even more vigilant.

The ‘mosquitoes of souls’ flew out of him and spread out. Suddenly, a shadow rushed out of a collapsed building, with a common longsword in her hands.

Reflecting the fire and the holy halo nearby, the longsword carried the air of divinity, and the shadow seemed to have been melded with the longsword. Surrounded by two illusionary gaps, she slashed at Congus.

Congus did not use legendary magic that required the cooperation of short spells, in case the master of the divine domain attacked him with his ring when he cast the spells. He raised his hands, and all of the colors around Natasha faded away, replaced by the greyness of the void. Natasha’s movement was halted under ‘Time Stop’, her longsword frozen in midair.

When Congus was about to extract Natasha’s soul, another person rose from behind his back. He had the Sun Staff in his right hand, preparing to ‘lock’ Natasha in the maze when necessary, and his left hand was emitting silver brilliance as it was raised high at the enemy.

“You are going to cheat again?” Ignoring the air of the silver moon on Lucien’s left hand, and not bothering with Natasha who was in the zone of ‘Time Stop’, Congus summoned a void-like black ball in front of his skull. Unleashing the greatest horror, it was about to be shot at Lucien.

It was Orb of Ultimate Destruction, a ninth-circle magic!

“He is not using any legendary magic. He is truly wary of Ell.” Delighted, Lucien instructed Ell to attack.

However, there was no response to his command.

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Chapter 502: Grand Entrance

“No response?”

“Something is indeed wrong!”

Apart from shock, Lucien couldn’t help but feel that he had seen it coming. It was like something long-expected finally took place, or the other boot on the upper floor finally hit the ground.

Not trying to call again, and not wasting any more time, Lucien decisively commanded the ‘Angel of Lightning and Thunder’ who was hiding in another bomb shelter to attack!

When he said that it was in case of accidents, he meant the accident of when Ell went wrong!

The Orb of Destruction that seemed able to create a void took shape. The two needle-like red spots on Congus’ white skull stared at Lucien and locked onto him, making him feel coldness rising from the bottom of his heart.

Suddenly, another shadow flew out from Congus' left rear. He had six wings on his back and was surrounded by lightning and the holy halo. Attracting the remaining atmosphere in the divine domain, it seemed that he was the master of the divine domain.

As a fake Seraph, he was on the second tier in the divine domain and could execute part of Ell's power on his behalf!

No expression could be seen on Congus' white skull. The Orb of Destruction blinked and arrived next to Lucien, and he started chanting: "Spirit Confinement."

He had been wary that the master of the divine domain, who was close to level nine, would ambush him with 'Congus Ring', which had quite a few legendary magics on it!

"Spirit..." A complicated voice that almost overlapped with Congus' spell echoed following him, and massive magic waves emerged.

Having no time to check the 'master of the divine domain' who had been solidified into a statue, Congus discovered in shock that Lucien had a black, weird ring on his right hand, which looked so familiar.

"He has just advanced into the senior rank. How can his cognitive world be substantialized?"

"How is it possible?"

For a moment, Congus felt that his soul and his cognitive world were collapsing. It completely violated his common sense!

“... Confinement!” As the weird spell ended, Lucien’s spiritual power flooded into the ‘Congus Ring’ incessantly like a river that had just broken the dam. On the other hand, the moment the Orb of Destruction hit the target, the trigger was activated, teleporting him to the other side of the battlefield. He was away from the confinement, and he watched the ruins turned into destructive black.

Illusionary souls appeared around Congus, trying to crawl into his body. Immediately, the two needle-like red spots on Congus’ face were frozen. As a result, the area of ‘Time Stop’ collapsed, and Natasha was normal again. In the next second, she did not bother to look at Congus but simply slashed at a certain corner in the ruins.

Out of nowhere, feeble magic waves spread out from the white skeleton enshrouded by souls. Congus vanished and blinked to a corner not far away. He freed himself from the illusionary souls that hadn’t really slithered in, but his forehead was greeted precisely by Pale Justice!

It was an estimation and a plan that Lucien made according to the effect of ‘Brief Blink’. When the other places were occupied by the holy air of the divine domain, there was an 80% chance that the spectres would choose this corner to hide in!

Congus, who was briefly affected by ‘Spirit Confinement’, did not have any thinking ability, and could only count on his instincts!

A firm and gentle hue popped up on the longsword, surrounded by two illusionary, horrifying gaps. Congus’ black cape was abruptly cut, and his pure skeleton fell apart. The gold skull was broken into three pieces, with earsplitting howls echoing from the mouth.

However, right then, the skull revolved and got covered by the feeling of a twist of time and space.

When everything was settled, Congus was already gone, and Natasha had been blasted by the howls.

Despite using Pale Justice to block, she was still blown away by the terrifying soundwaves. She fell heavily, with blood on her lips. She was apparently heavily wounded.

“Chaos Teleportation... He’s still not killed. Legendary Sorcerers are really hard to kill.” Lucien’s spiritual power was almost dry, and he could barely raise his hands. “Let’s get out of here fast. Congus’ capabilities are not really compromised.”

The main body of the Demigod-lich was the gold skull. The skeleton was mainly meant to stabilize part of the magics. It was not a big deal even if the skeleton was lost. Therefore, Congus still had at least 95% of his strength left. After he returned, he would definitely vent his fury through legendary magics. Lucien, on the other hand, had run out of spiritual power, and Natasha was also heavily wounded. If they did not seize the opportunity to flee, there would be no chance of survival for them except for mutual destruction with the enemy.

Natasha did not say anything but wobbled to Lucien, helping him to get back on his feet. They were ready to leave Death Valley. Now, the loss of control of the mysterious existence was longer and longer. As long as they ran a thousand meters away before Congus returned, he wouldn’t be able to locate the two of them as easily as before. Their chances of survival finally did not seem slim now!

“Although I’m heavily wounded, I can still keep this speed. As long as Congus’ landing point is not very close, we will be safe.” Natasha comforted Lucien in delight and observed the surroundings warily. She did not need Lucien to remind her to know that something was wrong with Ell after seeing that it was the Angel of Lightning and Thunder that was standing there stunned.

Hardly had she concluded her sentence when everything around them changed. The collapsed buildings were raised again, and the town decorated with agates and jades were as complete as yesterday. Pleasant hymns and overwhelming halos appeared again, decorating the place as if it were the real Mountain Paradise, although the pure souls and angels were nowhere to be seen again.

Ell flew out of a bomb shelter. Wearing an olive garland and a white robe, he smiled at Lucien and Natasha who raised her longsword. "One of you is out of spiritual power, and the other is heavily wounded. Even though you have a legendary ring and a longsword that's equal to legendary, you still cannot put up any resistance."

His vibe was unpredictable and intimidating. However, Natasha refused to wait to die. Gritting her teeth, she was about to wield her sword and attack.

Right then, Lucien secretly patted her arm and spoke in the telepathic bond, "Wait a moment. There's still a chance. Later, you will run backward as fast as you can. Don't look back."

"You want to die together with the enemy?" Natasha's voice was shivering.

Lucien smiled, "There are still chances that I may survive. Over the past few days, the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls have been greatly weakened. Even if Alterna completely lets go of it and attacks the enemy, chances are that my body will decay but I can hide my soul in the magic robe of the 'Immortal Throne'. The extraordinary item will never be corrupted so easily. I'll have to count on your help then. It's not a big deal for a sorcerer to change a body."

“But...” Natasha wanted to say something, because it was only Lucien’s own deduction. If the power left in the remains was beyond his estimation, the item as well as his soul would be decayed together.

“There’s no need to say anything. This solution has better odds than you fighting him. Isn’t it obvious which option you should choose?” Lucien criticized Natasha’s hesitation. “In my heart, you have always been a determined knight who makes decisions after ruling out emotional factors. Don’t disappoint me.”

Seeing the unusual rigorousness on Lucien’s face, Natasha bit her lips and nodded hard. Her silver and purple eyes were covered with mist. Then, she slightly backed off and stood next to Lucien’s right hand.

The conversation was conducted in the telepathic bond and did not take much time. At this moment, Ell floated not far away and said while looking at Lucien’s left hand. “After I kill you, I will have plenty of time to return to the World of Souls before the Demigod-lich comes.”

The World of Souls? Both Lucien and Natasha looked at him in astonishment.

Ell enjoyed their astonishment and burst into laughter. “Do you still not recognize who I am?”

Solid black, white and grey colors surfaced in both of his eyes.

“The mysterious existence of the World of Souls? You...” Lucien was surprised at first and then looked at his left hand. No wonder it was so weak. Had the largest portion secretly escaped to Ell?

Ell smiled, “Alterna’s greatest mistake was that she did not foresee that part of my main consciousness had been awakened in advance. She was stalled by the power that I dropped. Until the power is fully absorbed, she will be swallowed if she gets distracted and attacks anyone. In the meantime, my current body is not bad at all. The power of faith is copious, allowing me to return to the ninth circle quickly. While I cannot deal with Demigod-lich for now, am I unable to deal with the two of you in your current states?”

“So, you can go to hell.” Ell summoned the power of the divine domain. The holy halo was more dazzling than ever before. Because of the blockage of the body, it was in no conflict with the mysterious existence of the World of Souls at all.

Enhanced by the power of ‘Mountain Paradise’, and surrounded by the sacred light, he looked like the real God of Truth.

Lucien’s heart became heavy. He began to discuss with Natasha about the time to run. In the meantime, he talked to Alterna and asked her to attack despite the risks.

Suddenly, the hymns and praises were thousands of times more magnificent, making Lucien and Natasha feel that their minds were cleansed. Ell, on the other hand, was stunned, but was still emitting the holy brilliance.

“What’s wrong with him? Lucien asked in confusion.

Natasha shook her head cluelessly.

“Hehe, finally.” A familiar voice came from the entrance of the Death Valley. Francis, in a plain robe, and with six illusionary wings, slowly walked in and watched ‘Ell’ zealously, as if he were appreciating a piece of artwork that he had just completed.

Natasha’s eyes were frozen. “Francis, what have you done?”

Francis seemed overjoyed, and Lucien and Natasha posed no threats to him right now. Therefore, he replied rather cockily, “Faith is gathered according to different prayers, sublimating into godhood. You should know it already as ‘Leviathan’.”

“You know that?” Lucien did not expect that Francis would recognize him.

Francis laughed. “I did not see it, but it does not mean that none of the existences saw it. I only learnt it a few days back when I was heavily wounded by you.”

After saying that, He continued his topic, “However, since godhood is the congregation of beliefs and represents the strongest desire of different souls, how can regular creatures bear it? The fake gods such as Ell, Avando, Asin and Antanas became more and more bigoted, extreme and crazy because of the influence of godhood. Countless people must’ve been crying and driving them in their heads. Therefore, for the fake gods, the higher they go and the more faith that they gather, the crazier and more dangerous they will be. Few fake gods can advance into the legendary realm.”

“Does it have anything to do with what you are doing?” Seeing that Francis was so calm that he seemed to have forgotten that a Demigod-lich was returning, Lucien asked in confusion.

“Oh, I’m off the topic.” Looking at Ell respectfully, Francis said, “If a fake god had the doctrines, clergy, rituals and prayers of the Lord, and his believers worshiped him as an omniscient and

omnipotent being like the Lord, do you think that his godhood will be closer and closer to the Lord?"

"How can you invoke the Lord? What you are doing is pure blasphemy!" Natasha berated him more than angrily.

Francis burst into laughter. "How can it be blasphemy? What do you think will happen when his godhood is more and more like the Lord?"

Instead of waiting for Lucien and Natasha to reply, he turned around to Ell and said piously, "You are one, and everyone. You are the beginning, and the end. You are the moment, and forever."

Boom. The final step of the ritual seemed to have been finished. Infinite holy light burst out from Ell, suppressing the mysterious existence of the World of Souls inside his body. In the sky, the hollow and unpredictable hymns echoed again. A gigantic, illusionary cluster of light that was divided into seven layers surfaced uncannily. From the first to the fifth layer, there were holy spirits and angels, there were all kinds of musical instruments, and there was happiness and peace. On the sixth layer, there were six Seraphim, who were worshiping the indescribable brilliance on the seventh layer.

"Mountain Paradise..." Natasha found it hard to believe.

Lucien, on the other hand, was stunned.

As if attracted by the enormous force, Ell was more and more synchronized and alike with the light of the seventh layer. In the end, with the main consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls, he flew towards the infinite brilliance whose feet was embraced by an angel.

Francis declared frantically, “How can such an idiotic fake god resist the assimilation of the Almighty Lord?”

“What I have been worshiping and preaching has always been the Lord. How is it blasphemy?”

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Francis drew a cross on his chest devoutly, the vertical bar shorter and the horizontal bar longer!

Lucien, on the other hand, heard only one voice: “Welcome to FM XXX. This is God of Truth.”

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Chapter 503: “Hunter”

Enshrouded in holy light, Ell had turned into a glittering ball that was projected to the seventh layer of ‘Mountain Paradise’ and melted into the infinite brilliance.

Natasha shook her head nonstop, overwhelmed as if she were the little girl whose mother had just passed away again. Her years of faith bordered on collapsing as she was faced with such a scene. Lucien’s years of influence couldn’t have amounted to the shock and desperation she had at this moment.

Facts were the most powerful weapons!

Lucien, vaguely knowing what was going on, managed to suppress the crazy roars in his head. Noticing Natasha's countenance, he suddenly had the bizarre idea that he should give Francis a great gift to thank him for his contributions to Lucien's happy life. Of course, that is, if he and Natasha could survive the disaster.

At this moment, while Lucien could not see his own face, he could absolutely imagine how fabulous it was. Shock, delight, confusion, panic, fear and all the other indescribable feelings were surging inside his heart like a tsunami.

Watching Ell being merged with 'God of Truth', Lucien suddenly discovered that the Saint Badge he wore quivered, and the source of divine power inside changed into 'God of Truth' without any resistance. It was not until this moment that Lucien understood why Francis was bold enough to accept the Seed of Spirit.

"Wait, the main consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls is still inside Ell's body. Will the God of Truth have indigestion? Will he explode and destroy the world?" Such an idea suddenly occurred to Lucien, who watched 'Mountain Paradise' with his mouth open. Did Francis know that Ell was possessed by the mysterious existence of the World of Souls? Somebody might get killed!

Hardly had the idea occurred to him when the infinite, obscure light on the seventh layer expanded abruptly, as if it was proving Lucien's speculation. He couldn't help but put on a bitter smile and leaned towards Natasha. Being killed by the self-detonation of 'God of Truth' seemed almost a kind of 'glory'. The future history of magic would probably record him in such a way: "This is a sorcerer who once slew a god, although he perished because of that, too."

A gentle breeze echoed. The dimmest piece of black, white and grey was spat out from the light. The monotonicity in him was broken and flew far away, and the projection of Mountain Paradise gradually faded.

“What a shame. They were not merged. Otherwise, I could’ve tried God’s Arrival!” Francis watched the scene as zealously as before,

Try God’s Arrival? With your capabilities, I’m afraid that your body and your soul will fall out on the spot. Lucien secretly laughed at him, but he was even more grave. Francis did know that the main consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls was hidden inside Ell’s body. He was even more mysterious than they imagined. Would Lucien’s suicide attack work in front of Mountain Paradise’s projection?

Pointing at Francis, Natasha demanded, “Your rhetoric cannot cover the nature of your blasphemy! Your words in themselves are blasphemy!”

Francis drew inclined crosses on his chest slowly. “I am no less devout to the Lord than you are, except that our opinions on the Lord have great differences both theologically and generally. However, it is not evidenced that I am a heretic. We have only gained a new understanding of the existence and the form of the Lord under the enlightenment of a great prophet.”

“A great prophet...” Lucien repeated in confusion. That sounded like the head of the heretics lurking within the North Church. Was he a certain Saint in the North Church?

Lucien was glad about the debate between Francis and Natasha. A delay was very helpful for him to recover his spiritual power. Even though he could only use magic below the senior rank, Natasha was still capable of fighting Francis, who was only a level eight with his help. What he was worried about was the Demigod-lich who left through the Chaos Teleportation and the projection of Mountain Paradise that had not completely vanished.

Suddenly, the black, white and grey piece attempting to fleet stopped, and a gold skull appeared before it. Congus landed at a spot nearer than everybody anticipated. He had arrived in advance!

The black, white and grey piece shivered, as if it was communicating with Demigod-lich. After only two seconds, Congus burst into laughter. Opening his jaw, he swallowed the black, white and grey piece.

The two needle-like red spots danced crazily like fire in the wind and gradually turned gray. The space around Demigod-lich was twisted, and his vibe soared intimidatingly. In only one moment, he seemed to have broken away from the hundreds of years of being halted and upgraded by one level. Also, it seemed that he was the mysterious existence that controlled the specters, and not controlled by it.

The grey fire bouncing in Congus' eyes, he turned to Lucien, Natasha, Francis and the projection of Mountain Paradise that was about to disappear, before he said gloomily:

“You will all die.”

...

Inside the magic tower across the ocean, the Lord of Storm read the intelligence report before him. Lightning glittered in his eyes, and tornadoes rose around him, blowing away everything inside the house except for the chairs that Hathaway and Douglas were seated on.

“Congus...” Fernando roared. Then he rose abruptly and said to Douglas, “Ask Bergner to help me.”

Bergner was the name of the Tower Prophet. He had entered the alternate dimension, too.

Douglas’ usually kind face was filled with graveness, too. “Alright. You and Hathaway will go to rescue Lucien, and I will watch over Vicente in case he plays any tricks.”

Fernando, being a reckless man, flew towards the place where the Portal to Alternate Realm was deployed immediately after Douglas’ approval. Hathaway remained silent and followed him.

By the time they reached the lobby of the Portal to the Alternate Realm, Bergner, the Prophet, had already been notified by Douglas and was already waiting. His grey hat seemed to be a small version of the tower.

Nodding at the Prophet, Fernando entered the Portal to Alternate Realm in the lead and returned to Allyn.

When Hathaway and Bergner also arrived at the magic tower in the Congress of Magic, Fernando implemented a telepathic bond and walked out.

“Aren’t we going to deploy a portal to the northern mountains of Erdo Islands?” Bergner confusedly watched Hathaway walk out with Fernando.

Fernando's voice bordered on screaming. "Relocalization and reestablishment will take another day. However, it will only take us less than a minute for us to reach Heidler from here. Since Vicente and Congus are not there, we will control the Hand of Paleness in no more than an hour."

"Bergner, foretell the location of Congus' phylactery and the location of the Portal to Alternate Realm he used." Hathaway requested straightforwardly.

Bergner was more or less stunned. "You want both of them?"

"If he is dead, everything will be settled." Fernando's red eyes were filled with terrifying and depressing storms.

...

"Your Excellency Demigod-lich, congratulations on advancing to the second level of legendary with the help of the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls. You are likely to be promoted to a demigod and control the power of death." Francis said in a smile unhurriedly, although he was faced with the threat of a legendary expert.

Congus was dazed. "Do I know you?"

Is he trying to surrender?

However, learning the lesson from the three previous encounters with Lucien, Congus did not intend to chatter on. Dead people were the safest targets to talk to!

Francis slightly bowed and drew the weird crosses on his chest. Then he said respectfully, “The great prophet will arrive with my body. I hope Your Excellency Demigod-lich can live until you enjoy your beautiful future.”

Congus suddenly had a bad feeling. The gold skull was opened, and a hoarse voice echoed, “Spirit Confinement!”

Soundless explosions took place. The remainder of the Mountain Paradise’s projection over Francis’s head unleashed holy brilliance that blocked the shadows which intended to confine his soul, creating the weird feeling that time and space had been twisted.

With the help of the twist, a most extremely evil, cunning and formidable air rose abruptly inside Francis’ body, which then formed a dark shadow dozens of meters tall behind him. The shadow had two curly horns and a pair of bloodred, mocking eyes on his obscure face. The enormous black wings on his back blocked the sky of Death Valley.

After he arrived, minor volcanoes rose in the divine domain similar to Mountain Paradise. Red magma flowed out, and black smoke spread throughout the place with an intense smell of sulfur. The temperature seemed to have risen by hundreds of degrees.

Below the volcanoes, there were another eight horrifying scenes. There was a cold plain of eternal silence, there was a muddy stinky swamp, there was an infinite slope of rocks, there was a magnificent bronze castle, there was a world made of fire, and there was a colossal gap whose bottom could not be seen. After only one moment, Death Valley seemed to have turned into a hell.

Looking at the shadow in disbelief, Congus blurted out, “Lord of Hell!”

The shadow turned out to be Maldimos, the Lord of Hell!

Hearing Congus’ exclamation and learning the shadow’s identity, Lucien felt that lightning struck his head and illuminated the scenes he had forgotten, allowing him to connect everything.

Why did Rhine know that the seal of the Master of Argent had something to do with the secrets of the World of Souls?

Why was he confined when he was well-prepared and wary, when Sard got away easily?

If Rhine had not known the secrets of the World of Souls, or that the Master of Argent was sealed in Aalto’s projection, he wouldn’t have participated in the scheme or explored the World of Souls, which meant that he wouldn’t have been trapped. If he hadn’t been trapped, he wouldn’t have asked Lucien to summon Silver Moon Alterna to have a head-on clash with the mysterious existence of the World of Souls, resulting in heavy losses on both sides.

If the target had been the gods, few could have plotted against them without them knowing it.

The other identity of the Master of Argent turned out to be Tiphotidis, the Ice Duke, who was the lord of the eighth level of hell!

Perhaps, the Lord of Hell had already realized the World of Souls and the secrets it contained from the incident when Tiphotidis was sealed. It could be seen by the fact that he pretended to be the great prophet of the 'Horizontal Cross' church. The devil who was best known for his cunningness and prudence was certainly unwilling to directly deal with the mysterious existence of the World of Souls. Therefore, he set up a scheme to attract Rhine to join the game and instigated Silver Moon Alterna to fight the mysterious existence of the World of Souls, so that he could take advantage.

So, Lucien had been pushing forward his scheme without noticing anything was wrong. There had always been somebody else behind the curtain.

It was indeed as expected of the Lord of Hell and the Head of Devils!

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In the projection of hell, the devils surrounded in flames and smoke lunged at Lucien, Natasha, and the Demigod-lich with the cold wind that could freeze their souls. The succubi inside the bronze castle let out soul-stirring moans... As Maltimus, the Lord of Hell, arrived, the projections of countless devils formed a terrifying legion.

Demigod-lich, who had only a gold skull left, opened his mouth after brief astonishment, releasing an ear-splitting howl that echoed directly in the soul. The quakes spread out, and the intense air of death was rising.

Within the range of the howl from the Demigod-lich, the volcanoes, rocks and, castles remained unchanged, but all of a sudden, a senior-rank devil almost three meters tall who was wielding a fiery sword collapsed without a sound.

As if contaminated by him, the swarm of devils fell like wheat that had been reaped. In only two seconds, the first wave of the devil legion that marched aggressively was annihilated.

“Life Ritual.” After his advancement, it was much easier for Congus to perform the legendary magics. The time gap between the two unique magics that were based on the Land of Dirt, his demiplane, and Demigod-lich, his legendary class, was much shorter than before.

As Congus’ voice spread out, the fire from hell turned grey, the stinky swamp was dry and broken, the bronze castle decayed and faded, and the cold wind of death on the silent plain raged even more violently. The devils that had just collapsed rose again, their skin wrinkled and their muscles rotten. With needle-like redness beaming out of their eyes, they turned around and charged at Maltimus, the Lord of Hell.

The extracted vitality was gathered into filthy, dim clouds in the sky that was illuminated by black lightning. Grey water drops poured down toward the Lord of Hell torrentially.

At this moment, Congus’s demiplane seemed to have overlapped with the projection of hell. Soul Catchers rose one after another, the giants of death threw rocks, evil beasts commanded the legion of the dead, dozens of stinky skeleton dragons flew in the sky, and countless shadows wandered between illusion and reality unpredictably, making it barely possible to put up any resistance.

Scourge of the Undead!

Although none of the spectres were legendary, they had the advantage in numbers. Now that the Lord of Hell had been stalled by Congus, they could still hurt him.

After the space was twisted through the projection of Mountain Paradise, Maltimus' projection here had already reached the level of grand arcanist and close to the peak of legendary. Congus dared not be careless at all.

Lucien and Natasha were both shocked at what they saw. Congus was indeed too imprudent earlier. He did not carry out 10% of his abilities when he dealt with the two kiddos who were only seventh-circle and level seven. If he had treated them with his current attitude, however quick-witted Lucien was and however resolute Natasha was, they could've only died.

The fire that was similar to sulfur was ignited on Maltimus, blocking the dirty rain. He whispered: "Life Deprivation."

Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. The spectres exploded like blooming fireworks.

Eleven silver balls of light suddenly appeared next to Congus. They also expanded and exploded, and it was not until only two of them were left when he finally blocked Maltimus' Life Deprivation.

However, Congus' Undead Scourge had already been wiped out by then!

Inside the ruins, Natasha managed to stab Pale Justice before her to thwart the attack of Life Ritual and Life Deprivation. The sword trembled and hummed violently, emitting the brightness of sacredness and determination, while it protected a tiny range nearby. It seemed that the sword might be broken at any moment.

For Maltimus and Congus, Lucien and Natasha, who had lost their combat abilities, were not worth their attention at all. The aftermath of their attacks could've killed the two of them, had it not been for Pale Justice, which was a legendary weapon for both spectres and devils.

For Congus, if Lucien restored his spiritual power at this moment and could still use his ring, he wouldn't mind working with Lucien temporarily to deal with the Lord of Hell. There were no eternal friends or foes but only eternal interests. However, it was a pity that Lucien absolutely did not have any ability to provide help.

Maltimus, on the other hand, was rather cautious and did not do his best. He was worried that Lucien would set Alterna free at the cost of his own life. However, Alterna, who only had the strength for one attack and who had been weakened by the material world, was not too great a threat for a demigod like him who knew all the details about her.

Swallowing the consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls, and melting the World of Souls with the hell, were his greatest purposes. Otherwise, he wouldn't have tried so hard to diminish the consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls. Even if he could not kill it, he could still assimilate it!

"Death Lament." Congus' spell sounded like an unpredictable, illusionary song, that made the sulfur flames on Maltimus die out dully.

Pale Justice wailed and blocked Death Lament, but it did not seem able to hold on much longer.

Lucien hinted Natasha to draw the longsword and run back when he launched the suicide attack with the strength of Silver Moon Alterna.

However, the ivory light inside Lucien's left hand suddenly expanded. Unhurriedly, it swallowed and digested the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls.

Such quickness, such ease and such an astounding result dumbfounded Lucien, whose head seemed to be illuminated by a light that drove away all the darkness. All the details that had escaped his attention before were now clearly visible.

Why did the mysterious existence of the World of Souls lose control so coincidentally?

Why was it never out of control after he was wounded when he mixed the potion and wrote the paper?

Why was Alterna unable to control her 'appetite' when faced with Asin, if she had been so cautious before, to the point that she took the chance when nobody noticed to the Lord of the Underworld?

Furthermore, when the Master of Argent was slain, according to Rhine, he summoned Alterna and borrowed her strength.

It was a lie that the absorption and digestion would take seven days.

In his confusion and shock, Lucien only felt that the strength contained in his left hand changed and grew rapidly. In the next instant, the strength was poured into Lucien's body, allowing his spiritual power to soar, like the sorcerers whose capabilities were temporarily improved through projections or summoning.

At this moment,

“But it is not complete.” Having no time to ask Alterna what happened, he could only reply that there was still a long way to go for ‘fusion magic’.

Boom. Alterna did not say anything, but stronger, higher power surged into Lucien’s soul and body. His perceptions of the world entirely changed.

Lucien, at this moment, seemed to be in space. The material world next to him lost all the external conceptions and turned into part of his cognitive world: Electrons jumped in orbits, accepting and launching quantum photons now and then; protons and neutrons formed the atomic nucleus under the strong interaction... The deep and cold light flowed out quietly

Extending his hand that was made of his spiritual power, Lucien realized that he could directly ‘control’ them. He was immediately shocked.

However, Lucien soon realized that it was not the best moment to relish the experience. He hurried to review the knowledge and mechanism of fusion and project them into different magic models.

The time seemed to be elapsing slowly. Also, he had the main core of the fusion magic, and his spirit library had enough introductions to its mechanism. Therefore, a rather shabby magic structure without any assistant models soon appeared before Lucien.

“Control it, release it.” Alterna sounded as serious as before.

Lucien was rather scared. “No launch, no extension, no nothing! We are going to be killed, too!”

“I’ll take care of it. Hurry up.” Alterna promised him. The ‘cognitive space’ around immediately faded, revealing the real world, where Maltimus was still fighting Congus, and Pale Justice and Natasha were still managing to resist.

Lucien took a deep breath. The feeling of entering deep into matter lingered before his eyes. Therefore, he extended his left hand, and the silver light drew uncanny traces in the air as if he were controlling the particles of the entire world!

Natasha was the first one to notice that something wasn’t right. Sensing that Lucien was performing complicated magic, she turned around and looked, only to catch a pair of eyes that were deep, dark and filled with infinite mysteries.

The demonic eyes were emanating unimaginable charm. Natasha could barely move her head away after she saw them.

Lucien opened his mouth and declared hoarsely, as if he hadn’t spoken for years:

“Eternal Blaze!”

Along with the spell, silver brilliance burst out of Lucien’s body. The moon seemed to have landed, turning Natasha and himself blurry.

It was not until they heard the spell that the Lord of Hell and Demigod-lich noticed Lucien's changes. When they sensed him, they discovered, to their surprise, that terrifying, overwhelming strength that exploded from Lucien, and infinite light was coming at them like the scorching sun in the midday.

Having no time to take other actions, Congus hurried to chant, "Undead Rampart."

Walls made of souls and bodies surrounded him, almost as good as Wall of Sighs, the highest defense magic in Necromancy.

"Alterna!" Maltimus, who was more or less braced for it, roared. The hell next to him collapsed into a Hellish Barrier.

However, under the scorching heat, the radiant rays and the enormous blast, rocks were shattered, ramparts were melted, and barriers were broken.

The Lord of Hell and Demigod-lich both wanted to leave using teleportation. However, they realized that they had locked the space during their battle earlier, like they usually did. Therefore, in their red eyes, the scorching light from the grey fire was brighter and brighter, occupying their horizon and swallowing everything!

Boom! The terrible explosion did not echo until this moment, deafening everyone!

Outside of the northern mountains, Lucien, Natasha and Alterna appeared from the fuzziness. Then, they all heard the explosion and saw an incandescent sun rising far away, dispelling the deepest darkness before dawn.

“It’s sunrise...” Natasha looked at Lucien and then at the ‘sun’, mumbling to herself.

The sun soon disappeared. A gigantic mushroom cloud where the fire was surging popped up, blocking half of the dark sky.

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Chapter 505: Roar

In the headquarters of the Hand of Paleness at Heidler, inside a dark, steepled magic tower, after destroying the barricades through Advanced Cracking and Elemental Dissection, Fernando and Hathaway found the entrance to the Land of Dirt, Congus’ demiplane, with the help of Bergner’s astrology.

Then, they repeated what they did. Since their master was not here, most of the defenses were broken in only one hour by two grand arcanists and one prophet. The only thing left before them was Demigod-lich’s secret chamber where his phylactery was kept. They saw a black box that was embedded with all kinds of rare gems and sensed the bouncing of soul fire inside.

“It’s a barrier of ‘Desperate Abyss’.” Bergner reminded Fernando and Hathaway in case they were swallowed. The magic circle with which Demigod-lich protected his phylactery certainly entailed dangers.

Fernando simply twisted the space around with 'Electromagnetic Storm', blocking the last connection between the magic circle and the control pivot, while Hathaway started to brutally crack the barrier with 'Extravagant Dissolution'. They did not have the time or patience to analyze and guess the riddles to destroy the defenses at minimal cost. In order to gain more time for the rescue, it was acceptable to suffer the counterattack or even be heavily wounded.

The magic circle was dispelled and broken layer by layer. The secret chamber seemed to have become an abyss, and a powerful counterattack was about to be launched.

Suddenly, Fernando, Hathaway and Bergner all sensed something and raised their heads. Through the transparent barrier, they observed the black phylactery.

The space above the phylactery was twisted and blurred abruptly, displaying the outbreak of infinite light, in which a gold skull was howling miserably while being broken and melted.

The air of destruction was able to be sensed by Fernando, Hathaway and Bergner even though there was a 'Desperate Abyss' in between.

As the gold skull quickly vanished, the projection of the scene was blurred, and the viewpoint went further and further away.

The three legendary sorcerers discovered in shock that a strange, orange cloud in the shape of a mushroom rose in the mountains where the light burst out. It was so large that almost half of the sky was blocked.

The blast spread out, raising rings of smoke, which made the ‘mushroom’ look exceptionally weird.

After leaving a deep impression on Fernando, Hathaway and Bergner, the mushroom disappeared together with the projection of the scene.

“The explosion was as powerful as a full-strength blow from the president.” Reviewing what he just saw, Bergner reached the conclusion. He looked at Hathaway, as if he was asking the opinion of the authority in the elemental field. “It looked like simple, explosive magic. Generally speaking, the power of such magic can be improved. I wonder if it can reach the level of God’s Arrival in the end.”

Looking at her front in silence, Hathaway seemed to be considering something, or organizing her speech. “I sensed that the explosion had something to do with the mysteries of the sun. As to how much it can be improved, I cannot say anything without examining the theory and the structure of the magic first.”

“Who was Congus fighting?” Fernando slightly frowned. “Mysteries of the sun... Is it still with the boy Lucien? But what did he use to perform the magic of such a level?”

When the illusionary sun rose earlier, Fernando already sensed that it was possibly related to Lucien. Now that the same scene had appeared again when Congus hunted Lucien, he naturally associated the two incidents. However, he did not think that Lucien had advanced to the peak of legendary all of a sudden. Even though he had insights on the mysteries of the sun due to his previous research, and he achieved the model of legendary magic, his strength had to be improved step by step. Therefore, Fernando suspected that Lucien borrowed power from somewhere.

The precious magic gems on the black phylactery began to emit different colors and absorbed the other materials around, rebuilding a gold skull. Fernando and Hathaway looked at each other and accelerated the speed of cracking ‘Desolate Abyss’.

After almost an hour, the gold skull took shape, and Congus woke up from the dark. However, the outburst of light that resembled the arrival of the sun still lingered in his eyes.

For undead creatures, such light itself caused the greatest damage, not to mention that it came with a terrifying blast and unbelievable high temperature. Congus almost failed to weather through it and became the first lich who couldn't be revived even though he had a phylactery.

"The Silver Moon had recovered a long time ago and had been waiting for a chance. Thankfully, I made it back alive." Congus thought to himself in fear. At this moment, his soul was still being developed inside the gold skull, and he hadn't sensed the surroundings yet. "Also, what exactly was the magic that Lucien Evans used? How could it have been so horrifying?"

Although he only had time for a peep, he could tell with his experience that Silver Moon Alternant lent her strength to Lucien and allowed him to perform the magic. If the spell had belonged to the Silver Moon, it could've been cast much easier.

"How many more secrets is the boy hiding?" The more he hunted Lucien, the more shocked he became. But soon, he calmed down and considered future plans. "The Silver Moon has recovered. The predator will become the prey. It's a pity that the main consciousness of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls was wiped out by Lucien's 'legendary magic' along with my shell. All my endeavors have proved to be for nothing. I even lost my ring!"

He had been quite satisfied about the legendary ring and regarded it as a divine item. Although he had chosen Necromancy, the field he was best at, and used his legendary class as the architecture in order to improve the odds of success, which meant that the abilities of the ring overlapped with his own abilities, it did not change the fact that the ring was the only legendary item that he had forged. It was a masterpiece that made him proud.

“Lucien and Natasha, the two rats, are not dead. I cannot stay in the congress anymore. Should I join the guys in the World of Souls, or should I hide in the Dark Mountain Range?”

Pondering for a while, Congus made up his mind to enter the World of Souls. He gnashed his teeth, “If there is any chance in future, I will definitely fulfill my promise and turn you two little rats into corpse prostitutes!”

A moment later, as his spiritual power restored, Congus’ gold skull floated, and his eye sockets were filled with the previous needle-like redness. He was about to go to the nearest gap to the World of Souls.

“You?” It was not until this moment that he noticed Fernando, Hathaway and Bergner who were observing him. Sensing the horrifying fury that the Lord of Storms was holding back, he hurried to say, “Lucien is not dead, and neither is Natasha!”

He was worried that the old pervert would change from roaring into attacking in excitement and wipe him as well as his phylactery. Now that his capabilities had been reduced by a half and not entirely recovered, there was no way that he could resist Fernando, not to mention that expressionless Hathaway was standing next to him.

“You have still done things that are punishable by death!” Fernando roared.

Congus calmed down and looked at the prophet that the congress sent. “Bergner, it was wrong of me to try to kill a senior-rank sorcerer of the congress and to search for Silver Moon Alterna and the World of Souls on my own. I should be punished as a warning for the other sorcerers of the congress. However, Lucien Evans is not dead. Please be careful about the degree of the punishment. Also, I demand a meeting of the Highest Council, where all the members will discuss my punishment together. This is the treatment that a legendary sorcerer deserves!”

The congress had only eighteen legendary sorcerers. The Church, which was the most powerful of all, had only twenty of them. The legendary are the best warriors and the foundation for any organization. The loss of a legendary sorcerer was a great retrogression to every organization. Therefore, Congus was qualified to propose such a demand.

Bergner, who always considered the development of the Congress of Magic, nodded and said to Fernando and Hathaway, “Congus has violated the rules of the congress and almost killed a senior-rank sorcerer. It is indeed a horrible mistake. However, it’s still ‘almost’. Lucien Evans is alive. Therefore, Congus’ crime does not deserve the death penalty.”

“Also, I believe that you are well aware of the role of a legendary sorcerer. He should be punished aptly. For example, under the witness of magic source, Congus will swear to the two of you or to Lucien Evans that he will not hurt him anymore. He will also offer tremendous compensations and be appointed as an explorer of a few dangerous areas. That should be enough.”

“Hunting a senior-rank sorcerer of the congress blatantly is a severe provocation against the order of the congress. If such a behavior is not punished with alarming penalties, I believe that all the sorcerers in the congress will worry about themselves. There will be no sense of community at all. Compared to such a consequence, the loss of a legendary sorcerer is not unacceptable!” The Lord of Storm tried to suppress his anger, but he sounded like he was roaring even when he was only expressing his reasoning.

Congus still looked at Bergner and said, “However, Lucien Evans is not dead, and he actually did not suffer any loss. Is a senior-rank sorcerer more important than a legendary sorcerer? Although he may become a grand arcanist in a few years, that’s only a possibility! His new alchemy system hasn’t been proven yet! Do you want to kill a legendary sorcerer just to appease him?”

“I believe that the members of the Highest Council should be able to make a judicious conclusion about which is more important, a sixth-circle sorcerer who may grow into a legendary sorcerer, or a sorcerer who has already advanced into legendary!”

He intentionally avoided the terrifying legendary magic that Lucien just performed and simply focused on his current identity and position.

As long as the case was appealed to the Highest Council, Vicente, who had the veto right, could at least keep him alive!

Bergner looked at Fernando and Hathaway in a dilemma. “In any case, the punishments for legendary sorcerers should be decided by the Highest Council together, not by us in private. Alright, Fernando, Hathaway, let’s bring Congus back to Allyn and convene a meeting of the Highest Council to discuss his mistake, evaluate his sincerity and value, and make a final decision.”

Douglas’ request for him, other than providing help, was to stop the two grand arcanists from outrageous actions. Therefore, he suggested that the two grand arcanists should consider the future of the congress and attach enough importance to a legendary sorcerer.

Fernando’s face was a bit twisted, and his eyes were occupied by storms. However, he contained himself and fell silent, as if he had accepted Bergner’s suggestion.

Seeing that, Congus was relieved and started enhancing himself with the magics such as ‘Magic Order’ in case of accidents.

Hathaway, on the other hand, simply walked out, as if she had accepted the result more easily than Fernando did.

By the time Hathaway reached Bergner, Bergner suddenly felt that a world-destroying storm burst out in the tiny chamber. Lightning rose like trees, and thunder blew up the ceiling. Noises of broken items echoed nonstop. The weather within ten kilometers was affected and changed into a thunderstorm, too.

Congus' cry came to an abrupt halt when it just rang out. The crystal ball in Bergner's hands glittered, and he was about to save Congus, but the silver, grey eyes on Hathaway's expressionless face simply stared at him without blinking, until he abandoned all his movements.

"Ahhh!" The phylactery was broken. A scream that seemed to be echoing inside the soul disappeared as quickly as it appeared.

The thunderstorm ended. Fernando walked to Bergner's front. With the remaining lightning flashing in his red eyes, he roared terrifyingly: "Let's convene a meeting of the Highest Council to discuss which is more important, two living grand arcanists or a dead legendary sorcerer!"

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Chapter 506: A New Way of Searching

The gigantic mushroom cloud slowly disappeared, but earthquakes were still coming over from deep down like soundless cries. The violent wind raised dust that carried the air of death, making everyone feel that their faces were burning.

It was not one mountain but a group of mountains here. At this moment, having sensed such obvious aftermaths when she was outside of the mountains, Natasha had a new understanding about the power of 'Eternal Blaze'. "It's almost as good as Dracula's Scream..."

She had once entered the Dark Mountain Range and observed the place where Lucien fought Dracula with the Observer's Castle. She was shocked by the broken environment, and she had the same feeling today.

"There's still a huge gap. When the spell Eternal Blaze turns into 'atomic fusion', it will probably be as powerful as God's Arrival." As an earthling, Lucien had natural fondness of fusion magic, and he felt regretful that he could only perform it once with the strength of Alterna. In order to be a human-shaped hydrogen bomb, he would have to reach level three of legendary, which was where most of the grand arcanists were at. Also, the power of the magic was only limited by the user's capabilities and understanding about its mechanism. It wouldn't be strange that he could directly destroy the world someday.

By then, the Congress of Magic would have to solemnly swear that they would never use 'Lucien's Big Ivan' first.

"The temperature at the center. The sunlight it produced suppresses spectres and devils as well." Alterna said gravely next to him.

She had changed to a new hairstyle. The long gold hair had been combed to the left side of her head and dangled down from there, revealing her pure and beautiful face. Plus her white robe, she looked much more like a princess than Natasha did.

While Lucien was very curious about whether Alterna understood the special theory of relativity and the mass-energy formula he wrote, or she had inferred the power and status of the magic based on the structure of the magic and his description for it, the secret involved a demigod, and he could not predict the consequences if he asked recklessly. Therefore, he calmed himself down and asked with a bitter smile, "Your Excellency Alterna, didn't you say that you needed seven days to absorb the remains of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls?"

Lucien suddenly grew anxious as he said that. He had thought that Alterna was one of the silly guys who acted based on their instincts. Together with their natural closeness, he was bold enough to whine. However, she was apparently one of the scheming guys, and she was also an honorable demigod. Would she be infuriated by such a question and even kill him?

If he survived all the disasters, only to be killed by the Silver Moon for a complaint, he would definitely die with regrets.

Well, would she prefer to be regarded as a male than a female?

Alterna replied solemnly, "I needed seven days if I were to eat it slowly."

She said with a 'I didn't lie to you' look on her face.

Lucien and Natasha both felt awkward, because she could've digested it in one day or shorter. He asked, "Why didn't you eat faster if you could absorb it quickly?"

Both of them understood that Alterna did it for the purpose of attracting the masterminds behind the curtain. It was only a subconscious question due to the fear and anxiety in the past days.

Pressing her face with the right hand, Alterna replied equally solemnly, "I ate it slowly because I was waiting for the main dish."

The main dish? Lucien understood that it referred to Maltimus, the Lord of Hell. However, the central area of Eternal Blaze had such a high temperature and such an intense release of energy. His projection that hadn't reached the peak of legendary yet couldn't have survived at all. What was there to eat?

If the purpose was to weaken him so that she could fight him in hell, the loss of a projection could only cause a minor injury at best. Under the enhancement of hell, Maltimus would still be able to compete with Alterna who was not in the home field.

According to the congress' descriptions on 'Lord of Hell' and 'Will of Abyss', they were slightly different from Alterna in that they seemed to be limited to the worlds they lived in. Therefore, they could not arrive at the main material world freely. Even if they did, they would be weakened. The only exception was the War of Dawn, when Maltimus gathered enough strength and sacrifices with a terrible scheme and opened the gate of hell, descending on the main material world. It was a pity that he was blown back by the pope's God's Arrival.

On the other side, their strength would be boosted in hell and in the abyss. They were the places that the Church had the weakest influence in apart from the alternate dimension controlled by other organizations.

Thinking about that, Lucien suddenly felt regretful. If even two experts in the legendary level couldn't have left any traces, there couldn't be any items or materials that survived the disaster.

Alterna seemed to have seen through Lucien and Natasha's confusion. She remained as solemn as before as she replied, "The roasted goat? He was not the main dish; the qualities he displayed were my target."

The qualities displayed? Lucien and Natasha looked at each other in shock? Was it the Lord of Hell's understanding about the nature of the God of Truth, the method that he briefly broke the limitation of arrival by twisting the space with the projection of Mountain Paradise, the skill with

which he improved a level-eight radiant knight to a level-three legendary one, or the extraordinary abilities such as 'Life Deprivation' that he demonstrated during the battle?

The moment she recalled it, Natasha couldn't have seemed more torn. She found it unacceptable that the Lord of Hell could indirectly make the projection of Mountain Paradise arrive. Her faith was greatly shaken.

Lucien was more inclined to the first speculation. "God of Truth?"

Alterna neither nodded her head nor did she shake it. Instead, she said very, very carefully, "Do not walk on that path, for it may be wrong."

After that, she looked at Lucien's left hand. "The rest of my power and the 'cake' has melted into your left hand. You can take a look at it."

Thanks to the powerful recovery of the Silver Moon, Lucien's left hand that was ripped off had been restored. Hearing that, he focused his attention and moved his spiritual power over to examine it.

Before he knew it, Lucien had the illusion that he was viewing everything from an unimaginable perspective high above. Also, he seemed to have touched the mysteries of death and spirits for real and established a vague connection with the World of Souls.

However, it was still just a feeling. Lucien woke up very soon. He saw a silver moon rising before him, leaping into the sky and illuminating a corner, resonating with the sunrise in the east.

Under the illumination of the silver moon, the frozen, monochrome illusion popped up, and a pair of gigantic bat wings seemed to be rising inside.

In the next instant, everything was gone except for the sun.

“Mr. Rhine is finally unshackled.” Lucien remarked in delight. Whatever role he played in Alterna’s plan, whether he was tricked or directly involved, the fact remained that he was a friend who offered Lucien great help.

Looking at the sky quietly, Natasha suddenly said with a smile, “You played a lot of roles and tricked many people. Did you see it coming that you would be tricked by such a beautiful and seemingly harmless girl without noticing it at all? This is truly remarkable.”

While the Silver Moon was genderless, Natasha obviously preferred to regard her as a girl.

Lucien explained with a helpless smile, “I just felt that a demigod could’ve attacked me directly if she meant any harm, and no tricks were needed. That was why I fell for it.”

“There’s no need to explain.” Natasha said in amusement, “Didn’t you say when you comforted me that the girls who seemed silly, soft, cute and beautiful, tended to be dark inside? Haha. Your theory has been proven.”

Lucien could only smile now.

“Right, what abilities does your left hand have?” Asked Natasha curiously.

Pondering for a moment, Lucien replied, “The greatest benefit is that I can study the nature of a demigod’s power and slightly sense their understanding about the world. My connection with the World of Souls is also strengthened. In the meantime, this left hand should be able to nullify magic, divine powers, elements and other abilities. However, since there is not much power left, it can only affect abilities no higher than the eighth circle. Also, unless I have groundbreaking research products in the field, there will be no way to improve it in the future. As for the rest of the abilities of the left hand, I have to figure them out during the usage.”

It was similar to Bloodline Elimination, but could not deal with the natural effects caused by extraordinary powers, such as the mountains collapsing by magic, or the illusionary gaps of space from Natasha’s sword.

“That’s great. You have earned a lot. Your spiritual power must’ve reached the eighth circle, right?” Natasha said rather enviously.

Examining himself, Lucien nodded, “It only just stepped into the eighth circle, but I haven’t even constructed a seventh-circle magic yet.”

Then, he comforted Natasha, “You’ve done a great job in the test of life and death this time. Your chivalry and willpower have both been trained. Also, with your bloodline, you will meet few obstacles before you enter into legendary after you become a radiant knight. Chances are that you will advance into level eight very soon.”

“Chivalry...” Natasha suddenly sighed, “I don’t even know how to face the Lord now.”

Her chivalry was partly built on her faith. The collapse of faith tended to result in the plunge of willpower. She would not die of it, but further advancements would be very difficult.

Lucien comforted her in a gentle voice, "Sympathy, courage, protection, justice and other spirits of chivalry, are they all the bliss from Mountain Paradise? In your heart, is there not sympathy for the weak, the protection for your family, friends and subjects, the hope for order and virtue, the courage to fight enemies and difficulties, and the determination in your opinions and glory?"

"Natasha, all the virtues and spirits originate from our heart. The real Lord is not out there, not on Mountain Paradise, but in your heart. Each of us have a Lord that solely belongs to ourselves in our heart. Unless you give up on yourself, he will never be gone."

Natasha put on a smile that covered up her gloom. She said lightheartedly, "Lucien, you are very fit to be a priest. Well, I need time to review my mind. Alright, let's go. Your Eternal Blaze was too noisy. Perhaps, His Excellency Varantine is coming."

"I'll stay in the northern mountains and wait for my teacher and Her Excellency Hathaway to come. Considering the uniqueness of my fate, it will be difficult for Varantine to locate me." Although Lucien hated to say goodbye, he still said toughly, "You need to get out of here fast and return before the Church discovers this."

"Okay." Natasha did not hesitate.

Right then, a stormy roar echoed far away, "Lucien Evans!"

The roar seemed to be from a place far, far away. Lucien couldn't hold back his smile, "My teacher does have a loud voice..."

The transmission of electromagnetic waves was limited in this world, but soundwaves remained unaffected. Therefore, the Lord of Storm decided to search for him with 'Lord of Storm's Roar', a ninth-circle magic, which was the most effective way.

However, it was still amazing that the voice was delivered so far away. Lucien could only remark that his teacher was not scared that he would be discovered by the Church at all.

"I'm going to meet Grandma Hathaway, too." Natasha's eyes glittered.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 507: Summer Change

Not far away from Death Valley that was already gone, Fernando, Hathaway and Bergner floated in the sky and observed the destruction, inferring the temperature and power of the explosion based on the astonishing traces and the gigantic pit.

"If this was really an explosive magic, wouldn't the sun be a planet where such explosions happen all the time?" Bergner asked at a loss.

It was not because he was hostile against ‘fusion explosion’; it was just that he felt lost as a prophet when the sun, which was in a very important position in astrology and horoscopes, finally revealed part of its mysteries.

After Fernando killed the Demigod-lich, Bergner did not leave in fury. According to Congus’ reason, it was obvious that two living grand arcanists were more important than a dead legendary sorcerer. If Congus’ self-defense was left aside and the rules of the congress were respected, Fernando wasn’t wrong doing what he did, either.

Perhaps because the Lord of Storm had always abided by the rules of the congress, people had forgotten that he was short-tempered not only in academic questions, or how he achieved his legendary class and nickname. It was not until he suddenly attacked that Bergner felt it was only reasonable and as expected of the ‘Lord of Storm’. Therefore, he accepted the result with a bitter smile.

Fernando shook his head, “Technically speaking, this was not an explosive magic. I don’t find any unique traces left by the traditional explosive magics. There’s only the purest release of energy and an unimaginably high temperature.”

He specifically added ‘traditional’ when he mentioned the explosive magics in the school of elements. It was obvious that he regarded what was before him as a brand-new way of using explosive magic that approached the mysteries of the sun. Walking down the path, the faction of light and electromagnetism would be able to be partly included in the field of elements.

“Exactly.” Hathaway nodded softly and agreed with Fernando’s conclusion.

Bergner, a prophet who was not good at elements, sighed, “I can’t imagine that Lucien Evans has created such a magic. However, I do have a feeling that the times have changed. Perhaps starting

from this moment—No, since Lucien proposed the Energy Quantum Theory, arcana and magic have entered a marvelous and appalling era.”

While Fernando and Hathaway did not respond to Bergner’s words, their looks and their silence suggested that they were considering it. What a prophet said must not be overlooked easily.

At this moment, two people flew close from far away. Fernando’s hands that had been clenched in fists all this time loosened, and he criticized gravely, “You were truly idiotic this time! You didn’t know that somebody played tricks on you, and you were forced into the Portal to an Alternate Realm just like that! If you are this careless again next time, I think I will have to collect your body for you, if your body can be found at all!”

Hardly had Lucien arrived when he was greeted with the storm of roars that he had missed. He felt rather warm to see his teacher’s angry look, and therefore hurried to admit his mistake.

“Granny, how did you come so soon? We thought we would have to wait until the evening or the next morning.” Natasha had often heard Lucien talking about his teacher’s roars. She observed it joyfully and planned to record it to make fun of Lucien later. However, after a while, she changed the subject for some reason.

Hathaway looked much more gentle as she stared at Natasha. She said casually, “We killed Congus and came from the Portal to the Alternate Realm that he established.”

“You killed Congus?” Lucien was surprised and delighted. He was worried that ‘Eternal Blaze’ could not kill Congus who had a phylactery, and that there would be infinite trouble if the guy escaped. He did not expect that his teacher had already taken care of the problem.

They must’ve held back a lot of pressure, mustn’t they?

“He should die!” Fernando did not change his attitude. Then, he held back his ‘anger’ and asked with a fake smile, “What’s with your magic? That illusionary sun we saw the other day was made by you, too, wasn’t it? What about the Silver Moon and the existence from the World of Souls?”

“Master, you saw it, too?” Lucien did not expect that his teacher could’ve seen it over such a long distance. Then, something most important was obviously missing in his speculation at that time. The world was more complicated than he thought.

Hathaway had been standing quietly. She interjected at this moment, “Everybody saw it. Is it a legendary magic that was derived from the new alchemy?”

She was keener than anybody else as she was studying the ‘new alchemy’.

“Yes. I noticed some phenomena when I studied the decay of atoms and reached a lot of conclusions. After I killed Congus for a second time, the knowledge was integrated, and the world gave me feedback. I achieved the prototypes of two legendary magics, which triggered what you saw. Later, with the help of the Silver Moon, I completed the main body of ‘Eternal Blaze’, or ‘Atomic Fusion’, and released it.” Lucien did not reveal the special theory of relativity or the mass-energy formula but explained it from the experimental phenomena that would be seen in the new alchemy.

The deduction of the special theory of relativity was not difficult. Considering the knowledge and the existing accomplishments of the Congress of Magic, anybody who overcame their biases could come up with it in a few years. However, it was exactly because of the biases that Lucien dared not show his teacher the paper immediately.

While the wave theory of light and the particle theory were the foundations of different factions and cognitive worlds, the opinions on time and space was the fundamental ‘common sense’ that

every arcanist used to understand the world. They came from everyday, intuitional and errorless feelings. For example, even the ordinary people had the feeling that time flowed by quietly as they enjoyed peace.

Therefore, for an arcanist, absolute, independent, time was the cornerstone of their worldview. It was well believed that 'Time Stop', the ninth-circle magic, merely froze the area and slowed down the movement, and that it did not really manipulate the time. The magic was like an upgraded version of Deferment.

The disruptive part of the special theory of relativity was not the mass-energy formula but the idea that time and space are relevant. It told people that time was a function of speed and depended on matter, which would be a revolutionary storm no smaller than the one caused by the Energy Quantum Theory. In the meantime, it declared the obsolescence of 'Ether'.

After all, the preliminary studies on fission and fusion did not require the mass-energy formula. Therefore, Lucien hid it for now so that his teacher could take it in slowly.

Thinking about that, Lucien secretly asked for forgiveness in his heart. "My teacher is always the first one to take the hit of the groundbreaking theories. I feel really sorry for him. Well, can fission and fusion help him reach a higher level?"

Fernando asked solemnly, "Fusion? The other is fission?"

The decay of elements that was observed was clearly fission. That was why he asked in excitement.

"Fusion releases energy just like fission does?" Hathaway asked the important question, with zealotry beaming out of her silver grey eyes.

They completely forgot that the area was under the control of the Church, or that an insane explosion of 'Big Ivan' just took place, but simply floated in the air and discussed atomic fission and fusion.

Having been taught by Lucien in advance, Natasha listened enjoyably and chimed in now and then. Bergner, who was terrible at elements, was so overwhelmed that he simply left and stayed on alert.

After a brief introduction, Lucien said, "Master, Your Excellency Hathaway, the explosion previously must've been noticed by Varantine.

"Varantine? Does he dare to come here?" The Lord of Storm glared at Lucien. There were two grand arcanists and one level-two legendary prophet. Why would they be scared of the leader of the ascetics who was not even a Saint?

Even if the pope came here in person, Fernando still believed in the capabilities of his side as long as God's Arrival was not available. Although they could not beat him, it was not difficult to escape. A legendary sorcerer was more difficult to kill than any other class, unless they were surrounded and the space was blocked. But since a prophet was here, it was absolutely impossible to ambush and surround them.

Despite saying that, Fernando held back his desire in arcana exploration. He went on, "Let's go back to Allyn. You can write your experiences with the Silver Moon and the existence of the World of Souls into a report. Tell people the things about Maskelyne, too, if you want. You cannot face the World of Souls on your own."

Congus had some files left in his place, which let Fernando know why they had been chasing Lucien.

Natasha took the opportunity to bid farewell, ready to return to the knights sent by Duchy Violet.

“Talk soon.” Natasha was not upset by the departure and made a gesture of electromagnetism messaging to Lucien with a smile. She flew away at ease after whispering something to Hathaway in secret.

Seeing that she left, Fernando suddenly put on a horrible smile. “Lucien, your pursuit of love seems very tough.”

Have I been seen through? Lucien asked embarrassed, “What are you talking about, master?”

“Haha, don’t be shy. I have abundant romantic experience. What have I not been through? The only reason why I’m single right now is that I do not think it is a big deal now. Whatever question you may have in that regard, you are free to ask me.” Fernando made fun of his student without any reservations.

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In the Nekso Palace at Rentato, the capital of Holm...

A white candle was burning inside a silver candlestick. The dim light from it created an air of loneliness and desolation under the contrast of the storm and lightning outside.

Sard, wearing a white hat, looked at King Feltis who was lying on the bed and said, “Your Majesty, your life came to an end a few months ago, and it has been sustained by the divine power since. However, even the divine power cannot extend your life anymore. Everything is set. You can return to the arms of the Lord in peace. Rest assured. Death is not the destiny. You will enjoy eternal happiness and salvation on Mountain Paradise.”

Feltis’ dirty eyes became clear, and he appeared more or less guilty, but his guilt was replaced by more dutifulness and determination. He said intermittently, “Honorable Saint Sard... Rex, the things... will be in your hands. Holm has always been a kingdom favored by God... and it will always be one.”

Rex, Duke of Frenburg and president of the Parliament of Nobles, was full of grief in front of the king whom he had served for years. On one of his knees, he grabbed Feltis right hand and said, “Your Majesty, I will live up to your hope.”

“It’s my mission to add more glory to the Lord. Your Majesty, rest assured, the prince will not fall into hell.” Sard drew a cross on his chest.

Crack. An enormous lightning struck and illuminated the room. Feltis closed his eyes with a smile, his right hand slipping off.

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In the residence of the Minister of Finance, Count Henson was woken up from his dream.

“What? His Majesty has been summoned by the Lord? Get the wagon prepared now!” Count Henson stood up from his bed abruptly and walked out in his pajamas. His lady hurried to follow and covered him with a black gown, before she handed over his staff.

Count Henson who had lost his usual grace went to the wagon at the gate of his villa almost running. Then he shouted, “Hurry! To the Nekso Palace!”

Having not activated his bloodline, he ran far more slowly than a wagon dragged by Dragon Scale horses. Being carried to the palace, on the other hand, it would expose his panic. Therefore, despite his anxiety, he simply cleaned his clothes inside the wagon to show that he was very calm in order to give other nobles confidence.

BOOM. A lightning bolt struck, and deafening thunder echoed, exactly an implication of Count Henson’s heart. The wagon rolled fast as the coachman tried his best, making mud splash everywhere.

The four wheels rolled so fast that the whole carriage was almost thrown when the wagon took a turn.

The window was opened as a result. The wild wind blew in, and raindrops the size of beans poured into the wagon. The night outside was as dark as ink and seemed to contain infinite horror.

The wagon stopped outside of the Nekso Palace. Count Henson rushed into the palace despite the storm. Then, he saw Duke James and Duke Russell who were standing by the gate.

“What’s the situation? Where is the prince?” Count Henson breathed hard. He was already an aged senior.

With a gloomy face, James replied hoarsely, “The prince has been summoned by the Lord, too, because of grief.”

“What?”

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Count Henson’s exclamation was eclipsed by a series of shocking thunder. He stood in the rain and simply allowed it to pour on him. There was nothing but fuzziness before him, now bright and now dark.

(End of Volume V)

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 508: Candidates

Inside the Parliament of Nobles in the Nekso Palace.

Torrential rain was pouring outside with deafening thunder and dazzling lightning, as if it were the end of the end, but all the members of the Parliament of Nobles in Rentato had been gathered in the hall. White wigs and black capes could be seen everywhere.

Had it not been for the power of the natural lightning, which made the experts below gold knights too scared to fly here, all the members of the Parliament of Nobles would've been gathered, and it had only been one hour since the Lord summoned King Feltis and Prince Patrick.

Of course, the nobles who could not make it here had also learned from their spokespersons and allies in Rentato remotely and forwarded their opinions.

They had never been more grateful for the Allyn Telephone and the Telegram Company. While the 'wired phones' that they promoted were limited to Rentato and the capitals of a few counties because of the complicated infrastructure and the huge cost that came with it, it was the only means of communication for the nobles who were unable to deploy and use expensive teleportation arrays in such weather. Many nobles decided to help with the promotion after witnessing its advantages.

"How was the prince summoned by the Lord?" Count Henson took a hot bath in the restroom in the Parliament of Nobles and changed his clothes and wig. It was not until then that he was finally freed from shock. He put on a white paper flower and seated himself in the front row, asking James, Duke of Paphos, Russell, Duke of Wolfburg, and Viscount Harrison, who had come after informing the Congress of Magic.

The four of them were the leaders of the Liberal group apart from Prince Patrick. They had to reach a consensus first, or the nobles on their side would lose confidence.

Duke James put on a white wig in the Parliament of Nobles to cover his bald head. He said sullenly, "I don't know, either. It already happened when Russell and I came to Nekso Palace. We examined the prince's body and discovered no anomaly. It was indeed a body collapsed caused by

overwhelming grief. I don't think anybody could've assassinated him when he was protected by His Excellency Kritonia."

Kritonia, 'Heart of Time', was one of the two legendary knights of Holm. In the whole world, there could only be no more than five knights who could reach level three of legendary, he and Rudolf II were among them. As for the legendary knights who reached the peak of legendary, apart from the monsters such as Prince Dracula, Prince Abyss, and the lord of the first level of hell, there was only one among human beings, who was Saint Melmax, the captain of the Temple Knights and a member of the Grand Cardinal.

Although he claimed that no assassinations could've happened under Kritonia, James did not seem certain of it at all.

"His Excellency Kritonia was a hero in the War of Dawn and a legendary knight who crushed the Magic Empire's reign in Holm together with the late king. However, he is approaching the end of his life. He needs to consider and arrange more things than ordinary people do." Duke Russell said expressionlessly, "He cannot observe the situation as quietly as His Excellency Winston of the Solefen family."

Winston, 'Night Walker', was the other legendary knight of Holm, who was now supervising the kingdom's colonies in a few alternate dimensions.

Viscount Harrison sneered, "I, for one, don't believe that the prince passed away because of grief."

Harrison, Henson and the rest of them knew that Patrick had been a crown prince for four decades. It was inevitable that there was a conflict of power between the prince and the king. The two of them hadn't been intimate since a long time ago, particularly when their ideologies differed greatly. The nobles might've believed it if Patrick's body collapsed because of ecstasy.

“With everything coming to this point, we need to forget our grief and focus on two things. Firstly, we need to ask the sorcerers of the Congress of Magic to investigate the prince’s death in private. Secondly, we carry out our backup plan and support David to assume the throne.” After Count Henson calmed down, his blue eyes became sharp again.

Patrick had always been in poor condition. The liberal nobles had been prepared that he would die earlier than the king. Therefore, they were not panicked after they passed the initial shock and panic.

David’s father was King Feltis’ cousin, as well as Archmage Morris’ nephew and student. Although he had died in an adventure, David, a grand knight, was completely inclined to the Liberal in daily life as well as in official affairs under his father’s tutelage. He was the most suitable candidate of the royal family for the liberal nobles. Also, his bloodline was very close. According to the law of nobles, he was the fourth heir on the list.

“Okay.” Duke James nodded heavily and informed the other liberal nobles of the result of their discussion.

A moment later, Rex, ‘King’s Griffin’, the president of the Parliament of Nobles who wore a blue cape and a white wig, walked in, followed by a black-haired, smiling man whose silver grey eyes told everyone unmistakably that he belonged to the Hoffenberg family.

“Gordon!” The liberal nobles became solemn.

Duke James couldn’t have looked more awful. “Didn’t he claim that he would serve the Lord for his life? Didn’t he quit the Sword of Truth’s Knights and go to Lance, the Holy City, to join the Temple Knights?”

“A level-eight radiant knight no more than 50, the Torn Sword...” Duke Russell and Viscount Harrison whispered gravely.

Noise echoed in the hall. The other nobles, be they liberals or conservatives, began to whisper to each other. Count Gordon was a genius and an eccentric of the Hoffenberg family. He became a radiant knight when he was only 35 years old. He was appointed as the deputy captain of the Sword of Truth’s Knights by King Feltis. However, as a pious believer, he went to the Holy City at 40 and joined the Temple Knights.

His bloodline was much further from King Feltis than David’s was. However, his rank as a radiant knight was influential enough to raise his right of succession to be on par with David. While the Hoffenberg family was not unpopulated, most of its members were more distant in bloodline, or were not knights, or they had already embarked on the path of magic, thereby forfeiting their qualification.

Duke James and the other liberals thought that Rex would support Alex, his nephew who had just activated the bloodline of ‘Sword of Truth’. Then, in terms of strength or blood connection, David would inherit the throne without suspense. Nobody expected that Gordon would come back.

As the mallet knocked the table ahead, the hall of the Parliament of Nobles immediately fell quiet.

Rex drew a cross on his chest and said sorrowfully, “Our great king, His Majesty Feltis, and our honorable crown prince, His Highness Patrick were summoned by the Lord an hour ago. Let’s have a moment of silence and pray that they be favored by the Lord on Mountain Paradise.”

James and the other nobles stood up and drew crosses in the quiet and grievous atmosphere.

Five minutes later, Rex hinted that everybody should sit down and turned tough. “Because His Highness Patrick, heir of the kingdom, has also been summoned by the Lord, without leaving any children, the Parliament of Nobles will elect an heir according to the law. The election will be based on the right of succession, on the premise that they are blessed by the Lord.”

By ‘blessed by the Lord’, he meant that a Grand Cardinal would come to host the ceremony of inheritance.

Rex did not allow the nobles to speak. Pointing at Gordon who was next to him. “The royal family of Holm is in peril after such a strike. Therefore, Count Gordon decided to consider for his family and asked for the Lord’s forgiveness. He quit the Temple Knights and returned through the teleportation array of the Church. He is a level-eight radiant knight and of the purest bloodline of ‘Sword of Truth’. I propose that he should inherit the throne. Please vote by raising your hands.”

“Wait a moment.” James stood up and said loudly, “Under such circumstances, according to the law, only if more than two thirds of the members agree and none of the nine dukes objects can the elected inherit the throne. Is it the case, President Rex?”

Rex looked at James gloomily, “Yes, and no. When all the other candidates have no more than one fifth of the votes, the last candidate will not need to meet the requirement. In emergencies, the candidate with more than half of the votes will inherit the throne directly. I believe that it is an emergency right now. The throne cannot be left empty.”

“It is not up to you whether or not this is an emergency; it requires everyone’s vote. Now, I propose Count David. He is closer to His Majesty in bloodline and much more entitled to the throne than Count Gordon. Also, he is a grand knight who has activated the strength of his bloodline.”

James did not speak on the podium but looked around at other nobles on the spot. “I don’t think any member will object to the hereditary hierarchy, right? If anyone agrees to it, then the candidates stronger than his son or his grandson can invoke the example and steal the title when they are about to inherit the title, right?”

It was the foundation to keep the nobles in fact. Every noble wanted to leave their title to their direct heir. If the strong were free to rob, every family would be filled with assassinations and internal strife.

Of course, that was one of the reasons why they succumbed to the Church. The independent and powerful church could ensure that nobody would disregard the rules because of their strength.

A conservative stood up and bowed at everybody courteously, "According to the law, the bloodline abilities are the foundation of nobles, and powerful strength will be considered during inheritance. Considering the strength of a radiant knight, Duke Gordon and Count David are on par. Therefore, electing Count Gordon is not in violation of the law and will not result in the collapse of order."

"Also, Count David's father was a sorcerer. We need to consider if he can be blessed by the Lord."

His brief reply completely resolved James' attack.

Count Henson stood up with a feather pen. He also bowed around courteously and said, "Just because the father is a sorcerer does not mean that the son is not a devout believer. Count David has never missed any church session and often donates to the Church. Everybody knows his piety well. I believe that the Lord can certainly see it and tolerate it. Count Gordon, on the other hand, once entered the Temple Knights. I find it hard to believe that he will place the interests of Holm before everything else in the future. This is not blasphemy of the Lord but a confusion of the power of the Church and the power of the king."

At such a moment, he had no time to be subtle but pointed out the confrontation of the two powers.

Gordon raised his hands and smiled, "Speculations are not proof. I believe that I will view the questions of nobles as the king of Holm instead of as a Temple Knight."

The other liberals and conservations stood and offered their opinions. In the end, Rex said, "Now, a show of hands. Those who agree with Count David, please raise your hands."

Arms were raised. They did not seem to be many, but they already made up one third. While the liberals were outnumbered by the conservatives, they were more united.

Rex frowned at that as he could not invoke the first special clause now. Thinking for a moment, he proceeded, "Those who agree with Count Gordon, please raise your hands."

Arms were raised. It did not seem to be a problem that he would have the approval of more than half of the people. Rex began to consider how to make the motion of the state of emergency pass.

Suddenly, the raising of hands was stopped when there was still not half. Rex looked at Duke Solomon, stunned. The noble who had a black mustache shook his head, stating that he would not support candidates with distinctive church backgrounds. As a major leader of the conservatives, his attitude directly influenced many other nobles.

Duke James smiled, "President Rex, it seems that we need to discuss and negotiate for a long time."

Now that Duke Solomon hesitated, he was confident to kick Gordon out through compromises.

Rex fell silent. Looking at the mallet in his hands, he suddenly raised his head, “I will propose another candidate.”

He intended to force Duke Solomon and the rest of them to agree with his proposal with the emergency of the situation, but they were more stubborn than he anticipated. He could only activate the backup plan now.

“Who? Who is higher on the hereditary hierarchy than Count David and Count Gordon?” Duke Russell expressed his objection.

Rex replied unhurriedly, “Natasha Violet, Countess of Violet, has activated the bloodline of ‘Sword of Truth’. She is closer to His Majesty than Count David is. Also, she is a radiant knight and a devout believer that can be blessed by the Church.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 509: Result

Duke James, Count Henson, and the other liberals looked at each other and saw objection in each other’s eyes. While Natasha had been in Holm, she was still too young to have a political view. Also, it was an unchangeable fact that her teacher Beliel, ‘God’s Glory,’ was a member of the Grand Cardinals. According to sources, she had been raised by the Church since six. She was a devout believer, only slightly better than Gordon as a candidate.

“According to bloodline, Natasha, Countess of Violet, is the heir only next to His Highness. She is a radiant knight and a devout believer. So, she is the most reasonable heir to the throne.” Rex looked rather tough.

Duke Russell stood and said while shaking his quill pen. “President Rex, we are both aware of it, but why are we discussing other candidates? Because Her Highness Meredith, Countess Natasha’s mother, automatically abandoned her right to the throne when she became a sorcerer. That is to say; her children are no longer entitled to it.”

Count Henson and Viscount Harrison looked at each other with a bitter smile, in that they had to offer objections using sorcerers as an excuse when they were inclined to the Congress of Magic.

Duke Solomon said solemnly, “If the logic stands, David will not be entitled to the throne, either. A noble’s right comes from their bloodline. Unless it is deprived according to the law, they will always enjoy it. What Countess Natasha activated is the purest bloodline of the Sword of Truth. Her right of inheritance comes directly from His Majesty.”

Rex seemed more or less relieved. Duke Solomon seemed able to live with that. So, he went on, “I discussed candidates in the meeting just now, instead of asking Princess Natasha to inherit the throne directly, because she is now the only heir of Duchy Violet. According to Entry Three, Clause Five of the inheritance law, if the inheritor has the rights to other countries and families and such rights cannot be combined, their position will be lowered by one level on the hierarchy, which makes her on the same level as David and Gordon.”

Duchy Violet played an important role in the Church’s defense in the northwest. The Church would never give it to Holm.

“Since the previous two candidates are not unanimously approved, it is definitely not a problem to propose Princess Natasha.” He began to call Natasha princess, acknowledging her position in the royal family.

“Duke James, Count Russell, do you have any objections? If not, we will have a vote.” Rex looked at the few leaders of the liberals.

Duke James and the rest of them were caught unprepared. They had thought that the conservatives would ignore Natasha as they did. After all, everybody knew the relation between Meredith and Hathaway. She was an excellent sorcerer herself. Who could have seen this coming?

Gender? No, females’ right of inheritance was specified in the law.

Strength? Worse. As a genius who became a radiant knight in her twenties and who was likely to become legendary, she was more distinguished than any of them.

Too close to the Church? Won’t work. Other than being a pious believer, Natasha did not have any behavior to be criticized. She had never flattered the Church by jeopardizing the interests of the nobles of Duchy Violet.

As for her suppression of the Congress of Magic on the surface and her ban on magic recorders and phones, such things could not be discussed openly. They could not publicize that they were cooperating with sorcerers, in which case Rex might change his attitude and ask Sard to come in and purge the nobles who had been corrupted by sorcerers. Those things could be done but never be talked about.

For a moment, the liberals couldn’t find a good excuse.

Duke Solomon, on the other hand, cleaned his black cape and asked, “President Rex, I heard a rumor about Princess Natasha, and I hope you can explain it. It is said that she and Lucien Evans, the Fallen Angel, are a couple deeply in love with each other. Will she betray the nobles, indulge the Congress of Magic, and infuriate the Church because of that?”

After Louise came to Holm, Lucien’s identity was no longer a secret. Every noble knew that he was that great musician. After he made it to the top twenty of the Cleansing List, the history of the great musician had been dug out, too.

Hearing Duke Solomon’s question, James suddenly breathed heavily. If that were the case, it would not be unacceptable that Natasha became the queen.

Rex replied unhurriedly, “Regarding that, I learned the answer from His Excellency Saint Sard, who was the Grand Cardinal of the parish of Violet and knew everything. Princess Natasha is attracted to females. Lucien Evans is just an excuse and a disguise for her. They are not as close as rumors have it to be. Also, the princess is a very devout believer. Sylvia, her partner in the past, was killed by her without any hesitation after she learned that Sylvia was a magic apprentice.”

“What?”

“Was the most beautiful musician killed because of that?”

“No wonder ‘Ode To Sylvia’ was rewarded with a manor by Princess Natasha.”

It was the first time that the nobles heard the gossip, which was from Grand Cardinal Sard, who couldn't have lied about such things. They immediately whispered to each other.

Count Henson now found it impossible to accept Natasha as the queen. He coughed and said, "Homosexual love is in violation of the Lord's tutelage. Also, there will be no offspring. Such an inheritance will be meaningless."

"That's just the idea of some preachers. The Lord only taught us not to be obsessed with lust. As for the offspring, I believe we can make it clear to Princess when we invite her to inherit the throne that she must give birth to a child as soon as possible. As for her relationship with her spouse in private, that's not our concern. I believe that it is not a great compromise for her. If she doesn't accept it, we will discuss other candidates." Rex looked at the members of the Parliament of Nobles. "If there are no other questions, let's vote."

Duke Solomon, one of the leaders of the conservatives, raised his hand first. He was not as extreme as Rex and preferred a candidate that was acceptable for the Church, the parliament, and the nobles in case of a great conflict within the country, which would only result in the decline of Holm. In such a case, even the winning nobles would not earn much. Natasha was undoubtedly a suitable candidate.

Duke Solomon's father was 'Night Walker' Winston. His influence on the conservatives was as great as Rex's. Many people followed him to raise their hands, and so did the nobles who supported Rex. Soon, two-thirds of the participants had raised their hands. Duke James and Duke Russell, on the other hand, were gloomy and prepared to use the dukes' veto right.

Suddenly, Viscount Harrison thought of something. He wrote on a piece of paper, before he passed it on to Duke James in secret.

Knowing that he was scared that the gold knights such as Duke Rex could overhear them, Duke James did not blame his redundant move. Instead, he opened the paper that read, "Princess Natasha is closer to Her Excellency Hathaway than we imagine."

Duke James had a complicated look on his face. After discussing with Duke Russell, he suddenly raised his hand, which was quite a shock for most of the liberals. But they still chose to believe in him and followed his lead.

Rex put on a smile. "Very good. The Parliament of Nobles has unanimously passed the motion that Natasha Violet, Countess of Violet, is to be invited to Holm to inherit the throne."

He knocked the gavel and declared, "This meeting is now concluded."

.....

Watching the conservatives leave, Duke James said to Viscount Harrison solemnly, "I hope you're right."

"We can only take our chances. Rex seemed well prepared. I'll report the result to the Highest Council. They will decide whether or not assassination is necessary." Viscount Harrison left in a hurry.

In a secret chamber inside the Nekso Palace, Rex spoke to two seniors respectfully, "Your Excellency Saint Sard, Your Excellency Kritonia, Natasha has achieved the right to the throne as per your instruction."

"Very good." Sard smiled peacefully, his dangling eyelids blocking his dirty eyeballs.

.....

On the 35th floor of the magic tower in Allyn, in the meeting room of the Highest Council, one of the twenty-four chairs was gone.

“We discussed the problem before. I don’t think it’s the best choice to let Beliel’s student be the queen of Holm. I suggest we eliminate her in advance.” Said Vicente, the Lord of the Undead, coldly, without looking at Hathaway at all.”

Vicente, who was well prepared, proved his innocence in Congus’ incident, and provided sufficient evidence that Congus’ students were unaware of Demigod-lich’s actions, protecting them from being punished.

Several members of the Highest Council nodded, agreeing that Natasha and Gordon should be killed to ensure David’s right to the throne.

Hathaway looked at them, coldly, “This is the Hoffenberg family’s business. Whoever meddles with it will be my sworn enemy. Also, I believe that Natasha will be a just queen who will not be biased towards the Church.”

Due to her lack of eloquence, she simply threatened her enemy.

“But how many people support you? Vicente challenged Hathaway.

Davey, the Innovator, said lightheartedly, “I believe in Hathaway’s judgment.”

“What’s wrong with you?” Without a sign, the Lord of Storm began to roar, “Kill Natasha and Gordon? Are you planning to terrify all the nobles in Holm, Brianne, Colette, and Calais? Sard will smile in his dreams! The nobles will be completely inclined to him! Seven legendary knights in four countries, plus the Grand Cardinals in their parishes, that will be twelve legendary warriors, two of whom are level-three! It’s enough to suffocate us!”

The other members of the Highest Council couldn’t help but shift their heads under the roar, but most of them secretly agreed with him. While Fernando was short-tempered, unamiable and even slightly freakish, he had always considered the development of the Congress.

“Fernando, what’s your opinion?” Douglas asked in a smile. He was least influenced by the roar.

Fernando looked around with his red eyes, and most members did not dare to look back at him. “At the very least, Natasha is not a bad choice.”

“Not a bad choice. Yes, I agree with that.” Douglas was more willing to trust Hathaway and Fernando.

Vicente meant to object, but his influence was diminished by the Demigod-lich’s incident. His allies were unwilling to support him at such a moment. Therefore, the Highest Council reached a conclusion very soon. Natasha would not be stopped, but her tendencies would be observed so that she could be destroyed or controlled when necessary.

.....

After he returned to his library from the meeting room, Fernando saw Lucien who was wearing a black, double-breasted tuxedo pacing back and forth.

“Master, what’s the situation?” Sensing that his teacher came in, Lucien hurried to ask.

Fernando chuckled. “Natasha will not be stopped from inheriting the throne, but it’s mostly up to herself. Violet is far away from Holm, and she still has her father to take care of.”

Then, he said solemnly, “Lucien, this is the best I can do for you. It depends on yourself whether or not you can trick a queen into your bed.”

Lucien smiled in embarrassment, “It’s very difficult. Natasha likes girls.”

“That’s indeed a problem...” Fernando thought for a moment. Then, his eyes shined. He opened the space gate to the demiplane, leaving Lucien in the library in confusion.

A moment later, Fernando walked back with a belt with beautiful stripes. He gloated, “It’s still there. This is my most remarkable achievement in alchemy when I was young. Lucien, put it on, and you and Natasha will be a loving couple soon enough.”

“What’s this?” Lucien found it odd and did not dare to take it over.

Fernando grimaced and raised the belt, “A gender-transitioning belt, of course. You will become a real girl after you put it on. Natasha is close to you enough. The only obstacle between you should be gender.”

Lucien did not see his face, but he guessed that it must be filled with anger and awkwardness. “Master, this is my boundaries. Please don’t joke about it.”

“How boring. You are unwilling to sacrifice anything for love.” Fernando shook his head exaggeratedly, teasing his student.

Lucien looked back at him expressionlessly, “That’s not important. The important thing is, why did you build a gender-transitioning belt when you were young, master?”

Fernando’s smile was immediately frozen. Then he glared, “Somebody asked me to build it for him.”

“Tsk...” Lucien shook his head, not convinced at all. “There are wrong names, but no wrong nicknames. No wonder they all call you a freak.”

“What’s that attitude? Life is all about trying. Lucien, I’m very worried about your life status. A man who hasn’t tried anything is pathetic.” Fernando sniffed and drove Lucien out.

Throne of Magical Arcana

In the Ratacia Palace in Aalto in the City of Psalm...

Hearing the news forwarded by Philibell, the new Grand Cardinal of the Violet parish, Natasha said with apparent grief, “I didn’t expect that my grandfather and my uncle would be summoned by the Lord so quickly.”

Although she knew that King Feltis was unwell due to old age and Prince Patrick had always been weak, and she was braced for bad news, Natasha still couldn’t stop sorrow from surging in her heart. As she grew up, she had fewer and fewer blood family members who cared for her selflessly. That was the most heartbreaking experience in life.

“Patrick didn’t succeed the throne after all...” Grand Duke of Orvarit, who knew the Hoffenberg family even better than Natasha, sighed. But he did not say anything more and simply looked at Natasha, “Are you willing to go to Rentato to inherit the throne of Holm?”

Natasha thought of Holm and Lucien. She then looked at her weary father, whose violet hair had now been mixed by grey. She shook her head firmly, “Holm has many heirs, but you only have me.”

“I’ve been taught to shoulder the responsibility of the Violet family and Duchy of Orvarit. How can I leave?”

Grand Duke of Orvarit patted Natasha's shoulder comfortingly. He smiled at his daughter, "What if I want you to go?"

Huh? Natasha was stunned.

Philibell, who had a beard, echoed peacefully, "You can still come back after you go there. While the Church forbids the Kingdom of Holm from merging with the Duchy of Orvarit, you can be the sovereign of both countries and ask different offspring to inherit them. Therefore, you can stay in Holm for one year and Orvarit for another. The transmission circle will be open to you. This is the Church's reward for your family's years of devotion."

In doing so, it would be easy to both control Natasha and direct the nobles to be used to 'autonomy.' The conflict between the royal power and the regular nobles would be greater.

"Also, I'm still in good shape, and I can be the Grand Duke for at least another twenty years," said Grand Duke of Orvarit half-jokingly, "Your mother was married far away from her family. She felt guilty when she saw her father growing old and her brother haunted by diseases. She failed to meet your grandmother for the last time when she passed away. She felt that she owed a lot to the Hoffenberg family. Therefore, I hope that you can go to Holm when it needs you the most to make up for your mother's regrets."

Natasha fell silent. Her hands were clenched in fists, and she nodded slowly, "Okay."

Philibell said half-seriously and half-jokingly, "Your Highness, the Church is aware that your favorite type is different from that of regular girls. Therefore, we have helped you remove the demand that you must be married. However, you still have to have offspring, which I believe is also the hope of the Grand Duke and the nobles of the two countries. You may consider asking the angels to arrive inside your body as your children. That's a glory only for the devout believers."

Sard blamed what happened in Aalto on Lucien, claiming that Lucien manipulated Princess Natasha when she wanted to comfort the Grand Duke. So, the Church knew that Natasha's sexual orientation was never changed. The Grand Duke learned a thing or two about it later, too.

Natasha lowered her eyes and said, "I'll try."

What she was thinking to herself, however, was something else. "Is the sexless conception that Lucien mentioned real? Can I borrow his... thing?"

Since he made up his mind, Lucien had made up various plans. In case Natasha couldn't handle the pressure and got married to a random noble for a child before he won her over, he regularly introduced the knowledge, including artificial insemination and test-tube baby to her.

Having received Natasha's confirmation, Philibell said kindly, "I will not disrupt your farewell anymore. For your safety and convenience, it would be best if a minor legion of knights comes with you. Their family may use the transmission circle with them."

The regular knight legions, due to different functions, were made of a hundred to five hundred knights of various levels, their squires were ten times more, and soldiers were even more than that. A minor knight legion was the guards for the heirs to a throne, usually made of one radiant knight, three grand knights, six knights, a hundred squires, and five hundred soldiers. However, what Philibell mentioned obviously only included the official knights and their families.

He left after that. The Grand Duke said to Natasha with a smile, "Just now, I said that I could be the Grand Duke for another twenty years, but you'd better not keep me waiting for that long. I want to see my grandchild and the future of the Violet family sooner."

"I'll try." Natasha prayed that Lucien's 'technology' wouldn't go wrong.

The Grand Duke looked at Natasha and said, “I want you to go to Holm, not only because I want you to make up for your mother’s regrets, but also because he is there. You won’t be separated anymore. So, you need to hurry up on the grandchild thing.”

“Father, what are you talking about? Who is he?” Embarrassed, Natasha pretended to be ignorant. Where was her father’s misunderstanding from?

The Grand Duke said in a smile, “Who else? Lucien Evans, of course. While you were a pretend couple years ago, my intuitions tell me that you are not a fake one now. I’m very happy about it.”

Father, you are overthinking... Natasha thought to herself. However, she hated to hurt the Grand Duke’s feelings when they were about to depart and therefore did not explain. In the meantime, she made up her mind to conceive with Lucien’s bloodline.

“Don’t think I know nothing. To whom have you been talking to for more than one hour every day over the past years?” Grand Duke of Orvarit suddenly felt that his daughter was not as emotionally keen as she claimed.

Natasha tried not to laugh. “That’s because we are good friends. I never intended to hide it from you, or you wouldn’t have known it at all.”

“Alright, go pick your knights. Camil will go to Holm with you.” Grand Duke of Orvarit decided to ask Camil to find an opportunity to ‘remind’ Natasha.

Natasha nodded his head. “Alright, I’ll talk to you regularly after I reach Holm.”

She began to make plans. “I’ll bring John’s family and give Lucien a surprise...”

.....

The transmission magic circle was opened in the Radiance Church and glowing.

It was one of the largest magic circles to provide reinforcements when the Congress of Magic attacked. Fifty knights could be teleported at once. Despite the fortune of the South Church, such magic circles were only deployed in Lance, Antiffler, Aalto, Rentato, and Hem.

In ivory light, Natasha, Camil, nine knights and their family, about forty people in total, appeared in the transmission magic circle. The ordinary people such as Joel were dizzy and gagging.

Of the nine knights, only John, a level-three grand knight, brought his whole family. The other knights thought that such trouble was unnecessary since they would return to Aalto in one year, and they only brought their wives and children.

“John, you can’t go anywhere without your parents? Are you not grown yet?” Fenge, another grand knight, joked with him. He was John’s friend and knew that John wouldn’t be pissed by a few teasing words.

After weathering through the dizziness, John was in a hurry to take care of Joel, Elsa, and Elvin. He replied with a smile, “It’s a rare opportunity to go abroad. Shouldn’t we bring our parents and brothers to appreciate a different view? Also, wasn’t it, Her Highness’ notice that we must bring all family members?”

“I don’t think so. Did you hear it right?” Fenge looked at Natasha in confusion.

At this moment, the maids from the Nekso Palace came over. They cleansed Natasha’s hair, eyebrows, and other facial parts and donned a cape with the emblem of the Hoffenberg family outside of her ivory armor. That was a purple sigil enshrouded in clouds, with a sacred crown at the center that was next to a gold scepter and a blue longsword on two sides.

“Your Highness, please go to the Nekso Palace with your knights and return to the Radiance Church according to the marked route, where you will be crowned.” Rex, president of the Parliament of Nobles, bowed respectfully.

Natasha said solemnly, “Please lead the way, Duke of Frenburg.”

John and the other knights hurried to settle their families and leave the Radiance Church with Natasha, arriving at Nekso Palace.

It was late at night after a storm, damp and dark.

“Start!” Rex, who was leading the way, waved his arms.

A knight raised his horn and blew it hard.

Wu!

With the horns, four knights including John rushed out on their horses, followed by Natasha who rode on her horse majestically.

Wu!

The magic crystal lights in the manors were turned on, embracing the new sovereign like the stars in the sky.

“This is...” None of the knights had ever seen such splendor. They were rather shocked.

Wu!

Candles were lit by the houses next to the street. Countless people peeped at their new lord through their windows and door gaps.

Natasha suddenly grew nervous, because crowning required the illumination of the holy light. Could her faith pass the test?

She suddenly felt something. Tilting her head, she saw a black-haired man standing behind a window. His face and his unique monocle were so familiar.

She couldn't help but smile when she saw Lucien. What was there to be scared of if she had weathered through the hunting of legendary experts?

Did she not have sympathy, loyalty or bravery in her heart?

Therefore, Natasha pressed forward with her head held high, leaving a deep impression on the nobles and citizens of Holm.

As they passed through the streets, it was dawn when Natasha and her knights reached the Radiance Church. She was bathed by the first light of morning.

Getting off the horse and stepping into the Church, Natasha walked into the hall unhurriedly to the front of Grand Cardinal Sard, kneeling before the saint cross.

After questions and answers, she laid her left hand on the Cannon and raised her right hand, pointing at the sky with three fingers: "I, Natasha Violet, swear solemnly before the Lord.

"I am a devout believer of the Saint Truth, I will abide by the Cannon and the law of Holm and defend them with my life, and I shall always be ready to fight for the glory of the Lord and the interests of Holm until I die!"

Sard examined her faith with the book of Cannon in front of her.

With a peaceful mind, Natasha was interrogated by the holy light if she had ever broken her knight vow. When given a negative answer, the holy light glowed as if an angel had arrived.

Sard said gently, “You are a devout and determined believer; you are a brave and stubborn knight; you are qualified to be the sovereign of Holm.”

While he talked, he took up the gold crown on the red velvet cushion nearby and put it on Natasha’s head.

“I hereby announced that under the grace of the Lord, Natasha Violet is to become the Queen of the Kingdom of Holm and all the lands affiliated to it, the Protector of Faith, the Violet Countess, the Lord of Billbis Islands, the Lord of Soloho and Baltimore, the Duchess of Emden, the Lord of the Most Glorious Sword of Truth’s Knights, the Most Magnificent Verdict Knights, and the Most Ancient and Honorable Saint Cross Knights.”

Natasha raised her head with the crown and took over the symbolic ‘Sword of Truth’ that was glittering sacredly, allowing it to emit sharp brilliance.

Duke Rex, Duke Solefen, Duke James, Duke Russel, and all the other nobles fell to one of their knees: “Greetings, Your Majesty!”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 511: Discovery

The morning after the rain was particularly refreshing. The sun was not high yet but was warm and gentle.

The selected Dragon Scale horses, emitting silver grey brilliance, accommodated the proud knights to go to the Nekso Palace, galloping as gracefully as if dancing.

Behind them, Natasha accepted the tributes of her subjects with a gold crown and the 'Sword of Truth', followed by the nine dukes and other lower nobles.

After they reached the Nekso Palace, the nobles dispersed and went to the hall where the Parliament of Nobles was located, waiting for the queen to host her first meeting.

Natasha returned to the queen's house calmly and turned on a divine power circle, blocking the center of the Nekso Palace. Then, she took off her armor and changed into a black court dress under the help of Camil and two maids.

Hinting to the two maids to leave, Natasha finally revealed slight exhaustion. "That's a lot of pressure. I don't know who are my enemies, who are my friends, and who are supporters that I can win over. This place is too strange and depressing compared to Orvarit. I didn't even dare to speak when the divine power circle was not activated. Kritonia, 'Heart of Time', is the one responsible for the safety of the Nekso Palace and the entire Rentato."

It was obvious that she did not trust Kritonia.

“Actually, you don’t need to come to inherit the throne. Holm is much more complicated than Orvarit. As an outsider who lacks concrete support, you can be involved in schemes and riots easily.” Camil said a lot of things despite her usual coldness. “Whether you are inclined to the Congress of Magic, or the Church, or try to balance them, it will all be very troublesome.”

Natasha said in a bitter smile, “I know it. Even if I collaborate with the Church to strike the Congress of Magic, disregarding Granny Hathaway and the royal family of Holm, it may still not be enough to resist the Congress. They are expanding too fast. In order to contain them, we need both Holm and the help from Brianne, Colette and Calais. Also, it will raise objections and even the revolt of the liberals, which may result in the division of the kingdom, turning Holm into ruins.”

“If I’m inclined to balance, the Church will definitely urge me, and I will have to consider that the Violet family and my father are at places where the Church is most powerful.”

“Why did you make such an unwise choice if you knew it so clearly?” Camil blamed her.

Natasha shook her head and said ruthlessly, “What excuse did I have? If I state that I’m unwilling to assist the Church, it would be a betrayal of faith that will be punished by the Holy City, and the Violet family will be weakened openly and clandestinely. Therefore, when I heard the news, I thought that I might go to Holm someday, but not now. However, my father suggested that I come and let me know my mother’s regrets.”

“Since I couldn’t find an excuse, and the blood of Hoffenberg runs in my body, I might as well shoulder the responsibility of Holm. I do not wish to see a civil war in Holm that transforms my mother’s beloved hometown into hell. That’s why I’m here.”

“Besides, I am a devout believer, the leader of the Hoffenberg family and the Violet Countess. The Church should respect my will to some degree, just like before.”

“Natasha, that was before. If the situation in Holm comes to a critical moment, the Church will never consider what you think but only ask you to sacrifice for the Lord.” Camil found Natasha’s plan too ideal.

Natasha smiled and said firmly, “If it is completely against my will, I would rather sacrifice myself. The Church cannot interfere with the power of the throne randomly. That’s a deal the two parties reached before the Lord hundreds of years ago. If the Church violates it, they will be heretics and raise all nobles’ hostility.”

Camil looked at Natasha and helped her clean her necklace. “What are you planning to do? What do you want Holm to become? What’s your future direction?”

“Well, I don’t know yet. I cannot make up my mind for now.” Natasha was more or less confused.

Camil looked at her solemnly, “Then, you’d better figure it out fast. Whether you are to lean towards the Congress of Magic or the Church, or to maintain balance, you have to make a decision soon. That’s the only way to make preparations in advance.”

She was referring to the Duchy of Orvarit.

“I understand. The principles of my administration must be settled soon in order to issue laws and eliminate opposition. However, that needs a much deeper understanding about the situation in Holm. Now, the only thing certain is that even the most liberal noble is unwilling to be eliminated by the Church and even the most conservative noble wouldn’t want to return to the dominance of the royal power hundreds of years ago. That is, not considering people like Gordon who are

completely devoted to the Church. So, I should try to maintain balance for the time being.” Natasha nodded.

Then, she turned around and looked at the mirror. Touching the emblem of the Hoffenberg family, she said to herself, “Before that, I need to figure out my faith. What is the Lord to me in my heart? What’s the relation between the Lord and the Church? Only by seeing through myself can I make future plans, advance into level eight and draw the Sword of Truth. Also, it’s hard to tell what Grand Cardinal Sard thinks and wants...”

She did not tell the Grand Duke or Camil about the shaking of her faith. Besides Lucien, only Fernando and Lucien guessed a little from the projection of Mountain Paradise that Francis summoned.

“Alright, it’s time to go to the Parliament of Nobles.” Camil opened the gate.

Natasha looked at the mirror again. When she saw the fear and sorrow of the beautiful purple-haired girl inside, she suddenly thought of something else, “After I become the queen of Holm, I cannot go to the magic tower to visit Granny Hathaway, or check his unique magic tower and the Atom Institution that he mentioned a lot in Aalto. My every move will be interpreted by the malicious nobles. If I do those two things, it will be a sign that I’m inclined to the Congress of Magic.”

“It’s impossible for them to visit me under Kritonia’s watch... While we are closer in distance, we are actually further from each other.”

“I hope his new encryption algorithm can protect our communication...”

.....

In the hall of the Parliament of Nobles, Natasha stood on the podium and accepted the nobles' tributes again. Then she said concisely: "Now, I'm going to announce two things. Firstly, the whole country will mourn for a month as my grandfather and my uncle's funeral is prepared. In the meantime, the meetings in the Parliament of Nobles will be suspended, and all the orders and policies needed will be proposed to me."

Now that the king and the prince had both been summoned by the Lord, it was reasonable of Natasha to propose such a request. Therefore, none of the nobles had any objection.

Natasha went on, "Secondly, In light that I don't know much about the affairs of the kingdom yet, and based on my confidence in the policies that my grandfather and my uncle released, unless any unexpected and unprecedented event takes place, I will not approve any motion that changes current policies or ministers in the next six months. Please contribute to the prosperity of the kingdom just like before."

"What?" The nobles exclaimed in shock.

Rex stood up and objected, "Your Majesty, there are many problems in the kingdom that need to be addressed in time. Isn't it too extreme that no motions will be approved?"

"Before my arrival, the kingdom has been growing prosperously thanks to the policies and the efforts of the ministers. Are they no longer applicable just because I am here? Will they turn from being helpful into poisonous in only six months?" Standing straight, Natasha asked back resolutely.

The nobles, who were used to the old King Feltis and the weak Prince Patrick, suddenly felt a lot of pressure.

“No, that is not what I mean. I’m only implying that they may not reflect the current situation.” Rex defended himself. He did not want to be marked as someone who slandered the late king.

Count Henson, as the Minister of Finance, was relieved. His post seemed safe now. Therefore, he stood up and argued with Rex, “Her Majesty made it clear that, if anything unexpected happens, say, a certain minister proves to be guilty of a crime, then she will certainly replace him. But until then, carrying on the previous policies and personnel will help the kingdom pass the shock caused by the demise of the king and the prince. I agree with the proposal.”

The winners in the past felt more or less regretful that they couldn’t earn more, but they could live with it since their interests were not jeopardized. Therefore, both the conservatives and the liberals seconded it. How could anyone in the Parliament of Nobles not be a winner in the past?

“One more thing. I will bequeath estates and properties to the ten knights who came with me from the treasury of the royal family. If there are no objections, this meeting will be over. Let’s prepare for the funeral.” Natasha looked at the nobles.

It was not the nobles’ place to comment on how the money of the royal family was spent. Therefore, they rose and bid the queen farewell.

After they went out, Camil looked at Natasha carefully. “Well done. It was redundant of the Grand Duke to ask me to watch over you.”

She believed that Natasha had been well trained as the Violet Countess in the past ten years.

Natasha smiled at the garden up ahead. “There are abundant population and material resources in the new alternate dimensions. They will be the focus of the Church and the Congress. Therefore, I followed someone’s advice and did things by not doing anything first.”

What she did not mention was the other focus of the Congress, which was the mysteries of ‘fission’ and ‘fusion’ that Fernando and Hathaway were working on from the legendary magic models Lucien provided including ‘Eternal Blaze’. Lucien couldn’t explain the experiment phenomena, as it was based on the discovery and research on the particles such as neutrons. Therefore, he simply ascribed them to Alterna, claiming that he constructed the models by the power of the Silver Moon and the feedback of the world. As a result, the two grand arcanists had to completely dedicate themselves to the research. But of course, since there were magic models, it was still much easier than aimless explorations.

.....

In Allyn, Lucien stepped into the Atom Institution.

After Fernando confirmed the existence of nucleus by blowing gold foil with hydrogen particles and Lucien found neutrons by blowing nitrogen with the same particles, establishing his own alchemy system, the elemental sorcerers went crazy, and so did the sorcerers of other schools. More and more arcanists began to blow weird things with particles, hoping to find something. Therefore, Lucien saw quite a few more similar magic circles and alchemical devices in the Atom Institution, like the electromagnetic cyclotron he ‘invented’.

“Master, you’re back? We were hoping to find you!” Katrina and Layria exclaimed in delight.

“What’s up?” Judging from their faces, Lucien could tell that it was a good thing.

With a brilliant smile, Katrina said, “Master, we discovered an unusual phenomenon when we ran low-temperature experiments. When metals are lowered to a specific temperature, their electrical resistance will be gone!”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 512: Students Different Thoughts

Superconductivity? Lucien almost blurted out.

Before, when he asked Jerome, Annick, Katrina and Layria to run experiments on the changes of nature of different materials in low temperatures, Layria was mainly meant to create a vacuum with coal. He did not expect that they would discover superconductivity at all, because helium was not found yet, and there was no way to approach absolute zero. Later, he was so busy with other things that he forgot about their task.

After Jerome advanced into middle-rank and got his Holm Crown Ring, he filed an application to Lucien and changed the focus of his studies to X rays. So, his previous projects were given to Katrina and Layria.

However, Lucien merely regarded it as a potential supplement, and he asked the two girls to focus on the new alchemy, namely the particles in the elemental field. He did not expect that he would embrace a pleasant surprise today.

Holding in his emotions, Lucien asked in surprise, “The electrical resistance is gone?”

superconductivity, what a beautiful noun. Lucien couldn't help but think of the mag-lev technology, the large particle collider, the hope to strengthen his electromagnetic gun, and magnetics-restrained controllable fusion.

"If controllable fusion is achieved, the power source of Allyn will be better improved. Similar sky cities will no longer be restrained by energy. The legendary sorcerers will have one more standard item, which is a city that floats in the blue sky. Well, should I call it 'Sun Well' or 'Eternal Furnace', or maybe 'Evans Energy Core'?"

Lucien was woken up from his fantasy by Layria's delighted voice. "Yes, it is not gradually gone, but suddenly disappears when the temperature is lowered to a certain place!"

"What materials did you use? What was the temperature?" Lucien began to ask more carefully. Annick, Heidi, Sprint, Jerome and other people also came close. The two girls had been obviously overjoyed since a few days ago, but they didn't tell anything to their partners, so the other students were already filled with curiosity.

Calming down, Katrina said, "Master, since the helium you discovered lowered the minimally possible temperature, we were interested in the experiment again and tried many materials in our spare time. Half a month ago, when we studied the mercury in low temperatures, we discovered that its electrical resistance was suddenly gone when the temperature was lowered to 4.2 degrees from absolute zero. Later, we tried other metals such as lead and reached the same result, except that the temperatures were different."

"Yes, I never knew that electrical resistance could disappear!" Layria could not believe her discovery even to this moment.

Lucien listened carefully and asked them to repeat their experiment. He was gradually freed from his previous ecstasy, too. The superconductivity right now was still based on materials in an extremely low temperature, which meant that it was highly impractical. Despite the assistance of magic, it would be difficult to be applied in reality.

For example, if Lucien were to increase the power of his electromagnetic gun magic with the ultra-powerful magnetic field caused by superconductivity, he would not only have to combine the similar structures into it but also melt the parts in Snow Goddess' Whip where a low temperature could be created. As a result, the magic would be terribly difficult to achieve. Lucien estimated that it was at least legendary level. By the same logic, in order to achieve controllable fusion, he needed to be improved to Silver Moon Alterna's level.

Also, the relevant files in his spirit library had not been unlocked yet, so there was still a long way to go in the research of superconductivity. After the substantiation of his cognitive world, Lucien was already able to read the files on the special theory of relativity in the spirit library, part of them on the general theory of relativity, and part on the quantum theory, but the more advanced and detailed files were still locked.

Lucien nodded in approval at the girls' demonstration. "Do you know the value of your research? It means that you will win a Silver Moon Medal. The sorcerers of the electromagnetics faction will crazily love you."

Jerome and others gasped, not expecting that Katrina and Layria could win a Silver Moon Medal.

Sprint, Heidi and Annick, on the other hand, were rather frustrated. They believed that Mr. Jerome deserved a Holm Crown prize, which was a reward for his devotion and persistence. When the man became a sorcerer, they hadn't even known what magic was yet, so there was nothing to be jealous about. However, now that some of their classmates were going to win the highest honor in electromagnetics, they felt rather complicated.

Katrina and Layria blushed and couldn't say anything in their excitement. It was not until a long time later that Katrina said, "Master, we knew that the research was very valuable, but we did not expect we would be awarded for it. Right, this is our paper. Could you see if there's anything wrong? If not, would you please sign your name?"

It was a project of the Atom Institution. Lucien couldn't break the rules. He browsed through the paper, checked the data, and signed his name, before he gave it back to the girls and said, "You should also sign your names. As second-circle sorcerers, you are qualified to share the honor."

Lucien smiled at Katrina and Layria whose hands were shaking. "You are waiting for me to come back before you publish it?"

"Of course. This is your research. You are undoubtedly the lead author. Also, being praised by you is more exciting for us than being given a Silver Moon Medal." Said Layria delightedly.

Lucien chuckled in a good mood. "Submit it in the Sorcerer Administrative Department later. However, you must not go easy on your following research, and you should try to find materials with superconductivity in normal temperature. Right, you need to work on particles, too. Don't stray from the path you choose."

"Understood!" The girls replied with their heads held high, apparently overjoyed.

Suddenly, Katrina thought of something else and asked, "Master, when we discovered superconductivity, a very incomplete model appeared in our cognitive world. It was even more incomplete than the feedback you described. It's absolutely impossible to complete the model. Why is that?"

“Of course it is incomplete. Have you figured out the nature of superconductivity and understood why it only appeared at a low temperature?” Lucien patted their shoulder with a smile, “If you cannot complete it for now, you can improve other electromagnetic magics based on it to improve their power or lower their difficulty.”

Layria hurried to ask, “Master, can we ask you questions about improving magics? We don’t have any experience in that.”

Although they learnt the basics in school, they had been working in the Atom Institution since graduation and never needed to improve any magic. Therefore, they asked for their teacher’s help subconsciously.

“I’m your teacher. You are free to ask me any questions.” Lucien nodded. He was rather curious about their incomplete model, too, and hoped to improve the power of his electromagnetic gun with it.

Receiving an affirmative reply from their teacher, Katrina and Layria went to the Sorcerer Administrative Department joyfully. Lucien, on the other hand, looked back at Annick, Sprint, Heidi and Chelly. Sensing their complicated feelings, he asked with a smile, “Very envious and jealous?”

As if stung in the back, Sprint suddenly stood straight and raised his head, “Not at all! I will definitely earn the highest honors of different fields just like you, master.”

“Well, I’m indeed a bit jealous. I’m going to teach them a lesson tonight. They kept it from me for such a long time!” Heidi admitted it rather frankly.

She tried to cover her real feelings with a joke, but her smile was still rather awkward.

Annick scratched his head. “Sort of. However, I’m quite satisfied with my research about particles. According to Mr. Lazar, Mr. Jerome and Mr. Rock, it’s a world full of treasures, and whether or not I find anything depends on my efforts. I believe that I will achieve something in the future.”

He was only slightly more talkative in front of Lucien and his fellows in the Atom Institution.

“I envy them, but my studies on that are still shallow. It’s perfectly normal that Katrina is ahead of me.” Chelly, who came one year later, was rather cool about it, but she appeared to be bothered by other problems.

Lucien saw it but did not ask. He simply said, “I have just returned from an alternate dimension. Who can tell me the latest studies on arcana and magics in the past two months?”

Jerome replied, “After your New Alchemy was published, all the sorcerers in the Congress of Magic went mad! It touched the field of the Creator! Therefore, regardless of their faction, as long as they knew part of elemental magics, they were all working on your ‘new alchemy’ and the particles, even including the arcanists who had distinguished achievements in their fields.”

“On the other hand, the war between the particle theory and the wave theory has entered a predicament. The former cannot explain light quantum, and the latter cannot explain the classic double-slit experiment. Hehe. The sorcerers of the two factions are both conducting relevant explorations, hoping to defeat the enemy.”

Heidi shook her head at the stubborn supporters of the wave theory. However, it was true that the confirmation of light quantum hypothesis could not completely invalidate the wave theory, because many phenomena were still inexplicable. Those sorcerers, living through their panic, picked up classic experiments as their weapons again.

The supporters of the particle theory, on the other hand, had made a gratifying comeback and was on par with the supporters of the wave theory now.

Annick added, “According to the journals in the past two months, many arcanists were trying to explain President Douglas’ experiment from the perspective of the wave theory.”

Lucien nodded at that. He planned to write a paper that copied the Lorentz transformation ¹ to explain President Douglas’ experience, so that his teacher could be mentally prepared for the special theory of relativity that he was going to submit to his teacher later.

“Alright, I basically get it now. There is no need for you to envy Katrina and Layria. They deserve the honor because they persisted in the experiments on the materials in the super-low temperatures. You, on the other hand, are faced with a boundless world of particles where infinite mysteries lie. What you can get is solely up to yourselves.”

“Is there anything you want to ask me? If not, I’m going to Rentato.”

Annick and Sprint raised their hands when other people shook their heads. “Master, I have one question.”

“What is it?” Lucien raised his eyebrow.

Annick and Sprint looked at each other and asked boldly, “Our question is the same. Master, theoretically speaking, your cyclotron should improve the energy of particles infinitely as long as

the space is large enough, but why were the cycles of the particles changing and breaking away from the acceleration field of the cyclotron in the end? Should the cycles only be concerned with electric charge, mass and intensity of the magnetic field? None of the factors changed, and the particles were only sped up!”

Lucien frowned. He could not tell them that it was the relativistic effect, right? The faster an object is, the greater its mass would be...

1. In physics, the Lorentz transformations is a one-parameter family of linear transformations from a coordinate frame in spacetime to another frame that moves at a constant velocity (the parameter) relative to the former.

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Chapter 513: Inside and Outside the House

Thinking for a moment, Lucien asked, “As the speed and energy of particles are improved, the radius of their tract will grow accordingly. However, the capacity of the cyclotron is limited. In order to break the boundary, you will have to either expand the capacity with space-related magics, or build a particularly huge cyclotron, setting a radius of ten kilometers.”

If they were not clear about the problem, Lucien intended to fool them with this excuse for now.

“Master, that’s not what we meant,” said Sprint in a hurry, “Based on the specifications of the cyclotron in the institution, we calculated the theoretical particle energy we can reach, but it was quite different from reality. The particles deviated from the acceleration field much earlier than it was accelerated to that level. It was obvious that the orbits and the frequency of electrical field

changes were in conflict, which was odd. Just like Annick said, shouldn't the orbits only be concerned with an electric charge, mass and intensity of the magnetic field?"

Annick added, "We intended to adjust the frequency of the electric field changes to adapt to the changes in the orbits, so that the particle energy could be better improved. However, we lacked the corresponding knowledge to calculate the new orbits. So, we are hoping that master could tell us whether you discovered the phenomenon when you invented the cyclotron, and whether you could point out the source of our problem."

It seemed that they had indeed found a problem. Lucien nodded softly, "Annick is a very prudent man. Now that you dare to raise it, it means that it is a real phenomenon that has been repetitively tested. However, I was forced to enter the alternate dimension after I devised the cyclotron, and I haven't run any experiments with it. I cannot think of an explanation just yet. Therefore, we need to work on the problem together."

"The formulas regarding the movement of particles in the magnetic field and the electric field seem alright. They have been proved in the early phase, too. So, we need to find out the different conditions that caused the problem."

"The speed was fast." Heidi interrupted. She had heard a lot about the problem from Annick and Sprint.

Sprint thought and said, "The energy was improved, and the radius of the track grew larger."

Lucien waved his hands. "The essence of the latter is the increase in speed. Considering the different conditions of the two phases of the experiment, does it suggest that the formulas are no longer applicable, or that the other specifications of the particles, such as electric charge and mass, will change, in high speed or high energy?"

Lucien already held back his surprise. He intended to raise the consideration of the arcanists, so that they would be mentally prepared for the special theory of relativity later.

“Hehe, how is it possible? The faster, and the larger the mass the more the electric charge will be?” Heidi grimaced. How could the improvement of speed change mass, the in-built nature of an object?”

Sprint and Annick looked the same. They believed that part of energy was transformed into electricity in the high energy state. For them, even if the formulas were not applicable in the high speed state, they were worth studying more than the joke that the mass had grown larger.

“There’s still some time until the end of the month. You will work on the question and write a paper. I’ll ask Mr. Drummond to publish it on ‘Arcana’.” Lucien ended the topic and asked about the studies of Jerome and the other people.

However, it had been only two months. It was already impressive of the Atom Institution to discover ‘superconductivity’ and ‘relativistic effect’. Naturally, no significant breakthroughs were made in other experiments, although Jerome did dig into the nature and usage of X rays, discovering that it could be a chronic curse when energy was increased.

After inspecting the Atom Institution, Lucien returned to Rentato on the magic steam train, waiting for the evening.

.....

Tall, strong, gold-haired, and handsome, John was well observed by the maids when he patrolled in the Nekso Palace.

“John, your time is up. Time for me to patrol.” Fenge came to replace John when the night fell. Natasha had deployed the knights who followed her to Holm to different key locations in the Nekso Palace. “It will be your turn to supervise the interrogation room of the Nekso Palace. Don’t be captivated by the beautiful girls of Holm and forget that.”

John patted Fenge’s shoulder in a smile, “Do you think I’m like you? Alright, I’ll bring my family to the villa and settle them down first.”

John found Joel, Elsa and Elvin in a room in the Nekso Palace. Led by a maid, the four of them went to the villa that Natasha offered to them.

“The architectural style is vintage and graceful, obviously different from Aalto.” Joel observed his family’s villa in a great mood, not upset by the separation from his homeland. He was too focused on appreciating the exotic landscape of the foreign land.

Not an artist as Joel was, Elsa observed the environment and said in satisfaction, “As expected of a villa granted by the royal family. It’s much better than our house.”

Passing through the blooming garden and reaching the gate, the maid brought out a bronze key rather shyly and opened the gate. Then, she pressed the wall skillfully. After a crack, the hall was ablaze with light. The crystals glittered brilliantly, driving away the darkness.

The view deeply astounded Joel, Elsa and the rest of them. Their own hall was as bright as day, splendid and dazzling, like nightless Mountain Paradise in the Cannon.

Noticing their shock, the maid said proudly, “Lord Baron, they are the crystal electric lamps that can only be seen in Holm. They are powered by the electric current transmitted from the river far away. It’s very easy to use them. All you need to do is to press the switch.”

As a maid of the royal family, she represented the queen. So, she could not call them magic lights, like the ordinary people did, but have to call them by their official name.

Pointing at the row of switches next to the gate, the maid showed the newcomers how to use them.

As the crystal lamps were lit one after another, stars seemed to be glittering in the villa splendidly. John, Joel, Elsa and Elvin were so dazzled that they thought they were in a dream.

“Unbelievable. I’m already falling in love with this place.” Elvin, who had been an adult for a while, had the curiosity of a young person. He was thinking how to brag about this to his friends after he went back.

The maid led the few of them into the hall. Pointing at the bar near the dining room, she said, “The orange wall there can be opened. The lower part is to store wine and food, while the upper floor creates ice. If you put the ice into wine, you will enjoy a unique flavor and forget the heat of summer.”

While talking, she opened the magic refrigerator that had been built into a wall. “There’s also a wine cellar in the basement of the villa. They are both powered by electricity. Ordinary people are free to use them, too.”

She was talking to Joel and Elsa.

“Oh, so cool! The ice cellar is a bumpkin compared to this!” Elvin praised and took out a bottle of wine with ice, feeling the heat of summer dispersing.

“What’s this?” John calmed down and asked, deep in thought.

The maid smiled, “The inventor has named it ‘refrigerator’. They are expensive and cannot be manufactured yet. For now, you are the only ones who can enjoy them besides Her Majesty and a few great nobles.”

“By ‘you’, do you mean all the knights who come with the queen?” John asked, pretending to be casual.

The maid smiled but didn’t reply. She continued to show them the villa and introduced the novel objects here, showing, the silver boxes hanging in every corner of the house.

What surprised Joel and Elsa was that those boxes would blow out wind of different temperatures and create coolness as long as the buttons on the wall were pressed.

Before they finished their tour, something began to ring loudly.

“What’s this? John and Elvin asked the maid while they looked at the iron ‘monster’ on the table that was marked with numbers.

The maid hinted for him to pick up the bar-shaped object with a smile. “It should be for you, Lord Baron.”

John picked up the object in confusion and heard Fenge’s laughter before it reached his ear. “John, is that you?”

“Yes, it’s me. Fenge, what’s this about?” John asked in ignorance.

Fenge replied with great satisfaction. “This is Holm’s unique wire phone that supports remote, direct communication. What a marvelous object! If anything goes wrong, I’ll be able to inform you immediately.”

He seemed to be receiving the same introduction on the other side of the line.

“Most of the nobles and merchants in Rentato have such phones. The contact list is over there. You can dial and call them if you need anything.” The maid pointed at a notebook next to the ‘phone’ in a smile.

“Alright.” John needed to sort through his mind after seeing so many inventions at once.

After introducing the servants, the maid of the royal family left. The house became quiet again.

They should all be simplified magic objects. Were they made by him? John considered. When he raised his head, he saw suspicion in Joel's eyes, too.

Suddenly, Elsa said in a low voice, "This is Holm. Do you think Evans is around?"

"What if he is? Can we even meet him? The queen has just been crowned by the Church. Besides, we sold him out once before..." Joel said somewhat bitterly.

Hearing his words, Elsa's eyes turned red, and she couldn't say anything.

John, on the other hand, fell silent and sighed.

Elvin, who hadn't activated his bloodline, was not bothered. "We were doing what Brother Evans told us to do. Besides, magic items are everywhere in Holm. The sorcerers must be very close to the nobles."

While saying, he adjusted the frequency of the radio he found.

"Don't care about what other nobles do. As outsiders, we do not have support. We need to consider Her Majesty's reputation." John said thoughtfully.

Suddenly, a voice as refreshing as that of a lark echoed from the radio. "... Mr. Lucien Evans, a member of the Arcana Review Board, has returned from the alternate dimension safe and sound. He condemned certain extremists of the Hand of Paleness for their stubbornness and the rumors

that they instigated the Necromancy sorcerers who were unaware of the truth to spread out. Such rumors, as twisted facts, are a slander for himself and the Congress. He calls for everyone to be united around the Highest Council that is centered at President Douglas.”

“What happened exactly? Allow us to replay the story for you...”

“A member of the Arcana Review Board...” John repeated the title.

Joel and Elsa murmured, “Lucien Evans...”

Outside the villa, the lamps went on one after another. In their shadow, Lucien stared at the bright window with his hands in his pockets, wondering if he should go in and meet Uncle Joel in such a situation.

Hu. After a soft sigh, Lucien turned around and slowly walked to the royal magic tower of Holm.

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Chapter 514: Anomaly at Night

The royal magic tower of Holm was in the district of the nobles. It didn't take long for Lucien to arrive at the gate. He took off his mask and entered the tower after passing the examination.

The night was getting dark, but the magic tower was more lively than any of Lucien previous visits. Since the queen was from the City of Psalm, it remained to be seen whether the attitude towards sorcerers would be changed. Therefore, for their safety, some of the sorcerers living in Rentato brought their family to Allyn, and some hid in the royal magic tower of Holm.

It was right after dinner. Sorcerers in groups of twos or threes were roaming or discussing in the hall. The merry laughter of children could be heard now and then.

Rebeca was talking with a few sorcerers of the Will of Elements about the most popular 'new alchemy system', when she saw a young man in a high hat walking in through the gate. Her eyes were suddenly frozen, and she exclaimed in both panic and shock, "Good evening, Mr. Evans."

All the sound in the hall was gone. Everybody shifted their eyes to Lucien and greeted him one after another, Good evening, Mr. Evans."

They were so respectful that they did not seem to be facing a young sorcerer no older than 25, but one of the legendary bigshots.

Lucien keenly sensed the attitude change of the sorcerers of the Will of Elements and the branch of Holm. Those sorcerers respected and envied him in the past, but they revered and worshiped him right now, as if he were a grand arcanist or a legendary sorcerer.

Was it because of the new alchemy?

Looking at the lady who greeted him first, Lucien nodded and said, "It's been a while, Rebeca."

Her 'mistake' allowed Lucien to take part in the annual meeting of elements and alchemy, where his paper on the periodic table was approved by Raventi. Therefore, Lucien remembered her very well. Besides, she was very close to Lazar, who talked about her all the time. Chances were that she would become Mrs. Lazar soon.

"You—You still remember me, Mr. Evans?" Rebeca asked in surprise and delight.

Lucien pointed at his head with a smile, "I always have a good memory. Besides, Lazar mentions you all the time."

"I wonder when he is coming back." Rebeca said with some worry.

After the small talk, Lucien bid her farewell with a smile and went to the upper floor.

The other sorcerers crowded after he disappeared into the lift and quacked: "Rebeca, you know Mr. Evans so well?"

"I have many questions and considerations regarding the new alchemy. Could you forward them to Mr. Evans for me?"

“Can you ask Mr. Evans whether more sorcerers are needed in the Atom Institution?”

Rebeca suddenly felt that time was really flying. She first heard Lucien Evans' name because her love for the Symphony of Fate and the great musician. Then, she learnt from Lazar that a genius arcanist had appeared whose very first paper had been highly praised. After only eight years, the quiet young man had created one record after another and was about to reach the summit of arcana to appreciate the landscape of the height with the few grand arcanists.

However, she was not jealous of him, because the gap between her and the terrifying arcanist who had been coming up with revolutionary theories was too large for any jealousy. She could only feel helplessness and admiration.

Also, the new alchemy was different from Lucien's previous achievements, which were only confirmed and accepted after suspicion and disputes. It had been regarded as the spark of wisdom that would illuminate the new world since it was born. Most of the sorcerers were crazy about it.

They all understood that 'new alchemy' was essentially different from the previous 'alchemy', in that it was more of an internal model of atoms and a system that was built on such a model and depicted the changes of elements. 'Alchemy' was just additional knowledge; the mysteries of the microworld were its main content.

It was very important for the sorcerers who explored arduously in the depths and darkness of the microworld. From this moment on, the exploration in the field was no longer blind. It's like stars shining in a dark night, or a lighthouse that the ships in a storm finally saw.

Of course, they knew that a lot of problems regarding 'new alchemy' were yet to be addressed, but it had undoubtedly opened the gate of creation. Lucien would become a grand arcanist because of it someday!

“Perhaps one day, we will be able to change matter freely.” A sorcerer said with sincere delight.

Another sorcerer looked at the lift and remarked with admiration, “When that day comes, Mr. Evans will definitely be one of the most dazzling names in the history of magic.”

...

The new alternate dimensions were still being developed. The archmages and senior-rank sorcerers including Raventi mostly hadn’t come back. Lucien entered his office and looked at the Nekso Palace that looked like a galaxy on earth through the window. Then, he turned on his ‘communication glass’.

“... Hello, Lucien?” Natasha sounded exhausted.

Her earrings had been modified by Lucien, allowing her to hear the encrypted voice.

Lucien said with a smile, “Good evening, Your Majesty. Are you reading the files of the intelligence department and the secret library?”

The reason why he spoke to Natasha from the royal magic tower of Holm was because he did not want to expose himself.

While there was no way that Sard or Kritonia could’ve cracked his encryption algorithm, they could detect the source of electromagnetic waves that they perceived. If he were to contact Natasha from

Allyn, it would raise suspicion about his real relationship with her, but if he was in the royal magic tower of Holm, it would mislead people into thinking that he was Hathaway, as it was perfectly normal for a senior to care for a junior.

“Yes, although you told me a lot about Holm in the past years, it was broken and unsystematic. I need to grasp it more deeply and comprehensively.” Natasha then chuckled and said, “As the queen’s loyal knight, Count Lucien Evans, what do you suggest?”

Radiant knights were usually given titles of viscount or count. So, senior-rank sorcerers could enjoy the same privilege.

Lucien said with a smile, “Meet the great nobles, the powerful nobles and the nobles in charge of critical positions one by one. Talk to them and find people whom you can trust and depend on. As the queen, you have the natural right to command them. There’s nothing to worry about. Right. After the funeral, start to inspect the Sword of Truth’s Knights, the Verdict Knights and the Saint Cross Knights. Regroup part of the squads. Of course, most importantly of all, you need to improve yourself. The sooner you reach level eight and pick up the level-three Sword of Truth, the easier it will be for you to take initiative of the situation.”

“But who can I trust and depend on?” Natasha said in a self-mocking smile.

Lucien comforted her, “You need to know your heart and your faith first. If you don’t know what you want, you can never tell enemies from friends. Although you can intensify the conflict between the liberals and the conservatives and maintain the balance, it will not last. After all, the conservatives are backed by the Church, and the liberals are supported by the Congress.”

Instead of waiting for Natasha to reply, Lucien decided to stimulate her faith. “According to the news from the Congress, the prince may have been murdered.”

“What? By whom?” While Natasha thought that the deaths of her grandfather and her uncle were coincidental, they had been on the verge of death in the first place, and it was still acceptable. But hearing what Lucien said, she was more than shocked and infuriated.

“We suspect that Kritonia, ‘Heart of Time’, did it. Only his abilities to control time could’ve make the prince die of grief flawlessly. At that time, Sard and Rex were both in the Nekso Palace.” Lucien was sorry for Natasha but still finished brutally.

Natasha took deep breaths. “Are you saying that the Church and part of the conservatives planned it? What proof do you have?”

“There is no direct proof. What can be confirmed is as follows: Sard, Rex and Kritonia were all in the Nekso Palace back then, which can be proved by many nobles and maids; also, Her Excellency Hathaway examined Prince Patrick before the new year and believed that he could live for another five to six years; the liberals including Duke James proved that the prince and the king were as indifferent with each other as enemies. How could he have been grieving? You must know a thing or two about them.” Lucien introduced the intelligence he collected in the past day.

After a long silence, Natasha said hoarsely, “I’ll bid farewell to my uncle’s body in the funeral. I wonder if I can find anything...”

Her voice sounded lost and overwhelmed, which pained Lucien. Knowing that he went too far, he hurried to rectify it, “Even though it was done by the Church, it does not mean anything. The God of Truth lies in everyone’s heart, and everyone can pray to Him directly. The Church, on the other hand, is just an organization that tries to separate the believers from the Lord. It may be righteous, and it may be evil.”

“Just review your path as a knight and consider what is it that you have been persisting in. Are you going to defend the glory of the God of Truth, or that of the Church?”

“Of course I’m defending the Lord. But if the Church is abandoned, how can we organize the rituals and praise the Lord?” Natasha was trapped by the details.

Lucien said with a smile, “The Church is a tool between the believers and God. If it is no longer necessary, just throw it away. If it is still useful, you can modify and make it suit you. There’s no need to cling to the South Church.”

“Wait, wait, wait. I need to sort through my faith.” The fact that Prince Patrick could’ve been murdered by the Church was quite a shock to Natasha.

...

Under the night sky, Juliana, who was summoned from Aalto, spoke to a few night watchers next to her in an enchanting tone, “The Church is weak, the nobles are arrogant, and the glory of the Lord has been severely tarnished. Therefore, we will purge the unqualified believers as per the will of the Lord.”

She pointed at a villa not far away. “Baron Austin is a corrupt man who is inclined to the sorcerers. According to his servants, he listens to ‘Arcana Voice’ every day. Our purpose is to clean him and defend the glory of the Lord, but we will probably be punished by the Church. Are you willing to do that?”

“Night gathers, and now my watch begins...”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 515: Sard's Apology

In the living room on the second floor of the villa, Baron Austin was listening to the sweet voice of Ms. Nightingale attentively in his pajamas.

Since it was inappropriate to go to his mistress during the time of a national funeral, he could only kill time by listening to 'Arcana Voice'. Also, he found many programs in the channel very interesting, sometimes even more interesting than spending time with his mistress.

In Holm, except for the most conservative nobles and believers, it was a fashion to listen to the forbidden music radio station. The content in it was the topic in many parties of the liberals. Whoever did not listen to it would be considered outdated and rejected by their circle.

"... From today on, the program will change slightly. Next, you will hear 'Holm Observation' that is hosted by me. It will inform you of the major events in the kingdom."

"... I believe our dear audience have learnt that the beloved, respected Prince Patrick followed King Feltis due to grief after the king passed away. However, what about the process and the details? This program will direct you towards the truth behind the case."

Austin had been leaning against the sofa casually, but he sat straight and became solemn after hearing the introduction.

Holm Observation's exploration on the matter was still in the phase of unproven speculations. It interviewed random eyewitnesses to prove that Prince Patrick was in good health during the few days prior and couldn't have collapsed all of a sudden.

Although Nightingale did not say it outright, she was clearly insinuating that the Church did not like the prince for his favor of magic and alchemy. Anyone could infer from her words that the Church had assassinated the prince.

Austin gasped hard. He recalled what the liberals in the Parliament of Nobles said. The more he thought, the more suspicious he became. A week ago, the prince had just hosted a gathering of the liberals. His body condition was exactly like before, and he was in such a terrible relationship with the king. How could he have died from grief?

"They are bold enough to kill the crown prince..." Austin put the wine cup back on the table and began to pace.

When his back was faced to the window, two shadows lunged in and attacked him who was only in the level of regular knight easily.

"Who are you? How dare you attack a noble... Night watchers?" Austin saw the black gloves that the two men wore. "You are bold enough to arrest a noble directly? You are breaking the agreement between the Church and the nobles!"

Juliana flew in from the window and looked at Austin coldly, "The Church is too weak. Only we can defend the glory of the Lord."

“Are you going to divide the nobles and the Church, weaken the Church, and make it impossible for the glory of the Lord to spread?” Austin was not an idiot. He realized that he had encountered one of those zealous, extreme night watchers. Therefore, he simply suggested that their doing was on the contrary of their purpose.

“The Lord is almighty. He did not stop you because it is a test for us. If purging the nobles who have been inclined to the sorcerers like you raises the objection of the nobles of Holm, it will mean that they are all corrupt and beyond rescue. The throne must kneel before the Lord.” Juliana loathed sorcerers from the bottom of her heart. She extended her hand coldly and pressed Austin’s forehead. “Repent in hell!”

“How dare you...” Holy light glowed, and Austin’s head was pierced through. The blood was all vaporized. Even the rug was not stained.

Juliane put her left hand on her right hand and said, “Write down why we purged him and what he committed, submit it to the inquisition, and forward it to the Parliament of Nobles.”

“We punish sinners as representatives of the will of the Lord; we do not hide.”

“Understood!” The other night watchers echoed simultaneously.

...

Inside the royal magic tower of Holm, Lucien reminded Natasha in the end. “Be wary of Sard. There’s no telling what he is up to.”

“If he is really influenced by the World of Souls, like the pontiff and the saints in the North Church, his purpose may be to separate the five parishes here from the Church and to make himself the pontiff...” Since she hadn’t figured out her stance yet, she was not sure whether it was a good or bad result.

Lucien shook his head. “Don’t blindly refer to history. Sard is too sophisticated for that. After all, the South Church cannot stand yet another division. Besides, he has been in office for only two months. I fear that he hasn’t even won the cardinal of the Holm parish yet. What can he use to create division? Not to mention that there are parishes defended by other saint cardinals. Therefore, don’t be fooled by his recent performance.”

Natasha said softly, “All in all, I’ll try to find out his purpose. You’d better be careful, too, because you are the easiest one to deal with among the high-ranking experts on the Cleansing List.”

“Rest assured about that. I have the Congus Ring with me.” Lucien looked at the iron ring on his left hand.

Because his left hand would nullify the supernatural powers, Lucien had moved the Holm Crown Rings to his right hand and only kept the legendary ring that remained unaffected on his left hand.

“Okay, everyone knows that you have a legendary item!” Natasha pretended to be jealous. “After I sort through my heart and advance into level eight, I will have one, too! I’ll also bring the Shield of Truth over. In that case, I’ll have the strongest defense and the strongest attack. Haha!”

She did not want Lucien to end the call depressed and therefore made fun of him.

...

When it was dawn, Duke Rex, president of the Parliament of Nobles, flew to the Radiance Church gloomily.

“Your Excellency Saint Sard, I need an explanation. Why did the night watchers eliminate a baron and official knight without the approval of Her Majesty and the Parliament of Nobles?” Rex spoke to Sard in the library angrily, “It will dishearten all the nobles? How can they trust the Church and contribute to it later?”

Sard replied peacefully, “I only just learnt of the matter. I’ll ask the inquisition to deal with the few night watchers. An explanation will be given. Rex, you know that there are a lot of extremists among the night watchers. You cannot let the friendship between the nobles and the Church be sabotaged by a few rabid dogs, right?”

Rex was more or less appeased by Sard’s attitude. “If it was the personal operation of few night watchers, and they are punished rigorously, I’m confident to pacify the nobles who favor the Church, but it’s hard to say the nobles who favor the Congress of Magic. Also, the queen will reject the Church and us if she runs into such things when she is just crowned. I hope that Your Excellency Saint Sard can control the Church well in case of other extreme cases.”

“I’ll try to get the Holm parish under control in two years. In the meantime, I hope that nobles can pay attention to what they say and do and inform me in time if they are noticed by the extremists of the Church.” Sard replied friendly, “Right, write the nobles’ reactions to the matter into a document. I’ll report it to the pope. In any case, the extremists are devout night watchers. The pope has to approve it before they are punished.”

Rex nodded. "Alright, I'll have someone write it. Now, I'm going to the Nekso Palace and explain it to the queen face to face, in fact she is infuriated by the incident."

Watching Rex leave, Sard picked up the paper on the desk, which was the list of the few rogue night watchers.

Reading it with a smile, Sard brushed it with his thumb, and Juliana's name was immediately gone. Then, he picked up his quill and wrote, "... Because of the long suppression from the Congress of Magic and the consecutive holy light cases, many extremists have appeared in the clergy and night watchers in the Holm parish. Some of them believe that they have to eliminate the blasphemers within us to be united against the Congress of Magic. Some are similar to them. They believe that the Church is too weak and the nobles are too arrogant. Only by being radical can they wake up the numb people.

While others doubt the necessity to resist the Congress of Magic and believe that we can live in peace if we both make compromises."

"The incident this time was caused by the second type of extremists. I admit that my control over the parish is not good enough. I ask Your Holiness to send my previous assistants, Vera Amelton and other people from the Violet parish, to help me, so that I can settle down the issue and contain the extremists, and the nobles will not be pushed to the side of the Congress of Magic again."

"As for the punishment, I believe Octave, the cardinal in charge of the inquisition of the parish, holds full responsibility for the matter. Cardinal Amelton will replace him. However, in light of the complexities in the parish, he will still serve here..."

...

Reading the document submitted by the night watchers and listening to Rex's defense, Natasha was emotionless.

It was not until he spoke of the Church's decision that Natasha nodded and said, "Extreme lunatics are everywhere. The relation between nobles and the Church is not to be affected by them. I believe that most nobles will accept it as long as the Church shows sincerity."

Rex was relieved. It was indeed as expected of a queen from the City of Psalm to be inclined to the Church. "It's very wise of you, Your Majesty."

Right when he was about to leave, Natasha suddenly asked, "According to the night watchers' report, Baron Austin was listening to 'Arcana Voice' when he was arrested and executed, and the radio station was playing the content that implied Duke Rex assassinated my uncle Patrick. What's your take on that?"

"It is without a doubt the slander of the Congress of Magic that tries to sow discord between Your Majesty and the Church! They do not have any proof. It's just random talk." Rex defended himself solemnly.

Natasha raised her eyebrow. "You listened to the program?"

"The intelligence workers listened and reported the content to me." Rex explained.

Natasha nodded and didn't pursue it further. "Submit the intelligence to me earlier next time."

It was not until then that Rex realized he had misspoken. He hurried to say, “Because you were occupied by too many affairs recently, Your Majesty, I filtered the intelligence first and only submitted the important information. In the future, it will be directly submitted to you.”

“It’s alright. I understand your kindness. You may leave now.” Natasha asked Rex to leave, as casual as before.

It was not until Rex was out of the palace that Natasha suddenly turned solemn.

...

Lucien reached the 33rd floor of Allyn magic tower through a lift and entered ‘Thunder Hell’, Fernando’s demiplane, through the Portal to Alternate Realm in the library.

Fernando’s hair was more or less messy. It seemed that reverse engineering of fusion and fission was more difficult than Lucien imagined when a lot of knowledge and discoveries were missing.

“Right on time. Describe your feelings when you performed ‘Eternal Blaze’ again.” Fernando raised his bloodshot eyes and looked at Lucien. Then, his face became rather complicated, “You have new papers again?”

Lucien was holding a pile of papers in his hands.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 516: Support

Lucien could feel his teacher's complex feelings. He handed his papers over and said, "There's nothing subversive in it. It's just trying to explain Mr. Douglas's experiment on light speed and the related correlation. It shares some similarities with the previous assumptions put forward by several arcanists."

Lorentz Transformation. That was what Lucien prepared for his teacher to get him mentally prepared.

Fernando still felt quite suspicious, but he took the paper anyway and started reading. As he read further, the look on Fernando's face changed greatly.

Lucien could not help asking, "Sir, is it alright?"

Fernando grinned, "This is the second time this month that I read something like this."

Lucien was a bit surprised, "Someone submitted a similar paper already? But, I didn't find anything similar when I searched among the files in Arcana Review Board. I wouldn't bring it to you if I knew..."

Fernando temporarily put aside all his questions about fusion and fission and looked more cheerful now than he usually was, “I know, because he hasn’t submitted it yet. He dared not. He brought it to me and asked my personal opinion.”

“Who is he?” asked Lucien curiously. He was actually not too surprised since the data from the light speed experiment had been available for more than three years, and many wave theory supporters were trying to use the data to support their belief. It was not a big leap forward if an arcanist had found something like Lorentz Transformation.

Although the sorcerers in this world were experiencing lots of turnovers because they still had a lot to explore, when it came to sheer thinking, they were good.

“It was Oliver. Three years ago, he had a bet with Florencia, and he started working on it since then. His project was delayed because of the exploration of the new dimension, and he finally finished putting together the whole transformational equation group. His paper’s saying that, using Ether as the observer, moving length contraction happens to compensate for the difference in light speed in all directions, which explains Douglas’s experiment. I suppose your paper is about the same thing, right?”

Fernando just finished reading the introduction of Lucien’s paper. He assumed that Lucien’s paper was the same.

Lucien nodded, “Yes, but why did Mr. Oliver not submit it?”

Although Oliver was studying the Dark Dragon Lord, he should still be able to have his wife, Florencia, or his students submit the paper.

“Because he believed that there were still things, important things, missing, and he couldn’t explain why the phenomenon exists. He then got a new direction to go in, but the reasoning couldn’t go further. So he was kind of stuck, which was why he came to me.” said Fernando.

“So what’s your opinion, sir?” Lucien asked.

Fernando smacked his lips and said, “I told him that his thinking wasn’t clear enough yet. He was still swinging from one side to the other. But I also couldn’t help him with explaining the cause of the phenomenon. I told Oliver to find some time to talk to you. You’re known for being open-minded and creative, so you probably could help.”

Fernando put on a cunning smile and looked at Lucien, “I didn’t expect that you’d come up with the same explanation, but I remember that you’ve been ignoring Ether all the time. There’s no way that you suddenly decided to use Ether to explain Douglas’s experiment. Also, part of the equations, here, the length contraction, is problematic, and I’m sure you know it. So, Lucien, what are you really trying to achieve throwing this paper at me?”

Lucien looked in his teacher’s eyes, but did not say anything.

“I think you’ve dug in further. You are getting us prepared using this paper. You can take it out, your true paper.” said Fernando.

Lucien saw his teacher’s red eyes were very sincere and kind. He had to admit that his teacher knew him very well.

But should he just throw the special theory of relativity directly at Fernando?

Seeing that Lucien was still hesitating, Fernando glared at him and said, “What? You’re worrying that I might not be able to take it? Come on. I’ve already got my lesson from light quantum and energy quantum. There’s nothing that can explode my mind anymore. Even during that time, although I did lose control a bit, I’m still here, right? Safe and sound.”

Lucien still remembered clearly how Fernando suffered from the great frustration and fury when this happened last time. But he dared not say.

Weighing his words, Lucien said, “I think the change in length doesn’t come from the contraction of matter, but the contraction of space.”

“Space contraction... Interesting. Maybe we should see space from another perspective... Oliver once mentioned it as well.” Fernando wasn’t too surprised because of the existence of space barriers, demiplanes, and space spells.

“If we just put aside Ether here, just based on Mr. Douglas’s experiment, classical electromagnetic theory, and the studies on bodies in motion, we can put forward a postulate – the idea that the speed of light is a constant, independent of the relative motion of the source.” Lucien explained further.

Fernando’s right hand clenched and tapped his chin, “I see. If based on that, there’ll be lots of things to talk about. You just give me the paper.”

Lucien hurriedly added, “There’s one more precondition – the principle of relativity. There are quite some papers talking about it. You probably have read some of them before.”

Sorcerers often cast sound waves magic spells. A long time ago, they had found that when their enemies approached them quickly, the sound became quick and short; when their enemies fled away from them, the sound was prolonged. The change in sound waves seemed to be closely related to speed. The phenomenon was broadly discussed and therefore introduced the principle of relativity. Meanwhile, some arcanists were also looking at the changes in light waves from stars.

There was another common phenomenon that one could see in daily life to prove this: When a magic steam train approached from afar, the steam whistle would become increasingly sharper; but when it passed the observer, the steam whistle would become deeper.

Fernando nodded slightly, "Two preconditions only? Good. It's like your style: Start from less axioms and hypotheses, and use more logical reasoning. Give the paper to me. I'm prepared."

"Sir, why don't you further develop Mr. Oliver's transformational equations on your own based on the two preconditions? You can see the units in the equations from a brand new arcana perspective. In other words, they are no more mere math symbols."

Fernando was a bit pissed, but he still accepted Lucien's advice, "Let me see what conclusion you're hiding!"

He walked back to his desk and picked up the quill-pen. He first wrote down the two preconditions, and then started working on the equations.

When he first started, everything went very smoothly. A grand arcanist's knowledge was way more than enough for the initial deduction.

However, as he wrote down further, Fernando's quill-pen stopped above a certain line.

The black ink formed a small drop at the pen point, and then dripped down onto the parchment.

The ink slowly spread out.

The space they were in, Fernando's demiplane, Thunder Hell, suddenly became very stormy. The thundering and lightning were roaring.

Fernando looked up. His red eyes were full of shock.

Lucien did not look away. Instead, he looked right into Fernando's eyes.

Fernando took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Then he started working on the equations again.

As Fernando wrote down more equations and more stage conclusions, certain changes were happening in the study.

Rulers, quill-pens, books were contracting, and the clock was ticking slower and slower.

Lucien closed his eyes and spread out his spiritual power. The changes were real.

However, the changes were so tiny that only a senior-rank or above could notice.

The changes taking place in Fernando's cognitive world was affecting the real world!

That was the power of a legendary sorcerer!

After a while, Fernando finally put down the quill-pen in his hand and looked at the final conclusion attentively. He laughed in a mocking way at himself, "I thought I'd had a basic idea about the truth of the world, but I was totally wrong. Space and time are in fact very, very different from what we feel. The equation shows that time is actually a function of speed, depending on the matter. If it wasn't my own derivation, I'd definitely yell at you badly."

Fernando then looked up and said very seriously, "But this conclusion is based on the single postulate, and we need things more solid than this, although this can be used to explain why part of the starlight saw spectroscopic redshifts."

Fernando had not fully accepted it yet. The conclusion had to be proved by some further evidence, or it remained a fancy toy.

"Well... We might be able to use it to explain some of the problems that we ran into working on the artificial planets. Of course, this theory is not complete yet. Gravity is not involved, so it must still be problematic." said Lucien.

Then Lucien mentioned some records of data that his students collected and the questions coming up, "... so when we accelerated particles, there was a difference between the result and what we expected, and the theory of relativity would be able to explain it: Mass increases as the speed increases, so the orbital period also changes. We can use this formula to work out the variable and adjust the changing frequency of the electric field. If the particles can be further accelerated without trying away from the field, the theory of relativity will be able to be indirectly proved."

Fernando decided to take action immediately. In his magic lab, Fernando did exactly as Lucien said.

Then Fernando got the particles that carried the greatest energy ever. Then, he released a sigh,

"Lucien, in your programme, Arcana Voice, you talked about outlook of world, on life, and on value. In my understanding, the outlook on the world is how an individual perceives the world. Apart from humanity and history, it equals a person's cognitive world."

Lucien had no idea why Fernando wanted to talk about it now.

Fernando grinned, "But when it comes to how to understand space, it also involves the outlook on life and values. So I'm thinking... Why don't we call you the Destroyer of Three Outlooks"

Lucien's face twitched a bit. He did not find Fernando's joke interesting.

Fernando looked Lucien up and down with a meaningful smile on his face,

“I’ve learned my lesson from you, Lucien. That’s why I’m still here now after all of this. I am now more or less suspicious about every theoretical system. But for others, Lucien, you have to reveal your theory of relativity bit by bit, especially for Douglas. Your theory is a huge turnover to his, and he’s been through a lot of things in the past one or two hundred years. The wave theory of light, quantum theory... I’m afraid that this might be too much for him to take. I mean, I don’t think Douglas’s head is going to explode or his demiplane is going to collapse. Not that bad. But what happened to Brook might happen to him again. Mental changes are possible, too.”

“Sir, I never thought of throwing it directly at people. You insisted..” Lucien could not help complaining.

Lucien had started feeling more casual in front of Fernando.

However, Fernando just directly ignored Lucien, “I’ll start with Oliver. He should be able to take it as he’s seen the problems. Then I’ll have him submit his paper to make the senior-rank and above think.”

“Why senior-rank and above?” Lucien asked.

“Because those below can’t understand,” said Fernando succinctly.

Fernando then slowly walked back to his study and said.

“You’re already level seven in terms of arcana credit. The argument between wave and particle theory is still going on, and the number of papers about your new alchemy should be booming soon. With all these, this paper should be able to take you to level eight. However, now you should work on improving your magic level, as it’s just a matter of time for you to become a grand arcanist. You must have benefited from having the two legends temporarily living inside of your body, and I’m sure that the congress will also favor you to a great extent.”

Currently, Lucien had fifteen thousand arcana credits, which meant he was halfway from hitting level eight. He also expected that the reward credits from new alchemy would be very considerable.

In the study, Fernando handed Lucien the paper, “Take a look at what’s missing here. If there isn’t, I will not have to read your paper.”

Lucien took a glance at it and found that his teacher had also missed mass-energy equation as Einstein did. He smiled and picked up the quill-pen,

“Sir, there’s one thing missing.”

Lucien started writing on the parchment. The point of the pen slightly scratched the surface and made a tiny, soft noise. Fernando watched the entire process of derivation, and the look on his face changed several times: There was solemnity, shock, and then great excitement.

Lucien kept writing. Eventually, the formula came out: $E=mc^2$.

A thick bolt of lightning flashed through the sky outside the window. For a moment, the entire demiplane was illuminated by it.

Then the deafening thunder followed. It's great power even made the window frames shake.

"I see! That's what that part of the structure means! The mutual conversion between mass and energy! No wonder extraordinarily high temperature is possible in new alchemy!" Fernando said aloud to himself, out of great excitement.

He was so thrilled that it sounded like he was roaring. Finally, he had seen direction in making further progress in legendary level using new alchemy and by putting together all the fields that he was good at together!

Although the two magic structures – fusion and fission – were still too complex for him, and it would take time for him to understand bit by bit, he finally saw hope for reaching the next level!

.....

In the Bright Hall in Lance, the Holy City, the grand cardinals were discussing the latest report submitted by Sard.

"The priests and night watchers in Holm parish are not being reliable." said Saint Melmax, the leader of Temple Knights.

The rest of them remained silent. They all knew what caused the priests' mental instability. Part of it was because the Pope had been improving and modifying some fundamental theology theories. If they said anything improper, the Pope might be pissed.

“If we choose to launch a war right now, most priests and night watchers in Holm parish would be ready to fight, which is good. But right now we’re not ready for a war. We have to focus our power on the new dimension where both population and resources are abundant,” said Benedict II in cold voice, “so do as Sard proposed: punish the night watchers and gather the red robes, including Amelton.”

Philibell hurriedly nodded, “As you command, Your Holiness. I’ll assign a new red robe to the Inquisition.”

No one else said no because this basically had nothing to do with them.

.....

In the Radiance Church, Sard had received the written reply. He gently stroke the paper, smiling.

When his fingers came across, at the end of the punishment list, a new name appeared: Juliana.

But her punishment was much less severe, compared to the punishment for the other two night watchers who caught Baron Austin. She would be put into jail for a year, but the other two would be sentenced to death.

“Ask Octave to come.” said Sard to the red robe outside through the divine circle.

.....

A while later, Octave walked out of Sard's study. The look on his face was extremely gloomy and sombre. A couple of minutes earlier, he had been stripped of his title and duty as the leader of the Inquisition!

The position was only lower than a parish leader.

Octave felt that it wasn't really his fault. Radical night watchers came up almost every year.

Killing a noble who listened to Arcana Voice was not a big deal.

Should they just watch evilness spread out but do nothing?

The Church was getting more and more cowardly!

Walking in the Radiance Church, Octave felt the sympathetic eyes from other priests. He thought to himself in his heart,

"Your Holiness, do you see this? They think I am right! Your decision isn't proper!"

.....

June 20th, after King Feltis and Princess Patrick's funeral.

In a long, black dress, Natasha had an interview with Count James, Russell, and Henson.

"The Church has decided on the punishment. The two leading night watchers are sentenced to death, and all the other night watchers involved will receive different punishments. You may inform Baron Austin's family, and please extend my heartfelt condolences." said Natasha, crossing in front of her chest.

Count James wasn't happy, "Only the night watchers? The lunatics won't learn their lesson! We can't live in fear all the time! The leader of the Inquisition must be punished, and any night watchers who are prone to go extreme must be controlled and killed! That's what we nobles, at least most of us, believe. It's also for your own safety, Your Majesty!"

In fact, the punishment decision was already acceptable to him. The Church, he knew, had made big compromise. He was saying this to see Natasha's attitude.

Count Henson and Russell nodded.

Natasha said seriously,

“The Church is at fault, of course, as they did not keep an eye on those extreme night watchers. But they have apologized and made an acceptable decision. The murders’ death is the most important thing that Baron Austin would want. Also, Octave has been stripped of his duty. I believe that Saint Sard will keep the lunatics in line. I understand your concern, but what you ask for needs time.”

Count James was a bit disappointed, “We obey your wish, Your Majesty.”

After leaving Nekso Palace, both Russell and Henson jumped onto James’s coach, but neither of them said anything on their way.

When they almost arrived at the villa, Russell released a sigh and broke the silence, “Her Majesty has always been a follower since she was young, and she grew up in Aalto where the Church’s power is extremely powerful. It makes sense if she slightly favors the Church. Let’s not be too pessimistic.”

“But I’m afraid this is just the beginning. Her teacher’s Beliel, God’s Glory.” said James with his sullen-looking face.

Count Henson nodded, and he lowered his voice, “We have to be prepared, just in case...”

At this time, a Dragon Scale horse came close to the coach. It was one of Jame’s knights.

“What happened?” asked James.

Somehow the look on the knight's face was full of surprise, "Her Majesty is visiting Holm Royal Magic Tower to see the seniors!"

"What?" Count Henson could not believe his ears. The world had seemingly gone nuts in his eyes.

.....

In a spacious living room in Holm Royal Magic Tower, Natasha was waiting to see the sorcerer members in the royal family in Holm. She said proudly, "I really have to thank those extreme night watchers, or I wouldn't be able to find a chance to come here. When Duke Rex asks, I'll say that I'm here to reassure the Liberals. The Church caused these troubles, so they won't say anything about this as well."

But Natasha was also aware that visiting the magic tower was the farthest she could go. She could never visit Allyn. Holm was different because many royal families still gathered here.

"You're not here just for this, right?" said Camil, who knew Natasha very well.

Natasha looked more serious now, "I took Lucien's suggestion and collected some of my uncle's hair and flesh. By testing them, we can know the accurate age of my uncle when he died to see if he was ever affected by the power of Heart of Time. This is very strong evidence, as time always leaves its trace!"

“‘Heart of Time’ could manipulate time after the princess’s death.” said Camil, who did not know much about the limit of Kritonia’s ability.

Natasha shook her head, “He can’t make time flow back. Also, Lucien told me that some changes only happened to people who were alive, unless he actually once brought uncle back to life.”

“Sorcerers are always full of tricks.” said Camil, who did not quite understand.

Natasha overlooked the city of Rentato from the high castle. After a while, she cheered up a little bit, “I’ve known Lucien for years, but I never got a chance to celebrate his birthday with him. I was quite upset that I was going to miss this one as well, but now the problem has been solved. I’ll visit Duke Rex’s manor and properties during the day and come back here on Lucien’s birthday in the evening!”

Natasha thought to herself hard what gift should she prepare for Lucien.

She walked back and forth in the living room, and then noticed that Camil was staring at her.

“What is it, aunt Camil?”

“Look in the mirror,” said Camil, using her chin to point at the mirror in the corner.

Natasha was confused, but she did as Camil said anyways. In the mirror, she saw a purple-haired lady whose cheeks were flushed with joy and excitement. Her face was glowing with a sweet smile extending all the way from the corner of her lips to her eyes.

“I look... different.” murmured Natasha surprisedly.

Natasha remembered that the last time she was like this was years ago, when she was still with Silvia.

Camil said calmly, “You’ve fallen in love with Lucien Evans.”

She was not asking, but saying a fact.

“What?!” Natasha’s eyes suddenly opened big as if she just got struck by a bolt of lightning.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 517: The Preparation

Camil’s face was rather cold, but her eyes were shining with wisdom. She said straightforwardly,

“You’re always happy when you see him. You always share lots of topics with him, but you still feel good even if you two are not talking. Simply being with each other is sweet enough. And you keep mentioning him when talking to me.”

“You fancy him turning into a female. Is that normal?”

“For him, you chose not to stop the night watchers; For him, you faced great dangers and temporarily put aside your responsibilities. You distracted Prince Dracula for him; you protected him from Demigod-lich. You call yourself his friend?”

Natasha was totally shocked, “But... but he’s a man. I’ve been helping him because we are good friends!”

Camil’s blue eyes stared at Natasha until Natasha started feeling a bit uneasy, “True. You’re a knight and you help your friends. But how have you been feeling? You were once in love before, so you should be able to tell.”

Natasha started walking back and forth in the room restlessly.

Suddenly, she strode towards the door.

“Wait!” Camil did not expect this. She was worried that if Natasha would do something extreme, say, killing Lucien or hurting herself.

Camil softened her voice to comfort her, “Natasha, love comes regardless of sex. You always told yourself this, right? It just happened that you fell in love with a woman, but this time, it’s a man. Don’t panic.”

As she was saying this, Camil was also a bit worried. She was worried if she just picked the wrong time to tell Natasha everything, if she would disappoint the grand duke.

Natasha slowly turned around, but the look on her face was full of joy.

Her eyes looked gentle and her cheeks flushed. There was great excitement between her brows. At this moment, she looked absolutely stunning.

Camil was so surprised that she became speechless. She felt that Natasha had somehow changed.

After encountering Demigod-lich, Natasha kept falling into confusion from time to time. But now, probably because she had found her new target, Natasha was no more at loss, instead, her eyes were shining with determination!

Natasha grinned, “Aunt Camil, don’t worry about me. I’ll work hard for my own happiness!”

“What...?” Now it was Camil’s turn to feel lost.

Did Natasha already accept the fact within such a short period of time?

Natasha's clenched her right hand, she said with great determination, "I'm a knight. I don't dodge when there's a problem. I seek solutions."

Her voice gradually rose,

"My faith is to move forward, forward, forever. I'm going to defeat all the barriers in front of me!"

"No matter how he will respond to this, I'll not yield. I'm gonna tell him how I feel about him, defeat him, conquer him!"

That was the declaration from Natasha.

Camil should have thought about this as well. And so she had kind of expected this result.

Natasha grinned. Her left hand reached into her pocket. The small laurel box containing the godhood of the God of Love and Beauty was in it.

Natasha decided to be the one to solve the problem.

...

Lucien did not have to analyze Evans' Freezing Ray since he was the one who created the spell. After managing to control the fast-growing spiritual power, Lucien had built the structural model of the spell within his soul and became a seventh circle sorcerer.

Pushing open the window, watching the garden shining in the warm sunlight, Lucien's heart was full of joy. He was becoming stronger and stronger, the situation of the world was now relatively settled, and the lady he loved had come all the way to him. Although there were still many difficulties, things were heading to the positive side.

The monocle he was wearing was getting a bit hotter. Knowing that someone was contacting him, Lucien turned it on.

"Lucien, you know where I am right now?" It was Natasha's voice.

Lucien smiled, "You can't be in Allyn, right?"

"Haha, I'm at Holm Royal Magic Tower." said Natasha proudly.

Lucien was quite surprised, "Holm Royal Magic Tower? You don't care about the Church? They may overreact to it."

“No worries. I have to comfort the Liberals here, for what happened. It was the Church’s bad, and they have to understand and support me.” said Natasha half jokingly using the tone of a queen.

Words escaped Lucien’s lips, “Then on June 25th can you...”

“On June 25, are you available...” Natasha asked him simultaneously.

They both stopped, and smiled.

According to the custom in this world, birthday celebration lasted for more than an entire day, from the night before to the next early morning.

Lucien rubbed his chin and the smile on his face was big, “I’m always available when the queen asks.”

“Great. Then on June 25th, at Holm Royal Magic Tower, I’ll celebrate your birthday with you,” said Natasha cheerfully, “I’ve known you for so many years, but I never got a chance to do so.”

After they ended the call, Lucien walked back and forth in his room excitedly. He wielded his right fist in the air out of great excitement.

“One more step forward.” Lucien said to himself.

He could not sit down. Thoughts flashed through his mind. He believed that Natasha also had some feelings toward him. Maybe he should try to make a breakthrough.

Lucien decided to write it down – his plan:

“Target: To be with the girl I am in love with.”

“Step 1: Prepare good ingredients and make a couple of good Chinese dishes.”

“Step 2: Arrive at Holm Royal Magic Tower earlier. Make things romantic using candles, piano, and wine.”

“Step 3: Lead the topic and try to see how Natasha will respond. Three choices available: Keep trying, speak it out, and temporarily stop.”

“Step 4: Details – If Natasha doesn’t like it, stay back but don’t give up. Take more time to build it up. If Natasha’s attitude remains ambiguous, keep talking about our past experience and building stronger connections. When things are right, seize the chance and speak it out.”

“Notes: What to prepare”

“First, Natasha fancies sweet and main courses that are tender and juicy. She doesn’t mind spicy and less common food. So the dishes can include sweet and sour fish, sautéed lamb liver, roast suckling pig, honey pumpkin, etc, depending on what ingredients are available.”

“Second, get a piano and a violin ready. The music has to be romantic, but For Silvia and Exodus should be strictly forbidden in case sad memories triggered. Music list includes Marriage d’amour, Ballade pour Adeline, Canon In D Major..”

“Third, write down all the possible questions and get prepared...”

Lucien wrote a lot, like he was doing an experiment. He thought really hard, trying to find anything that he missed.

Lucien read the plan line by line. Then he started considering what might happen if his plan did work out. He felt the muscles in his arm and chest. Obviously, they were not very impressive, compared to that of the knight.

Lucien smacked his lips, slightly frowning.

“I gotta get prepared for this, too.”

Ten minutes later, Lucien had arrived at Allyn Advanced Arcana Library. His face flushing, his throat a big dry, Lucien said to the alchemical life,

“Umm... I just... Umm... Pink Book, please.”

...

After seeing the sorcerers from the royal family, Natasha walked to the top floor of the magic tower using the excuse to take a rest. But she walked to the entrance of Hathaway’s demiplane, with a big, sweet smile on her face.

Her left hand was still gently stroking the small laurel box in her pocket. She had hope in her mind. She believed that when he chose to wear the ring, all the barriers between them would disappear.

Lucien was good looking. If he became a lady, he must be gorgeous. She had to keep a close watch on her girl, in case someone would steal her.

That was what Natasha was thinking to herself.

But her left hand touched something cold. The big smile kind of froze on her face.

It was Pale Justice.

“I am a man.” said Lucien seriously. He once said this to Natasha.

The memories rushed back to her and filled her mind.

He was the black-haired, young man whose talent dazzled the audience;

He was that gentleman who she could talk to all day long about any topics without any stress or pressure.

He was the man that had great determination who never put her down from his back in the dark forest even when facing the greatest danger;

He was the resolved explorer who left Aalto for his magic dream;

He was that smart sorcerer who was always resourceful when Demigod-lich was chasing after them;

He was her knight, who cared about her, made fun of her, and stood in front of her.

Natasha stood where she was for a while. Then with a soft smile on her face, she turned around and left before she entered Element Paradise, Hathaway's demiplane.

The small laurel box had also been put into the bottom layer of her storage pouch.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 518: Birthday Gift

It was June 25. The sun was as bright as Natasha's mood right now.

Whispering in a delighted tone, she prepared her face and her clothes in front of a mirror. Since she was not a rookie in romance, and she had plenty of similar dates when she was with Sylvia, she did not reject skirts, broad-edged hats, earrings or necklaces. Therefore, it was no trouble for her to find a delicate black dress whose edge was slightly puffy, revealing the mysteriousness of the night and the attraction of the unknown.

"Huh. This is not so flirty that it contradicts my style and scares Lucien, and nor is it as tough and charmless as the knight suit." Natasha moved casually and commented in satisfaction.

The court dress was not in the style of the conservative Holm or that of the open Tria, but in the graceful style of Aalto between them. The neckline of the dress was slightly low, making it possible to see the fair and delicate skin down below, but if she did not bend, nothing inappropriate would be exposed at all.

The dress had been finely cut, too, highlighting Natasha's long beautiful neck, highly-rising breasts and slender but powerful waist in the most eye-catching way, filling her with the charm of a female.

Natasha observed herself and encouraged herself, “Sylvia used to envy my body figure a lot in the past. I am never too thin or too fat. Lucien will definitely be amazed.”

She was not unsure of herself. However, after dropping Lucien’s ‘gender transitioning plan’ the other day, when she recalled the past, she realized that she had never attempted to stress her femininity during her company with Lucien, and she had no idea whether she was a lady or a gentleman in his eyes. Therefore, she intended to correct her ‘bad’ impression of Lucien as soon as possible.

Queen Natasha was certainly not someone who would back off. Whenever she had a target, she always pressed forward determinedly and would fix the problems if she ever encountered any.

.....

Allyn, in Lucien’s magic tower...

Trays of Chinese dishes that had just been cooked were placed on the table in the living room, but there was no fragrance coming out, because they had all been kept with preservation magics.

Lucien took off the apron that he used for cooking and walked to the mirror while whispering a song merrily, observing himself, “Huh. Stick to the plan. I need to slightly change the style of my coat and give Natasha a brand-new feeling. I have to change the image of being just a good friend that I’ve built so far.

The black frock coat slightly wriggled into a black cloak. Inside it, there was a white shirt, a black waistcoat, and a rather casual bowtie on the neckline.

His pants that were in the same color were equally straight, covering his shiny black shoes.

Men's clothes were not as complicated as women's. However, the slight change of coat already changed Lucien's vibe. He was a quiet and even conservative man before, but he had additional passion and confidence right now, making him look even more attractive.

Putting on his monocle, Lucien combed his fringe, allowing it to cover the right side of his forehead from the left side.

After he cleaned himself up, Lucien frowned at himself, seeing that his hair had reached his ears, feeling that he was not masculine enough. He thought to himself, "Should I cut my hair short and keep a mustache?"

The idea had just occurred to him when Lucien realized something. He spoke to himself in amusement, "This should be what Natasha prefers. If I change myself into a masculine man, I will only achieve the opposite of my purpose!"

Lucien turned around, fixed the dishes with magic, and put them in the storage bag that was awarded to him after he became a senior-rank sorcerer. Suddenly, he snapped his fingers and exclaimed 'I almost forgot' in his business. Then, he hurried to pick up a peppermint candy from the table in the living room and tossed it into his mouth.

"Keep your mouth fresh." Lucien said in a smile and then bumped his fist at himself in the mirror:

“Keep it up!”

.....

Natasha was very satisfied with her look and barely put on any makeup. She merely changed her hairstyle to make her long hair even more alluring.

After she finished picking her clothes, as usual, she took out a few candies in different flavors from her storage bag.

“Which flavor will be better?” Natasha hesitated for a moment. Considering Lucien’s preference, she selected a sweet violet sugar and put it into her mouth.

After she was all set, Natasha was about to leave and begin her ‘quest’, when she suddenly remembered something from a long time ago, “Sylvia mentioned that Lucien had been staring at her legs and her silk stockings like a wolf since the moment he saw her. Huh, although Lucien explained that it was because he did not expect to see such a byproduct of alchemy, I would rather believe that he likes it than go there unprepared. After all, he certainly does not dislike it.”

Whispering again, Natasha opened her closet and picked a pair of black silk stockings and garters of the same color with her clothes.

Sitting on the sofa, Natasha took her right foot out of the black shoe and put it on the table. Her foot was slightly small compared to her height. It was graceful and chubby, and her toes were long and cute. There wasn’t any messy potion on her fingernails, either, which emitted healthy and attractive pinkness, like five vague roses.

As she rolled the thin silk stockings and covered the tip of her foot, hazy blackness buried her skin bit by bit and enshrouded her long, straight right leg.

After finishing both feet, Natasha put on the garters and stood up again. She pulled her dress and observed the result. Her legs behind the black silk stockings were obscure and unbelievably captivating.

“It’s really good to be a radiant knight. My legs that were too solid before are now perfect. Haha.” Natasha praised herself without the least embarrassment.

Then, she looked at the beautiful girl inside the mirror. Some anxiety and worries beamed out of her face.

However, those emotions were soon dispelled by her resolution. Natasha clenched her right hand and said to herself in the mirror:

“Natasha, you can do this!”

.....

Lucien walked out of the living room in a smile and reached the lift of the magic tower somewhat anxiously.

When he stepped into the lift, Lucien looked around and, upon seeing the garden outside of the enormous window, he thought of something. “Crap! I didn’t prepare any flowers! I’ve forgotten such an important thing!”

Checking the time, Lucien realized that he barely had time to search for flowers elsewhere. Therefore, he focused his attention on his own garden. “Well, I can claim that I’ve raised and cared for the flower for years. That will definitely show my sincerity.”

Comforting herself, Lucien left the lift and flew out of the window. Without any hesitation, he picked the violet, which was Natasha’s impression in his heart.

“Thankfully, the bloom season hasn’t passed in the high sky yet, or I’d have to make them blossom with magic.” Lucien did not know Natasha’s view on flowers and therefore merely picked eleven of them.

Having no time to think whether he had forgotten anything else, Lucien cleaned his clothes again and walked out of the magic tower, but Sprint, Katrina, Annick and other students stopped him.

“Master, where are you going? Isn’t it your birthday today? We’re planning to celebrate it with you.” Heidi asked with delight and surprise. Why did her teacher seem so strange today? He had even changed his style.

Lucien did not expect to run into them, either. He said rather awkwardly, “I’m going to meet a friend. You can come again tomorrow night.”

Heidi, Annick and Sprint were going to ask which friend it was, but they were stopped by Chelly, Layria and Katrina respectively. The three girls held back their laughter and said, “In that case, we will not delay you any longer, master.”

That was exactly what Lucien wanted. He hurried to leave on a wagon.

“Why did you stop me from asking?” Heidi looked at the girls in confusion.

Chelly, who was the most experienced one of all, smiled, “Didn’t you notice that master’s spring has come?”

Huh? Sprint, Annick and the other bachelors were still baffled.

.....

Reaching the royal magic tower of Holm on a wagon, Natasha entered the previous guest room with Camil gravely and met many members of the royal family in a hurry.

Then, she took a deep breath and said to Camil, “Aunt Camil, I’m leaving.”

“Don’t make it like a battle. Take it easy.” Seeing how dominating and magnificent Natasha was, Camil hurried to ask her to be gentle.

“Okay.” Natasha nodded, knowing that she was a little bit too obsessed about it. She put on a casual smile, walked to ‘Lucien’s Office’ on the same floor, and knocked on the door.

Without any wait, the door was opened. Natasha’s eyes immediately shined. She seldom saw Lucien in such a style, and freshness always meant unknown, further adding to his charm.

Lucien, on the other hand, was rather stunned. He had never seen such a gorgeous Natasha that was filled with femininity.

Natasha was very satisfied about Lucien’s reaction. She smiled, “Are you not letting me in?”

Lucien was back to himself. He cleared the way and revealed the room that was in a hazy atmosphere.

In the office, the left side was a chamber with a bed, the right side was the library, and the living room was in the middle with a piano in a corner and a round table at the center. On the table were trays of unique, carefully-decorated food and two candles. As the dim light of candles flickered, the fuzzy and romantic atmosphere was building up.

Natasha, who used to have candle lit dinners frequently, never thought that such slight changes could make the common environment so fascinating.

Lucien directed her to the table, pulled the chair and asked the lady to sit down first. Then, he took out the champagne that was kept in ice. Pouring half a glass for each of them, he returned to his seat on the opposite side.

“After knowing you for almost eight years, I can finally celebrate my birthday with you now.” Lucien raised his wine glass and said, while he considered his plans:

“First of all, I will direct the subject to the meaningful things that we’ve experienced together, so that Natasha will be emotionally softened. Then, I will play the piano and build the atmosphere as much as possible. After that, I’ll be able to drop the hint.”

Natasha raised the glass at Lucien. She smiled, “How time flies. You are 25 too now. Happy birthday, Lucien.”

After a clink, both of them sipped the champagne. Lucien took the opportunity to review his plan. In a warm smile, he was going to direct the subject of their conversation.

At this moment, however, Natasha stood up and said in a smile, “I have a birthday gift for you.”

“What gift?” Watching Natasha walk towards him gracefully, Lucien hurried to recall the other part of his plan that specified his reactions and directions after he received her birthday gift.

When he smelled vague fragrance, Lucien opened his mouth and was about to express his delight at Natasha’s gift.

But suddenly, Lucien saw that Natasha bent over and held his chin with her right hand.

What's going on?

Lucien was stunned. Then he felt that Natasha's scarlet lips were pressed to his mouth, that her fresh and smooth tongue opened his teeth and stuck in with the sweet smile of violet, looking for a partner to dance with.

What's going on?

Lucien realized that all his plans seemed unable to follow the actual circumstances. He subconsciously hugged Natasha back, allowing their tongues to dance together.

After a long kiss, Natasha let go of his mouth. Her lips captivating and her eyes hazy, she looked at Lucien who was still perplexed about what was going on and said in a slightly hoarse voice:

“Do you like my birthday gift?”

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Chapter 519: The Pace of a Knight

“Do you like my birthday gift?”

Natasha’s voice was slightly hoarse. She tried to pretend to be casual, but her heart was still beating faster than usual, as if the anxiety deep inside her heart was spreading out. Did Lucien like it? Would he accept it?

Even though she was a queen and a brave knight, she found it hard to remain calm, and she was not as confident as she appeared

“Even if he refuses me, I will not give up. I will definitely conquer him someday!”

Natasha made up her mind and encouraged herself that one failure was acceptable.

Suddenly, she felt that there was a hand on her waist and her back, and she heard Lucien’s deepened voice:

“I love it, but...”

The hand on her back suddenly pressed hard. Caught unprepared, Natasha leaned forward to Lucien and saw his eyes where a surging storm was rising.

“... but it is not enough!”

Huh? Natasha hadn't understood what he meant, when her mouth was already blocked by Lucien. She sensed his scorching breath spurting on her face.

Her lips were sucked and divided by Lucien, and a tongue broke into her mouth firmly. It went on a wild rampage, searching for the bold and open partner from a moment ago.

Well? Natasha seemed to understand something. She closed her eyes in delight and excitement. The dimness before her eyes seemed to have been completely illuminated.

Lucien kissed particularly wildly to express his long-repressed feelings, but he was still more or less ill at ease. Was it only a birthday gift just now? Did it mean anything else? Was he mistaken?

Uneasiness, expectations, anxiety... Everything had been mixed and cooked into a pot of indescribable feelings. Lucien slowed down and waited for Natasha to give an affirmative answer.

Suddenly, Lucien felt that the fresh and smooth tongue entangled his own. It was so powerful and so sweet that it was even trying to push back into his own mouth. In the meantime, two hands held his head.

Boom. Lucien felt fireworks blooming in front of his eyes. Natasha had given her answer obviously.

Their kiss gradually grew intense. After who knows how long, the two of them were finally separated.

Lucien was about to say something, when Natasha, whose face was flushing, said in delight, “Lucien, you taste better than I thought.”

Her pink tongue licked her lips quickly and agilely.

Lucien was immediately embarrassed. It was indeed as expected of Natasha. However, that was why he liked her.

Natasha breathed heavily. “After overcoming my mental resistance, I realized that I fell in love with you a long time ago. No, Lucien. I want to solemnly tell you...”

Her silver purple eyes became serious. “... that I love you. I hope we can try living together. I want to share my remaining life with you until death do us part.”

As a girl with enough romantic experience, Natasha knew very clearly that confessions of love could only be done when two people knew each other very well. Confessing love to a stranger that one barely knew would only terrify them, and if they were willing to accept it, they would be after the pursuer’s fortune or sex.

Lucien suddenly felt that the date plan he drafted arduously was a waste of time, because it had proved useless before he had a chance to use it. Even the confession of love had been done by Natasha.

However, it was not the time to be bothered by that. Lucien looked at Natasha's eyes warmly and tried not to let his ecstasy shake his voice. "Natasha, I love you too. Since I don't know when, I have already been enjoying spending time with you. I realized what I wanted on our return to Aalto. Over the past years, I've been trying to approach you and pursue you. I also would like to share my remaining life with you. I want you to be my wife."

Always remembering that 'those who date not for the purpose of marriage are scoundrels', Lucien expressed his solemn attitude.

Natasha put on a brilliant smile. It was the best feeling in the world that the one you loved loved you back.

She seemed tired of keeping her back bent. Therefore, she descended with her hands on Lucien's shoulder and sat on Lucien's legs directly. Then, her face looked rather strange.

Lucien hurried to explain in embarrassment, "This... This is a normal reaction."

Crap. The romantic atmosphere was slightly sabotaged.

Natasha immediately realized what was going on. She slightly twisted her back and observed Lucien's funny face as she expected. Then, she craned her head and spoke alluringly next to Lucien's ear, "Lucien's Big Ivan?"

"Yes." Blushing, Lucien did not know how to reply.

Natasha opened her mouth and sucked Lucien's earlobe, letting the numbness spread throughout his body. Then, she let go and chuckled, "I like your reaction. Don't be shy."

More than embarrassed, Lucien turned his head and sucked Natasha's fair ear softly, too. Out of his expectation, he saw that her body was shivering, and that redness rose from her neck to her cheeks.

Was it her sensitive point?

"I like you doing this to me, too." Her eyes as hazy as a mist, Natasha spoke directly. Then she asked both curiously and happily, "You said you fell in love with me and tried pursuing me years ago. Why didn't I feel anything?"

"I feared that you were only into girls. So, I've been trying to build up my relationship with you and change you." Lucien replied honestly.

Natasha smiled and seemed moved. "Lucien, I'm still into girls, but you are the only exception. Despite your gender, I don't feel uncomfortable at all having physical contact with you."

While saying that, she turned her waist to further prove what he said, making it even more difficult for Lucien to hold it back.

“Hehe. Since you were trying to build up our relationship, you must’ve made plans for the birthday dinner, didn’t you? Would you have done it if I didn’t confess?” Natasha seemed to be enjoying Lucien’s self-containment. She moved her waist slowly but unstoppably while she asked.

“Yes. I made a whole plan that included food preparations, subject guidance, piano-playing, love-confessing and everything.” His brain filled with blood, Lucien simply confessed dutifully.

Natasha was stunned. It was just a casual question, and she did not expect that Lucien did have a plan. Therefore, she asked in great interest.

Now that he had accidentally blurted out the embarrassing thing, Lucien had no choice except to introduce his whole plan. In the end, he said, “As it turns out, the plan is absolutely useless.”

Natasha burst into laughter. “This is so you! How hilarious!”

Her voice suddenly stopped as she laughed. Her eyes turned deep and profound as she said hoarsely, “But I like! I like it very much!”

Lucien sensed Natasha’s breath was getting hotter. Looking at her in the eyes, he understood her happiness.

Although he had never been through such situations before, he suddenly felt that the plan was not entirely useless. While the content on the plan was never put into use, the plan itself successfully touched Natasha. Lucien immediately felt sweet and happy, but that was soon disrupted by Natasha’s declaration.

“Lucien, let’s have a baby.” Natasha seemed unadapted to being emotional. She hurried to hold herself back and suggested delightedly.

Lucien almost passed out. Wasn’t it going too fast?

Sensing nothing wrong, Natasha continued happily, “I was planning to make a child by means of artificial insemination that you mentioned with your bloodline. However, such trouble is unnecessary now. We can be more direct. Haha!”

Lucien was embarrassed again. “Natasha, don’t you feel that you have ruined all the romance?”

Natasha finally realized it. She said regretfully, “Right...”

But she was soon refreshed. She looked at Lucien in a smile, “In fact, I think this is the atmosphere that is most suitable for you. Don’t you think so?”

“Me too. It’s relieving without any pressure.” Replied Lucien honestly.

Natasha went on the previous topic, “Lucien, I really I hope that we can be together openly someday, and that our children can grow under the bliss of their parents. Yes, that’s an idea that I’m certain of right now and a goal that I will strive for. Protection is the feeling from the real Lord at the bottom of my heart. It is there and it will always be, never to be shaken by anything else.”

Her eyes were clear and firm, as if she had found her path to walk on.

“Me too. I hope that our children can grow up in a complete family.” It was easy for a couple to fantasize about the future when they were together. Lucien, being no exception, smiled, too.

Natasha chuckled. “But first of all, we need to have a child.”

“We can work it out later.” Lucien responded in a smile.

Natasha, however, moved her waist again. “Is that so? Your Big Ivan seems to be suggesting otherwise. I want to take care of it right now.”

Instead of waiting for Lucien to reply, Natasha sat straight with only the support of her spine and grabbed Lucien’s hands.

“Natasha...” Lucien found it hard to keep up with the progress.

Hardly had he concluded his sentence when Lucien felt that his right hand, under Natasha’s guidance, touched a highly-rising spot that had a tip on it.

“Do you like it?” Natasha’s voice was even more hoarse, as if she were fascinated, too.

His blood flooding into his head, Lucien couldn't help but nod his head. Then, his left hand was pulled by Natasha through the layers of clothes and touched her smooth, elastic skin.

"Do you like it? Natasha leaned forward on Lucien and asked again hoarsely and sexily.

"I do." Lucien felt that he could no longer be called a man if he contained himself any longer. Getting both of his hands busy, he said, "Let's go to the bedroom..."

"Let's do it right here, on the table, on the rug or on the chair." Natasha chuckled and said, her voice filled with infinite charm.

Lucien felt that the first time was best on bed. Therefore, he tried to pick up Natasha. But all of a sudden, he felt that a slightly cold hand dug into his clothes and slipped all the way downwards from his chest until it grabbed his thing.

"I can't wait to taste your feelings."

Water seemed to be dripping from Natasha's silver purple eyes, as she kissed Lucien's lips again.

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Chapter 520: Philosophical Time

There was no window in the bedroom. The bed was messy, filled with a fragrant and strange smell that brought blushing subtleties.

Holding Natasha, Lucien leaned against the headboard, deep in thought.

After relishing the wonderful feeling when their bodies and souls were melted together, he suddenly grew a lot and seemed to have become a psychologically real man after only a few hours. A heavy responsibility had been added to his shoulder. From today on, he would no longer be alone. He had a partner, and probably a few lovely new lives in the future, with whom he would walk together until the end of his life.

Therefore, Lucien began to review his life goals and adjust his plan, trying to figure out how to be together with Natasha openly.

“According to the files in the library, it’s true a man’s ‘philosophical time’ after doing that.” Lucien made fun of himself after thinking that. Such heavy subjects had never occurred to him before.

As his eyes moved to the rug in the bedroom and the doorstep, Lucien’s eyes saw the messy clothes that had been thrown all the way. That black dress had been torn into God knows how many pieces under their joint efforts. Lying on the floor, they outlined a shameful scene with the many suspicious traces around.

Looking at that, feeling the smooth and elastic skin under his right hand, and smelling the sweet fragrance that was mixed with a weird scent, Lucien suddenly felt hot, and his libido surfaced again. His right hand pressed slightly harder.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The bell of the Radiance Church echoed at this moment, announcing that it was already the 26th.

In a fragrant wind, Lucien was sealed by the pink lips again. The strong and sweet tongue softly divided his teeth and entangled his own.

The kiss was not intense but filled with warmth. They felt and tasted each other, not leaving out any corner.

After a long time, their lips were finally separated. Natasha said in a brilliant smile with her dreamy eyes, "Happy birthday, my knight."

Lucien hugged her again and gave her another long kiss. Then he smiled, "You didn't sleep?"

Natasha wriggled and leaned next to Lucien, before she said thoughtfully, "No. I've been considering my life path. I'm planning to figure out my confusion in my faith. I'm also thinking about what I should do to change Holm so that we can be together openly."

"It's going to be a long and difficult path, but I will not give up."

Lucien couldn't help but smile. Had Natasha entered the 'philosophical state', too? It was truly as expected of Her Majesty.

Thinking about that, Lucien turned to Natasha, only to discover that the thin, white velvet quilt had slipped during her previous movement, revealing the graceful and firm rising below. The tiny tip of redness on it made Lucien blush and pant again. He subconsciously turned around to avoid the wonderful view.

"Do you not like it?" How could Natasha have ignored Lucien's anomaly? She chuckled and laughed at his conservativeness. Then, her eyes passed Lucien's body and caught the broken clothes on the rug. "You were nothing like that before. You were as ferocious as a beast and tore my dress into pieces."

Holding back his urges, Lucien subconsciously argued, "It was torn by you."

"Is that so?" Natasha leaned her face to Lucien and said in a smile, "I remember it now. Somebody couldn't untie the dress a moment ago and forgot to use magic in his fury. Therefore, out of my love for him, I tore the dress myself. Lucien, do you prefer this explanation or the one where you were as ferocious as a beast?"

Lucien had nothing to defend himself. So, he could only reply gloomily, "I prefer the first one."

Natasha smiled and praised him, "However, your performance was indeed excellent. You appeared rather immature at first, but you were rather experienced in the second time and got me under you when I was unprepared. It felt rather good to enjoy myself without doing anything."

“Also, with all the magical assistance and your body condition as a grand knight, you gave me the ultimate pleasure that I had never experienced before. I have never been as exhausted without fighting.”

“Although I am too tired to even move my finger, I can’t feel more pleasant, particularly when we were melted. It’s like our souls are interwoven. That must be love.”

She talked about his performance without the least awkwardness.

Lucien secretly wiped his sweat. The atmosphere when he was with Natasha was too weird. They must be a unique couple.

“Me too. I had unprecedented happiness. Right, it must’ve been because of my instincts as a man that you felt that I was experienced.” Lucien certainly would not say how knowledgeable he was and how pained his back was right now. “I don’t think you experienced it before, right?”

Lucien realized that it was terrible the moment he said that, because it would remind Natasha of Sylvia.

Natasha was not bothered. “The knights’ control over the muscles is very strong. Ordinary people can make them happy, too. When there was love, the enjoyment would be as good, but still, I had a feeling that I enjoyed it but did not enjoy it enough. In comparison, I almost passed out just now. Hehe. The last few of your magics are good. We can try the assistance of other strange magics in the future.”

Queen Natasha was a curious but rational woman. However, she did not think she needed to contain herself when she explored things in that aspect with her partner.

“Okay...” Lucien replied almost he was almost at a loss for words. He was so hasty in the previous two sessions that he completely forgot the tricks on the Pink Book. He merely built up himself with the magics such as potency and rejuvenation.

In the meantime, Lucien thought to himself, “The body transformation of radiant knights lasts too shortly. It can only be used at the critical moment, or the cast will ruin the feeling. I need to develop a new transformation technique to let me have the strength and agility of the radiant knights but not their supernatural abilities. That way, it should be enough to extend the effect by half an hour.”

It was not used for fighting, so supernatural abilities did not matter.

Thinking about that, Lucien recalled what happened to the living room a moment ago. Even though their magic and supernatural powers were within control, their exertion of strength had already collapsed the chairs and tables. The cuisines he prepared were also tasted by Natasha in a very weird way. If they hadn’t entered the bedroom at the last moment, Lucien was suspicious that the bed would’ve been collapsed, too. “I have to craft magic furniture now...”

Natasha turned around and leaned on Lucien’s chest, allowing their naked skin to contact directly. She asked worriedly, “Were we too hasty? I just couldn’t control myself. After I realized that I fell in love with you a long time ago, my years of feelings burst out like a torrent.”

Lucien was too inexperienced, which made Natasha, who had entered ‘philosophical state’, slightly uneasy.

“Not at all. I’ve waited for years.” Lucien did feel that it went too fast, but he was gratified by the company of the girl he loved and did not feel anything wrong later.

Natasha nodded in satisfaction. After another long kiss, she said regretfully, “It’s past dawn. Although I would like to stay with you, I need to go back to the Nekso Palace now, or I will raise the suspicion of the Church if I spend the night in the royal magic tower of Holm. We are both young and still have a long life ahead of us. I believe that we will be really together someday.”

“I understand. The constraint right now is for the happiness in the future.” Lucien hugged her and took out her storage bag, ready to put clothes on her.

Natasha suddenly winked. “Is that so? Your Big Ivan seems to be saying otherwise. It wants one more time, doesn’t it?”

Lucien looked at the ceiling helplessly, “You need to go back.”

“Well, there is still some time. It should be enough.” Natasha’s eyes were suddenly rippling like water. Then, Lucien felt that her long legs slipped past his own, whose smoothness was passed on to his heart in a numbing feeling. “Lucien, didn’t you say that it was only because of shock? But why do I feel that you are really into silk stockings? Both the dress and underwear have been torn by you, but the silk stockings are still intact.”

Lucien blushed and did not say anything. His body turned hot under the provocation, while the long leg slid all the way to the critical area.

Lucien couldn’t hold it anymore and grabbed Natasha’s leg, about to put her down.

Natasha reached Lucien's chest, her silver eyes glittering and her voice lascivious. "I will be on top this time."

The air was filled with panting and squeaky noises. Suddenly, the bed collapsed in a bam, but the two of them did not stop at all.

After a long time, Lucien lay on the bed, satisfied and fatigued, while Natasha stood next to the bed, sorting her black dress delightedly.

"I'm going back." Natasha bent and kissed Lucien. Then she said solemnly, "I wonder if you could invite the King of Nightmare to stay in Aalto for a while in case of any trouble."

"Rest assured. I'll take care of it. The Grand Duke will not be in danger." Lucien had already thought of it.

Natasha left the room in a light mood. After resting for a while and restoring part of his strength, Lucien got up from the collapsed bed and put on his magic robe. Walking to the living room, he watched Natasha get on the wagon and leave through the window.

"My life has entered a new phase after today." Lucien remarked in complicated feelings.

After Natasha returned to the Nekso Palace, Lucien talked to her for another hour through electromagnetism messaging. It was not until then that he finally sat on the rug and began to analyze the eight-circle magics, trying to improve his magic level.

Before he knew it, it was already morning. Lucien cleaned his clothes and opened the door tiredly, picking up the 'Holm Weekly' that he subscribed to.

"... His Excellency Saint Sard is worried about the mental faculty of the clergy and night watchers in the Holm parish. He has decided that the personnel will study in the Rentato abbey and communicate with the other four parishes on this side of the Storm Strait..."

"What is Sard trying to do exactly?" Lucien scratched his chin at the headline.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 521: Paradox

Lucien, who knew a thing or two about Sard, speculated his intention with the newspaper in his hands. "He is trying to influence the clergy and the night watchers of the Holm parish and build them into his own subordinates? The communication of personnel must be for the same purpose. He will also be able to send spies to other parishes..."

When he thought that Vera Amelton had mastered the inquisition in the Holm parish, Lucien felt quite reverential for Sard, who had made such great use of the incident where a few radical night watchers lynched a liberal noble.

“Chances are that Sard is behind the few night watchers... But what does he want exactly by doing so? Divide the Church after he grows powerful? However, both the new church that he creates in the future and the South Church will no longer be the best in the world. Even their own territory will be invaded by the Congress, the North Church, or the Court of Elves. Sard can’t be that stupid, can he?”

“On the other hand, if the Lord of Hell is behind him, it would be understandable that his goal is to weaken the Church. However, for people like him, unless the benefits overwhelm his sanity, he will never degenerate into a servant of devils from a saint.”

“Is Sard trying to replace Benedict II after the pope is summoned by the Lord?”

“It’s been almost thirty years since Benedict II’s coronation. According to history, he has no more than thirty years before he ascends to Mountain Paradise like the previous popes. Sard, whose longevity is still huge, can definitely afford the wait.”

The phenomenon that popes in history always had a short time had been noticed by the Congress of Magic and other forces, but it never had a reasonable explanation. It was suspected that they were too close to the God of Truth and used the god’s strength too often, and therefore their body and soul couldn’t take it anymore.

Lucien shook his head and browsed through the newspaper, thinking to himself, “I hope Natasha learns a thing or two about Sard. If he intends to divide the Church, he will have the full support of the Highest Council. However, what I fear is that he is ambitious enough to instigate the Church to fight the Congress so that he can eliminate his opposition in the five parishes, before he ascends to the throne of pope with the secrets from the World of Souls.

“By then, he may very well break the limits of longevity for other popes, which will be a nightmare for any force.”

While thinking, Lucien went to the top floor on the royal magic tower of Holm, ready to return to Allyn by way of the Element Paradise.

During the gap of the ‘second battle’, Natasha reminded Lucien that the Church paid even more attention to him after the new alternate dimension was discovered because a man who was likely to be at the peak of legendary must be suffocated in the cradle!

Therefore, she asked Lucien not to meet her too often, and she would contain herself, too. She also suggested that he jump via the demiplanes when he went to Allyn.

Strolling in the corridor, Lucien encountered many members of the Will of Elements. He greeted them in with a constant smile.

Those sorcerers, however, looked equally weird, which made Lucien rub his face and smell it in confusion. He had taken a hot bath before he left. There shouldn’t be any scent of love on him anymore. What could be the problem?

“K, what’s the look on your face?” By the time Lucien encountered the tall and frank K, who also had the weird expression, he finally couldn’t help but ask.

Since Larry, K’s teacher, was on a quest, K had been studying the ‘new alchemy’ independently for a while and met many problems that he would like to discuss with Lucien. At this moment, he tried to hold back his smile and scratched his head, “Lucien, you are like a man who just had his wedding. You have this foolish smile on your face, and you emit a weird sense of satisfaction. You are also walking unsteadily. Anyone with the preliminary experience can tell what happened.”

His meaning between the lines was obvious.

Lucien rubbed his forehead in embarrassment. Did he show his cockiness so patently?

So, he hurried to hide his smile and tried to make himself not look so happy.

After talking to K for a while, Lucien stepped into the Element Paradise. After the change of time and space, he saw a pair of silver-grey eyes before he was adapted to the dizziness.

“Your Excellency Hathaway...” Having just slept with her junior, Lucien couldn’t help but feel that she was some sort of ‘mother-in-law’ standing before him.

Not having any expression, Hathaway said very seriously, “She is a girl that is very serious about love. I hope you are not as a playboy as Oliver.”

Grand Arcanist Oliver had always been used as a negative example by the rational ladies.

“Your Excellency Hathaway should know very well my love life in the past years. Commitment is the gentlest but most powerful strength in this world, and that is my attitude towards both magic studies and my love.” Faced with his ‘mother-in-law’, Lucien was naturally both sincere and solemn.

After a brief silence, Hathaway nodded her head slowly, with slight delight on her face as if she was comforted by the fact that Natasha and Lucien were finally together. “I’ve been watching you. If you were otherwise, I would’ve stopped you. If you contradict yourself, we will be enemies.”

Her words were always concise and sometimes subtly ambiguous.

Lucien secretly wiped his cold sweat. Thankfully, he had always been strict about himself. Except for his illusions, he abode by his principles even when he was alone, or it would’ve been hard for him to pass the test of his ‘mother-in-law’. “I will cherish her, respect, comfort her, and accompany her from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health as long as we both shall live.”

Under the pressure of his ‘mother-in-law’, it was hard for Lucien to organize his speech, so he simply modified the wedding vow from Earth.

Hathaway did not pursue any further but nodded, “He who honors his words is a qualified man. I have some questions regarding the new alchemy to discuss with you.”

Hu. Finally passed. Lucien took a long breath in his heart. Discussing arcana questions was much easier than facing the interrogation of such an intimidating ‘mother-in-law’.

Lucien and Hathaway did not stop the discussion until more than half a day later. Then, Lucien returned to Allyn, planning to ask for the files about the clergy in the Holm parish. The files specified which of them were radicals, which were reactionists, and which were appeasers who wished to live in peace with the Congress of Magic. The list could be given to Natasha for her reference.

It was the beginning of the operation that Lucien had come up during his ‘philosophical state’, partly based on the British Reformation.

He found the order that Henry VIII issued very agreeable. “Those who do slanderously and maliciously publish and pronounce, by express writing or words, that the king should be heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel or usurper of the crown... are guilty of high treason. ”

Hardly had he left the magic tower of the Will of Elements when Lucien’s monocle became hot. So, he turned on the magic circle.

“Lucien, where were you? Come here. Oliver has some questions that he wants to discuss with you.” The Lord of Storm’s loud voice echoed.

Lucien hurried to explain, “I spent the morning discussing ‘new alchemy’ with Her Excellency Hathaway...”

Fernando, however, had already cut the communication impatiently. He was rather bad-tempered when he was reverse-engineering ‘fission’ and ‘fusion’, and he was not interested in Lucien’s explanation at all.

Turning off the monocle, Lucien raised his eyebrow. Had his master made Oliver accept it? That was rather fast...

...

On the 33rd level of the Allyn magic tower, Lucien walked into Fernando's library.

Fernando was scribbling when Lucien walked in. Suddenly dazed, he said in a vague smile, "Today is your birthday. Did you date the queen last night? Also, it seems that you've been well tasted by 'Her Majesty', haven't you?"

"Huh?" Lucien secretly suspected that his disguise was flawed. How could his teacher tell?

Fernando immediately laughed out aloud. "How inexperienced of you. I was just bluffing. However, I could tell that you had a date with Natasha even without using the prophecy magic."

"Why?" Asked Lucien, subconsciously.

Fernando chuckled, "I smelled the air of estrus when you were far away. How about it? Do you feel that your life has entered a new phase?"

Lucien was rendered speechless.

"How shocking. I thought that it would take you years before you made any progress, but it actually only took several days. I'm beginning to suspect that you are not my student Lucien!" Fernando 'mocked' Lucien, "but I'm completely relieved now. Natasha is now definitely on the Congress' side. We will try to support you to be the Prince of Nekso. But it will take time. Don't be hasty. Lucien, what a rarely-seen gem you are. Not only are you capable of arcana studies, but you are also good at sex-traps..."

Fernando was in such a good mood that he sounded more and more absurd as he rambled on, but he seemed more happy about Lucien's love life than about the Congress' increasing influence on Holm.

Prince of Nekso was a title for the queen's husband, originated from the title of the prince who built the Nekso Palace.

"Master, where is His Excellency Oliver?" Lucien hurried to change the topic.

Fernando grew serious when it came to arcana questions. He led Lucien to his demiplane and showed him Oliver, who was wearing a white wig. It must be admitted that he was a handsome, graceful middle-aged man.

"Evans, when Fernando gave me your paper, I found it unacceptable and believed that the view on time and space was ridiculous and wrong. However, after consideration, I realized that this view had germinated in my heart a long time ago, and I never had the guts to boldly take the step forward because of the boundary of the experience and common sense of the past." Said Oliver in a smile.

Lucien was slightly relieved. It seemed that this guy's cognitive world was not broken. "I feel relieved that Your Excellency Oliver does not reject it."

"In fact, when we studied electromagnetism, many sorcerers and I tried to integrate Mr. President's theory with Brook's theory, thereby constructing a real arcana system that can be used in every aspect. After all, the sources of all things should have the same nature, which we can call magic, or arcana, or truth, but it can't be in two different systems." Oliver spoke of his dream.

It was the common wish of all sorcerers to find a system that could explain everything. They had been pursuing it for thousands of years since the Magic Empire.

“During the integration, we found a lot of problems and conflicts, which were never resolved because we could not let go of our common sense in the past. It was exactly because of those experiences that I found it not difficult to accept your paper. I believe that many other sorcerers are the same, but of course, those who cannot accept it are definitely the majority.”

Lucien nodded his head. He had estimated that the ‘relativistic time’ would be attacked by everyone and did not expect that certain sorcerers had already done remarkable research on the problem. The idea was so disruptive that Oliver and his fellows would certainly not write into papers but would only discuss in private until convincing proofs were found. Therefore, Lucien knew nothing about it earlier.

Oliver changed the topic. “But there are still a lot of problems in your paper. I would like to discuss them with you today.”

“With pleasure.” Lucien sat on the couch next to Oliver. Fernando was ready to join the discussion, too.

Oliver took out his paper and pen. “It’s about relativity and the dilation of time. Consider a simplified experiment. There are two twins. The elder brother flies at a speed close to that of light, whereas the younger brother stays where he is. When his brother reaches a planet that the light can only illuminate with a journey of fifteen years, he returns immediately. Then, which of them will be younger when he meets his brother?”

“From the perspective of the younger brother, he was still, and his brother flew away at a speed close to that of light. According to the formula where high speed equals to slower time, his elder brother obviously should be younger than him.”

“However, from the elder brother’s perspective, according to the principle of relativity, he can regard himself as still, in which case his younger brother had fled away from him at a speed close to that of light. Then, obviously, the younger brother should still be younger.”

“So, it is a paradox.”

Lucien smiled. It was exactly the problem that he expected.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 522: On the Future

Lucien picked up a quill and drew two lines on the paper. “First of all, I admit that the system of relativity is very imperfect. It cannot explain inertia. It is also limited to the uniform-speed reference system and cannot be extrapolated to the uniform accelerated frame of reference.”

“However, regarding the question that you presented, it is not a paradox in this case. Here are the timelines of the brothers, let’s analyze them respectively. For the elder brother to fly away with a speed close to that of light, he would need an acceleration from stillness to his eventual speed, which is a process that cannot be neglected. If he intends to return, there would be another acceleration process in the opposite direction. It has to overcome inertia and cannot be neglected, either. In the meantime, considering the principles of relativity, the younger brother never overcame inertia...”

While analyzing, Lucien calculated with hypothetical data. The simplest approach was to explain inertia and gravity with the general theory of relativity, but Lucien couldn't do it just yet. He could only slightly introduce the concept and then calculate the two timelines with his knowledge in calculus to reach a result.

"... Therefore, the elder brother would be younger than the younger brother. To be more exact, his body changes were slowed down..." Lucien concluded.

Oliver rubbed the quill and read Lucien's calculation carefully. In the end, he nodded, "It was immature of me to have overlooked acceleration and deceleration. However, if his brother does not return but keeps wandering in space, after he reaches a stable speed, which one of them would be younger?"

"It's a moot question. If the elder brother does not return or meet his younger brother, they would be in two different reference systems and could not be compared, like two people living in two utterly unrelated worlds. They have their own lives, but they do not depend on each other." Lucien smiled and pointed at the air nearby. "Perhaps, there is such a real material world right next to us. It overlaps our world, but they have absolutely no influence on each other. Chances are that some people are holding a lively ball exactly in this place of that world."

Fernando did not find anything wrong with Lucien's explanation. However, he became solemn after hearing the random example that Lucien came up with. "That's a strange thought. If such a world does exist, our studies on time and space will be only at the beginning phase, because it's hard to imagine that two overlapping worlds that are both made of materials do not affect each other."

Lucien hurried to shake his head. "It's just a random thought. There's no need to ponder on it. It is not of any theoretical background or actual significance."

In his carelessness, Lucien proposed part of the content of a certain view on time and space in the spirit library. However, it was just an unproven speculation that was not appreciated by the mainstream.

“Then, we will move on to the next question...” Oliver opened his mouth again.

After extensive communication, since the relativistic effect had been proved by the accelerated particles, Oliver accepted the system for now, but he also reached a consensus with Lucien and Fernando that it was still an imperfect theory. Being that according to the theory, time flows slower on artificial planets than it does on the ground. However, according to actual data, the opposite is true.

“In any case, we have finally made a huge step on this path. I have a feeling that it will be a major reform in the macroscopic field, and we need to direct other arcanists carefully. Hehe. Lucien, you’ve shown remarkable abilities in both microscopic and macroscopic fields. It will be a dilemma for you to choose your legendary class. Other people’s problem is that they can’t find or construct a legendary class that befits their cognitive world, but you are wavering between two choices. How they will envy you!”

Oliver praised him, “I’ll submit the matrix of transformation as soon as possible so that it will be published in the next issue of ‘Arcana’.”

Lucien had been cautious about the problem and explained everything based on experimental results and actual phenomena. After all, it was possible that the relativistic system or the quantum mechanics system suddenly proved unfit for the law of this world.

Soul, spiritual power, space barrier, world feedback, magic models and everything else reminded him that this was a world which seemed the same as Earth but might differ greatly in critical fields.

However, since he could find better approaches to study them, Lucien could only slowly grope forward on his current path.

After ensuring his relationship with Natasha, Lucien had a more detailed plan about his future path. He was planning to adopt a more conservative attitude. After all, he was no longer alone. Which meant that he would focus on quantum mechanics and use relativity only as assistance during the construction of his cognitive world later, and that he was ready to modify the theory of relativity anytime according to quantum mechanics.

At least, according to Lucien, quantum mechanics was the only theory that could explain the differences between the two worlds, including magic, spiritual power and bloodline assimilation, when they had a lot of identical parameters.

Now that he was taking a bet, Lucien preferred quantum mechanics to the general theory of relativity!

Of course, the gravity control and time control that the general theory of relativity brought were something that Lucien could not abandon, either.

“The new alchemy is not perfected yet, and the construction of a legendary class is far away. I haven’t thought much of it yet.” Lucien speculated that the legendary class should be something like ‘Atom Control’, which would lower the demands on his studies of ‘fission’ and ‘fusion’. Chances were that ‘Atomic Fission’ and ‘Eternal Blaze’ would be the fundamental magics of the class, like ‘Spirit Confinement’ for Demigod-lich and ‘Element Disintegration’ for Hathaway.

Lucien did not say anything else. He suddenly changed the topic. “Your Excellency Oliver, I’m told that you were studying the Dark Dragon Lord. Have you found anything?”

Since Lucien proved himself to be a master of the field after submitting 'Report on the Changes of the Godhood of Ell', Oliver did not hide anything but said directly, "I met many problems. The moment the Dark Dragon Lord leaves his alternate dimension and enters the main material world, his godhood will decline. It seems that the power of faith cannot be imposed on him against the space barrier. So, he can only resort to his previous accumulation."

"But why is the Saint Truth not affected at all? Is this the difference between the Fake Gods and the True God?"

Although he was talking about the True God, Oliver showed no reverence. God for him was just a noun and a target to research on.

Lucien did not understand either. Recording what Oliver said in his note, he bid him farewell, ready to leave 'Thunder Hell' and went to apply for the files.

"Evans, wait a moment." Oliver suddenly stopped Lucien.

Lucien looked at Oliver in confusion. He was not familiar with the guy. What else could they talk about?

Oliver smiled, "I made certain mistakes recently. Therefore, I intended to write an opera as an apology for Florencia. Evans, you are the best musician. I want to cooperate with you. The tunes and melodies of the operas in the past were hardly satisfactory."

“I’ll try when I have time.” Lucien intended to build up his friendship with Oliver. It was always better to have one more supporter than one more enemy in the Highest Council.

Also, Lucien was also planning to write an opera as a gift for Natasha in the anniversary next year. Although he had the spirit library as his reference, he was hoping to adapt the works on a large scale. After all, it would seem more genuine if the gift that he offered to his love was actually created by himself. He could use Oliver’s advice.

Receiving an affirmative answer, Oliver left in satisfaction, promising that he would send the script to Lucien in a few days.

After he left, Fernando scorned, “He will die in the hands of a woman someday. I’m even suspicious that Florencia will give him a critical attack when he is asleep after she is done tolerating him.”

“A legendary sorcerer cannot be killed so easily...” Lucien was not worried about Oliver’s safety.

Fernando did not say anything else. He turned to Lucien and said, “Don’t speak to anybody after your relationship with Natasha. Take it slowly.”

Although somebody could’ve guessed that Natasha celebrated with Lucien for his birthday last night from their traces, it remained obscure how close their relationship was since she left at dawn. Also, Lucien exposed his own traces on purpose, because he could’ve returned under a transformation mask.

...

In the Affair Committee, Lucien found Thompson.

“You want the files of the clergy of the Holm parish? Since when have you been interested in politics?” Thompson was rather surprised. In his eyes, Lucien was an ascetic sorcerer who was not interested in the outside world at all, as proved by the fact that he did not even have a partner.

Lucien smiled, “We all live in the Kingdom of Holm after all. If we want to run experiments in peace, we cannot ignore politics. Thompson, I believe I have the clearance, right?”

“Of course you do. Your clearance are only second to the members of the Highest Council now.” Thompson asked his subordinates to find the files and gave them to Lucien. “You can’t take them away or copy them but can read them here.”

Lucien browsed through them and focused on the people who were willing to get in touch with sorcerers, recording the names on his spirit library.

“... Cardinal Richard, level eight, spoke that God loves people and cares about what they do but not who they are in his public sermon...”

Rubbing the name with his thumb, Lucien had a target.

...

In the Nekso Palace, Natasha met the nobles large and small according to the previous routine.

Although a brief conversation was not enough for her to grasp what everybody was thinking, it was something worth doing because it could deepen her impression on the nobles and their reverence for the crown deep in their hearts.

“Your Majesty, I have a summer resort in the suburbs. Would you honor us by your presence?” Duke James changed his previous rejective attitude and said to Natasha rather flatteringly.

Natasha smiled, “I will visit it if I have time.”

As she expected, after her birthday celebration for Lucien was discovered by them, the liberals suddenly became much more enthusiastic and supportive of her.

After the baldy James bid farewell respectfully with a smile, Natasha finally asked Camil who just entered the hall. “Aunt Camil, what’s the reaction of the Church?”

The Holm parish’s reaction would be Sard’s reaction!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 523: Protection

Camil had never agreed with Natasha and Lucien's test for Sard. She believed that it was too hasty and best be postponed until Natasha had a bunch of loyal supporters because it might infuriate the Church. However, she barely objected to Natasha's decisions after they were made, and she tried to cover the traces after they had determined their relationship.

At this moment, her solemn and rigid face looked somewhat strange. "A secret letter was delivered from the Radiance Church, reminding you that you should know your boundaries when you appease the nobles who are in favor of the Congress of Magic, and that you should not go to the royal magic tower of Holm too often, which would disappoint the devout and loyal nobles."

"Just that?" Natasha raised her eyebrow. It was a reasonable reaction, but the problem was that it was too reasonable. There was no telling what was on Sard's mind at all.

She, too, felt that Lucien's proposal was a bit risky, but she understood that the situation could not be changed if she did not overstep the boundary. Under the threat of the Congress of Magic and the Church, all the nobles would sit on the fence first before leaning to any side. The current situation was like a pool of dead water. She could not achieve a satisfactory result without churning it first.

Keeping the strange look, Camil continued, "Also, it encourages you to instigate Lucien Evans to repent, whatever it takes. As long as Lucien Evans betrays the Congress of Magic, and joins the inquisition and becomes a leader of the night watchers, it will be the greatest contribution. The Church will give you full support."

A grand-arcanist-to-be, and a talented sorcerer regarded as the future of the Congress of Magic, seemed to be in love with a certain pious believer. Such encouragement was more a reaction that the Church would take.

“The reaction is a little weird.” Natasha paced back and forth, not knowing what Sard meant exactly. Did he really believe in her devotion and think that she could seduce Lucien over, or was he just covering the incident with a random excuse?

“It’s hard to guess what an old fox is thinking...” Natasha raised her left hand and touched the communication earring subconsciously, hoping to discuss with Lucien. But then she realized that Lucien should’ve returned to Allyn. Therefore, she hurried to stop in case the purpose of the test was exposed.

When her long, vigorous fingers accidentally touched her earlobe, Natasha suddenly recalled how Lucien cared for it. Her lips immediately curled into a smile, and her eyes became gentle, too.

Camil turned around at the window, as if she found such an expression unsuitable to look at. It was not until Natasha was back to herself a few seconds later that she continued, “There’s something wrong with Sard’s reaction, but it is still reasonable. I suggest you stop testing him in such a way in case you cause a fire. Sometimes, you just need to wait for changes to happen.”

“Aunt Camil, I understand. The most important thing right now is to improve my strength and to control the Sword of Truth as soon as possible.” Natasha said calmly, not making any radical judgment because of ecstasy.

After Camil shut the gate of the palace, Natasha stood behind the desk and picked up the quill. Taking a deep breath, she began writing: “Protection, sympathy, justice, kindness, bravery...”

The words that represented chivalry flowed from her pen, fluent and magnificent at first but dim and obscure later, as if they were interrogating her own heart, faith and path.

After a long time, the only words below Natasha's pen was 'protection' and 'bravery'. Also, the strokes became clear and emitted firmness.

In such a way, Natasha sorted through her experiences so far, her recent confusion, the dawn she saw after she made up her mind, and the ideas that Lucien imbued with her, gradually locating the source of her chivalry and her faith, which was the love for her family and subjects and the bravery against enemies and schemes.

"Perhaps, this is the Lord in my heart."

Natasha dropped the quill. Looking at the words on the paper, she had a strong sense of relief, as if the dust on her heart had been wiped off. While her confusion and hesitation in the past hadn't been completely eliminated, she believed that she could definitely walk out of the swamp as time went by.

That would be the moment when she advanced into level eight and drew the Sword of Truth.

When that day came, she would not need to activate the defense in the Nekso Palace, or cover herself with Lucien's 'Congus Ring' next to her, when she intended to test Sard's reaction.

Warming up her body, Natasha suddenly had the desire of fighting that she hadn't felt for a long time. Therefore, she grabbed 'Pale Justice', opened the gate of the palace, and went to the 'Knight's Corridor' that had been intensified specifically, eager to unleash her delight by exhausting herself.

.....

Inside Duke of Frenburg's residence...

The conservatives, who have waited for a long time, also rose when Rex finally walked in. They asked, "What's the Church's attitude regarding the incident last night?"

Rex sat straight and frowned, "His Excellency Saint Sard reminded Her Majesty that she should not visit the royal magic tower of Holm too often, and that she should have boundaries when she appeases the nobles who are inclined to the Congress of Magic."

"Only a reminder?" Count Barady observed in disappointment.

Rex snapped his crimson coat. "The queen is also encouraged to allure Lucien to betray the Congress of Magic."

"Isn't it feeding a goat to a tiger?" Duke York said angrily.

In his eyes, Lucien would grow into a grand arcanist and a legendary sorcerer sooner or later, finding his way into the Highest Council. Even though Douglas would be the president for a long time due to the longevity of sorcerers, it would still be much better than betraying and joining the night watchers.

It was not the War of Dawn where sorcerers could barely keep themselves safe. The current arcana system was not esoteric for him, either. Queen Natasha would only be seduced by him if she were to seduce him. It would be best to ask them to draw the lines.

Could they only use radical methods when the queen was already enchanted?

Duke Rex shook his head. “His Excellency Saint Sard was worried that radical methods would anger the queen and make her lean towards the nobles who favor the Congress of Magic.”

Duke of York was a grand knight in his thirties. Not as patient as the older men, he couldn’t help but stand up and pace anxiously. “Are we going to let things run their course? The queen’s tendency is apparent now. It is balanced but more inclined to the Congress of Magic. Many nobles on our side are not firm. They are used to following the crown and their lords. It is estimable that more nobles will be working with James, Russell, Henson and the rest of them. Our comparison will be reversed in a year. We have to make preparations.”

Duke Rex stared at Duke York. “What preparations?”

Looking around at the five dukes, three marquises and five counts in the room, Duke York said subtly, “We will make preparations like what you did when the late king was summoned by the Lord, president.”

His family was Kritonia’s family. That was why he spoke to Rex so boldly.

Rex changed his face. “York, I didn’t do anything. I only accepted His Majesty’s request to make Holm stronger. Did you hear any rumors?”

Duke Solefen coughed and interrupted Duke York. “York, do you want to divide the country? Do you want every noble in your territory to covet it? Order is the foundation for nobles, or we would’ve been separated and swallowed. We will only approach doom if we are too radical.”

He raised his hands to stop other nobles from interrupting and went on, “I believe that the current circumstances are tolerable. Although the queen is likely to be biased towards the Congress of Magic due to Hathaway and Lucien Evans, her other decisions obviously show that she will not abandon us. She needs balance and stability, which are what I want to see, too, instead of a ruined Holm.”

“Anyone who attempts to sabotage the stability of the kingdom will be the Solefen family’s enemy.”

He spoke bluntly without the rhetoric of nobles, but it was based on the fact that his father was the other legendary knight of the kingdom. Other people couldn’t copy him.

“This is my opinion. I’ll be on my way if that’s all.” Clearing his black cape, Duke Solefen rose and left, followed by two dukes, two marquises and three counts.

Duke York watched Solefen leave. In the end, he snorted, “Balance and stability. It seems that he has heard ‘Arcana Voice’ and ‘News of the World’ a lot.”

The phrases began to spread from those channels.

Duke Barsaton looked at Duke York weirdly. How did you know their origin if you hadn't listened to it?

Then, he coughed and said, "As far as I know, the Solefen family has established alchemical workshops with sorcerers in private, earning abundant revenue from magic lamps, magic radios and telegrams. Also, they have vast lands in the alternate dimensions. The introduction of fertilizer has increased their family wealth because of the improved yield of the lands."

He was insinuating that, while most people in the Solefen family were firm believers, they were actually happy to see the 'balance' and 'stability'.

Duke York opened his hands. "Therefore, we need to make preparations."

Duke Rex and the rest of them looked rather gloomy. After deep thought, Count Barady said, "Maybe we don't need to do anything. Somebody has always been discontented..."

.....

At night, the wind started to blow on Rentato, driving away the heat of the day.

Lucien, who had transformed, walked with Alferris, who was in the appearance of a little boy, was going to the 'Salvation Church' in the east district of the city.

“You will let me enter Richard’s dream later with Dream Casting.” Lucien said to Alferris.

Although he was capable of the sixth-circle magic, Alferris was one of the best experts in terms of illusions and dreams below the legendary level. It would be a better option.

According to the files, Richard was a renowned cardinal in the Holm parish. He was a native of the country and grew up in the Rentato abbey. He had never been away from the place during the hundred years when he turned from an intern priest into a level-eight cardinal. Many priests and bishops in the parish were taught and raised by him. However, because he was too gentle, and his interpretation about the Cannon was different from that of the Church, he was kicked away from the central circle of the Holm parish after the public sermon. He was a target that was worth getting in touch with.

Before, Lucien planned to ask the Affair Committee to send somebody to test and persuade him, and after the guy’s ideas were figured out, he would be referred to Natasha for final observation. However, the files showed that the Affair Committee had sent a lot of sorcerers and liberals to persuade him, but to no avail. The Congress of Magic was certainly not so idiotic that they never thought of getting in touch with the appeasers before Lucien proposed.

Therefore, Lucien decided to meet Richard in person and get a comprehensive understanding about his opinions. But in the future, such things should be entrusted to the trustworthy sorcerers in the Affair Committee, because the most important thing for him was still to increase his strength.

Alferris licked the ice cream that Lucien specifically made for him and asked, “No problem. You can do whatever you want in the dream.”

As a crystal dragon, he hated heat.

After they reached the Salvation Church, Lucien and Alferris found a corner to hide in, and Alferris cast the spell remotely. Now was the time of evening prayer in the church. The complete defense circle was not activated yet.

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After the prayer, Richard was going to return to his house, but he ran into a young man in a black cloak when he just went out of the church.

Narrowing his eyes, Richard smiled, his white eyebrow shivered. “A dream? Who are you? Do you want to persuade me?”

Lucien thought for a moment and said, “I would like to discuss justification by faith with you, Your Highness.”

Richard was stunned.

Many sorcerers and nobles had talked with him before, but none of them had ever discussed doctrines with him.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 524: Questions

“I heard that you said god’s love towards the mundane shows no preference. No matter if he’s an ordinary folk, a sorcerer, or even a vampire, as long as he follows the Cannon, as long as he behaves himself, he is regarded as a loyal believer, and he can be saved.” said Lucien calmly, like he was a scholar here for a theology discussion.

Lucien did not strictly follow the theological doctrine, justification by faith alone, as the Saint Truth was still different from the religion on the Earth. If Lucien just copied everything and used them here, it would be a big joke in Richard’s eyes.

Therefore, Lucien further developed the content and meaning of justification by faith alone, and gave it a more comprehensive religious context.

Hearing Lucien’s question, Richard gradually realized this young man’s intention. He assumed that the young man was a sorcerer or a demon here to tempt and persuade him. So he smiled and said, “So the honest have no fear, he will live in the hollow realm; the kind have no fear, he will ascend Mountain Paradise; the just have no fear, he will be blessed...”

What Richard just said came from Cannon, and he said, “If a sorcerer or a vampire, like you said, can serve the Lord with their whole heart and soul, can strictly stick to their belief, he is righteous and will be saved. The night watchers are those who have been saved. But what the rest of the sorcerers and dark creatures are doing goes exactly the opposite way.”

“So Cardinal Richard, I understand you’re talking about those ancient sorcerers. They killed masses. They were crazy. They are everything but righteous. They shouldn’t be saved, yes. But

what about the sorcerers today? Most of them obey laws. They behave themselves, control themselves. Their ways of living comply with the instruction of Cannon.” Lucien smiled.

Richard knew that the young man was talking about those arcanists who were fully devoted to their experiments, so he said seriously, “They are blasphemers. They are full of lies when they are with the true followers.”

“You mean studying things in the world is regarded as blasphemy?” Lucien pointed at the sky, “Is there a line in Cannon saying that the world should not be explored? Did Lord ever tell the mundane that they shall never approach his realm?”

Richard indeed recalled, and he realized that the young man was not talking nonsense. There were warnings for those false believers, the evil, the bloodthirsty, but nothing strictly prevented the exploration of the world.

Lucien was well aware of what was in Cannon and what was not as he saw Francis transcribing the doctrines multiple times, and there were also books in his spirit library for reference. When Cannon was put together, it was many years before the congress was established. At that time, Douglas was probably still a middle-rank sorcerer, and there was no such thing as world exploration.

Therefore, in the Cannon, only bloody human body experiments were strictly forbidden, but most arcanists were not from the school of Necromancy.

After several minutes of silence, Richard said, “The mundane shall stay away. The mundane shall bow. That means human beings should not approach the realm of God.”

Lucien was, for a moment, a bit speechless. Those priests could always get what they want from a doctrine by reading into it from different perspectives.

Fortunately, Richard added, “Also, in the Doctrines, it says that the mundane shall never step into the forbidden area of God.”

That was the exact topic that Lucien wanted. He hurriedly said, “The Doctrines? But it isn’t for God, but from the popes and some priests. Is it authoritative?”

Richard slightly frowned, “The Pope is the only speaker of God on the land. His words are words from Lord.”

“But the North Church don’t think so.” said Lucien. He was very grateful that there was the great division in the Saint Truth, or he would never have the weapon to bombard the doctrines in front of Richard, a true theology expert. Also, Lucien wasn’t here for a real discussion, but to guide Richard to figure it out his own thoughts, which was the psychological guidance part in Lucien’s illusion!

When it came to criticize and denounce the North Church, Richard could go on and on. These words made Lucien’s head extremely heavy, but all Lucien was waiting for was one specific sentence.

“... All the lambs shall receive baptism where the shepherds pray for them. Under the shepherd’s guidance and help, they can be saved. The leader of the shepherds speaks my will.” said Richard. The lines which set up the statues of a pope were more than familiar to him.

light flashed through Lucien’s eyes and he instantly cut off Richard, “So justification by faith alone is not possible. No matter how devoted we are, no matter how we behave ourselves according to Cannon, the salvation has to depend on the priests and the pope, right? ”

That was a question that had been bothering Richard for years. This was his first time facing the question thrown at him by someone else. Richard was, for a moment, completely speechless.

“God has love for everyone, but more for shepherds, right? God has love for everyone, but is unwilling to directly connect to an individual’s heart, right? When a man prays, the praying will work better in a church than in his own bedroom, right? A priest can only get divine power when the pope nods, right?” Lucien seized the chance and threw at Richard a series of questions.

Richard tried to say something, but he knew that many priests got their divine power simply when they were reading Cannon or praying, without any extra guidance, so he remained silent.

Lucien raised his voice,

“If the pope is indeed the only speaker of God, why does he keep misreading Cannon? Why has he made so many changes to the Doctrines?”

“If God does not allow human beings to explore the world, why did the pope rewrite the doctrines and rebuild divine spells according to the arcanists’ findings?”

That was the very reason why Richard’s thinking had been messed up in the past twenty to thirty years. He did not know what to say.

“Therefore, I think, the Church, the pope... They are in fact standing between the followers and their Lord, because of their own desires for power. No matter if an individual has divine power or

not, all the mundane should be equal in front of Lord, and those who betray the Cannon, including them, will be thrown into hell for what they've done."

"Those who demand and acclaim sophisticated church rituals and those who say that the Church must be served are the fake believers. They are preventing God from loving everyone of us."

"And those who keep changing the doctrines based on their will must be demons that are hiding!"

Before Richard could say anything, Lucien kept throwing the words at him, leaving Richard no chance to dispute.

"We should make those get out of the way who keep talking about faith and belief but are in fact blaspheming God's will."

"Say farewell to those monopolists who are sucking in power and wealth from common people's pure faith!"

"Between Lord and followers, there should be no barriers made by any. There should only be faith, and the faithful demeanour!"

Richard stared at Lucien. This young man had spoken out all the things that he had been thinking to himself but dared not say, and in a more detailed, more structured, and more radical way!

Lucien stopped here. He was waiting for Richard's response.

After a long time, Richard finally put on a bitter smile and said, “The power of the priests should be regulated. Lord gave them divine power to make them protect followers, not to make them rule.”

Lucien grinned.

...

When the mist cleared, Richard opened his eyes. He realized that he was still praying in front of the cross.

He sighed, “Fallen Morning Star... He deserves the title.”

Outside of the church, Alferris said in surprise with its two big amber-colored eyes open wide, “That’s it, Lucien? Countless have failed persuading him!”

“I did not persuade him; He persuaded himself. If there was no root, my language trap would never do him in. He’s a theologian, but I’m not,” said Lucien calmly, “I was just giving him an idea, and the fact that he agreed with it was the most important part.”

Alferris gave Lucien’s theory a very general conclusion, “Anyways, you’re smart!”

“I’m just good at mental guidance and know something about theology. In other words, among those who are good at illusions, I am the one who knows theology the best; and among those theologians, I’m best at mental suggestion.” Lucien grinned.

Also, he had a whole spirit library in his soul.

Lucien felt a bit more relaxed now. If everything went well with Richard, he should be able to bring him to Natasha later. However, when he was about to leave with Alferris, he sensed a dangerous power approaching.

Someone was coming.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 525: Assassination

The sense only lasted less than a second, like it was just a false hint. But the ring, Congus Ring, that Lucien was wearing was reminding him that it wasn’t just an illusion.

“Lucien...” Alferris tried to talk to Lucien, but was stopped by him. Its big amber-colored eyes looked confused.

Who is it? What was the person doing here this late at night, near the small church located in the civilian zone of the city?

But the dangerous power never came back again. So Lucien said to Alferris using secret messaging, which would only produce tiny magic waves, "Someone was nearby, at least senior-rank. Now it seems that the person has gone into the Salvation Church. We gotta wait here for a bit longer to make sure Richard's safe."

Alferris all of sudden got excited. An enemy meant a fight; fight meant victory; and victory meant trophy!

Lifting its claw, Alferris wiped off its drool.

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Standing in front of the cross, Richard reflected on the conversation he just had with the young man. All the messy thoughts that had been bothering him had now become more organized and consistent, which helped him reform his heart full of faith.

At this moment, he felt great peace. He prayed silently, "My Lord, if you think I'm twisting Cannon, please let the divine light devour me, because I deserve it."

In the course of time, Richard started to be covered in a layer of divine light, like he was a saint that got blessed by God. He opened his eyes and looked up again at the cross, and then he said in a deep voice, "You are one, and everyone. You are the moment, and forever... I think I understand why the Church should exist. The existence of the Church should protect faith, not interrupt it. Everyone is entitled to get enlightenment from Cannon, as long as they are devoted."

Richard had never felt more relieved than right now. His heart was full of joy and faith, thudding a bit faster in excitement. He even felt that now he was able to reach level nine although the progress had been rather sluggish for the past decades.

“It’s all your blessing. Only truth lives forever.” Richard crossed his chest.

In Lucien’s eyes, Richard would have already stepped in level nine for a long time if it had not been because of his own confusion and struggling. His true faith and the deep understanding in theology would even bring him to the next level – a saint cardinal, legendary level.

Richard stood up. After all of the priests had left the hall, he headed for the garden. Breathing in the fresh air mixing with the flower aroma, he carefully thought about the reform that he was going to propose and felt truly blessed by his Lord.

No matter how difficult the reform would be, no matter who was going to step out and stop him, Richard was determined to carry it out.

At this time, he sensed someone walking to him.

It was someone with a red robe, wearing a biretta.

“Octave?” Richard recognized him.

Octave once listened to him preaching in Rentato, and he was the previous red robe in charge of the Holm Inquisition.

Octave was a serious-looking, middle-aged man, whose black brows were thick and light blue eyes sharp. He smiled and said, "You must have heard what's been going on recently. I'm a bit confused, so I wonder if I can talk to you."

"You have resentment in heart, so you are closing your eyes?" asked Richard using the lines in Cannon.

The look on his face and his voice was calm and soothing.

Octave crossed before he answered, "Yes, I'm afraid resentment will take charge of me and eventually make me forget my true intention – to serve the Lord. But sir Richard, should we just let the evil free and keep telling ourselves to hold ourselves back because of all the reasons? Isn't this betrayal to Lord's message?"

Then Octave cited the Cannon, "... because of faith, he showed no fear facing demons and flame. He threw himself into the crowd of the most dangerous enemies, and there was no retreat..."

He asked himself the question, and also the Church.

Richard shook his head, "What is evil? Why was the killed nobleman evil?"

“He listened to Arcana Voice; He worked with those sorcerers to make money.” Octave raised his voice.

Richard pointed at the Cannon in his hand, “Lord only told us not to be greedy, not to lie, not to indulge, not to disregard lives. Which one did he fail?”

“He lied.” answered Octave.

Richard smiled, “Those who lie will not ascend to Mountain Paradise, but linger on the land and be punished by lightning and flame. The Cannon never says that those who lie deserve death punishment.”

“He worked with a sorcerer! He listened to Arcana Voice!” Octave did not know what else to say.

Richard said peacefully, “As long as the sorcerer is not evil judged by the Cannon. There’s no such thing in the Cannon saying that he was not allowed to work with a sorcerer.”

“How can a sorcerer not be evil? The Doctrines says...” Octave cited the lines.

Richard just smiled, until Octave’s voice gradually lowered his voice.

“Since you’re willing to follow the Doctrines, I’d assume that you respect the Church’s decision. Why are you angry?”

Octave’s face lit up with this new perspective, “I see. I’m not against the Church, not the Doctrines, but the pope and the leading priests who stand high above in divinity but keep misinterpreting the Lord’s words. They have strayed away, thus they’re no longer capable of delivering the correct messages! Sir Richard, I know that you’ve been against the revision of the Doctrines. Please step out and awaken the rest of them! We have to propose to resume the original Doctrines.”

“What if the pope says ‘no’?” asked Richard. He had just been through lobbying, and therefore he immediately noticed the indication in Octave’s words.

“If he says no, then we will choose a new one! I believe that many grand cardinals share the same opinion!” said Octave excitedly, “In my mind, sir, you’re an ideal candidate!”

“This Isn’t what we want. The correct way to do it is to let every devoted follower to interpret the Cannon. That’s justification by faith!” Richard shook his head.

Octave was a bit surprised. He did not expect that Richard’s belief was even more radical than his.

Octave kept trying to persuade Richard, but Richard would not listen. Richard had made up his mind to stick to his reform.

In the end, Octave said in frustration, “Then I should leave you alone now, sir. I hope that one day you’ll agree with us, and we always expect you to be one of us.”

Us? Richard slightly frowned, but he did not ask.

After Octave had left, Richard went back to improve his reform proposal.

Meanwhile, at the end of the corridor, Octave suddenly stopped walking. There was a creepy smile on his face, and in his hand, there was a brown scroll which contained formidable power.

It was always much easier to use a dead person because his mouth was forever shut.

A Richard who got killed by a sorcerer was more of a trigger than a Richard who was alive!

The moment after Octave tore the scroll, the formidable power rushed out. Instantly, the grey color climbed onto Richard's body and infected the entire space within a certain radius.

Everything in the area had stopped moving under the power of the ninth circle spell, Time Stop.

Then Octave tore open another black scroll. The surging magic power targeted directly at Richard and removed all the defensive divine spells that Richard had, and the power could also by chance damage the items that Richard was wearing.

The ninth circle spell, Cracking (Advanced)!

However, when Octave took out the last scroll, Orb of Ultimate Destruction, a figure suddenly appeared in front of him.

The figure pointed at him, and then all of the divine items he was wearing instantly broke into pieces, including the red robe, and part of his body!

Octave was totally unprepared. He had lost the ability to take any actions either physically or mentally.

With New Alchemy, Lucien's spell, Elemental Order, had now had even stronger power, close to the ninth circle.

Although the divine circles had covered most of the magic waves from the spell, since Lucien was so close to it, he still sensed it and was now here to save Richard's life. To avoid being noticed by the legendaries in Rentato, Lucien did not choose to use Congus Ring.

In Lucien's eyes, what Octave just did was such a waste. Senior-rank scrolls were even more scarce than senior-rank items, since they could only be used once and the materials were rather difficult to find.

In other words, basically, Octave was trying to kill Richard using a great sum of money.

Lucien pointed at Octave again. He was going to lower Octave's magic resistance and then take him back using Petrification for further questioning.

At this time, someone suddenly jumped out from the darkness and his sword directly hacked at Lucien's neck!

Octave was not alone. There was another radiant knight, possessing the bloodline of Elimination!

He knew Lucien, and Lucien knew him, too. The radiant knight was the previous night watch leader from Aalto Inquisition, Lend!

Now Lend was already a level six radiant knight, and somehow he recognized Lucien. Driven by the exhilaration and anger, Lend could not hold himself back anymore.

Because of his bloodline, Elimination, Lucien defensive spells would be removed!

The edge of the sword cut in Lucien's body, but the body turned into foam. With a creepy smile, Lucien disappeared gradually.

Illusion! Lend's heart sank. He hurriedly wielded his sword for defence.

However, at this time, a giant creature showed up behind him. Its big, amber-colored eyes looked at Lend attentively. And then its mouth opened, and the freezing and numbing dragon breath came out.

Under the great pressure from the most powerful creature, Lend's mind blanked for a moment.

Meanwhile, Lucien appeared again beside Octave. And he directly jumped onto the level eight red robe.

Octave realized that Lucien had cast Baler's Transformation. He scoffed in his mind – A sorcerer turning himself into a radiant knight, how stupid was that?

So he laid a divine defensive circle in front of him against Lucien's attack. As long as he could get out of the place later, he could report to the Church that Richard was in collusion with the Fallen Angel!

However, to Octave's great surprise, Lucien's left hand had directly broken through the divine circle. The fist was covered with a layer of moonlight, and a mix of colors black, white and grey.

Octave wondered what it was.

He wondered if he was just in a dream.

Lucien's left fist went right into the side of Octave's face. Instantly, blood burst out and his teeth fell out.

Octave passed out.

Lucien controlled his power, or he would have punched Octave's brain out

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 526: The Great Prophet

Like a shattered kite in the air, Octave's body was fiercely punched backward by Lucien. Blood spurted out of his mouth, and he had totally lost his consciousness.

Suddenly, the look on his face distorted, and from his body, beams of light burst out. The light was shaped into four pairs of white wings behind his back.

Octave's light blue eyes slowly opened, but now they had become colorless. Looking down upon Lucien, the eyes were sheer cold.

"Angels on the Ground?" Lucien murmured.

Octave heard Lucien's exclamation and said triumphantly, "We're the righteous blessed by God, apostles who take Lord's true will. Of course, we have the power of angels. And you, you filthy Fallen Morning Star, should be cleansed by us!"

Octave said his words quickly. The lines came from the Cannon, and the language was from heaven.

However, Octave's mind was rather clear under the angel's power, and he knew that the power would not last long. Also, if the fight between them went on, the Radiance Church, Holm Royal Magic Tower, Nekso Palace could notice the chaos here at any time. Therefore, he flapped his wings, from where scattered light came out. The light spots then joined together, turning into a magnificent lightwave that rushed at Lucien with significant momentum.

Lucien, who was now with radiant knight power, was caught up in fighting against the light wave. Even the power in his left hand could not help him get out of trouble. Seeing that, Octave scoffed, and then, without hesitation, he reached Lend after a flash and grabbed him. Lend was already out of consciousness because of the crystal dragon's breath. Octave's four pairs of wings blocked the dragon's claws, and then Octave forced his way out of Salvation Church.

The wings closed, the light disappeared. Octave took Lend with him and both of them vanished into the darkness.

He knew that Lucien and his pet couldn't be chasing after them. Given that he was one of the biggest enemies to Sard, Stone, and the leading night watchers, Lucien had to leave the site as quickly as he could.

Octave cast a series of divine spells to remove the trace he left, and after Lend recovered, he made it twice as secure by asking Lend to use his blood power, Elimination, to cover their whereabouts. Then he finally headed for his real destination.

The night had quieted down because the fight stopped just in time. Those who possessed formidable power in the city were left in peace.

“I didn’t expect him... Lucien Evans...” said Lend word by word in extremely bitter hatred. He hated himself for not being powerful enough to kill this cunning demon himself.

Octave sneered, “It was a sneak attack, or we wouldn’t have been so passive. But his left hand is weird. The power in it is like your blood power, but even better in nature. It felt... It felt like his power had a much higher rank.”

“Higher rank? Was Lucien Evans once the archangel, Fallen Morning Star, God’s Left Wing?” said Lend out of astonishment. Although Lucien’s titles were familiar to many night watchers, they never believed that it was true. They believed that it was the Pope’s explanation to eliminate the negative influence.

Octave was afraid of the power in that left hand. He remained silent, as he didn’t know the answer either.

In silence, they kept moving ahead. After a while, Octave said in a low voice, “We can ask the great prophet. He’s the Angel King who carries the true will of the Lord. His mission is to defeat the corrupt pope, so he should know Lucien’s secrets. In the future, we’ll be able to be more prepared.”

Lend slightly nodded, “We’ll also have to confess to the great prophet since we failed our mission. Richard hasn’t been on our side yet, and we also failed to kill him and cast the blame on a sorcerer. By the way, Cardinal Octave, I don’t remember you being this talkative. You know, you didn’t have to say that out loud...”

Octave did not have to say it – the part that mentioned killing the pope. Octave and Lend both knew about it since they were the core members of the secret group.

Octave touched his face. Although all the wounds had healed, he still remembered the unbearable pain he just went through. He said in a bitter emotion, "I got punched on my head. Yes, I talked too much. I feel that I'm still not able to fully control my body and my mind."

Lend nodded as he understood. Without saying anything further, he and Octave arrived at a small, shabby church.

Although the place looked shabby, the inside decoration was stunning. Its exquisiteness and luxury was a sharp contrast to its outside appearance.

Octave and Lend were very used to it. They quickly walked through the praying hall, heading for the confession room.

"You two are back." said a young man with sharp facial features who was walking towards them. He was in his early thirties, but was already wearing the red robe.

Octave slightly nodded, "Arthur, we failed."

The young man was the most promising red robe valued by the great prophet, and also the most talented priest in Holm Parish in the past fifty years. Before thirty-five, he had already become a level nine red robe. The man named Arthur was regarded as one of the most competitive candidates for the saint cardinal position. However, due to his radicalism, he was always excluded from the central power of Holm Parish.

Arthur's eyes slightly squinted considering that he wasn't expecting this answer, "Failed? With three level nine scrolls?"

"We were close, but then we ran into Lucien Evans. I believe that he was there to persuade Richard." said Octave. He did not mention anything about Lucien's left hand to Arthur, as he thought to himself that this should be a secret only accessible to the great prophet.

"He was hiding, so we were not prepared. He even had a dragon! We managed to run away using Angels on the Ground." Octave added.

Arthur's brown eyes lit up for a moment. He then thought to himself and said, "This is our chance. We will keep it a secret for now. Not telling anyone else that Lucien Evans is contacting Richard might be of benefit to our future plans. If we have no solid evidence, because of Richard's prestige, we'd probably be in trouble."

Lend said calmly, "I know what you mean, Arthur, but the decision should be left to the great prophet."

Arthur did not say anything but directly left for the abbey in Rentato.

Octave and Lend continued to walk along the corridor and then they were surprised to find that they had run into seven to eight red robes on their way, which meant that most of the senior-ranks in the secret groups were all here today, and they were all extreme radicals, consisting one fourth of the entire Holm Parish.

"What's going on here?" Octave asked Lend.

Lend had no idea, although he joined the group prior than Octave, “Maybe there’s some emergency. We’ll know very soon.”

They knocked on the door of the confession room. The gentle but clear voice came, “Octave and Lend? Come on in.”

Pushing open the door, Octave and Lend walked in. They bowed to the great prophet who had just finished his confession.

Space was limited here. The candle in the room was not capable of lighting up the entire room. Shadows stretching on the ground, the place seemed a bit intimidating.

The great prophet was standing in the darkness, his face was hidden, but his deep eyes had the power to attract anyone’s attention, as if they could suck in one’s soul.

Octave saw that there was a book in the great prophet’s hand, but he could not see the name of the book clearly.

“You failed?” The prophet asked calmly and gently.

“Yes.” Octave and Lend lowered their heads deep, and they recounted what happened in detail.

“This isn’t your fault. I made a mistake. I did not ask for God’s implication before sending you two there.” said the prophet sorrowfully, as if it was him who failed the mission.

“But, it has proved the fact that we’re on the correct path. If we take actions too late, the priests will fall into the vicious sorcerers’ traps one by one! The pope and some of the grand cardinals are in fact helping the evilness!” the great prophet raised his voice.

“You’re the great prophet; you lead us to confront the evilness,” both Octave and Lend crossed, “only truth lives forever!”

“What do you two think of the Grand Cardinal Sard? Do you think he might join us?” asked the great prophet.

Octave and Lend both looked up at the great prophet in confusion. Why would the prophet be asking this question?

At this time, finally, Octave was able to see the name of the book:

The Interpretation of Dreams.

“The great prophet, why are you reading this strange book?” Octave could not help asking.

At this time, the great prophet's face started twisting and divine light burst out from his body. The white, light wings stretched out and filled the entire space. Behind the wings there was the bright sky. Suddenly they were up in the air, not in the confession room anymore!

The dignity and divinity made them have the urge to kneel down.

“Six-wing Seraphim... No, wait, this isn't right...”

Octave stared at the gorgeous-looking angel standing in front of him in astonishment, but somehow the face was quite familiar to him, as if he had just seen it.

Then the beautiful face put on a creepy smile. The answer struck Octave,

“Lucien Evans!”

The surroundings had all disappeared. Octave opened his eyes. Richard, the crystal dragon, and Lucien Evans were staring at him.

What was it? Was it a dream?

Seeing Octave panicking, Lucien grinned,

“The ones you saw in your dream came from your consciousness. I’ve got a rough idea about who the members are.”

“The place looked shabby, but inside it was luxurious and grand enough to be compared to the Bright Hall, which indicates that in your belief, you’re doing something righteous, even though it requires you to hide in the darkness and your hands will be covered in blood. You look upon heaven, however, you’re in hell...”

“You couldn’t see the face of the great prophet. This means that when you talked to him, the great prophet hid his face...”

“The confession room was narrow, dark, and intimidating. This shows that when you first came to the great prophet, you were in the darkest period of your life. Assumably, that confession room was the very one that you were in...”

“At the end, there were light wings. He once showed his great power in front of you, and that was perhaps where you got your power from, Angels on the Ground...”

Lucien’s tone was dull, but Octave’s face was getting pale.

In Octave’s eyes, Lucien was blocking part of the light from the window of the Salvation Church, making it look as if he actually had the six pairs of light wings.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 527: “Angel King”

Octave opened his mouth and was about to speak, when gentle, holy light suddenly illuminated inside his body, swallowing both his body and his soul.

After the light disappeared in spots, all the traces that suggested Octave's previous existence were gone, just like what had happened to Lend, captain of the night watchers.

"What is this?" Richard frowned, unable to stop Octave's death.

His hands inside the pockets of his long cloak, Lucien said gravely, "For them, 'Angels on the Ground' is not just a 'grace' that can increase their strength for a short while, but also an incurable 'poison' at critical moments. It should be a precaution in case they are captured and confess their secrets."

After knocking out Octave in one punch, Lucien did not feel anything yet, but the battle where Alferris teased with Lend on the other hand had great changes. Suddenly receiving the enhancement from 'Angels on the Ground', Lend had the overwhelming advantage. If Lucien hadn't finished his battle so quickly and offered help in time, Lend would've probably escaped. Even though the man failed to do so, Lucien could only watch him be swallowed by the power of angels without being able to do anything.

It was for that reason that Lucien did not try to move or wake up Octave, so that the guy could be brought back to Allyn for interrogation, but obtained his intelligence directly via Dream Casting while the power of angels was suppressed by the Silver Moon and the mysterious existence of the World of Souls. Otherwise, Lucien would have preferred to ask for the help of Atlant, the Eye of Curse, or Stanis, the King of Nightmares.

Richard found it unacceptable and shook his head. “How could the Lord’s envoys do such things to the Lord’s servant?”

It was almost the same as what demons and devils did to their worshipers. Also, since even he, a level-eight cardinal, was unable to do anything about, it was obvious that the enemy was no ordinary angel. The pure holy light just now convinced him of the source of the power.

“Angels are just God’s messengers, but they do not necessarily represent God. The pope that Octave described as corrupt is still able to use God’s Arrival. Perhaps, this is a test of the God of Truth.” Taking advantage of Richard’s bewilderment, Lucien directed him to what he wanted the man to think about.

Richard looked at the ground where Octave disappeared with the typical blue eyes of Holm and mumbled, “Was that ‘prophet’ really ‘Angel King’? Could he really accomplish the religious reform through the pope and the Grand Cardinals?”

“At least based on Octave’s subconsciousness, he was convinced that the Angel King had arrived through certain things.” Lucien was more or less confused about that. When he first heard ‘great prophet’ from Octave in the dream, he thought that the Lord of Hell, his old friend, had come again, and was certain of God’s relationship with Sard. However, Octave’s unsuspicious attitude towards the prophet made Lucien doubt himself, because the Lord of Hell could not steal the power of the God of Truth on his own but had to count on the senior-rank believers.

Therefore, the Angel King, who was only second to the God of Truth in Mountain Paradise and had arrived for real, while not as strong as the Lord of Hell, couldn’t have been deceived by the Lord of Hell directly.

Perhaps, the great prophet was just a puppet that the Lord of Hell introduced, and there were other masterminds such as Sard?

While thinking about those things, Lucien went on, “Also, Bishop Richard, you have announced that the right to the interpretation of Cannon should be returned to the devout believers. Then, why do you have to rely on the pope and the Grand Cardinals to perform a top-down reform? You should encourage your believers, count on your believers, and use their overwhelming strength to crush the obstacles that stand in the way of faith. Perhaps, that is the purpose of the God of Truth’s test, and the reason why he did not stop the schism of the Church.”

Richard turned around and looked at Lucien, stunned. He had never considered why the two parts of the Church both had divine powers after their separation from that point of view. Thinking for a moment, he shook his head and said, “The pope and the the Grand Cardinals are in possession of the extraordinary powers that the Lord grants. The reform will be pointless if I count on the weak believers alone, unless the Lord recalls the divine powers and grants every believer enough strength.”

“Bishop Richard, your definition of believer is too narrow. Are nobles believers? Are radiant knights, gold knights and legendary knights believers? As long as your reform meets their wish to communicate with the Lord directly, so that you can make them join your cause, plus part of the conscious members among the Grand Cardinals, it will be possible to experiment on your reform on a small scale.” Lucien did not elaborate on it but offered a simple tip. “By then, you will be the unique saint in the history of the Church. Chances are that you will be favored by the God of Truth and become his real spokesperson on earth.”

Lucien did not have any god-related faith and naturally could not understand a pious bishop like Richard. Therefore, he habitually allured the man with power, fame and a position on Mountain Paradise after death. In Lucien’s eyes, it was hard to push forward Richard’s reform without the boost of interests.

Hearing what Lucien said, Richard’s eyes suddenly shined. “Yes. I have to count on and activate the believers. They are the foundation of Mountain Paradise and the targets of the Lord’s grace!”

Lucien couldn't help but wipe his cold sweat. As a non-professional who was mixed up with too many things, he found it impossible to imagine what the guiding principle and roadmap that Richard came up with in the end for his religious reform would be like.

They did not waste any more time. Fearing that the death of Octave and Lend would raise the wariness of the great prophet, Lucien and Alferris asked Richard to turn on the divine power circle and left the Salvation Church.

Alferris walked next to Lucien, grieved, with the translucent, amber eyes filled with sorrow. It repeated nonstop, "My trophies, my trophies..."

Lend was swallowed by the holy light without leaving anything, and most of the valuable items on Octave were destroyed by Lucien's Elemental Order. Therefore, Alferris caught no treasure at all.

Lucien patted it in a smile. "I'll keep the scroll of 'Orb of Ultimate Destruction'. The rest of Octave's items will be yours."

Alferris immediately turned around and lunged at Lucien. Extending the tongue, it licked his hands enthusiastically, "Boss, sign me up for another hundred years!"

Where else could it find such a rich, generous and prize-winning partner?

Alferris almost wanted to lock Lucien in its house and urge him to write papers every day!

Lucien was amused by the shameless crystal dragon. Tossing the last few items to him, he hurried to retreat his hand.

Alferris opened the storage bag that Lucien kept the items in temporarily. Its eyes glittering, it poured the treasures into its palm and licked them one after another, as if it were leaving its unique mark on them.

After licking, Alferris counted the treasures with great passion while he asked obsequiously, “Lucien, I didn’t know that you had such a profound understanding about dreams.”

“It’s part of my research, but most of the things I said were far-fetched.” Replied Lucien unconcernedly.

Alferris looked at Lucien, finding it strange. “Are you not scared that you reached a wrong conclusion?”

“The few key points are alright. Octave’s impression on them was too deep. His reactions could’ve been analyzed in the dream without any tricks. As for the rest, it doesn’t matter whether or not I was right. Does his mental faculty have anything to do with me? Am I responsible for his psychological health?” Said Lucien with a smile.

Alferris did not pursue the question any longer. Counting the lovely treasures, it said angrily, “Lucien, it was outrageous of them to say that I was your pet. We are obviously partners!”

“Yes, partners.” Replied Lucien casually.

Thinking for a moment, Alferris asked curiously, “Are pets more important for sorcerers? I can tell that most sorcerers have pets.”

It only studied the theories that it was interested in. Pets, which might share its treasures, did not interest it at all.

“Sort of. Pets are the extension of a sorcerer’s body. They are the eyes and ears of a sorcerer...”
Lucien generally introduced the functions of a pet.

Alferris fell silent as he talked. Lucien looked at it in confusion, only to discover that it was eyeing himself with glowing eyes.

Alferris suddenly lunged at Lucien and licked his left hand intimately: “Boss, recruit me as your pet!”

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After getting rid of Alferris with a lot of trouble, Lucien returned to his magic tower and turned on the communication with Natasha.

“... After Richard sorts through his ideas, I will summon him and talk to him. If his ideas are in the interest of us and the nobles, I’ll propose to Sard that he be appointed as the archbishop of the

royal family.” Natasha was in a good mood after hearing Lucien’s voice, but she did not reach a decision recklessly.

After their test on Sard’s reaction, almost everybody knew that she was still a ‘friend’ to Lucien. Therefore, Natasha was not afraid of communicating with Allyn anymore, as long as the frequency was not high.

Lucien was thrilled about it. A while back, he still needed to go to the royal magic tower of Holm cautiously, but the reality had changed much faster than he planned.

“Archbishop of the royal family?” Lucien did not quite understand what the job was about.

Natasha explained with a smile, “The archbishop is responsible for the religious problems within the royal family. The castles of the royal family and the private churches within the manors are under his authority, too. However, my grandfather had been in poor health for the longest time and relied on the treatment of the saint cardinal. Therefore, the Grand Cardinal of the parish was also the archbishop of the royal family. But as a matter of fact, the two posts are independent, and I have a say on the candidate of archbishop.”

Lucien immediately realized that it should be a post that the Church set up to control the royal family before the Congress of Magic could compete with the Church, but it was something that Natasha could make use of now.

“Natasha, do you have any systematic ideas about the future of Holm? The Congress and I can only cooperate with you if you have a vision.” Lucien asked gently.

Natasha chuckled. “I think we should discuss the question face to face. Lucien, I thought of you every time I saw the moonlight over the past few days.”

She expressed her feelings boldly and straightforwardly.

While feeling happy and sweet, Lucien was more or less rendered speechless. Shouldn't he be the one doing the sweet talking?

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 528: Manifestation of Influences

Sensing Lucien's silence, Natasha asked rather confusedly, "You don't like me being so straightforward?"

"No, I love your spontaneity and your aggressiveness. You wouldn't be the Natasha that I love if you cringe shyly." Lucien expressed his feelings, too. "However, I feel that what you said was too 'tough', and it was more suitable for a man to say."

That was because the original quote left a deep impression on Lucien.

Natasha snorted and grimaced, "In fact, when I said that, I had imagined a scene in my mind, where I played Moonlight, building a peaceful, slightly sorrowful atmosphere, before I left the

piano, walked to your front, fell on one of my knees, grabbed your hand, kissed the back of your hand, looked at you in your eyes, and confessed my love to you emotionally. Haha.”

Lucien was amused. Had Natasha duplicated the romantic confession of love that she planned for Sylvia to him?

After laughing for a while, Natasha said delightedly, “I was just kidding. I know that you don’t like it. But to be honest, it’s quite strange. I used to be a knight who was so good at romance, but why are the topics always diverted to strange courses, ruining the atmosphere, whenever I want to talk sweetly to you?”

“You are good at romance and sweet talk? As I recall, I was the one who taught you that confession.” with a smile, Lucien teased Natasha.

Natasha raised her voice and argued solemnly, “That’s only one of them. I’m adept at sweet talking. It was exactly based on romance and sweet talks that I won Sylvia! Right, that is not my point. My point is, why does the romantic and sweet atmosphere between us always change weirdly?”

As time went by, she seemed to have forgotten the trauma of the past and could talk about Sylvia in a regular way.

“In fact, I like the atmosphere. I feel that it is relieving, joyful and warm to be with you, and I don’t need to worry about the change of feelings if we continue on like this.” Lucien thought for a moment and expressed his feelings frankly, too. However, Lucien felt that his face was flushing when he talked in such a way, and he was certain that Natasha was not.

Natasha chuckled and said emotionally, “Me too. It makes me feel very happy and comfortable, as if we had started since a long time ago and we will continue to the end of our life. When I was with Sylvia before, I was always worried that she might abandon me and choose you. But now that I’m with you, my heart is very peaceful, because I know that you will always be here by my side. It is not about gender or external pressure. Even if you were a girl, I believe that you still wouldn’t give up.”

“Lucien, although I had romantic experiences, I have never been intimate with a gentleman before. If I do anything wrong or overstep your boundaries, please do tell me so that I’ll pay more attention in future. Problems occurred between me and Sylvia exactly because we were not candid enough to each other, and we did not communicate often. I want to protect our love.”

Lucien smiled. He was somewhat excited but managed to control his voice and make it gentle, “Natasha, me too. I don’t have much love experience. If I do anything terrible or clumsy, please don’t despise me and just tell me straightforwardly.”

“It is your clumsiness that I like!” Natasha’s voice became hoarse, enchanting Lucien’s ears. “I am looking forward to my birthday when I realized that we will celebrate it together.”

“What gift do you want?” Asked Lucien half-jokingly. It could only be a surprise if he was the one who prepared the gift.

Natasha lowered her voice and chuckled, “You should know what gift I love most.”

Lucien was immediately lost for words.

However, Natasha followed with a smile, “I was just kidding. I know it’s your boundaries. You never encouraged me to abandon my family and responsibility and elope with you, and I will

respect your thoughts, too. I will only imagine it in my heart until the day you are willing to do it yourself. For me, the best birthday gift is that you accompany me to pass the dawn.”

“However, there’s still more than one month to go before my birthday. There should be chances for us to meet in between. Lucien, I miss your temperature, your smile, your different looks, and... and your ‘flavor’.”

Lucien had thought that Natasha would be shy in the end, but out of his expectations, she spoke it out so openly. Therefore, to defend a man’s dignity, he followed, “I miss you, too. I miss your everything.”

“Really?” Natasha said in a slightly hoarse voice, “By then, I will wear your favorite dress and silk stockings. Do you want black or any other colors?”

Her voice was so captivating that Lucien’s body became hot. He was about to reply, when Natasha cut off the electromagnetism messaging with an evil laugh. It was quite a bummer for Lucien.

Pacing back and forth in his library, Lucien thought to himself, “Last time, it was Natasha who pushed me over. Next time, I have to be more active and push her over, or I wouldn’t deserve to be called a man.”

“Huh, what should I do? What distance should I keep so that I can push her over without being pushed over by her?”

“After we enter the room, if she is in the front, I’ll hug her from behind and kiss her earlobe, which will weaken her strength...”

“If we walk into the room next to each other, I’ll distract her attention with other topics. Right, I can confess my love boldly so that she will be overwhelmed by surprise...

“Or maybe, I can trigger the softness in her heart with a romantic atmosphere, so that she will be pushed over by me willingly?

“But what if she is as straightforward as yesterday?”

Without him knowing it, Lucien began his ‘meticulous’ ‘Natasha Push-over Plan’.

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While the two of them who were in hot love tried to control the frequency of their communication, they had been talking every other day. Very soon, it was already the Month of Fire (July).

Cleaning his clothes, Lucien spoke to Leo, his butler, “You will audit the accounts of the few companies with a few assistants who are good at numbers. I’ve already talked to Arthur.”

Although he was not in charge of specific affairs, Lucien maintained his interests in the Allyn Telephone and Telegram Company, the Mineral and Harvest Company and the Gift from Elements Company by seasonally auditing them. While those people couldn’t have the courage to embezzle his revenues, it would be good for both himself and them if he was more strict.

“Yes, my lord.” Replied Leo respectfully.

After seeking his revenge and settling his life, he had a plan of reestablishing a family and was now dating a middle-aged lady who studied magic.

After he left the magic tower, Lucien went to the Atom Institution, intending to continue the analysis on ‘Magic Order’, the eighth-circle magic, after a brief visit, so that his magic strength could be adapted to his cognitive world sooner.

Hardly had he entered his office when Lucien saw Annick, Sprint, Katrina and other students waiting for him, each holding one copy of Arcana.

“Katrina, Layria, has your paper on superconductivity been published?” Lucien thought that it was the reason for their excitement. After all, they had never published any paper on Arcana before.

Katrina said with a delightful smile, “Yes, it has, master. It’s on the third page of Arcana of this issue.”

“Also, many sorcerers of electromagnetics wrote letters to us. Some even visited us in person.” Layria was also very happy. She was flattered by such treatment.

Lucien checked the arcana badge of the two girls. Realizing that they had been successfully upgraded to level four, he nodded his head in approval, “You will have to continue on the work. Right, is there anything else?”

Sprint, the most impatient of all, opened Arcana and said, “Master, take a look at the paper on page one. His Excellency Oliver has proposed a solution to the problems in Mr. President’s light speed experiment. He has offered a transformation formula on the length reduction of materials in the motion against Ether.”

“A solution?” It was not until then that Lucien realized that they were excited about Oliver’s paper. Therefore, he took over the journal and browsed through it, checking if it was in accordance with their previous discussion.

His students looked at Lucien expectantly and solemnly, hoping that he could point out the problems of the paper. They were frustrated, however, because Lucien closed the journal calmly after skimming through the article.

“Master?” Heidi couldn’t help but ask.

Lucien raised his eyebrow. “What’s up?”

“Do you have any... thoughts?” After a brief hesitation, Heidi asked straightly.

Shaking the journal in his hands, Lucien asked back, “What thoughts do I need?”

After a brief silence, Sprint said anxiously, “Master, this is an explanation on Mr. President’s light speed experiment with Ether! It’s a strike on the particle theory! Now, all the sorcerers in Allyn

who support the particle theory are waiting for the opinions of Mr. President, His Excellency the Lord of Storm, Her Excellency Hathaway and you.”

After he broke the silence, other people immediately chimed in.

“The supporters of the wave theory are cocky again. They’ve found a new weapon!” Said Heidi in dissatisfaction.

“Master, did you find any flaws in this paper?” Annick asked cautiously.

“I feel something is wrong with the paper, but I can’t tell what it is.” Chelly rubbed her hair.

“It seems to be only an assumption...” Katrina and Layria said simultaneously.

Because their teacher had proposed the light quantum hypothesis, and they belonged to the elemental school, they were all supporters of the particle theory.

But after they wrangled for a long time, Sprint and his lot discovered that Lucien was as tranquil as before, as if the paper they read was just an illusion.

Heidi asked in confusion, “Master, are you not mad? Do you not want to refute them?”

“Why would I be angry?” Pointing at the journal, Lucien smiled, “I just checked it. His Excellency Oliver has only proposed a theoretical explanation that is still an assumption. It only suggests that things can be like this but cannot explain why things are like this. Also, it hasn’t been proved by any experiment or phenomenon yet. Why should I be angry?”

Heidi patted her chest in relief and said, “That explains a lot. I thought you betrayed the particle theory, master.”

The other students looked more or less the same.

Lucien looked at them and said solemnly, “When did I say that I support the particle theory?”

Huh? Heidi, Sprint, Chelly, Katrina’s jaws almost hit the ground. Even Annick and Layria, who were usually calm, were stunned, too. Weren’t you the one who came up with the light quantum hypothesis?

“Until the interference and diffraction can be explained from the perspective of particles, my opinion on the particle theory and the wave theory is the same. They are both flawed and cannot explain the nature of light.” Lucien took the opportunity to inculcate his ideas into his students.

Dazed, the few young men did not know what to say.

At this moment, Lucien’s monocle became hot. Somebody was reaching out to him.

“Lucien?” a loud voice echoed. “Have you read today’s ‘Arcana’? What’s your take?”

After hearing that, Lucien suddenly smiled. No matter how many prizes he won and how many revolutionary theories he came up with in the past, he was never considered a real authority compared with the renowned specialists such as Raventi or Gaston, but only a genius who had earned something through inspiration. Therefore, when there was any problem that they wanted to discuss, they would never talk to him first. However, after the ‘new alchemy’ was submitted and he had a complete system that belonged to himself, everything had changed subtly.

One’s influences in most cases were best manifested in other people’s subconscious reaction.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 529: Busy Lucien

Lucien respected the honorable archmages who were dedicated to arcana studies like Raventi. He smiled and said, “I just got this issue of Arcana and haven’t read it yet. However, if that is the paper you would like to discuss with me, it shouldn’t be a problem, as I communicated with His Excellency Oliver in my teacher’s place a few days ago.”

“You discussed with him?” Raventi was slightly surprised. Oliver and Lucien were not associated in his impression, and Lucien should be the last person that Oliver turned to. However, Raventi soon found a reason. The Hand of Annihilation must’ve been over to discuss with the Lord of Storm, and Lucien happened to be there at the same time. Therefore, he was invited to join the discussion.

After thinking it through, he asked impatiently, “Do you think that the length of materials will be reduced when they move against ‘Ether’? Is it necessary to explain His Excellency Douglas’ experiment from the perspective of ‘Ether’?”

Raventi was one of the Elementalists who was relatively open-minded but had his own persistence. He could accept that atoms could be subdivided, but he could not imagine that materials could be reduced in length during movement on their own without the integration of spiritual power.

“First of all, this is just an assumption, exactly like the assumptions that many supporters of the wave theory came up with before. It shouldn’t be treated with bias because it is proposed by a grand arcanist.” Lucien repeated what he said to his students earlier. Then he said, “Also, I don’t think it’s the reduction of the materials. If the reduction is real, I think it is more likely to be the reduction of space...”

Heidi and Annick both realized why their teacher was so calm after hearing the conversation between Lucien and Raventi. It was only because he had read it in advance.

“How cunning of you!” Heidi secretly complained in her heart. Then, the same thought came to Katrina and the rest of them, they listened to the discussion between their teacher and Raventi attentively, referring to the journal in their hands now and then.

After a long time, Raventi finally cut off the communication in great satisfaction. Lucien raised his eyes, only to see six pairs of eager eyes. They seemed rather relaxed, as if their previous anxiety had been cleared after he expressed his opinion.

“Master, I’m still confused about this.” Katrina hurried to ask. Their master was on their side after all!

After Lucien explained their questions, Annick frowned and asked in confusion, “Master, you mentioned earlier that you are inclined to neither the particle theory nor the wave theory? Then what is light exactly?”

When he mentioned it, Heidi and the other students recalled the topic that astounded them a moment ago. They all looked at Lucien with confusion and worry.

Thinking for a moment, Lucien retained his serious attitude and said, “If you drop your preconceptions about the wave theory and the particle theory, and if you consider really based on the experiment phenomena and results, you will discover that light shows both the features of particles, as suggested by the photoelectric effect and the Brook scattering experiment, and the features of waves, as suggested by the double-slit experiment, the diffraction experiment and the Brook spots. Therefore, both the wave theory and the particle theory have shortcomings that they cannot overcome, and they cannot depict the light completely. I believe that waves and particles are unified on a higher level, except that they have different projections in reality.”

It was the first time that Lucien explained the question in front of everyone. It was more of a psychological warm-up for his students.

Annick and the other students were deep in thought after Lucien’s explanation, but they seemed more puzzled.

Lucien did not intend to continue the War between Wave and Particle. So, he shut his mouth in time, planning to return to his office and peruse Arcana of this issue. At night a few days ago, his cognitive world suddenly had hazy, cubic stripes all of a sudden, which were similar to the structure of a new legendary class that Fernando had mentioned repetitively. It made Lucien suspect that somebody had proved a certain prophecy in the ‘new alchemy’, but it was not about neutrons, the most important of all.

Lucien could’ve found the neutron on his own after repetitive experiments. However, his magic level was not adapted to his cognitive world yet, and he hadn’t learnt a lot of regular magics.

Because of his unconsolidated foundation, there might be hidden problems if he allowed for grand changes in his cognitive world. After all, even if the new legendary class was constructed, he couldn't put it into use for now.

Lucien believed that in a year or two, when his knowledge about seventh-circle and eighth-circle magics was abundant enough, and his magic level had been stabilized, it would be the best opportunity for him to 'discover the neutron'.

When he was about to step away, Lucien felt that his monocle became hot again.

"Lucien? Have you read the latest issue of Arcana?" It was Gaston's voice this time.

Lucien sighed with a smile. "I just discussed with His Excellency Raventi about it..."

They discussed for a while. Gaston expressed his ideas and listened to Lucien's opinion. In the end, he said, "I barely discussed arcana questions with you before. You are more distinguished than I expected. What other suggestions do you have regarding His Excellency Oliver's paper?"

"I feel that his transformation matrix can be applied to many other places. It may be worth studying." Lucien mentioned it subtly.

Gaston was certainly unable to capture Lucien's meaning between the lines yet. He smiled, "I also feel that the matrix can be used in many other research frontiers. Right, Lucien, I don't think you have heard yet. The Arcana Review Board has decided that with your expertise, you should not only be responsible for the revolutionary papers. A well-deserved authority, you should be in charge of the review of your fields."

“What fields?” Lucien grimaced. Ever since the untrained arcanists discovered that they could not make a breakthrough in his place, he hadn’t reviewed any paper in a whole year and almost forgot that he was a reviewer. After all, there weren’t many revolutionary papers.

However, Lucien did not refuse the Board’s decision, because reviewing more papers was also an exercise and a way to obtain inspiration. Even the papers that cannot be passed might bring him a new insight.

Gaston smiled, “All board members agree that you are an authority in elements, alchemy, thermodynamics and mathematics. All the papers in the four domains may be forwarded to you. Also, you will also be responsible for the quantum photon papers in the school of Light-darkness and the papers related to X rays and electrons in electromagnetics. Is there a problem?”

So far, although Lucien had won the Prize of Immortal Throne and the Silver Moon Medal, nobody really considered him an authority in necromancy and electromagnetism, not to mention horoscopes, illusionary, transformation or summoning that he hadn’t made any distinguished achievements in them.

“Not at all.” Lucien replied.

Gaston praised him, “Lucien, you are the most amiable one of all the gifted arcanists that I’ve seen. One other thing. I am planning to establish an institute that belongs to myself like you. However, in the microscopic field, the resources of the Congress will surely be invested in the Atom Institution. Therefore, I’m planning to study something else other than the new alchemy. Do you have any suggestions? Is there any field worth paying attention to in the school of elements?”

Lucien could already imagine similar institutions and research centers growing larger and larger in number. Sorcerers were no fools. After the new alchemy was proposed, other than confirming his

talents, they must've realized the advancement of such a research methodology — both in terms of results and in terms of funding.

Thinking for a moment, Lucien replied solemnly, “I believe that the studies on synthetic living matter is far behind the current development of arcana. It's a field worth digging into.”

“Thank you.” Gaston thanked him sincerely.

After the conversation ended, Lucien looked at the students who hadn't left due to curiosity with a smile, until they were almost crept out.

“Master, anything else?” Heidi, the boldest of all, asked in a shivering voices. Were there still quizzes and exams? They were almost middle-rank sorcerers!

Lucien shook his head. “Don't worry. I've found something for you to work on.”

That's exactly what we're worried about! Layria and Sprint put on bitter smiles.

“As you may have heard, I will shoulder the full responsibilities as a member of the Arcana Review Board. Therefore, as my student, you have to help me with the review on the papers allotted to me.” Said Lucien solemnly.

Sighs echoed. Sprint, Katrina were surprised at first, because it was certainly amazing to review other people's paper, but very soon, they were all frustrated.

Chelly said timidly, “Master, while our arcana level is now three or four, and we are some sort of middle-rank sorcerers, that’s because what we are in touch with is the most cutting-edge stuff in the elemental field, and it’s easy for us to obtain arcana credits.”

“In fact, it’s been only four years since we graduated. We haven’t grasped enough knowledge or done in-depth research in many fields. I fear that there will be many problems if we review other people’s papers. Even you may be blamed.”

Including Sprint, who was often the most confident one, all the students nodded in agreement. One might trip himself if his step was too wide.

“This is exactly the way for you to build up your knowledge. I will re-review every paper you review. Whenever an error is discovered, the reviewer will have to write a report to be about why they made the error and what they can learn to avoid it. For the record, my re-review will be meticulous and rigorous in the first few years until you know what you are doing.” Said Lucien solemnly.

“Yes, master.” The few students immediately agreed with it.

Heidi, then rubbed her cheek in relief and smiled, “In fact, reviewing papers is not bad. It will help us to build our own knowledge system as soon as possible. I was freaked out a moment ago, because I thought that master was assigning ten knowledge points and exercises to us like before.”

“A great proposal. I’ll prepare a quiz for you when I have time. Hopefully, you won’t be lonely before you become archmages.” Lucien had thought to modify the Course of Theoretical Physics ¹ directly, but too much knowledge about the theories of relativity and quantum mechanics was in it. After the general acceptance of the two theories improved, his students and more arcanists would definitely ‘enjoy’ it.

“What?” Heidi’s face was pale, as she felt the eyes of Sprint and other students who were going to tear her apart.

If she wasn’t lonely before she became an archmage, she would certainly be lonely for the rest of her life...

At this moment, the smile on Lucien’s face was like the smile of a devil.

.....

After dismissing the scared students, Lucien began reading the papers. Very soon, he noticed an article which was titled as ‘An Analysis On the Spectrum of Hydrogen Lines Based on the New Alchemy’.

“... So, they found the Balmer formula [2. Johann Balmer, a Swiss mathematician, discovered (1885) that the wavelengths of the visible hydrogen lines can be expressed by a simple formula.] based on the theories, which befits the experiment result.” Lucien realized the source of his gains. It was different from Earth where the formula first came up based on experience.

When he was about to read the paper more carefully, Lucien’s monocle became hot again.

“Who’s calling me this time? What a busy day...” Lucien complained, as he hadn’t enjoyed a moment of peace in the whole morning.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 530: Rock's Suggestion

After he activated the communication circle, a mature, pleasant female voice came from his monocle, "Lucien?"

Lucien was stunned for a moment, unable to tell who it was. It was not until the speaker opened her mouth again that he finally realized that she was Lady Florencia, the wife of Grand Arcanist Oliver.

"Lady Florencia, is there anything I can help you with?" Asked Lucien in confusion.

Florencia chuckled, "Do you think I have nothing better to do? I wouldn't have contacted you if there weren't anything. What's your opinion on Oliver's paper? You must've read this issue of Arcana, right?"

Lucien was even more baffled. You and your husband could've discussed it in private. Why do you bother to ask an outsider? However, Lucien recalled that the couple seemed to be in conflict. He smiled and said, "I have read it and discussed it with His Excellency Raventi and Mr. Gaston. If you don't mind, I'll start from the beginning. Is that okay?"

“Yes.” Florencia replied quickly.

After exchanging their views on the paper, Florencia was silent for a moment. Then she lowered her pleasant voice and said, “Lucien, did Oliver ask you to work on an opera together with him? You’d better refuse him.”

“How did you know?” Oliver’s intention to please his wife had been found out by Florencia? That was rather a surprise for Lucien. What a terrible secret-keeper!

Florencia’s suppressed voice emitted delight. “He always complained that there were no real musicians in Holm, and that nobody could adapt his script into an excellent opera. So, if he intends to please me with a new opera, how can he forget you, a grand master who ranks very high even in the entire history of music?”

“Then, how did you know that he would please you with an opera?” Lucien finally understood that Florencia inferred it based on her understanding about her husband and their previous married life. Having just started his own love life, he asked curiously.

Florencia chuckled again, but her laughter seemed to contain complicated feelings. “He’s always like this. It’s either jewelry or emotional poetry, or a new opera, that he creates in person. The previous two choices were recently used. Considering his personality that he would not use them repetitively, it is easy to infer that he’s going to make an opera this time.”

“Then, why did you ask me to refuse him? You don’t want to forgive him?” Lucien patted his face after the question. How could he have asked it directly? It turned out that he had a gossip side, too.

Florencia laughed without any delight. She teased with bitterness, “After you wrote For Sylvia, Sylvia died. If you write another opera that is meant to mend the relationship between a couple,

only to separate them in the end, I believe that your love music will become a curse in everybody's mind. It's for your own good that I asked you to refuse him."

Lucien captured Florencia's meaning between the lines keenly. "My lady, are you going to renounce your marriage with His Excellency Oliver?"

"Yes." Florencia responded. Then, she poured her feelings out. "I tolerate him again and again, but he never really regretted. I'm too exhausted and desperate to deal with him any longer. I have my own arcana and magic studies. I have teachers, students and friends. It's not like the value and significance of my life will be gone after I leave him. Sometimes, love can't cover everything. Perhaps I can find new happiness after we are separated."

She spoke rationally without any tears or yelling, which made Lucien hear the resolution in her words. It seemed to be a decision that was made after deliberation, not a spur of the moment decision. Therefore, he did not persuade her but simply smiled, "In that case, I'll wish you a happy new life in advance, my lady."

However, based on Florencia's familiarity and understanding about Oliver that she revealed unconsciously, could their relationship really be cut so easily? Lucien was quite suspicious about it.

Florencia said in a low voice, "Lucien, you are really a good man. I often think that if I hadn't run into Oliver but encountered you who are both more talented and more loyal than him, my marriage would've been so happy that it made other people jealous. I envy young Natasha."

She was Morris' student, and Morris was a member of the royal family of Holm and a junior that Hathaway thought highly of. So, she had a general understanding about Lucien and Hathaway's dialog the other day and learnt how Lucien refused all kinds of temptations over the past years.

“Thank you for your compliment.” Although he had received a good-man card, Lucien was not bothered at all because he already had his love. He simply smiled and thanked her.

Florencia suddenly chuckled, “In fact, I once had the idea of retaliating against Oliver, and I planned to have a soulful and physical relationship with another gentleman exactly like what he did to me. At that time, you were one of my targets, but you completely ignored my charm. Also, I couldn’t overcome the psychological barrier myself, either.”

“Now that you have little Natasha, there’s no way that I would do that. I’ve suffered the pain myself, and I will not let another girl suffer such unforgettable pain again. Lucien, be nice to young Natasha. If you have another woman, I’ll seduce her and get her away from you completely. Hehe. She lost her mother when she was still young. She must be very into a mature women like me.”

Lucien rubbed his chin in embarrassment and hurried to change the subject, “My lady, you mentioned that I was one of your targets. Did you have other candidates?”

Florencia felt much more comfortable after the revelation. She held back her laugh and said, “I am very demanding. Few people met my requirements. Also, they had to have strong backgrounds so that they would not be killed by Oliver. Therefore, besides you, I planned to seduce my teacher. However, after careful analysis, I found that the odds of success were not high. Lucien, do you think if my dress is fully embedded with the Wave Stones, the Sun Stones, the Ice Crystals, the Dragon Hide and other precious materials, my teacher will be captivated by me?”

Lucien pointed it out directly, “I believe that His Excellency Morris would take off your dress, push you to the bed, and leave with your dress.”

“Haha! I think so, too!” Florencia was stunned at first. Then she burst into laughter.

Lucien raised his eyebrow. Feeling that it was inappropriate to make fun of the seniors behind their back, he hurried to ask, "It's been a while since I met His Excellency Morris. What studies is he busy with now?"

"My teacher almost drooled after you proposed new alchemy. That's a field that controls the changes of materials. If anyone can get to the bottom of it, they would have however many treasures they want. Therefore, my teacher has been completely devoted to it ever since." Florencia said jokingly. As a matter of fact, for a ninth-circle elementalist such as Morris, Donald and Raventi, new alchemy had shed the light of legendary for them. How could they not devote themselves to it?

Lucien replied equally humorously, "If Alferris were not a dragon, I would've suspected that Alferris is His Excellency Morris' natural son. He truly guards his fortunes like a dragon."

After some chit chat, Florencia said, "Lucien, you should work harder and try to have a child with Natasha soon. If Oliver and I weren't that into a childless relationship, we probably wouldn't be like this today."

"The situation today is still too dangerous for us to have children. Also, it's been less than one month since she was crowned. There are months to go before any urge or pressure." Lucien had talked with Natasha about that, too. There would be a lot of changes in the coming years, and pregnancy would weaken her and keep her in danger. Therefore, they should consider the question after Holm was stabilized.

Natasha couldn't have agreed with it more. She wanted to be married to Lucien openly and let their child be born in a complete family.

Regarding the problem that the higher one's rank was, the more difficult conception would be, the 'Forced Conception' on the Pink Book was certainly not developed for nothing. It was a creation of a certain legendary in order to continue his bloodline. When he saw that magic at the beginning, Lucien had the idea that he could establish a clinic in Allyn that specifically treated infertility.

After ending the conversation with Florencia, Lucien more or less hesitated. Considering the closeness, Florencia was Morris' student, and Morris was Natasha's senior, so he should refuse to cooperate with Oliver as per her request because they were on the same side. However, he had already promised Oliver, and it was inappropriate to go back on his words.

After thinking for a moment, Lucien made a decision. "I'll wait until their marriage is waived. If His Excellency Oliver still wants an opera to get back with her, it would be in no conflict with Lady Florencia's request."

"... Also, does Lady Florencia's request that I should not work with her husband suggest that she is still wavering and scared that she may be swayed under the opera?... I hope their relationship would not end in tragedy even if they are discovered..."

Suddenly, the monocle became hot again. Lucien rubbed his eyebrow helplessly and turned on the communication circle.

"Lucien." Morris's voice came from the monocle.

Lucien exclaimed and replied somewhat awkwardly, "Good morning, Your Excellency Morris."

"Why do you sound weird?" Asked Morris in confusion.

Lucien smiled. He couldn't confess that he had just made fun of the grand arcanist with the grand arcanist's student just now. So he simply asked, "Is there anything I can help you with, Your Excellency Morris?"

"Have you read the latest issue of Arcana?" Morris' question was the same.

Just like that, Lucien spent the entire morning discussing with familiar archmages and senior-rank sorcerers. However, the legendary sorcerers such as Douglas did not reach out to him, because their wisdom was enough for them to see the problems in Oliver's paper.

Lucien was not free again until noon. He planned to continue reading Arcana after lunch. If he did not study and follow the latest papers, he might commit horrible mistakes even though he had the spirit library.

At this moment, Rock, who was wearing a black tuxedo, walked in and knocked on the door of Lucien's office. "Lucien, do you have a moment?"

"Have you accomplished the mandatory task?" Lucien invited him in with delight.

Rock said relaxedly, "Of course, as a member of the Atom Institution, the mandatory task for me was very simple. Lazar must be returning soon, too. Lucien, the reason why I'm here is to inform you that we are running out of hands and space as our research programs grow larger in number."

"I'll file an application to the Magic Research Board, so that we will have the other unoccupied laboratories on the eighteenth floor." Lucien replied. He was already an unquestionable authority in the field of atomic research. It was not difficult to do. "As for hands, don't we have many arcanists?"

Counting himself, there were ten arcanists in total.

Rock opened his hands. “We have too many arcanists. Nobody is willing to run errands anymore. Your students all have their own research programs as they grow up. Therefore, we need to hire a batch of magic apprentices.”

“Then, go to the Task Zone to issue tasks, or contact the magic school and ask them to recommend the best students.” Lucien asked suspiciously, “Why do you care about that?”

Rock did not look like a man who cared about that sort of thing.

Rock chuckled but admitted honestly, “I’m getting anxious seeing that you and Lazar have both found your love. This is the place I spend most of my time in. How can it work out if there is no ‘fresh blood’? The few female students of yours are quite good, but they are all too proud because of you, and they do not think that I’m a big deal at all.”

“No coercion or intimidation.” Lucien reminded him.

Rock rose in satisfaction, “I’m looking for a partner for the purpose of marriage. Why would I do that? I’m going to the Task Zone. Considering the reputation of the Atom Institution, countless apprentices will apply for it. Well, would it be too troublesome?”

“Resume review, written exams, and interviews. You can screen them through three procedures. It’s all yours. I’ll supervise it in person once in a while.” Lucien said rather mischievously, hoping to give the magic apprentices a lesson about job hunting.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 531: Hot Tide

After seeing Rock off, Lucien shook his head and smiled, not having high hopes in him. Then, he focused his attention on Arcana and finished it. He saw the paper that Annick and Sprint submitted for discussion about the differences between the actual effect and the ideal effect of the cyclotron. They vaguely determined that energy was transformed into electricity, but they failed to come up with any formula to deduce the specific data to adjust it.

“I hope more people can begin thinking about this question.” Lucien closed the journal and focused on analyzing the eighth-circle magic.

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On July 3, in the morning, the tide of hotness was surging.

Lowi had no idea how many times he had come to the magic tower of Allyn. He only knew that if he couldn’t find a task that he was capable of to earn enough rewards for his rent, it would be barely possible for him to survive in Allyn where everything was expensive. He would have to leave the center of arcana and magic tower and look for opportunities elsewhere.

“This is my own fault. I was too sloppy in school and did not work hard enough. I failed to become an elite apprentice, so I can’t be recommended to the good posts.” Lowi did not complain but blamed himself for his lack of effort. If he had become an elite apprentice in school, he could’ve been recommended to the Sorcerer Administrative Department, the Apprentice Assessment Department, the Task Zone or other departments of the Congress, or given an opportunity to work in the major organization and journals’ offices in Allyn. That way, he would get in touch with many official sorcerers, and a decent pay that was enough for him to survive in Allyn.

Lowi touched his pocket. There was a recommendation letter in it for the local magic group in the Paphos County.

Although in the eyes of the magic apprentices who went to remote counties or even the Solar Islands, to be recommended to the Paphos Country, one of the top three prosperous places of Holm, was something worth envying, it was entirely meaningless for Lowi who had realized his mistake after graduation because it was not Allyn. If he left the center of arcana and magic, he would be left behind by his classmates who stayed in the place soon enough.

According to the survey made by ‘Allyn Impression’, a collection of tidbits that appeared only a few years ago, every one of ten apprentices who stayed in Allyn for three years after they left the magic school became an official sorcerer. The elite apprentices that were recommended to good positions even had a terrifying ratio of one in three, which was far higher than other branches where the ratio was one in twenty.

In the Solar Islands and the remote counties, it was an astonishing one in thirty. Unless there was absolutely no choice, nobody wanted to go there. But the situation seemed to have improved after the channel of ‘News of the World’ appeared.

After thinking that, Lowi moved his finger away from his pocket, determined not to be left behind by other people at the beginning.

However, his heartburn made him smile bitterly. In order to save costs, it had been a while since he enjoyed breakfast.

His family was not rich in the first place. If he couldn't find a job that suited himself and paid well, his dream would have to succumb to reality, unless he accepted the tasks that were evidently dangerous.

"Life, or dream? What a hard choice." Lowi teased himself and swallowed to allay his hunger. Cleaning his apprentice robe that had been worn out, he walked to the Task Zone.

Finding a silver counter that was not occupied yet, Lowi raised his head and read the missions displayed on the green screen.

"Secret mining mission in the southern desert of the Gusta Empire: The pay is one arcana point or a Thale every day, and additional pay will be calculated according to the quality and quantity of minerals. Please refer to the appendix for the details. Capability Request: Unrestricted. Number: Unrestricted. Danger Level: Very High. You will need to face the monsters in the desert and take care of the night watchers and the clergy. In the meantime, the minerals contain invisible curses."

The abundant pay dazzled Louis' eyes, but he was stopped by the final description. It was impossible to accomplish the task without the capabilities of an official sorcerer. Eight out of ten apprentices would be killed.

"... Holning's store needs an alchemy assistant for three years. Food and accommodation will be reimbursed."

Lowi was tempted. Despite the lack of pay, which meant that he couldn't buy materials or borrow books, the reimbursement of food and accommodation could help him avoid the expensive life in Allyn. Also, he could learn a lot by working as an assistant to an alchemist.

“But I'm a sorcerer more inclined to spell-casting than craftsmanship. A delay of three years will make me further behind. I might as well go to the Paphos county and learn the latest research through the magic radio.”

Lowi shook his head and continued reading, but the tasks were either too dangerous or too unrewarding for him to resolve his imminent crisis.

Lowi was frustrated after reading the new tasks in half an hour. Did he really have to leave Allyn?

The sorcerers in different clothes next to him accepted tasks and left, talking and laughing. But in Louis' eyes, they seemed to be in a different world that was filled with color and brightness, while he was surrounded by gloomy mists.

Louis, unwilling to give in, raised his head again, and planned to find a short, low-paying task to deal with the day, so that he could check if there was any suitable new task for him tomorrow. Suddenly, the green screen bounced, and a new message jumped on it.

“Apprentice Recruitment: The Atom Institution, located on the eighteenth floor of the Allyn magic tower, is in dire need of ten apprentice-level assistants. Duration: Three years. Capability Request: No lower than senior-rank magic apprentices. Payment: Ten arcana points every month, free elementary books on arcana and magic, free-to-use experimental devices. Deadline: July 10.”

“Apprentice-level assistants?” Lowi repeated in confusion, finding it hard to believe the copious payment.

Suddenly, his eyes were frozen when he saw the dark red words below the introduction: “The Atom Institution?”

“The Atom Institution!”

Lowi immediately felt that a fire was burning all the way from his heart to his head, making him unable to think about anything. The Atom Institution, which belonged to Mr. Lucien Evans who proposed the new alchemy, was a sanctuary for every sorcerer who intended to walk on the path of elements and materials, and a marvelous place where new research achievements appeared on a monthly basis. It represented the highest level in atomic studies.

Such a place is recruiting apprentice-level assistants?

What am I waiting for?

Lowi felt that his dream was right before his eyes, shining splendidly. Panting, he hurried to accept the task and took over a form that was passed on to him by the staff.

“Resume?” Lowi had never heard of such a thing before and was somewhat stunned. Thankfully, the introduction on it was quite detailed. He filled it out according to the conditions requested.

“If your resume passes, you will have the first round of written exams in two days, which will be about the fundamentals of elemental arcana and magic.” The instructor repeated the task description in a weird tone, for she had never heard of resume or written exams before, either.

Two days? Can I survive in Allyn for two days? Should I take some other task to live through it?

Lowi was confused, but he soon grew ruthless. Looking at his apprentice robe, he thought to himself, “I can’t be distracted by other tasks but have to be focused on reviewing the fundamentals of arcana and magic... It should be enough for me to survive seven days if I sell this robe to the pawn shop!”

After he made the decision, Louis’ eyes became bright, and he walked out determinedly.

After the instructor saw him off, she shook her head. Then, with passion beaming out of her eyes, she picked out a resume and began filling it out, too.

Hardly had Lowi stepped away when he heard exclamations: “The Atom Institution is hiring apprentice-level assistants?”

“The Atom Institution is hiring?”

“Is it true? Is it true? Let me take a look!”

In the ever-rising voices, the whole Task Zone was seething. Many apprentices were so excited that they were blushing, as if they had seen their bright future.

It made Lowi slightly frown. The competition would be rather intense. Then, he laughed in self-mockery. If there weren't any intense competition for that, it would mean that he had been dreaming all the time.

As he walked firmly, Lowi encountered his teacher in the magic when he passed by the task platform at the edge. The usually mannered middle-aged man was also waving his hands excitedly like apprentices.

"Mr. Balterley, greetings." Lowi said politely.

Balterley recognized that it was his student that he often thought highly of. He smiled at Louis, "You're here for tasks? Go to accept the apprentice assistant task from the Atom Institution! I just took it!"

"Master, aren't—aren't you a second-circle sorcerer and a level-two arcanist? This is apprentice assistant!" Lowi asked in shock.

Clenching his fists, Balterley said zealously, "Is that important? As long as I can get into the Atom Institution, what's the big deal even if I have to be an apprentice as a sorcerer? That's the cutting edge of the elemental field. Also, I'll be privileged to hear Mr. Lucien Evans' tutelage and get in touch with the deepest mysteries of elements and materials."

Lowi suddenly felt a headache. The competition appeared to be too intense.

However, the fire of dreams and ambitions were burning too wildly to be extinguished, which filled him with expectation and momentum.

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After a round of written exams and interviews, Lucien found a frustrated Rock in the Atom Institution.

Regarding that, Lucien asked curiously and correctly, “Rock, what’s up? There’s nobody you’re interested in? Nobody calls to you? As I recall, the institution was almost crushed by crowds recently.”

Rock said regretfully, “Some female apprentices did approach me. Well, a few male apprentices did, too... But I refused all of them. I’m looking for a partner to marry. Do I have the courage to accept those people? Those I was indeed interested in, however, were all self-respective, polite and indifferent. They didn’t give me any chance at all. What’s wrong with this world?”

Lucien burst into laughter and patted Rock’s shoulder. “It’s a good thing to be more social in order to find a partner, but your way is not going to work out. It’s not hard to find a mistress, but it will take you forever for you to find an independent girl who is worth your respect and love. I intended to persuade you to give up a few days ago, but then I thought a lesson would do you good. Alright, drop your other thoughts and complete the second round of written exams and interviews fairly. I’ll supervise the final interviews in person.”

Rock sighed and complained jokingly, “You’re talking as if you were an expert.”

“Of course I am. I have a girlfriend.” Lucien replied also jokingly.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 532: Invitation

In a branch of the Congress of Magic on the Solar Islands in the Boundless Ocean...

While the dark picture where a middle-rank sorcerer’s head was blown up in public hadn’t been entirely erased from Blake’s head, nothing could stop him from listening to ‘Arcana Voice’ and ‘News of the World’, which was the entertainment all over the islands that was even more popular than parties and balls.

“Good evening, this is the Weekly News Review of Allyn, and I’m your old friend Lark.”

Blake felt that he truly had one more friend when he heard the crisp and calm voice every night, one who told him stories late at night and who made him feel familiar even though he had never met her.

‘Lark’ reviewed the important news piece by piece, and Blake listened attentively. He was now delighted at the progress in research studies and now was worried by the gloomy situation in Holm.

“... Over the past few days, an unprecedented tide has appeared in Allyn. Countless apprentices and sorcerers sent their resumes to the Atom Institution and surged to the eighteenth floor of the Allyn magic tower for written exams and interviews. According to sources, the Atom Institution was crammed by people during the days, and they had only seen such splendor when the grand arcanists participated in a symposium. The people completely blocked the way.”

Lark’s cold voice was mixed with a smile, especially when she mentioned ‘sources’.

“What resume? written exams, and interviews?” Blake said to himself in confusion. ‘Atom Institution’ raised his strong interest. It should be Mr. Lucien Evans’ Atom Institution, right? Did he come up with any paradigm-shifting theoretical system again? No, since apprentices and sorcerers were involved, it should be about something else.”

Lark continued, “For the audience outside of Allyn, you may be unaware of what has happened. So, allow me to briefly review the incident. On July 3, the Atom Institution issued an ‘Apprentice Assemblage Task’, planning to hire ten apprentice-level assistants to help the arcanists in the institution with their experiments.”

“What was most surprising, however, was the way of recruitment that the Atom Institution adopted. You would have to obtain a resume form, on which you would write your name, age, school, assessment and your magic image. Then, after screening, they would select distinguished candidates for interviews...”

Blake was already unable to follow Lark. His brain was humming. The previous announcement was crushing his skull like a surging tide.

“The Atom Institution is short of apprentice-level assistants?”

“If I can enter the Atom Institution and get involved in the cutting-edge studies in the microscopic field, maybe it won’t take long before I can improve both my arcana and my magic to the middle rank!”

“No, no, their interviews must be over...”

In Blake’s eyes, if the Atom Institution wanted apprentice-level assistants, the queue outside of the gate would span across Allyn. Of course, that was exactly what happened. But according to his experience, shouldn’t the magic school recommend elite apprentices to them directly instead of issuing a task openly?

“It is said that Mr. Lucien Evans is a man of integrity and strictness. This must be his idea. The best candidates will be chosen fairly and openly...”

Many magic apprentices who were not distinguished in the magic school, because of fortuitous incidents, were sometimes better than the elite apprentices in terms of arcana and magic abilities. However, due to the gap at the beginning, it was difficult for them to catch up with the latter or get more opportunities.

“This is the shortcoming of being far away from Allyn. How frustrating it is to know things only when they are outdated...” Blake sighed and focused his attention on the news again.

“... It is reported that more than five hundred apprentices submitted their resumes on the first day, and that another eighty official sorcerers and middle-rank sorcerers were willing to join the Atom Institution as apprentices...”

Blake did not mock them, because he had thought the same thing when he heard the news. He was thinking about abandoning the privileges of an official sorcerer and join as an apprentice, even if he would be responsible for the chores.

He heard that Mr. Evans convened a regular meeting every month. He would gain a lot even if he only attended it as a guest.

“... Up until now, the first round of resume screening, written exams and interviews have been over. Mr. Lucien Evans was not involved. Mr. Jerome and Mr. Rock were responsible for the whole process. According to them, they have selected twenty-five eligible candidates, who will participate in the final interview together with the talents selected from the second round of recruitment. Mr. Evans will be in charge of the final interview.”

The second round? Blake almost jumped to his feet. Did that mean that he still had an opportunity?

Lark's crisp voice spread into his ears. “Here, I would like to remind the members in the branches and local magic groups outside of Allyn that today is July 8, and 6 p. m. on July 10 is the deadline of resume submission. The second round of written exams will begin on July 12. If you are interested, please plan for your visit to Allyn.”

“You are all members of the Congress of Magic, and the Congress and the Atom Institution treat you equally. In fact, the second round of recruitment was added by Mr. Evans for you. He said that the sorcerers and apprentices outside of Allyn must not be left forgotten.”

Blake felt rather moved. The sorcerers and apprentices in Allyn could never feel the pain of being forgotten by the Congress. The reason 'Arcana Voice' and 'News of the World' became the most popular entertainment was not just because they provided a lot of knowledge but also because they offered a bond to make the islanders feel connected to Allyn.

"Thank you, Mr. Evans. Thank you, Congress..."

"... You can ask your friends in Allyn to help you with the resume. I believe most branches and local organizations should have devices for electromagnetism messaging. If you don't have any friends in Allyn, you are free to contact the Task Zone. This is their contact... Please stay where you are until you receive the invitation for written exams, so that the branches and the local groups will not be paralyzed." Lark's voice had never been more pleasant for Blake.

After he finished 'News of the World' in excitement, Blake waited for dawn anxiously.

When the sun was high, Blake hurried to the magic tower of his branch. Although it was partly within his expectation, he still saw a surprisingly long queue.

"What a heated scene..."

It was an ineffable picture for Blake, who waited until the afternoon before it was his turn.

Blake meant to contact the staff in the Task Zone. However, a shadow that he always dreamed about suddenly showed up in his heart, and he somehow changed the target of his communication.

“Hello, who is it?” A common female voice came over.

Taking a deep breath, Blake said, “It’s me, Blake. How are you doing, Alfalia?”

“I’m doing fine. Is there anything wrong?” Asked Alfalia.

Weighing his tone, Blake said, “Are you still in the Paphos County? Is it only three hours away from Allyn?”

“It takes two hours and forty minutes on a magic steam train. Blake, do you want me to fill in and submit your resume for you?” Alfalia’s voice was filled with a smile.

Blake said in surprise, “How did you know?”

“Because I’m on the magic steam train to Allyn for the Atom Institution.” Alfalia chuckled.

Blake scratched his head. “In that case, I’ll have to ask for your help.”

“Okay.” After Alfalia’s reply, the two of them fell into a brief silence.

Then, Blake couldn’t help but ask, “Are you not worried of running into those things again?”

Alfallia was born into a magic family and inherited a huge fortune, which was why she could use electromagnetism communication items when she was only a second-circle sorcerer. However, with her wealth, her capability and her outstanding looks, she became a target that certain immoral higher-rank sorcerers coveted. She had refused the deal with those people and returned to the Paphos County, her hometown.

Alfallia smiled, "I can always give up if I run into one again. It's not like I can't experiment on my own without the Atom Institution. Besides, Mr. Evans is an honorable man who never had any rumors. I trust his integrity."

Hearing his love's casual but firm words, Blake smiled. That was exactly the Alfallia that he had always loved. Every time he recalled her, her face was rather fuzzy, but her bright, smiling and determined eyes were always clear.

"May you succeed." Said Blake sincerely.

Alfallia smiled, "You, too."

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Inside the Atom Institution, Lucien was discussing superconductivity with a few students, when he saw Rock wobble in palely as if he were about to collapse.

"Mr. Rock, what's up?" Annick asked concernedly.

Rock whined, “I’m about to die! Resume reviewing, written exams and interviews were all my job, and I needed to complete my own experiments and magic structures. I feel that I’m stepping into a grave, because I see faces everywhere! That jackass Jerome was always accompanying Vera!”

“You were the one who took over the job happily. That’s nobody else’s fault.” Lucien observed sarcastically. Then, he entrusted the experiment to Katrina and Layria, before he returned to the magic tower casually. After all, many experiments were unsuitable to be performed in front of the people of the Atom Institution.

“Master, today’s ‘Holm Weekly’.” Hardly had Lucien greeted Pinocchio when Leo handed over the newspaper.

Lucien took over and read it. The headline was exactly ‘The Queen Has Appointed A New Royal Archbishop’.

Nodding his head, Lucien was not surprised. Natasha had mentioned it the other night. She appreciated Richard’s religious reform but believed that it should be conducted prudently as it would drive the Church mad.

“Sard passed Natasha’s request without any blockage? Is his purpose really so simple?” Lucien brought the newspaper to the library.

At this moment, Pinocchio announced, “Master, a guest named Arthur Doyle has come to visit you.”

Its voice echoed in the tower.

What is it about? Lucien asked Pinocchio to let Arthur in. Then, he saw the round fatty approach him flatteringly, “Lucien, here’s an invitation. Duke James will hold a party in his personal estate tomorrow, and he hopes that you can join. Her Majesty will also visit his manor.”

The fatty had been in a panic all day after the demise of Prince Patrick and tried to approach Duke James. However, after Natasha acceded to the throne, and especially after she celebrated the birthday for Lucien, Arthur had been revived and rejuvenated. He had been strutting cockily, except that he lost his confidence whenever he ran into Lucien.

Is this an opportunity for us to meet? Lucien’s mood was never better. Although they couldn’t do anything when they were surrounded by the nobles, it would still be enough as long as they could meet.

Therefore, Lucien nodded and promised that he would come.

.....

Late at night, inside a private villa...

Looking at Count Barady, Duke York said gloomily, “Her Majesty will visit James’ estate tomorrow. How’s the thing that you mentioned last time going?”

“It should be hopeful.” Count Barady gave a vague reply.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 533: Abrupt Change

The east of Rentato was known as ‘Land of a Thousand Lakes’. The lakes large and small were as smooth as a mirror, presenting an entertaining view with the exuberant forest around.

Such a beautiful place had naturally been occupied by the royal family and the great nobles. James, Duke of Paphos, had a personal manor right next to one of the gentle lakes. It was truly enjoyable and pacifying.

A four-wheeled wagon, pulled by a dragon scale horse, slowly stopped at the gate of the manor. Arthur, despite being a fatty, rushed to open the door of the wagon ahead of Lucien and jumped off, before he made the gesture of supporting Lucien to get off.

Lucien shook his head with a smile. He stepped forward and appeared behind Arthur. Then he murmured, “What’s the point of this? You will leave the best impression on Her Majesty as long as you operate the Holm Mineral and Harvest company and the Holm Mineral Union Bank well.”

The shares of Prince Patrick’s ‘investment’, without a doubt, had been inherited by Natasha. Lucien had been making fun of her about that, too. He had tried his best to invent magic items and save more wealth, and finally, he could declare proudly that he would not be scared of the cost for the

magic materials that he needed until he became legendary. However, Natasha's heritage alone had exceeded all his possessions. He felt rather envious.

Arthur turned around and followed Lucien. He replied without blushing, "I respect you from the bottom of my heart, Lucien. The alchemical and magical items you invented gave me unimaginable wealth and allowed me to join Duke James' circle. So, my previous gesture was absolutely genuine. However, did you mention that Her Majesty was satisfied about the promotion and development of the 'Holm Mineral and Harvest company'? What about the Holm Mineral Union Bank? Did she say anything?"

"Her Majesty is from a foreign land. She does not know the bank industry, which only exists in the countries around the Storm Strait, very well. So, she hasn't offered any remark. You should write a report on the history and future of banks for her." Lucien understood that, in order to promote magical items and influence the people of Holm, Brianne and other countries, he had to start from three aspects, namely the simplification of magic items, the financial support centered at banks, and the manipulation of public opinions.

Of course, that was based on the premise that the Congress of Magic was strong enough.

"No problem." Said Arthur delightedly. He was so fat that his face was almost bloated, and his eyes had only a thin line left.

At the gate of the manor were two rows of soldiers in red uniforms, informing that Natasha had arrived.

Passing through them, Lucien and Arthur went to the most eye-catching garden of the manor under the guidance of a squire.

The garden was Duke James' pride. It was claimed to be only second to the royal family's villa. All kinds of amazing flowers were blooming in the vast garden, letting out intoxicating scent.

At the center of the garden, it was a rather spacious place for an open-air garden, with both a view of the lakes in the front and gorgeous flowers behind.

Hardly had he joined the party when Lucien noticed Natasha. She was wearing black clothes that looked like a hunting suit. Her purple long hair had been tied, and she appeared to be much calmer. It seemed that after days of adaptation, she had finally changed from the Violet Countess into a real queen.

Looking at Natasha with appreciation and love, Lucien felt quite great. The anxiety in his heart for days seemed to have been eased. He was already satisfied just looking at her quietly.

As if she sensed Lucien's eyes, Natasha turned around and looked back at her.

Her silver pupils seemed to be glittering, and her lips curled. It appeared that she did not know that Duke James and the rest of them invited Lucien, either.

But very soon, Natasha controlled her face and continued talking to the nobles around.

She was wearing silky black gloves that were in the same style with her clothes. She did not take them off when the nobles kissed her hand.

Lucien had switched back to the double-breasted long tuxedo. Now that they had determined their relationship, he was not worried that his constant style would make her tired of him.

After a while, Natasha said with a polite smile at Lucien who approached. "It's been a while, my knight."

It was not until this moment that the other nobles who were relatively weak noticed Lucien's arrival. Their conversations came to an abrupt end. Including Duke James, Duke Russell and Arthur, everybody glanced at them curiously and expectantly, hoping to find certain traces.

Were they really good friends, music partners, or were they something more intimate?

Lucien took off his top hat and fell on one of his knees. He grabbed Natasha's right hand and kissed the back of her hand against the glove like a knight. "Your Majesty, your knight has never left."

Her right hand slightly shivered, as if she recalled something. Lucien, on the other hand, recalled the scene of moonlight that he described earlier, and put on a smile.

After Lucien stood up again, Natasha smiled, "I saw many creative gadgets in Holm. They have filled the kingdom with vigor and hope. That's your effort, Lucien."

Arthur was more or less disappointed at their politeness and their normal conversation. They seemed like simple friends. There was not the tiniest detail that suggested a more intimate relationship. He thought that Lucien would eventually become the queen's husband and Prince Nekso, but the reality was not as beautiful as he imagined.

Duke James and the rest of them were rather disappointed, too, but they also felt quite lucky. They feared that the queen truly fell in love with Lucien Evans, which might raise a civil war if she was determined to marry him despite the Church. That was not their purpose.

They hoped that the queen could keep an intimate relationship with Lucien without being enchanted, and that the balance between the Church and the Congress was maintained.

As for whether or not they were lovers in private, that was not their concern.

Trying to control his mood, Lucien talked with Natasha like a good friend and the queen's knight, occasionally interrupted by her conversation with other nobles. It was just like any regular party.

After twenty minutes, having not found anything, Duke James smiled, "Just now, Her Majesty mentioned creative gadgets in the kingdom. I happen to have some in my place. Why don't I give Your Majesty a tour, where you will hear the introduction from their creator, Mr. Lucien Evans, in person?"

"Okay." Natasha agreed quickly, knowing that Duke James had more to say.

Therefore, Duke James and three other leaders of the liberals, Lucien, Camil and a young man with silver grey eyes went to the main house of the manor with Natasha.

"This is Count David, a ferocious knight of the royal family." Duke James introduced him to Lucien.

Lucien nodded his head. “His Excellency Morris mentioned your father before. He was an excellent sorcerer.”

David had the typical look of the Hoffenberg family. His face was contoured shenke, but his silver grey eyes emanated certain coldness. He replied with a smile, “Mr. Evans, thank you for your approval of my father.”

He was neither cold nor warm, as he recalled his late father.

Very soon, the few of them entered the main house and stepped on the stairs. As the queen’s knight, Lucien naturally stayed behind and ‘protected’ Natasha with Camil, one on the right and the other on the left.

Right when Duke James and the rest of them were about to turn, Lucien suddenly sensed something soft in his left hand.

“Natasha’s hand?” Lucien turned his head in surprise, only to catch her delightful eyes.

Natasha’s right hand had taken off the silk glove. The warmth of her palm was a major contrast to the courtesy a moment ago.

Lucien understood her heart. He couldn’t help but hold it more tightly. Lucien felt indescribably satisfied by the secret movement. The warm feeling seemed to have made his heart peaceful again.

As they held hands, Natasha looked at the front, but the smile on her face couldn't be covered.

After they passed the corner, they loosened the hold on each other's hands as if it were nothing and followed Duke James to enter the chamber.

Inside the secret chamber, a tray with wines, champaign and 'Sky Blue' on it had been placed.

After checking the drinks, they each picked up a cup and looked at Duke James, waiting for him to speak.

"In fact, I only mean to ask Your Majesty's opinion on the alchemical workshops and the promotion of magic items. Honestly, a lot of our wealth has been invested in it." Duke James spoke rather straightforwardly, as he felt that he had grasped Natasha's tendencies.

Natasha kept the solemnity of the queen. "My attitude is the same. All the magic items that benefit the kingdom and the people will be encouraged, and those which are evil and corrupting will be forbidden."

"You are truly not one of those conservative people, Your Majesty." Duke Russell said with a smile. "I'm hoping to invest in something, but I don't know if it could make profits. Mr. Evans, do you have any suggestions?"

"What investment?" Lucien suddenly felt that he was in a business meeting.

Russell sipped the champagne and said, “Radio stations, like ‘Arcana Voice’ or ‘News of the World’, rather than a few simple news programs or music episodes.”

He keenly sensed the value in it, but he did not know how to make money from it.

Natasha looked at Lucien curiously. He seemed to have talked about it before in private.

Lucien smiled. “The main problem is that magic radios are still expensive. Although they have been simplified, only the people above the middle class can afford them. The popularization of the item means that the radio stations wouldn’t have great returns.”

“Do you have any suggestions? Further simplification?” Count Henson was quite interested in it, too.

Lucien looked at them and said thoughtfully, “I suggest that the radio station should also publish newspapers. Whoever subscribes to the newspapers for one year will be given a magic radio. Then, the radios will be popularized soon enough.”

“But there will be heavy losses!” As the Minister of Finance, Count Henson was very sensitive about losses. One magic radio was much more expensive than a year of subscription.

Lucien looked at Natasha and said, “There will be losses, but it’s a necessary price for promotion. The revenue, however, will come from advertisement. I’ll ask my companies to give the radio stations tremendous advertisement fees”

“Wouldn’t you lose money?”

Lucien smiled, “Advertisement is investment and will pay off later. We can afford the wait.”

Even though he lost money, it would be worthwhile if he could control the public opinion of the radio stations of Holm through advertisement.

Duke James was about to talk, when his face was darkened. He crumbled the cup in his hands into pieces. “It’s poisoned!”

It was not until he heard poison that Lucien felt a corrupt, terrifying poison bursting out inside his body, but it was eliminated by the Congus Ring immediately. However, below the poison was a weird curse that made him unable to focus his spiritual power as he were drunk!

Were the wines in the secret chamber all poisoned?

Why did he fail to notice it?

In his anxiety, Lucien looked at Natasha and immediately felt that his heart was heavy, because her face was also dark and her hands were shivering.

Duke James roared, “Who poisoned the wine?”

His voice was so loud that the glass was almost shattered, as he tried to draw the attention of the nobles outside.

He knew very well that, as long as the criminal was not an expert above legendary, they would’ve raised his wariness if they approached him, who was a gold knight, and they poisoned the wines within the range of his consciousness.

That was, of course, if they did not have the cooperation of spies!

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Chapter 534: “Poisonous Devil”

Because he was capable of many marvelous magics, Lucien was very confident about the wines he checked, but his confidence turned out to be a fatal mistake today. He had drunk a cup of ‘Sky Blue’ that was mixed with terrible poisons and weird curses.

No, not just the wine!

Lucien looked at Camil. As a level-eight radiant knight whose responsibility was to protect Natasha, she wouldn't drink or eat anything on such occasions. Still, her face was dark, and her body was quivering uncontrollably. She intended to turn into 'Tide', but the blue ripples disappeared immediately after they surfaced. It was obvious that she had been poisoned and cursed!

Where was the source of the poisons and curses?

Lucien suddenly smelled vague but sweet fragrance of flowers, like that outside, except that it was more sweet and intoxicating.

Something was wrong with the fragrance!

There must be a spy, or something who was manipulated, that brought the item which emitted such fragrance in. When it was mixed with the wines that had also been played tricks on, the wine and the air became unimaginable poisons and curses. No wonder he did not detect anything during the examination!

But it was not the time to look for the spy or the accomplice. Lucien wobbled to Natasha, with everything fuzzy and shaking before him.

Thankfully, Lucien had the Congus Ring which dissolved the poison. He was unlike Camil, James or the rest of them, who were not only dizzy but also weak, even unable to stand on their feet.

Count Henson, who did not activate the strength of a knight, collapsed and fell into 'hangover'.

Lucien's body still had strength. He gradually approached Natasha like a drunk man. If his heavy head and soul still remembered things correctly, 'Sword of Truth', the ultimate bloodline that could cut everything, was immune to curses. Therefore, Natasha should be only poisoned, with strength fading from her body, but her head should still be clear. As long as she put on 'Health Belt' and activated it, the poison in her should be relieved in no time.

The level-eight magic item was also immune to the poisons below legendary!

As for the Congus Ring, even if Lucien wanted to give it to Natasha, she couldn't use it.

Count David, the second weakest of all, collapsed like Count Henson, but he hadn't completely entered 'unconscious' yet, but moved his eyes anxiously.

Power from the curses spread out from his lungs and his stomach and extended upwards, affecting Lucien's brain and soul. It made his head swollen and his heart race. He was unable to cast a single spell or activate any item.

After he staggered to Natasha, Lucien took off the belt and put it on her.

Natasha said in a low voice, as if talking was difficult for her. "I cannot concentrate my will... I can't use any magic item. Go... go now. Their target... should be me..."

As if not hearing anything, Lucien buttoned the Health Belt on the back of her waist, before he said with a numb tongue, “Try to... control yourself... The poison... hasn’t been completely activated yet... There should be a chance... to use magic items.”

Natasha did not waste time or give up. She tried to get her body under control, while she urged again, “Hurry and leave... You still have strength... Ask for the reinforcement... of the nobles outside...”

At least, Lucien would not die with her.

Then, she would be able to seek the slim chance of survival without concerns.

Applause echoed from the gate. “What a touching couple. I hope that you will stay together after you die.”

Lucien raised his head, only to discover a weird, green-haired man at the gate. There were no pupils in his eyes but only the devastating whiteness. His clothes were quite eccentric, too, because he was wearing a black cloak that covered his entire body even though it was a hot day.

The weird man who appeared to be in his thirties bowed and said, “Your Majesty, allow me to introduce myself. I am Primous, ‘Poisonous Devil’ of the Dark Congress.”

‘Poisonous Devil’ Primous was the expert who ranked 62nd on the Cleansing List, a level-nine dark night, and a descendant of the Demon Lord. He was best known for poisons and curses. While he ranked lower than Lucien, he was definitely stronger than Lucien.

Natasha did not respond to him but tried to focus her attention, and Lucien resisted the power of curses with his spiritual power, too.

Primous, however, did not attack immediately, but chattered on, “You don’t know me? That’s alright. All you need to know is that I’m here to kill you. It’s been a while since the Congress waited for the South Church to declare war on the Congress of Magic. After learning that Your Majesty also chooses balance, the old men sent me here.”

He seemed to be affected by his bloodline, or maybe he was confident of his victory, so he appeared rather hysterical.

“As long as I kill Your Majesty, Mr. Lucien Evans, Duke James and the rest of them and pretend that it was done by radical night watchers, the Church and the Congress of Magic will definitely burst into war. Right, I’m good at simulation. I think I’m capable of making the legendary sorcerers and saint cardinals believe that ‘Cursed Angel’ Grunwell of the night watchers did all this.”

Hearing his neurological chatter, both Lucien and Natasha tried to dissolve the power of either the curse or poison in their body, but it seemed that they were stronger and stronger as time went by. Neither of them could stand on their feet anymore.

Primous seemed to be unaware of their efforts, and nor did he care that Duke James and the rest of them could not reply because of lack of strength. He continued on happily, “In order to kill you, I spent tremendous efforts on controlling the servants and gardeners to slightly change the vegetation in the garden. If you were truly a flower lover, Duke James, you would’ve realized it a long time ago. It’s a shame that you are just a show-off. So, when you walked into this chamber with the fragrance of flowers, the previously harmless ingredients in the wine turned violent.”

“In order to not alarm you, I did not adopt drastic and fatal poisons and curses but chose weakening and paralyzing ones. They look rather effective and gave me enough time to arrive from beyond the range of your consciousness, Duke James.”

His words confirmed Lucien’s speculation, and it seemed to have ruled out the possibility of a spy.

However, how could Lucien have trusted a lunatic like him?

“Haha. Do you think that I’m so stupid that I would give you enough time to lift the poisons and curses?” Primous suddenly smiled.

Shocked, Lucien thought of something, but the power of curses that flooded into his head slowed his thinking.

Primous grimaced, “My mix of poisons and curses are named ‘Helpless Kiss’. The longer you delay, the less strength you will have. So, in order to be absolutely safe, I let you hear my chatter. I’m happy that you cooperated with me.”

As he said, he clapped his hands, “Down! Down! Down!”

Duke Russell and Camil fell first, with desperation and regret in their eyes, followed by Duke James, whose feet could no longer support his body.

“Wow, as expected of the queen and Mr. Lucien Evans. You have lasted so long. Let me guess. The queen’s bloodline can eliminate the power of curse, and Mr. Evans has equipment that provides immunity to the poisons.” Primous warmed his wrist and seemed about to attack.

Lucien stepped forward. His head was more muddled than ever, and he had only one idea, which was to stand before Natasha. However, the rational, systematic thinking that he had formed still gave him a possibility to reverse the outcome. He could allure Primous to approach and attack with his left hand, hoping that the nullifying ability of the hand could dispel the supernatural powers of the level-nine dark knight and hurt him.

Primous chuckled, “It seems that I’ll have a lot of trophies this time. Mr. Evans, you are rarely-seen moving treasury of magic items.”

He took off his cloak and revealed a nightmarish body. That was a body full of ulcers, from which yellow or green mucus was bubbling and corrupting everything.

“So, would you please die?” Primous took action. Lucien could not capture him at all, much less attack him with the left hand.

He was not careless at all after the real attack began but regarded Lucien as an opponent on the same level as him. Therefore, while his melee abilities were not as good as a regular level-nine, it was still not something that Lucien could resist.

Bam. A yellow and green shadow blinked to Lucien’s side and knocked his chest brutally.

The poison that seemed to be killing the air made Lucien’s head even heavier. He raised his left hand but could not keep up with Primous’ speed. His chest suffered excruciating pain.

Without a sound, Lucien disappeared and appeared in the shadow of the gate.

‘Magic Trigger’, the magic he prepared in advance, saved Lucien’s life at the critical moment.

“I almost forgot that you are a sorcerer, Mr. Evans, but I don’t think you can dodge again, can you?” Primous mocked Lucien and rushed at Lucien unbelievably fast.

Lucien managed to lift his left hand and blocked his chest, but Primous disappeared before him and blinked to his back, kicking him right on his back. The yellowish curses and the dark green poisons immediately surged forward.

With a dull noise, the three layers of grey skin that suddenly appeared on Lucien’s body were shattered into pieces, and obvious gaps showed up on the robe of the Immortal Throne. Lucien was blown toward Natasha, vomiting blood, with his back almost broken.

If he hadn’t learnt ‘Magic Order’ a few days ago and preset three ‘Stone Skins’, a four-circle magic, Lucien could’ve been killed directly!

“You’re still alive? That’s why I hate sorcerers most!” Primous grew agitated.

Duke James and the rest of them, while wondering how Lucien avoided Primous’ second attack, tried to focus their will, only to little avail.

Primous suddenly turned into a dark green spear and pierced at Lucien who was still on the ground.

Hardly had Lucien turned his body around with his uncontrollably hands and feet when he saw that. He intended to resist the attack with magic, but he couldn't focus his spiritual power, which was still under the suppression of the curse.

Am I going to die here?

Suddenly, a shadow appeared before Lucien. A longsword was drawn, and the gaps of void appeared out of nowhere, blocking the spear.

However, the spear was so terrifying that it pierced through her body despite the longsword, sprinkling her hot blood on Lucien's abdomen, chest and face.

"Natasha..." Lucien said subconsciously.

Natasha's face was in abnormal red. The wound on her abdomen couldn't recover due to the poison. As she lost tremendous blood, her feet were obviously shaking, as if she could barely stand on her feet, but her voice was still as firm as before: "A knight should never stay behind."

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Chapter 535: Lucien's Ruthlessness

The spear that Primous turned into was blocked by Pale Justice. Sensing the power that was equal to legendary for a Demon Lord, he stepped back. With his festering body, he narrowed his eyes and looked at Natasha who was standing unsteadily, before he declared, one word after another, "Your bloodline has mutated? The more heavily wounded you are, the stronger you will be?"

Natasha did not say anything else but stayed before Lucien holding her longsword. It appeared that her bloodline ability had been suppressed by Primous' poison, too, which discharged her newly-received strength incessantly. So, she was unable to attack but could only focus on defense first.

Since the wound on her abdomen that was corrupted by the poison couldn't be healed, the huge blood loss also added to the weakness of her body.

Primous raised his voice, sounding hysterical and brutal. "Magic Trigger, stimulation-induced defense of magic items, and bloodline ability mutation. Can you two just let me kill you? This is too disgusting. What's the use of your resistance? You would still be killed by me eventually, won't you? Wouldn't it be better to save our time?"

Lucien was like a man who drank three bottles of Reis. His brain was too sluggish for him to come up with any solution, much less performing magic. He could only vaguely sense that the power of force was gathering around his neck through his blood and spreading to his brain. Also, the power of the curse had begun to affect his body functions. Except for his left hand, the rest of his body parts were losing strength.

"No, I have to find a way to get rid of this 'intoxication', or we'll be dead for sure!"

“I cannot wait for reinforcements without trying to save myself, or there’s a 99.99% chance that I will die before the reinforcements arrive.”

“Natasha is in great danger!”

Messy ideas popped up in Lucien’s head. He waved his hands helplessly, trying to cling to an inspiration to get him out of trouble.

Primous took out two daggers, which were covered in dark green, decaying liquids that dropped on the ground once and while, darkening and corrupting a whole area.

“You will be punished for your lack of cooperation!” Primous shouted in fury. Then, he launched a storm of attacks at a speed that Lucien could not capture. The area was gradually contaminated by wriggling black, green and yellowish colors. Everybody entering the area would be suppressed by curses, poisons and diseases.

It was the semi-illusory willpower frontier that belonged to a level-nine gold knight.

Fearing ‘Pale Justice’ in Natasha’s hands, Primous did not start a head-on battle. Instead, with the suppression of speed and willpower frontier, he searched for the flaw in Natasha’s sword art and left wounds on her body with the daggers now and then.

While Natasha had the blood power of getting stronger as the wounds grew heavier, she was far weaker than Primous in the first place, and she was affected by the ‘Helpless Kiss’. It was not bad

that she could carry out one third of her abilities. Therefore, she could not keep up with Primous at all but could only defend herself with her longsword.

It was good for the first ten seconds. With the flawless defense and Pale Justice's suppression of evil and devils, Natasha managed to resist the attack of the Poisonous Devil. However, as time went by, the effect of 'Helpless Kiss' was more and more obvious. She gradually ran out of her strength, and many flaws appeared in her sword art. Primous took the opportunity to cut her hunting suit, break her skin and leave astounding wounds on her body.

By the stimulation of the wounds, Natasha recovered part of her strength, but her breathing was heavier and heavier. She was like a tightened bow that might be broken at any moment.

Suddenly, Primous circumvented Pale Justice and approached her with his back against her. Then, he knocked her chest with his right elbow.

Crack, crack, crack. The noise of ribs being broken echoed. Natasha vomited red, silver blood. She only had the time to block Primous' upcoming attack, before she was blown backwards into the wall next to Lucien.

After a bam, the wall of the secret chamber covered in the divine power circle was almost broken.

Fearing that he might be hit by the legendary longsword that obviously suppressed devilish bloodlines, Primous did not finish the enemy immediately after he hit them like before but considered his own safety the top priority. He tried not to be touched by Pale Justice. Had it been otherwise, Natasha would've been killed by him.

"You can't stand up again, can you?" Primous shouted excited and bloodthirsty, but then he roared again, "Why—Why are you still standing? Just lie down and let me kill you!"

Lucien watched Natasha struggle to get back on her feet. Her blood, mixed with sweat, dripped on the ground, and her body was full of decaying wounds, but still, she raised her longsword determinedly in a gesture of protection.

“You shall not pass until I die.”

Because of the heavy wounds, Natasha did not sound as weak as before, but her actual weakness was not changed at all.

Lucien loathed his helplessness at this moment. Now that he could not use the spiritual power, he was only half a grand knight at most, and he could not participate in a higher-level battle at all.

“I have to get rid of the dilemma!”

“I have to restore the spiritual power!”

“In order to restore spiritual power, I’ll have to lift the curse.”

“How can I lift the curse?”

His head filled with blood, Lucien thought slowly, sensing the power of the curse surging into his head from his neck.

“I announced that you are what I hate most instead of sorcerers! Your mutated blood power is too disgusting!” Primous was more than infuriated, but it did not affect his capability at all but only made him more bloodthirsty and crazy.

His fury and his chaotic blood powers did not make Primous lose his basic judgment. He still attacked stormily with his speed and agility, taking advantage that Natasha had to protect Lucien and that she was short of strength or alacrity.

When the red blood dripped to the ground, Lucien felt he heard the countdown of Natasha’s life. He was grasped by desperation and self-loathing.

However, for Lucien, what came with such desperation was not surrender but stubbornness that was like a conditional reflex. The spirit of not giving in had been melted into his soul ever since he played ‘Symphony of Fate’.

Anxiety, desperation, self-loathing and all the other feelings were gone. Even though Lucien’s head was still numb and sluggish due to ‘intoxication’, it had regained part of his thinking abilities after the negative emotions were gone.

“The power of curse affects the body and the soul by affecting the brain...”

“After it is melted by the body, it will have incessant support. Then, it will enter my head with my neck as the bridge... My spiritual power will be crushed sooner or later before I enter a ‘drunk dream’... Perhaps that’s why Primous said that the longer it was delayed, the better the effect would be...”

Struggling to analyze the procedure of the curse, Lucien found no way to resolve it, because lifting the curse required magic, and he could not perform magic now that he was suppressed by the curse. So, he was in a predicament.

“Is there any other way?” Lucien reviewed his body and realized that only his left hand still had strength.

“Left hand?”

“It is not affected by the curse!”

Lucien’s pupils suddenly widened!

At this moment, Natasha was blown into the wall by Primous in a huge noise again, but the soundproof chamber that was defended by divine power circles made the nobles outside hear nothing.

Sliding from the wall, Natasha held the ground with her left hand and tried to get back on her feet, but her wrist lost strength, and she fell again helplessly.

But Natasha did not give up. She still tried, even though Primous had already walked closer. She did not give up her persistence. If she was going to die either way, she might as well try one more time before her eyes were really closed!

“Wow, get back on your feet! Why don’t you get back on your feet! Let’s see if you can get back on your feet again!” Primous shouted passionately like a lunatic, mocking Natasha’s helpless struggle.

Then, he turned around and looked at Lucien, bowing with his left hand on his chest. “You two can go to hell now!”

After that, he grabbed the two daggers and pierced them at Lucien’s and Natasha’s heads respectively.

Lucien raised his shivering left hand, but the dagger was right before him. Everything seemed to have come to an end.

At this moment, Natasha’s shadow appeared before Lucien again. The wounds on her body were so devastating, and her feet were so unsteady, but some sort of mental power seemed to get her back on her feet again and allowed her to block Primous’ daggers with Pale Justice.

Natasha’s tied purple long hair had been blown apart. It dispersed behind her like waves, covering her bloodstained face and making it impossible to see her eyes.

The picture left a deep impression on Lucien, but he did not have the time to think about so many things. He simply clenched his left hand.

Primous roared in exasperation, “You can still stand!”

“I will not fall until I am shattered!” Natasha seemed to be shouting with her soul, but her strength had faded so much that even her mutated blood power could not make up for it. Pale Justice was gradually dangling down.

At this moment, Primous’ eyes were widened, as he saw Lucien opening his left hand and stabbing it into his own neck behind Natasha. His blood spurted out and sprayed on Natasha’s back.

“Is he killing himself?”

The unimaginable, nervous pain almost made Lucien writhe on the ground, but thankfully, he did not have any strength for that.

Holding back the pain, and not pursuing accuracy, Lucien closed his left hand and moved it as if it were trying to twist something. The power of curse which was flooding into his brain vanished the moment it ran into the Silver Moon and the mysterious existence of the World of Souls.

‘Helpless Kiss’ was level nine by itself, but the poison had already been offset. Naturally, the remaining power of the curse could not resist the Left Hand of God at all!

Black air surged out of Lucien’s neck like a snake, dispersing into the air.

His central nerves broken, Lucien could not sense any of his body parts below the head right now, but for a sorcerer, as long as the brain and the soul were still there, everything was there!

His spiritual power surged like the tornado on the ocean. The power of the curse, losing the backup, was soon pressed into a corner and about to be crumbled.

“Something is wrong with his left hand!”

Primous grew wary when he saw the black air gone. Not having the time to finish Natasha, he tried to settle the troublesome sorcerer first.

However, he was not too bothered by it, either. A sorcerer only in the sixth or seventh circle was not necessarily capable of breaking his semi-illusory willpower frontier!

But at his moment, he saw Lucien taking out his left hand and speaking in an obscure accent that did not sound like a human being at all: “Spirit Confinement!”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 536: Analysis

As the spell was cast, Primous suddenly felt indescribably terrifying magic waves emerging out of nowhere. Illusionary faces suddenly appeared in the dark, green and yellow willpower frontier around him. They lunged at him with their fuzzy, blurry bodies without being affected at all!

“A legendary magic?”

Primous couldn't have been more astounded, but hardly had the idea occurred to him when the ferocious, incomplete souls ignored his defense of poisons and curses and crawled into his body. They entered into his nose and exited from his mouth, before they reentered into his eyes, forming a weird circulation as if they were having a grand ball.

The glamor in his eyes was gone, revealing the dull whiteness. Primous' body seemed to have slightly expanded because of the excessive souls. He stood in wild disbelief like a statue, and his semi-illusionary willpower frontier was instantly gone.

The esoteric spell that did not seem to be cast by the tongue, and the overwhelming magic wells, made Duke James, Duke Russell and other people who could not see the fight both surprised and delighted. If they heard and sensed it correctly, it was a legendary magic! Which Excellency of the Congress of Magic came to their rescue?

No matter who it was, their lives were finally saved!

Therefore, they were more inclined to the Congress of Magic.

After activating the Congus Ring and restricting Primous with 'Spirit Confinement', Lucien immediately felt that his spiritual power was dry and his head was in excruciating pain. The power of the curse that was almost gone seemed to be launching a comeback. However, 'Origin', the Holm crown ring on his right hand, fed his spiritual power that he stored in advance to him.

Having no time to bother anything else, Lucien spread out his spiritual power and took out a bottle of 'Water Song' from his storage bag.

Without any magic waves, the 'Water Song' floated and blew away the cork, pouring itself into Lucien's mouth.

One of the requirements for a sorcerer to advance into the senior rank was that their soul and spiritual power could directly affect reality. That was why Congus and other liches would have spoken and cast spells when they did not have a body. It was based on the privilege that Lucien cast a spell.

In fact, the power of curses differed from poisons in that cutting the central nerves could not stop it. Lucien had planned to stab his left hand into the neck, avoiding the spine and the central nerves, and use the nullifying ability of the hand to block and eliminate the power of curse. However, he did not have such self-control when he was 'intoxicated', and he hurt his spine and central nerves, losing the feelings below his neck.

If it was delayed any longer, his brain would've decayed due to the lack of oxygen. Then, Lucien would have to switch to a new body. Therefore, the moment he tamed Primous, Lucien hurried to recover himself with drugs.

The Water Song flowed into his throat. Emitting watery colors, it twisted and recovered the wound.

Since the spine was not completely broken and the central nerves were not collapsed, such a wound was much easier to treat than broken limbs. For example, Verdi, Natasha's cousin, was cut in the neck by her before, but he was not killed and was even slowly recovering.

Then, Lucien cast 'Remove Curse', the fourth-circle magic, to eliminate the remaining power of curse.

After his wound was recovered, Lucien hurried to take out another bottle of 'Water Song'. Holding Natasha who was still on her feet, he poured the drugs into her mouth and treated her with 'Poison Neutralization' and other magics. He also added the effect of air filtering on himself.

Seeing that the danger was no more and Lucien was safe, Natasha was relieved and lost the momentum. Her willpower was finally crushed by the 'Helpless Kiss', and she collapsed in her arms.

Once one was hit by 'Spirit Confinement', their soul would be caged forever until it was relieved by a corresponding magic.

Even though the magic effect disappeared eventually, the soul would turn into dust if it took too long.

The black curse on her wound was cured by her blood power. The green and yellowish poisons were soon dissolved by Lucien's magic and drugs. The wound began wriggling, erasing the hideous, devastating traces.

Although 'Helpless Kiss' could not be relieved by a common 'Poison Neutralization' and 'Water Song', Natasha's external wounds were basically recovered. Her life was no longer in danger.

"I will gather my willpower and activate the Health Belt. You go to rescue Aunt Camil, Duke James and Duke Russell first." Due to the loss of blood and Helpless Kiss, Natasha was still extremely weak.

Supposedly, after she gathered her willpower with her blood power which made her stronger when she was wounded, the best solution was to break into the pivot of the Health Belt and use it to eliminate the poison. However, Lucien, the owner of the Health Belt, was in danger and unable to direct her to carry out the performance of the belt. So, she had to fight without it, and the Helpless Kiss was still not relieved yet.

“Alright.” Without further ado, Lucien planned to wake up James, who was a gold knight, in case more enemies came.

Therefore, Lucien carried Natasha to a wall and let her gather her willpower gradually. By then, as long as she intended to use the Health Belt, he would sense it and could provide guidance.

As he walked to Duke James, Lucien saw that his eyes were still clear. It seemed that his level-nine diminished the effect of ‘Helpless Kiss’. Even without his help, he would’ve gradually recovered after Helpless Kiss passed the most active phase.

After ten seconds, ensuring that his spiritual power was good enough for him to use the Sun Staff, Lucien finally performed a magic to suppress Helpless Kiss. At such a moment, he had to be prepared that everybody but Natasha was a spy.

Duke James was more or less recovered, but he still couldn’t gather his willpower, so he said, “Help me activate the ring on my left little finger.”

On his left little finger was a bright blue ring which, according to Lucien’s senses, had the effect of poison resistance. However, ‘Helpless Kiss’ was much higher than its innate effect, and it had to be activated in order to relieve the poison.

Activating magic items was Lucien's specialty. Soon, the ring began to emanate a layer of watery light.

The watery light soon found its way into Duke James' body, dissolving Helpless Kiss. After receiving the help, Duke James roared and pressed the green and dark air out of his skin.

He got rid of Helpless Kiss with the strength of a level-nine gold knight.

Getting back on his feet, Duke James looked so awful as if his whole family had died. For a level-nine gold knight, his own strength was the best safety measure for him. He did not expect that he would almost get killed in a trap today.

Suddenly, his eyes were straightened. "Didn't one of the masters come?"

He thought that the rescuer cast the legendary magic just now, but there was not a second moving person in the room except Lucien.

Lucien smiled, "Your Excellency, let's save other people first."

James looked at Lucien in surprise and suspicion. Could it have been him? When did he enter the eighth circle and boast a legendary item?

It was even more unbelievable than them being assassinated!

However, he concealed his suspicion and surprise soon and gnashed his teeth, “Poisonous Devil... the Dark Congress... Lucien, after you’re done ‘interrogating’ Primous, you must give him to me. I’ll let him regret living in this world.”

It was both because of fear of death as well as the fury of being set up.

“Your Excellency, do you feel ‘Helpless Kiss’ in the air?” Lucien was surrounded by ‘Air Filtering Bubbles’, a magic that temporarily blocked the curses and poisons in the air, but what was odd was that Duke James did not seem affected by Helpless Kiss anymore.

Duke James was also curious. Thinking for a moment, he looked at Primous and said, “Such poisons and curses should be closely concerned with himself. Now that he is caged, the poisons and curses of such a high level couldn’t last after losing his support.”

Lucien raised his eyebrow. His head was clear again after he was detoxicated. After ensuring that everything was alright, he sniffed and walked around Camil, Russell, Henson and David, before he returned to Duke James and said solemnly, “Your Excellency, do you really think this is done by the Dark Congress, and that he is ‘Poisonous Devil’?”

“Is he not?” Duke James was slightly surprised but not entirely unprepared. After all, Primous was the one who said everything. As a murderer, his words were not convincing.

Lucien’s attention had been focused on Natasha. He said in anger, “Duke James, if a gold knight like you can be poisoned so easily, this ‘Primous’ should have achieved tremendous accomplishments, but it is not true.”

“It took several minutes for us to reach the chamber from the garden. There was wind, the sun and the defense of the divine power circle. I cannot imagine what fragrance could have followed us into this place. After all, our garments are all magic items. We would’ve sensed it if the fragrance was abnormally dense, wouldn’t we? Therefore, Primous lied about how he poisoned us!”

“But I did smell fragrance here, and it did become a curse.” Duke James temporarily stopped rescuing Russell.

Lucien did not reply but continued, “If the fragrance would turn into a level-nine ‘Helpless Kiss’ the moment it touches the wine, like Primous said, wouldn’t ‘Helpless Kiss’ have been generated the moment we entered the chamber? But why didn’t we detect anything?”

“If I was the only examiner, ‘Helpless Kiss’ might’ve been unique and escaped my attention, but you failed to detect it, too, although you are a gold knight, Duke James. That is rather odd.”

Duke James narrowed his eyes. “Are you suspecting me?”

“If you are alright, there is another possibility, which is that ‘Helpless Kiss’ was generated after our examination. That is the only way to trick a gold knight and a senior-rank sorcerer.” Lucien looked at Duke James.

“Primous claimed that the level-nine ‘Helpless Kiss’ was a mix. That should be true. Based on that, we can reach a simple conclusion, which is that the fragrance outside was only meant to confuse our senses and make us unskeptical when we smelled the fragrance in the room. The real criminal, on the other hand, released the ‘real fragrance’ after we checked the wine and the room to generate ‘Helpless Curse’.”

“Also, the poisons and curses of such a level must be closely related to Primous’ blood power. They cannot last without the preservation of magic items. How could he have measured the time if he did not know when we entered the room?”

“How could it be so easy to assassinate a gold knight, a senior-rank sorcerer, and three radiant knights?”

Hearing Lucien’s analysis, Duke James sniffed and identified the scent in the air. Then, with uncontrollable fury beaming out of his face, he strode to Duke and kicked him in his waist.

After a clang, a glass bottle the size of a fingernail rolled out.

It had been opened, emitting sweet and vague fragrance.

“Why did you do this?” Duke James’ demand drew Natasha’s attention.

Lucien remained silent despite his confusion. Having been the target of assassination before, he was rather prudent about his safety. He was bold enough to join the party without a Transformation Mask for many reasons. Firstly, he believed that the Church would not send night watchers to kill him in a party held by the liberals, which would make the liberals completely inclined to the Congress. It would also dishearten the neutrals among the conservatives.

Secondly, with the Congus Ring, he was not very scared about assassins below legendary.

Thirdly, in the case of the extreme lunatics, he had asked his ‘buddy’ Alferris to protect him in secret. With its seventh-circle magic capabilities and its nature as a dragon, it was not difficult for Alferris to fool the experts below legendary. It must’ve detected a strange level-nine knight approaching.

Lucien’s head was too numb because of Helpless Kiss a moment ago for him to think about Alferris. Now that he was awake, he was naturally very confused.

If it felt that the enemy was too strong, it should’ve been easy for Alferris to save him or inform Fernando.

But where was the little crystal dragon?

Hopefully, everything was still fine...

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 537: Cooperation

In order to trick everyone, David did not seem to have prepared any items against the poisons or curses. He did not carry any drugs that could relieve 'Helpless Kiss', either. At this moment, under Duke James' roar, he could do nothing except to look back at him in desperation and craziness.

To be honest, even an archmage of the Congress might not have equipment or drugs that could nullify the level-nine 'Helpless Kiss'. It was needless to mention the nobles.

Gold dragon scales surfaced on Duke James' skin as he released his supreme dominance. Stomping on David's abdomen, he slightly suppressed his 'Helpless Kiss' and restored David's language ability. "Tell me! Why did you do this?"

David understood that his scheme had been exposed when the special bottle of 'honey' rolled out of his belt. Assassinating one's liege was an unpardonable crime for the nobles. He burst into laughter crazily and hopelessly, "Why did I do this? You should ask yourselves!"

"Did we ask you to assassinate Her Majesty?" Duke James roared angrily like a dragon.

David took a few deep breaths. "What sweet fragrance, just like the intoxicating hope. Ever since I was born, you had been telling me that Prince Patrick might not live a long time and would certainly have no children, and that I would be the one who acceded to the throne."

"Therefore, I built myself up all the time. I improved my chivalry. I held myself with noble character. I approached you and the Congress of Magic, not letting any flaw from my future ascendancy. I hoped to control Holm and even echo with 'Sword of Truth', touching the mysteries of the legendary knights."

“My whole life was for the throne, but you abandoned me all of a sudden and chose this uncanny queen instead! How long did she live in Holm? Did she ever strive for the throne? I don’t buy it! I want to take back what is mine!”

James was rather embarrassed as David talked crazily. David was a backup candidate that they groomed because of his identity and his tendencies towards the Congress of Magic. But naturally, when Natasha, who was more suitable, appeared, they abandoned him without any hesitation. They did not expect that he was so covetous about the throne that he would bite the people who raised him.

However, as a senior noble, James did not let his embarrassment last for long. He said angrily, “That’s why you conspired with the Dark Congress to kill Her Majesty and us? I get it. He would’ve left you unkilld for some reason, and you would’ve worked with him, blaming this murder on ‘Cursed Angel’ Grunwell. The Church, to appease the nobles who favor the Congress and the neural nobles, and not to divide the kingdom, would’ve chosen you as the king.”

David was dazed. Then he burst into such crazy laughter as if he had heard the funniest joke. Duke James and Lucien both frowned.

He looked at Duke James, almost unable to catch his breath: “You really bought it?”

“You believe everything he said? How naive!”

“Who do you think would be convinced by my story, if you, a gold knight, were killed but I, a mere gold knight, survived?”

“He is not ‘Poisonous Devil’?” Recalling the fake clues that ‘Primous’ made, Lucien observed calmly.

In the meantime, Lucien took out the crystal ball, testing Alferris' whereabouts.

Because of 'Helpless Kiss', David was out of strength as he laughed. He said both weakly and cockily, "If he were really as hysterical and maniac as 'Poisonous Devil', how could he have been sent for this mission, and how could he have trapped rational experts like you? 'Poisonous Devil' is a lunatic, but I am not one!"

"He intentionally mimicked 'Poisonous Devil' and confessed his scheme in order to mislead you into thinking about the Dark Congress."

"Duke, you're not wrong about one thing. After he killed Natasha and Lucien, he would've broken the divine power defense, pretending that it was an accident, so that the other nobles would notice it. Then, in order not to be killed by the legendary experts, he could only flee in panic after killing a few random nobles who were inclined to the Congress. Therefore, only one of you would've died, and the rest would've survived with me and revealed the scheme of the Dark Congress. That way, the kingdom would be kept intact."

The crystal ball became dark, and the Host Stars of Destiny showed up. Lucien was too occupied to ask anything, but Duke James inquired earnestly, "Who is he exactly?"

David snorted, "You still haven't got it? It is so obvious now!"

It was truly impossible to communicate with a lunatic. Duke James stomped and pressed back David's voice.

“Who is he?”

David cackled crazily, “Didn’t he mention that he would blame it on ‘Cursed Angel’ Grunwell? You think it was just a random talk? It was just a trick. He was exactly ‘Cursed Angel’ Grunwell, a level-nine gold knight of the same Demon Lord bloodline as ‘Poisonous Devil’!”

“Grunwell, the night watchers!” Duke James looked at Grunwell who was standing like a statue in fury. It was a night watcher!

After murdering a baron radically, they were even thinking to kill the bigger nobles!

For a moment, Duke James was full of disgust against the night watchers and the Church. If he did not need them to balance the Congress of Magic, he would’ve advocated banishing the Church from Holm!

Natasha, Russell and Camil looked more or less the same after hearing David’s reply. The only difference was that the latter two did not even have the strength to frown.

Noticing Duke James’ awful face, David smiled even more delightedly, “Very angry and very desperate about the Church? Then, let me tell you something even more infuriating.”

“What is it?” Duke James demanded.

David laughed very happily, “Think about it. Is it easy for me, a noble who was close to the Congress of Magic, to get in touch and conspire with someone who ranked top ten among the night watchers? Could my fury have burst out so soon? Let me tell you. It was all because of the nobles who were inclined to the Church. They triggered the devil in my heart. Hehe. They did not want the kingdom to fall into a civil war. Therefore, they asked Grunwell to pretend to be ‘Poisonous Devil’ of the Dark Congress. After everything was over and you elected me as the king, you would find that the most conservative nobles also supported your opinion!”

“By then, you would’ve thought that they were doing it to appease you and to maintain ‘solidarity’ in order to live through the difficulties!”

Duke James said gloomily, “Who was it? Any noble who attempts to kill their liege must be hanged!”

It would matter if such a thing was done in secret, but if it was revealed, it would be the most severe crime that challenged the entire noble class.

“Count Barady, Duke York, and perhaps President Rex.” David replied with a smile, selling them out without any hesitation, and even adding more.

Now that I’m about to die, what’s the point of keeping Holm complete and prosperous? You should die. Let a civil war reduce Holm into ruins. That will be the best offering for me!

Duke James couldn’t have looked more awful. He declared, one word after another, “I’ll ask sorcerers, knights who are adept at interrogation, and the members of the inquisition to question you in turns. I hope you’re not lying.”

If it was only Count Barady, it would've been easier. However, behind Duke York had Kritonia, a legendary knight, and Rex was the leader of the conservatives. If they were involved in the matter, it would have to be handled with caution. Also, David was not necessarily speaking the truth.

“You won’t be disappointed, Duke. Did you ever wonder why the prince died so coincidentally? Haha!” David burst into laughter, not bothering that they saw through his exaggeration in the end. After all, the seed of suspicion had been planted!

Hearing him pointing out the problems about Prince Patrick’s death, Duke James looked so awful that his face seemed to be dripping water. Natasha, however, continued focusing her willpower as if she did not hear anything, but coldness did beam out of her silver eyes.

Lucien was less puzzled after learning that it was done by night watchers. They were ‘professionals’ to eliminate sorcerers and evil forces. Naturally, they had their ways to avoid the detection of the Host Star of Destiny. Also, he was levels lower than the criminal.

At this moment, the Host Star of Destiny of ‘Alferris’ glittered on the crystal ball, implying that it was unhurt and not far away.

What surprised Lucien, however, was that two clusters of powerful projections of fate lay next to the Host Star of Destiny of the Little Crystal. They were very fuzzy but they did not cover themselves, allowing Lucien to identify them very easily.

“Master? Your Excellency Hathaway?”

What exactly is going on?

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In midair, Fernando, the Lord of Storm, stared at the void before him with his red eyes wide open. On his left side was the indifferent Hathaway, and behind him squatted the clever Alferris.

It informed his master the moment it noticed that something was wrong.

“Sard, why did you ask us to watch this? To let me see how my student makes a comeback?” Asked Fernando solemnly.

The air not far away seemed to have been gathered into the shadow of a person, who smiled peacefully, “How would the liberals seek another way of balance, and how would they abandon the Church at the critical moment without any hesitation, if they had not been through life-and-death dangers that made them desperate about the Church first?”

“What do you want exactly?” Fernando squinted.

“Cooperation. I want to cooperate with you.”

Sard’s projection spoke concisely.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 538: Sard's Plan

Subconsciously, Fernando was about to establish a storm barrier in case other legendary experts were snooping around them, but Sard hurried to say, "Use other spells. I cannot cast my projection into your barrier."

He certainly dared not leave the Radiance Church and talk face to face with the grand arcanists, which would be like feeding himself to the enemy. A saint cardinal was not as unpredictable and unkillable as a legendary sorcerer.

Therefore, Fernando and Hathaway set up multiple magics together to prevent prying. The seemingly empty and peaceful air was full of fatal traps.

After everything was done, Fernando looked at the human-shaped air with his red eyes. "By cooperation, do you mean cooperating with the two of us, or the Congress?"

Hathaway had always been taciturn when somebody else could speak for her. Alferris, on the other hand, had been blocked by Fernando since the beginning, unable to see them or hear their conversation.

It was not because Fernando distrusted it but because it was still too young and might reveal secrets subconsciously. Also, the sense deprivation was a torture for other people but nothing for a dragon. Alferris had already fallen asleep, floating in midair with Fernando's strength.

Sard smiled as warmly as when he was preaching. "The cooperation I want cannot be supported by you two alone. The Congress of Magic is stronger than the Northern Extremists in terms of both the capabilities of their leadership as well as the personnel on the lower levels, but why is it only restrained in the cities such as Allyn, Rentato and Cox? Why can't it control a massive empire as well as its vassal kingdoms and duchies, like the Northern Extremists, who do not need to worry about the Church inside but only need to pay attention to external defenses? This is highly undeserved for the second strongest force in all the dimensions."

Fernando calmed down and replied loudly, "That's because we grew from weak to strong, unlike the North Church which was partly capable of resisting the South Church and had the full support of the northern nobles since the very beginning."

"The Church has set up one big and four small transmission magic circles in Rentato, Cox kukesi and other cities, ensuring that they can reinforce it in time if we intend to remove the branches of the Church on this side of the Storm Strait, transforming a local war into a total war. In such a case, both parties need to calculate the potential losses prudently. However, I believe that, as the Congress develops, the situation will be greatly changed in ten years."

"Ten years? You mean the legendary advancement made possible by 'new alchemy'?" Sard asked about the details unhurriedly.

Hathaway interjected, "Yes. The system will be more or less perfected in ten years, and the errors will be rectified."

"By then, Hathaway will certainly reach the peak of legendary, as well as Raventi, Morris, Donald, Prado and other archmages who have stayed in the ninth circle for a long time will advance into

legendary, too.” Fernando declared confidently and exaggeratedly, leaving the impression that he was bragging.

However, he was even more confident than he appeared. He did not show it because he wanted to mislead Sard. Whatever purpose Sard might have, sending him the wrong intelligence might yield amazing results in the future. For the big shots in their level, a conversation was also a competition.

Sard smiled, “Lucien is truly a genius. Ten years later, the Congress of Magic will be able to make the Church waver between losing half of the Grand Cardinals and evacuating from the few countries on the other side of the Storm Strait. His Holiness the pope estimated that it would take sixty years and therefore is not anxious.”

While God’s Arrival was terrifying, it could only be used once. Even if Douglas was killed, what could they use to kill Brook and Hathaway?

By then, as long as the two grand arcanists at the peak of legendary stalled the pope, the other legendary sorcerers of the Congress would definitely make the Grand Cardinals pay gravely. After all, the South Church was surrounded by enemies, and it was impossible to summon all the legendary experts to attack the Congress of Magic, unless certain compromises were made to achieve the cooperation of the North Church and the Dark Congress.

Of course, such a possibility was little to none. The conflicts of heretics could not be mediated. Also, they certainly would not wait and watch the Church, which was the strongest of all, to swallow the Congress of Magic without losing anything. In that case, it would be their turn to be swallowed soon.

“Ten years is not too distant. I wonder how you want to cooperate, Sard.” Fernando asked solemnly.

Just now, he described the Congress' possible improvement following Hathaway's opinion, but in fact, with the new alchemy, the mass-energy formula, and the reverse-engineering of 'fission' and 'fusion', he was confident to reach the peak of legendary in one to two years even though he could not grasp all of them due to the lack of knowledge. Hathaway was the same.

If neutrons were discovered in advance, the advancement of Raventi, Donald and other archmages would be sooner, too. It would be a major mistake to predict the change of the Congress of Magic in a time span of ten years.

Sard said calmly, "I can shorten ten years to one year. After one year, you will control Holm, Brianne and other territories like the North Church controls the Schachran Empire. The frequency of sorcerers being killed will be significantly lowered."

"It would take the pope one year before God's Arrival could be used again. Therefore, one year later will be a good point. By then, I will shut the transmission magic circle in Rentato, so that you will not fear reinforcements. It will take at least half an hour to transfer from the Holy City. I believe you are capable enough of pushing the frontline to the Storm Strait in the meantime."

Storms seemed to be raging in Fernando's pupils, indicating that he was not calm. While Hathaway was still indifferent, her focused eyes showed her attention, too.

For the Congress of Magic, the Radiance Church had to be removed in order to control this side of the Storm Strait, and the greatest problem for the removal was the super large transmission magic circle inside it. Because of the uniqueness of the divine power barrier, it could not be blocked in advance. However, Sard was implying that he would shut down the lifeline of Holm!

"What do you want from this? What about the Grand Cardinals of the other four parishes and the legendary knights in the countries?" Fernando controlled his anxiety.

Sard chuckled. “You should’ve made some progress on diagnosing the fake gods. I believe you must’ve reported Lucien’s report on Ell’s church, too. Do you not know what I want? I want to establish a church with my own beliefs in order to approach the Almighty Lord.”

“The lands on this side of the Storm Strait is an excellent choice. I will reform the doctrines of the Church and return the interpretation right of the Cannon to the believers. The Saint Truth will be everyone’s Saint Truth. In such a way, my church will be something that you can count on and work with, like the North Church and their nobles.”

“For the legendary knights and nobles, it will be an acceptable balance. Until the South Church is completely destroyed, you cannot abandon them and have to respect them.”

“What I’m doing right now is to make use of the radicals in the Holm parish to transform the opinions of the clergy and to intensify the relationship between the nobles and the Church, so that the liberals will abandon the Church and join my arms when a new balance is available, and the conservatives will make a similar choice after weighing the pros and cons.”

“I’m confident to attract one of the four Grand Cardinals in other parishes. Based on the secrets I obtained from the World of Souls, I’m confident to attract another one or two in a year. The legendary knights will recognize the situation. Now, I already have ‘Heart of Time’. I don’t think you have no legendary knights on your side after such a long time, do you?”

Sard admitted frankly that he got something from the World of Souls. After all, the Congress of Magic must’ve guessed it.

Fernando acknowledged his speculation with silence. A few legendary knights in every country had been attracted to the Congress, but until the situation changed, they would not revolt but would even attack the Congress under the Church’s lead.

“In such a way, the power of God will plummet. Even if you have three Grand Cardinals, that’s still far from the nobles. You would be overwhelmed by them. Are you not worried about that?” Asked Fernando solemnly.

Sard shook his head. “What I want is faith, the truth, and to be closer to the Lord. Everything else is just false. If you would like to cooperate, you have to stress that when you swear before the Origin of the World, and I will also promise that I will shut down the transmission magic circle with the Heart of Faith.”

“This is too important a matter for us to give you an answer immediately. We have to summon the Highest Council for discussion.” Fernando said seriously.

Sard smiled. “Of course.”

Then, the human-shaped air that he gathered was gone.

Hathaway watched it for a while and said in a low voice, “Do you believe what he said?”

“He sounded rather reasonable. It’s worth a shot, too. However, we have to be prepared that he is up to something else.” His hands behind his back, Fernando looked at the Radiance Church in the city.

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Inside the secret chamber, James kicked David into a coma after hearing his speech. He turned to Lucien and said, "Lucien, you will check his confession with magic first. I'll ask the neutrals and the Church advocates to check it, too. Rest assured, this is only to get more convincing and authentic proof. We will not compromise or attack randomly until the enemy pays."

"Alright, I'll check it later. 'Cursed Angel' Grunwell, on the other hand, has to be given to me. I lack the materials of a level-nine gold knight to work on the steady inheritance and activation of blood power. You can take away part of the tissues and his identity papers from Grunwell, or the conservatives would deny it." Lucien looked at Grunwell casually.

Duke James also looked at Grunwell. To be used by a sorcerer as experiment materials was much more brutal than to be killed. However, he was interested by something else Lucien said. "Steady inheritance and activation of blood power? Has the Congress made breakthroughs in that regard?"

"Not yet, but I believe there will be." Lucien bragged, giving the nobles hope without specifying how long it would take.

His eyes glowing, James said, "Lucien, you are truly a genius in arcana studies. I hope that you can resolve the conundrum someday. Alright, this room has poisons and curses lingering everywhere. It is bad for Her Majesty and other victims. I'll suppress the 'Helpless Kiss' in Russell and Camil first. The mix of poisons and curses will probably fade away very soon after they take a good rest in the other room."

"You will bring Her Majesty to the guest room. I'll 'process' the spot first before I inform 'Heart of Time'."

Lucien discovered that James was more friendly to him. He was not worried about their relationship when Natasha protected him risking her own life, and he even gave them an

opportunity to talk in private. Perhaps, his change of attitude was because of the assassination of the night watchers?

Lucien was about to reply, when his cheeks bounced and he received his master's secret message. Understanding everything, he nodded at Duke James with a weird look and walked to Natasha.

"You still haven't gathered your willpower? I'll suppress the 'Helpless Kiss' with magic first." Lucien held Natasha's shoulder concernedly.

Natasha nodded. "No. Bring me to the guest room. I can use the Health Belt after the willpower is gathered."

Lucien exerted strength and supported her to leave the wall that she leaned against. But he suddenly felt something when he noticed that her feet were unsteady.

Natasha sensed Lucien's pause and looked at him in confusion, but she felt a hand on her leg the moment she turned her head, and she immediately flew up. She waved her arms subconsciously, hoping to catch something, but because of her weak hands, she could only grip Lucien's shoulder in the end.

Calming herself down, Natasha saw Lucien's smiling face as well as the ceiling. It was not until then that she realized that Lucien had swept her off her feet!

Ever since she could remember, counting the incident where Lucien carried her to escape, she had never been hugged by a man in such a way before. Both embarrassed and angered, her bloodstained face emitted suspicious redness.

Lucien felt great after finally leaving the queen swooning. That should be the normal posture!

Natasha's face was slightly red. It was indescribably beautiful even though it was covered in blood. Recalling the female god of war that stood before him a moment ago, Lucien was greatly touched and kissed her in the face.

Sensing the warm touch on her face, Natasha put on a warm smile. All her embarrassment gone, she said in a low voice, "I'll hug you in the same way if there's a chance!"

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 539: Kritonia

Holding Natasha in his arms off her feet, Lucien walked to the guest room at the end of the corridor calmly. With such a posture and such softness in his hands, he was quite satisfied and could not cover his smile even though he could smell nothing but stinky blood and sour poisons.

Natasha, on the other hand, felt rather complicated. Her self-perception and her previous experience both suggested that she was a brave knight, but now that such a brave and firm knight was hugged by Lucien in such a way, she felt indescribably weak and ashamed. However, Lucien was the one who was hugging her. His heartbeat, his smell and his chest were all so familiar and made her feel warm and sweet. Therefore, she was both delighted and embarrassed, and she tried not to reveal her feelings on her face in case Lucien made fun of her.

While she felt uncomfortable and yet she did not want it to end, it did not occur to Natasha that she was also wearing a smile until Lucien stopped at the door of a guest room.

“Duke James’ guest rooms have divine power circles, too?” Lucien was more or less surprised.

Natasha tried to shift her attention from her current awkwardness and looked at the room. “The few guest rooms on this floor are for the entertainment of the royal family and other major nobles. So, the divine power circles are independent from the overall defense of the manor, giving the guests a private, secure space.”

As she explained, she saw that Lucien opened the door with his spiritual power and walked in.

The guest room was rather spacious, with a living room, a bedroom, a library and other facilities such as a piano and a bar. After Lucien closed the door and activated the divine power circle, the whole room was suddenly separated from the manor. Quiet and tranquil, it seemed like a private space that belonged to them.

Natasha knew that Lucien was being cautious. He could not be distracted when he guided her to use the Health Belt. They would be in major trouble if the divine power circle was not activated and an enemy attacked them.

Suddenly, she felt something soft, comfortable on her back and realized that Lucien had put her on the velvet bed and was staring at her attentively with her black eyes.

In a low voice, Lucien said, “Just now, you...”

Before he finished, Natasha interrupted Lucien and smiled, “No thanks are needed between us. It was my faith of protection as a knight and a wife. If it were you, I believe you would’ve done the same. I was quite shocked when you stabbed your hand into your neck.”

Without being shy or retreating, she spoke of the word ‘wife’ frankly.

While talking, she extended her right hand and grabbed Lucien’s, passing the gentle warmth into Lucien’s heart.

There was no need to say or do anything. Lucien held Natasha’s right hand tightly and sensed the eternal warmth between the two of them. Then, looking at her in the eyes, he lowered his head and kissed her lips.

Natasha blinked and slowly closed her eyes, relishing the kiss and not loosening her right hand.

Everything was slow and gentle, but it was even more exhilarating than passion.

After a while, when their lips were separated, Natasha’s eyes were clear again. She said with a smile, “Hurry and suppress ‘Helpless Kiss’ for me...”

“I’m going to help you suppress ‘Helpless Kiss’...” Lucien smiled and said at the same time. Then they both stopped and looked at each other with a smile.

“Hurry. If our recovery is delayed because of romance, and we are killed by subsequent enemies, it will be on the top ten most stupid ways to die in Allyn.” Natasha recognized the situation as keenly as before.

Lucien chuckled, “There shouldn’t be any subsequent enemies.” Had he not received Fernando’s secret message, he would’ve helped Natasha suppress the poisons earlier, but the truth was, it was not easy to come by Her Majesty when she was weak.

Natasha raised her eyebrow. “Granny Hathaway and the Lord of Storm came?”

She believed that Lucien came to the private party with certain preparations. Therefore, she thought of ‘reinforcements’ the moment Lucien said it.

“Let’s talk about the details later. I’ll help you recover first.” Lucien nodded. Considering that Duke James would inform ‘Heart of Time’ to come after processing the spot, he could not stay long. So, he helped Natasha suppress ‘Helpless Kiss’ with magic such as ‘Poison Neutralization’.

Natasha focused her attention and began to gather her willpower. After a minute, a sharp and cold brilliance beamed out of her eyes.

Seeing that, Lucien spread his spiritual power to Natasha through their right hands that were still crossed, guiding her to pass the magic barriers of the Health Belt. Then, he erased his own mark.

Natasha was slightly surprised, but she did not have the time to consider at such a moment. She hurried to leave her own mark in the pivot.

The Health Belt around her waist emitted a gentle glow. As its passive ability was activated, the dark green gas spread out and disappeared.

After a dozen seconds, Natasha waved her left hand and said in complicated feelings. “Being weak is a terrible feeling.”

Then she looked at Lucien. “Why did you erase your mark?”

“I have the Congus Ring with me. The effect of the Health Belt is redundant for me, and you don’t have an item that protects you from poisons, diseases and negative energy.” Lucien said with a smile.

While the royal family of Holm was rich, and Natasha had a granny who was a grand arcanist, the senior-rank items, especially those with special effects, had always been rare. Therefore, although Natasha had equipment that could prevent poisons, it was not as good as the Health Belt.

Having regained her strength, Natasha cleaned the blood on her and teased him, “What a precious gift. You truly deserve to be called a ‘moving treasury’, Mr. Evans.”

It was what Grunwell said just now.

“You’re my wife and my queen. Nothing is more precious than you.” Lucien realized that he might be talented at sweet talking after all.

Natasha chuckled and enjoyed what Lucien said, but she intentionally said, “You picked three items from Mr. Rhine’s place. Except for the scroll that you used yourself, you offered the other items to me. Your adventure proved to be for nothing.”

It was then that Lucien realized that the items he got from Mr. Rhine’s treasury had been mostly offered to Natasha. However, it was definitely worthwhile as long as she was happy. Mr. Rhine was really a good man. When could he offer an opportunity to pick another item from his treasury?

“Right, did you have something you want to say?” Natasha was also relieved after knowing that Hathaway was around. She almost forgot to ask.

Lucien cast another spells cautiously in case of snooping. Then, he spoke to Natasha via the telepathic bond. “Sard was the one behind the curtain. He wanted to...”

There was no need to keep it a secret from Natasha. As the queen of Holm, she would be involved in the matter sooner or later. Besides, her tendencies were rather obvious.

“I don’t trust Sard. He has been too mysterious and unpredictable.” Natasha offered her opinion.

Lucien nodded. “Nobody knows what he got from the World of Souls. It’s not easy to infer his real purpose. We have to be prepared that he has great schemes.”

“His Excellency Kritonia was attracted to him... What’s the result of your necropsy?” Natasha asked solemnly.

Lucien thought for a moment and confessed, “The necromancers of the Hand of Paleness knew a lot about cells. Based on their knowledge system, they found out the age of the prince when he passed away. Although there’s an error of about half a year, it is doubtless that the prince’s actual age when he died was two to three years older than the age he should’ve been. You can ask Hathaway for more details.”

The test result was too important to be delivered through electromagnetism messaging. Lucien joined the party and met Natasha partly to forward the message, too.

Natasha listened and sighed in sorrow, “I find Sard even less trustworthy...”

Then, she calmed down and smiled like a real queen. “Rest assured. I will not be impetuous. It takes tricks and plans to crush the enemy in a head-on clash. I’ll cooperate with them until the lands are separated. Then, I will bring Kritonia to trial for his crime. He will have no support.”

After learning the cause of her family member’s death, she made up her mind. Sard couldn’t have done it on his own. The pope and the Grand Cardinal must’ve given their help.

“The Congress and I will be on your side.” Lucien touched Natasha’s hair, which made her slightly uncomfortable. She intentionally changed the subject, “Right, Lucien, I’ll tell you a secret...”

Hearing the secret in the telepathic bond, Lucien smiled. “This is great. I feel relieved.”

Pausing for a moment, Lucien walked to the window and observed the nobles who were almost about to riot. “Kritonia will be informed very soon. It’s inappropriate for me to meet him. I’ll leave now. Don’t be scared when you face him. Her Excellency Hathaway is around and observing everything.”

“Okay.” Natasha suddenly put on a naughty smile. “There should be a few more minutes. Lucien, my strength is not entirely back yet. Help me take off my clothes and put on new ones.”

Her hunting suit was transformed from a senior-rank knight suit. She couldn’t have resisted Grunwell as long without it, but under the corrosion of curses and poisons, the suit had been completely ruined, with cracks and holes everywhere. Thankfully, she had a few more senior-rank helmets and knight suits after inheriting the throne, so she opened the storage bag and took out a knight suit that had been transformed into a purple long dress, as well as lingerie, silk stockings, etc.

Lucien’s heart raced, and he breathed heavily, “There’s no time...”

“You are overthinking. I asked you to change my clothes for me exactly because there is no time.” Natasha said in a delightful smile, “This is a ‘reward’ for you hugging me a moment ago.”

Lucien’s smile was immediately frozen.

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In another chamber where Duke James had turned on the divine power circle, Natasha arrived with her purple long hair tied again. The vague redness on her face still hadn't faded away.

At this moment, Duke James directed a grey-haired old man to enter the room. Inside his azure eyes, an ever-surging river of time seemed to be running.

"Your Majesty." Kritonia bowed in a heavy mood. "Duke York must be severely punished for his involvement in the assassination against you, but considering that he merely observed but did not participate in planning, and considering the loyalty of the Kritonia family for hundreds of years, please show him some mercy. The Kritonia and me will protect you even more loyally."

He had already gained the confession from David. Therefore, he had come to Natasha to plead guilty and seek compromises and exchanges.

Natasha said solemnly, "If I compromise and back off about someone who intends to kill me, wouldn't it be telling everyone that they are free to kill me because they wouldn't be punished whether they win or lose? I don't think I can survive for long in such a case."

Kritonia was about to talk, only to be stopped by Natasha's gesture: "So, York and Barady must die!"

"As a punishment of treason, the Barady family, who initiated the assassination, will lose their title and their fief lingdi. As for the Kritonia, since only York was mildly involved in it, he will be punished but his family will be unaffected."

"Kritonia, what do you think of such a decision? I don't think there is only one grand knight in your household, is there?"

Easy compromises without principles would only make the compromises worthless.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 540: The Solemn Queen

Kritonia raised his head, only to see Natasha standing straight intimidatingly against the light, making everyone forget her gender and her beauty.

He narrowed his eyes. Even though he did not release any pressure actively, he was still giving off an oppressive air having been a legendary knight for hundreds of years. Duke James, who was protecting Natasha, couldn't help but move his eyes away, but Natasha looked back at him without wavering.

After ten seconds, Kritonia said in a low voice, "That's an excellent decision, Your Majesty. I agree that anyone that violates the basic order of the nobles shall be punished, but I hope that Your Majesty will allow me to take care of York in person. I do not want him to embarrass the family on the gallows."

"That's understandable." Natasha looked gentler, but the exhaustion no less than that of after a fierce battle with a radiant knight of her level rose in her body. "Also, I would like the shift change of legendary knights to be advanced. I hope that Winston can take your shift as soon as possible, so that I can be familiarized with both of you the two excellencies sooner."

Kritonia understood that it was her conditions of the deal. Also, he knew that Natasha wouldn't trust him for the time being after such an incident. He nodded and said, "I'll swap with Winston and watch over the colonies in the alternate dimensions after I escort you back to the Nekso Palace. I will live up to your trust, Your Majesty."

"You are a legendary hero who founded the kingdom, Your Excellency. I'm confident in you." Natasha encouraged and reassured him. "I'll leave Duke York to you. His heir will be your decision."

Kritonia pressed his chest with his left hand and bowed deeply, "Thank you for your trust, Your Majesty. I'll escort you back to the Nekso Palace first."

Now that the Heart of Time had come, the poisons in Camil, Russell and the rest of them were soon relieved. Kritonia also 'successfully' found evidence from 'Primous', proving that he was the 'Cursed Angel', who ranked fifth among the night watchers.

After she returned to the Nekso Palace, Natasha spoke to James and his partners, "Duke James, would you please invite Duke Solefen to come? Also, block the message and convene the Parliament of Nobles an hour later. Duke Russell, please watch over Count Barady in case he runs off and check to see if York is really dead."

"Yes, Your Majesty." Duke James and the rest of them answered sincerely. A distinguished knight was always admirable, especially one who stayed to resist the enemy when she could've run away.

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Inside the Parliament of Nobles in the Nekso Palace.

Count Barady walked in with Duke Russell gloomily. He merely nodded at the nobles who greeted him warmly, his usual manner gone.

“Russell, can you tell me why Her Majesty is summoning the nobles? As I recall, the one-month mourning period is not over yet. Is she breaking her promise?” Count Barady spoke to Duke Russell.

He knew that Natasha was going to James’ private garden, and that the Duke and Grunwell would take action. Therefore, he had a bad feeling when he was informed that Natasha was convening a meeting of the nobles. However, Duke Russell, a level-eight radiant knight, had come to his house to invite him and was keeping him company. He couldn’t even run even if he wanted to hide or escape, and so he had to come in fear.

He kept telling himself that it was fine. He merely fermented the hatred in David’s heart and introduced Grunwell to him. He never asked him to kill Her Majesty. He couldn’t be blamed for introducing two people to meet each other in a private dinner, right?

Seeing that Duke Rex’s eyes moved over, Russell understood that he had fulfilled his responsibility and therefore returned to his seat with a smile.

“Why did you come with Russell? Do you know why the queen convened a meeting? This is in violation of the one-month promise.” Rex had a bad feeling, too, as if something horrible had happened.

Count Barady shook his head. “I have no idea. Where is York?”

Duke Rex frowned. “I didn’t see him. Isn’t he always the earliest? Did something happen to him? In that case, His Excellency Kritonia’s fury will burn everything.”

Duke York had always come early to the meetings in the Parliament of Nobles to visit ‘Heart of Time’ first.

Realizing that York did not come, Count Barady looked even more awful, but he also had a plan to save himself.

Since it was a temporary meeting, many nobles who were not in Rentato failed to come. Only two thirds of the members were present.

Sensing that Natasha had arrived, Rex left his seat and walked to the dais up ahead, knocking the mallet.

After the knock, the hall fell quiet.

“Welcome Her Majesty.” Rex turned around, his black cape floating.

Natasha walked in slowly in a black long dress, followed by Camil and a team of knights.

The moment they entered the hall, the knights split and ‘guarded’ the seats in the ground hall.

The one in the lead was a calm gold-haired man. Count Barady recognized that it was John, the knight that Queen Natasha brought from Aalto. The others were the Violent Knights from Aalto and the new knights who pledged loyalty to the queen. More than fifteen of them were grand knights. Plus Camil, they were much stronger than a medium knight group.

Not knowing what happened, the nobles whispered to each other. Everything suggested that something great was going to happen.

Also, they were shocked that the queen had earned the allegiance of so many grand knights and knights in only one month. The Sword of Truth’s Knights had been adjusting under Natasha’s command and were most trustworthy.

It meant that she already had the strength to defend her crown.

Natasha knocked the mallet, silencing the hall where hundreds of flies seemed to be humming.

Then, she looked around and declared ‘furiously’: “This morning, I suffered an assassination attempt.”

“What?” The nobles exclaimed. It was a taboo to assassinate one’s liege in the first place, not to mention killing the queen in no more than one month after she was crowned. That was challenging the order of the nobles.

Rex was stunned first. Recalling York’s absence and Barady’s absentmindedness as well as their hints, he immediately burst into fury and glared at Count Barady. Idiots! You can go to hell if your evidence has been found!

At this moment, Count Barady calmed down and turned a blind eye to Duke Rex’s fury, considering how to minimize his punishment.

Natasha knocked the mallet again and said, “The assassins were Count David and ‘Cursed Angel’, who ranks top the fifth among the night watchers. Duke James, Duke Russell and Count Henson can prove that. His Excellency Saint Sard can prove the identity of ‘Cursed Angel’.”

The hall fell silent again. The nobles found it hard to understand why David, who always favored the Congress of Magic, conspired with the night watchers, but they soon realized that it was all because of desire!

“The night watchers dared to assassinate the queen? The Church is more and more outrageous!”

“I believe that such actions must be contained, or it will be our turn soon.”

“Contained? All the Church ever did was to apologize and then to forget their apology! Perhaps our balance strategy is a mistake!”

The nobles discussed angrily, as Natasha expected. The Church could've denied Grunwell's identity, if somebody other than Sard were the Grand Cardinal of the Holm parish.

"Your Majesty, such a crime must be punished! Hang David, burn Grunwell, and ask the Church to compensate!" The nobles, regardless of their sides, offered similar opinions.

Natasha nodded. "They shall be tried fairly, but I've summoned the meeting today because Count David confessed that he was instigated by Count Barady with Duke York's involvement."

The noise stopped again. All the nobles were shocked save the few who knew about it in advance. Both Duke York and Count Barady were bit shots in the Parliament of Nobles. There would be a major shock now that they were involved. Also, 'Heart of Time' was behind Duke York after all.

Thinking about that, they all looked at Count Barady and prayed that it was not true. The kingdom could not afford a civil war.

Rex, on the other hand, glared at Barady in fury. A reckless fool!

Count Barady slowly stood up. "Your Majesty, I deny the accusation against me. I would like to confront David. I never instigated or hinted him to assassinate you. Duke York is as innocent as me. You can ask him, too."

He associated himself with York, hoping to minimize his penalty with the influence of 'Heart of Time'. Besides, indeed no evidence of instigation was left.

“I’ve asked someone to invite Duke York.” Said Natasha calmly, which made Count Barady ill at ease. “Your Majesty, I would like David to confront me in front of all nobles.”

Natasha waved her hands, and a knight pushed the shackled David in.

“Hahaha, Barady, you still want to deny it? It was you who fermented hatred in my heart. It was you and York who taught me how to kill the queen.” David laughed crazily, causing a great scene.

Count Barady smiled. The crazier, the better. As long as he linked himself to York, there would be a great chance that he could get away with it. “Would you please tell them how we instigated and allured you?”

David was stunned. Unable to think of any convincing speech, he made up a few lines according to the prior confession.

Barady raised his voice, “Your Majesty, he is lying! We never said such things! I would like a cleric to test the veracity of his words!”

He believed that he never said anything that was punishable. He was confident of himself!

Looking at Natasha sincerely, Count Barady said, “Would you please repeat your acquirement of his confession, Your Majesty? I’m angry about David’s setup.”

He put on a smile.

At this moment, another knight walked in and fell on one of his knees, “Your Majesty, Duke York has killed himself. This is his confession letter, which described Count Barady’s doings in details.”

The hall burst into whispers again. It was a totally unexpected change.

What? York killed himself?

What about the Heart of Time?

Why did he confess?

Count Barady collapsed on his seat, his brain too muddled for him to hear any voices or see anything.

It shouldn’t be like this! It shouldn’t be like this!

Natasha knocked the mallet and announced calmly, “Based on valid proof, Count Barady is found guilty of treason. He will be hanged, his title and his fief lingdi renounced...”

The nobles listened to Natasha sentence in confusion: “... His fief will be divided into five parts. The largest part will go to the royal family, and the other four parts will be bequeathed to Duke James, Duke Russell, Duke Henson and Countess Camil for their successful prevention of the assassination...”

“... All members of the Barady family will be deprived of their titles. The main members will be exiled to the northland...”

“Duke York confessed before he killed himself, and he was not the mastermind. His family shall not be punished...”

The cold and grave voice echoed, soaking the nobles in sweat. That was a real great noble that was backed by a legendary knight!

In the past, Natasha was merely a talented level-seven knight and a lady with unparalleled beauty in their eyes. But after the verdict, as the Heart of Time backed off and the great nobles collapsed, Natasha had truly evolved into an intimidating queen in their minds!

Rex shook his head at Barady’s collapse. Now that the queen boldly convened the meeting, it meant that deals and compromises had already been made in private. Your destiny was already fixed. However you defended yourself, any noble with keen eyes could tell that something was not right when David made the confession. As long as the clerics or the neutral nobles interrogated you, they would get more convincing proof, which might involve other people.

However, he found Barady’s dying struggle understandable, too.

.....

After Lucien returned to Allyn, he was summoned by Fernando immediately.

“Considering your ability of inviting dangers, I’ve decided to talk to Douglas and ask him to get the improved ‘Life Hiding’. Think about which body part you can get rid of first.” Fernando spoke straightforwardly.

Lucien looked at himself. His left fingers were certainly not an option, as they would nullify ‘Life Hiding’, and a missing right finger would affect his spell-casting and his piano-playing. Therefore, he said, “The little toe on my left foot.”

Then, Lucien thought of a critical question. “Master, do I need to pay for it?”

“Do you want me to pay for it?” Fernando replied, not in a good mood. He had to make other sacrifices just to let the Hand of Paleness agree to offer the ritual magic.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 541: Felipe’s Surprise

Crows seemed to be flying before Lucien's eyes as he envisioned his bankruptcy. Although he had earned copious revenue from the technological investment in the Mineral and Harvest Company, the Gift from Elements Company, etc. he had devoted all his money to the construction of the magic tower three months ago and could barely make ends meet. He found his way back to the community of 'magnates' from the arcana point rewards for the new alchemy, the supplementary rewards for the light quantum hypothesis, and his annuities, but there was still a major gap between it and an improved ninth-circle ritual magic.

The Congress' favor on materials, drugs and magics was barely useful on the matter. The Hand of Paleness would be showing him enough respect if they did not charge him more.

Therefore, Lucien seriously considered applying for loans from his teacher or the Holm Mineral Union Bank.

Then, his monocle suddenly turned hot.

"Lucien, I just ended the meeting in the Parliament of Nobles. I sentenced Count Barady to death and deprived him of his title..." Said Natasha excitedly. She certainly did not have any mercy on the mastermind who caused such injuries to Lucien and herself.

Holding back the pain of imminent bankruptcy, Lucien smiled, "Any noble who plans to assassinate you in the future will have to think of what became of Count Barady before they act."

Natasha told him what happened in the parliament and her talk with Kritonia. Then, he said, "I've divided Count Barady's fief into five parts. One part is for Aunt Camil as 'compensation for shock', three parts will be used to appease Duke James and his lot, and the last part is supposed to be yours. However, since you cannot appear in public right now, I've collected it in the name of the

royal family, but I'll give them to you in private. That's your fair share. You are not allowed to refuse it."

Lucien was immediately shocked. With a smile, he blurted out, "Natasha, I love you."

It was the most unexpected windfall and more than enough to pay for the improved 'Life Hiding'. There would even be plenty of money left.

"Huh?" Natasha did not expect such an answer at all. She was somewhat lost.

Lucien did not lie to her and told her the things about the improved Life Hiding.

"I'll be much more relieved... I didn't know that you were also a 'money grubber'. Thankfully, I am a queen and the future duchess." Natasha chuckled and said, "It's a pity that a knight has to maintain the solidarity of body, blood, soul and willpower before advancing into legendary. I cannot use such a method as the last life-saving measure. A knight's path is destined to be an arduous and difficult one."

The Violet family had one legendary knight, and the Hoffenberg family had one too. Natasha was much more experienced than regular knights about their advancement.

Lucien knew a thing or two about that, too. Had it been otherwise, 'Body Controller' Ramiro's ability of massive proliferation wouldn't have been his unique skill.

Ending the conversation, Lucien discovered that Fernando was looking at him with a smile. He asked, "What's up, master?"

Fernando smacked his lips. "How great it is to be young, and how great it is to have a queen as your partner."

Lucien changed the subject rather awkwardly, "Master, does the improved Life Hiding have to require a limb part?"

It was a unique ritual of the Hand of Paleness, and Lucien was unaware of the details. He only knew that the original version of Life Hiding did require it.

Fernando glared at Life Hiding. "If I knew so many details, I would've developed it myself. All I know is that the original Life Hiding can only use one part of the body. You will stay in Allyn for the next few days. After the ritual of Life Hiding is done, you can go wherever you want."

"Starting from the next month, there will probably be more discussions regarding the Oliver transformation. We need to direct them to discover the relativistic effect. Hopefully, we can present your special theory of relativity to Douglas in two to three months."

"As you wish." Lucien had no objection. The most important task right now was to construct magic models to make himself a fairly strong level-eight sorcerer. His next goal would be 'Magic Reverse', a seventh-circle that he had been dreaming about for a long time.

.....

In his office in the Atom Institution, Lucien was reading the papers that his students reviewed and revising the final comment now and then.

Rock walked in exhaustedly with a journal and dozens of resumes. “Lucien, the second round of interviews is over, and the final interviews will be held in three days. See if there’s any problem.”

Lucien browsed through the resumes and smiled, “Not bad. There are a couple of middle-rank sorcerers. You check them first and ask the Affair Committee to conduct background checks. I’ll test them during the final interviews, too, in case of spies from the Church or other organizations try to sneak in.”

Since it was a public recruitment, from the smokingly popular Atom Institution, those spies would’ve been unqualified if they did not try to sneak in one way or another. Lucien dared not be careless at all.

Rock agreed. “The Church’s infiltration is too good. After all, there are many sorcerers in the Congress who are not having a thriving life.”

Then, he thought of something and, handing the journal to Lucien, said in a low voice, “Did you know? His Excellency Oliver and Lady Florencia are divorced.”

Lucien picked up the journal, only to discover that it was ‘Allyn Impression’, a journal of gossips. He found the article and shook his head, “In such a case, all the seven grand arcanists of the Congress are now single. How hilarious and heartbreaking.”

After discussing the gossip for a while, Rock rose and walked out in satisfaction. The moment he opened the door, he saw a graceful middle-aged man who was wearing a wig.

“Mr... Mr. Oliver...” Rock’s face turned face, for he had spoken evil of the man a lot just now.

Oliver nodded and passed Rock, closing the door of the office.

“Lucien, this is my play. Check it out.” Oliver glanced at the ‘Allyn Impression’ and said calmly.

Lucien picked up the play and skimmed through it. His lips twitched as he read on, and he almost suspected that Oliver was another buddy from Earth, because it was very similar to Andersen’s The Little Mermaid. Thankfully, the ending was entirely different.

In Oliver’s play, a handsome prince happened upon a mermaid princess on the ocean. The two of them fell in love. The mermaid princess abandoned everything else, swallowed potions to get rid of her tail, and returned to the prince’s country as a beautiful girl. They swore to live together forever, but the prince fell in love with another princess later, which devastated the mermaid and forced her to return to the ocean.

As time went by, the prince recognized his heart and realized that the mermaid girl was the one he loved most. Therefore, he set sail every day and called the mermaid girl’s name, only to get no response. Days passed, and the prince finally died of sorrow. Near his death, his mind made him see the mermaid princess walking toward him, so he put on a sweet smile.

“Very tragic...” Lucien did not know how to comment on it.

Oliver sighed. “Only a tragedy can move a lady and save a marriage.”

Lucien felt a toothache and couldn't help but observe, “Mr. Oliver, I'm really confused about something. Why did you betray your marriage and hurt Lady Florencia again and again when you were in love with her?”

Oliver said solemnly, “Lucien, you don't understand. I'm serious about every relationship. I dedicated my soul and my heart to them. My love was as scorching as fire. It was exactly in such love that my inspirations burst out. I achieved many of my results from there.”

“I love every one of them, but I love Florencia most.”

Lucien did not know how to react. After hearing Oliver's self-analysis, Lucien clapped hands for every lady that left him.

After only several seconds, Lucien overruled his previous decision to adapt the opera for Oliver. If Florencia demeaned herself by forgiving Oliver again, that would be her business, but he shouldn't be Oliver's accomplice. His conscience would be guilty if he worked on the opera.

Therefore, weighing his tone, Lucien said, “Mr. Oliver, I'm truly sorry. Her Excellency Hathaway and His Excellency Morris do not want me to write an opera for you, and they...”

Lucien left his sentence unfinished, with a ‘you know what I'm talking about’ look on his face.

Briefly stunned, Oliver heaved a long sigh. “I understand. They are the seniors of the Hoffenberg family. Lucien, I hope that I can cooperate with you on other operas in the future. The best librettos deserve the best musician.”

After seeing Oliver off, Lucien closed the door, not wanting to meddle in the family business at all. After all, Hathaway’s impression of Oliver had been terrible for a long time. She wouldn’t say anything even if Oliver went to ask her.

After pushing it away, Lucien had to learn the creation of operas himself. Thankfully, he had many classics in his head for reference, and he had selected ‘The Valkyrie’, the second part of ‘The Ring of the Nibelung’, written by Mr. Wagner.

Of course, in order to make the opera that was based on the folklores in German and north Europe fit for this world and Natasha, Lucien had to make fundamental adaptations, which could almost be called recreation.

.....

The second day after Oliver’s visit, Lucien received a message from Fernando and knew that the ritual was good to go.

On the thirty-third floor of the Allyn magic tower, inside an empty hall...

Lucien saw Felipe again, who looked as pale and sick as before.

“This magic is improved based on his studies on cell memories. With his cooperation, my odds of success will be higher.” Fernando admitted frankly that he had never performed the improved Life Hiding before, and the Lord of the Undead would certainly supervise the ceremony for Lucian.

Felipe looked at Lucien, finding it hard to believe that his master had failed to kill the guy multiple times and even got killed. However, he would not speak of those things in front of Fernando. Instead, he nodded, “Your magnifying magic based on the nature of light is good, but it’s far away from the effect you promised.”

His magic level had been improved to the seventh circle, which was rather fast actually but poor compared to Lucien. His arcana level was close to level seven.

Lucien said solemnly, “Improvements have to be made step by step. Rest assured. I will not abandon the studies.”

Lucien never had the courage to work on the experiments on the electron diffraction. He planned to wait until he digested the harvests brought by the special theory of relativity and the Silver Moon.

Then, Lucien asked the question that he cared about, “Felipe, can the improved Life Hiding only use a limb?”

Felipe said coldly, “Hair and teeth do not contain blood and are useless. Don’t try to keep yourself safe without affecting yourself. Are you such a greedy and insane man?”

He never hesitated to mock Lucien when there was a chance.

Lucien frowned. “What about the viscera?”

Felipe sniffed. “They work, but what’s the point? Even the radiant knights cannot sustain themselves a long time when part of their guts are missing. The parts cut by Life Hiding cannot be regrown, not even with Body Transformation. Stop fantasizing about the unrealistic things.”

“So you mean, the viscera do work?” Lucien was relieved. “I request to use my ‘intestine’ in a certain part.”

Felipe looked at Lucien, somewhat stunned, as if he had never seen anyone as stupid before. “Are you sure? I won’t compensate for your losses if the ritual fails.”

“I am sure.” Lucien calculated and realized that he could afford two rituals. Therefore, he might as well have a try.

Half an hour later, Felipe was stunned as he watched Lucien leave with ‘amulet of life’ in a light mood.

“He is absolutely fine when a section of his intestines are gone...”

“He is indeed a monster...”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 542: Terms of Cooperation

On the 33rd level of the Allyn magic tower, Lucien followed the Lord of Storm to his library.

In the empty corridor, Fernando eyed Lucien thoughtfully, “What intestine did you take out? Why were you not affected at all?”

While he was also good at Necromancy, it was a class where the knowledge of the ancient Magic Empire lingered and therefore had a completely different development from that on Earth. Regarding the inflamed and pathological organs, all that needed to be done was medical skills and magic potions. No surgeries were required at all.

In terms of dissection, the necromancers focused on the relationship between different organs and diseases to develop new magics of curses and diseases, or to lower the requirement of similar magic in the past. As a result, their categorization of internal organs was rather vague. Epityphlon and cecum were both regarded as intestines without being distinguished accurately.

“I have named it epityphlon. I discovered it when I dissected and studied Grunwell’s body recently that even though this section of the intestine was cut off and his recovery ability was suppressed, there was no negative effect at all. That is to say, this part was barely of any use.” Lucien offered a reason that he had decided a long time ago. After all, his teacher knew very well that he recently had a level-nine dark knight as an experiment material.

As for the influence on immunity, it was little to none for a knight.

Fernando croaked, "It is not entirely useless. At least, it can be used as the main material for the improved Life Hiding."

He showed no objection to Lucien's dissecting Grunwell but said affirmatively, "It's high time that you worked on blood powers. That's a useful supplement for soul studies. Many life-extending rituals in the future will require knowledge in that aspect as the foundation. You wouldn't want to turn into a lich, would you? Or do you want Natasha to die much earlier than you?"

"A knight cannot be transformed into a lich. They'll be scourged by negative energy even though they turn into death knights. Therefore, there are few legendary magics that can extend her life. As far as I know, there are no more than five of them with a remarkable effect of more than a thousand years. Without an excellent understanding of Necromancy, you wouldn't be able to host the rituals even if you are at the peak of legendary. You couldn't ask for Vicente's help by then, can you?"

"Isn't there still you, master? You hosted the ritual of Life Hiding just now." Lucien remembered it in his heart and complimented his teacher with his mouth.

Fernando replied impatiently, "That little girl has the potential to advance into legendary. When she needs to extend her life, chances are that I will already have perished while I am exploring the truths of the world. Also, the materials that the five legendary magics require are all extremely precious. For example, 'Blessing of Dragon', with which my life was lengthened, requires the blood and bones of a primordial dragon as the main materials for the ceremony. At that time, I worked with Hathaway and asked for Douglas' help before we finally hunted a primordial red dragon. You barely have any chance to get one."

“A legendary primordial dragon...” Lucien realized that it was terribly difficult to obtain such materials. Every dragon had horrifying physical defense in the first place, and their magic power grew with their age. A legendary primordial dragon would be as good as a legendary sorcerer in the ancient Magic Empire in terms of magic expertise.

More importantly, there were no more than seven primordial dragons that were still living. They were all important elders in the Dark Congress and certainly not counterfeits such as the Dark Dragon Lord.

Fernando ignored Lucien’s shock as if he were a monster but simply went on, “Therefore, if you can’t find suitable materials, you have to find a way to create a new magic ritual, which requires a profound knowledge on Necromancy. Do you think that Hathaway didn’t try to extend Patrick’s life? But he was too weak both physically and spiritually, and none of the existent rituals could help him greatly. Hathaway was not good at Necromancy and could not create a new ritual based on the actual circumstances... I knew no more than she did, either.”

He didn’t mention the Lord of the Undead, because Vicente was obviously not going to help Hathaway.

“Got it.” Lucien nodded solemnly but was not too anxious. Natasha and he were still young. They should focus on improving their levels and advancing into legendary, and they could consider life extension later.

As he spoke, Lucien asked curiously, “Master, how many years of life can your ‘Blessing of Dragon’ give you?”

Fernando replied cockily, “Depending on the quality of materials, the host’s understanding about the soul and the body, and certain unknown factors, the ritual adds two to five thousand years of life, and it can coexist with other life rituals. At that time, Hathaway and I both extended 4,700 years.”

That was close to the best one could expect. No wonder he was so satisfied. Lucien thought to himself and continued asking, “What about the other legendary sorcerers? Those who are not transformed into liches?”

“I don’t know much about other people because it’s sort of a secret. I only know that Douglas made a deal with the Elves and used ‘Nature’s Gift’ with the fruit of an elvish tree that yields once every ten thousand years, and that Brook hasn’t extended his life with any legendary rituals yet.” Fernando opened his library.

Brook was no more than two hundred years old. With his legendary expertise and the regular magic rituals, his life could already be lengthened to a thousand years, so he was not desperate to increase his longevity. Fernando, on the other hand, was different. Both Douglas and he were sorcerers who grew up in the ancient Magic Empire. They were already more than a thousand years old. Hathaway shared the ritual materials by the way because she collaborated with them.

His curiosity satisfied, Lucien smiled, “Master, I’ll return to the magic tower and put the ‘amulet of life’ in the key area for protection.”

While the amulet of life was not as critical as a lich’s phylactery, and he wouldn’t be killed when the item was destroyed, Lucien dare not be careless because he traded half of his possessions for it.

Fernando became solemn and hinted Lucien to walk in.

After Lucien entered in confusion, he closed the library, turned on the magic circle and said, “The Highest Council has passed the motion to cooperate with Sard. They also met him in secret yesterday and signed a magic contract with him respectively.”

“Every one of them? What requests did he propose? What’s his promise?” Lucien mentioned how mysterious and queer Sard was to his teacher before. He turned solemn, too.

Fernando invited Lucien in exactly because he wanted to hear Lucien’s opinion. He spoke frankly, “Every member of the Highest Council signed it. As per Sard’s request, we the sorcerers asked for the fairness of the Lord of Hell, and he swore to the God of Truth with his Heart of Faith, before we signed the contract.”

Generally speaking, ordinary magic contracts did not work on legendary sorcerers. After all, the devils and other mysterious creatures who supervised the magic contracts risked being captured by the legendary sorcerers as experiment materials. They were highly incapable of supervising such contracts and punishing the violators. Therefore, the magic contracts of such a level were mostly supervised by the nine dukes of hell, or sworn to the Origin of Magic.

Because the Origin of Magic was unpredictable, the restraint of the latter contracts had been questioned. Some people’s cognitive worlds collapsed because they violated their vows, but some were as healthy as before. Although it was accepted that they used wordplays in their vows, Sard obviously did not intend to take the risk and therefore demanded the supervision of the Lord of Hell, who was a demigod. His oath based on faith, on the other hand, was an absolutely effective restraint on the clergy.

“The Lord of Hell... Is he going to meddle in this too?” Hearing reference to the terrifying big shot, Lucien couldn’t help but smile bitterly.

Fernando smiled, “If it were before, he might intervene in secret. Schemes are his favorite. However, he was just ambushed by Silver Moon Alterna recently and lost an important projection under your ‘Eternal Blaze’. He might be unwilling to take the risk. The Silver Moon, on the other hand, is basically recovered and watching over us in the sky. He may be unable to defeat Douglas even if he casts a projection here.”

“That great prophet and Angel King are likely to be played by Sard himself to manipulate the radical clerics and night watchers, but he never admitted it.”

‘Watching over us in the sky’ was a common metaphor in the magic world to indicate Alterna’s attention.

“What’s your vow and what’s Sard’s promise?” Lucien asked the key question again.

Fernando nodded slowly, “The contract stipulates that, until Sard breaks his promise or attacks any sorcerer of the Congress of Magic not in self-defense, we cannot attack him. Also, until his new church jeopardizes the Congress, we cannot suppress their development. Furthermore, he will enjoy the priority preaching rights on every colony of our alternate dimension that we will obtain.”

It’s a reasonable summary of Sard’s desire and also seems to imply his sincerity for the cooperation... Lucien thought to himself.

“The promise he made was that today one year later, he would leave the Radiance Church and let the Congress take over the massive transmission magic circles and divine power defenses inside, which is even better than him shutting down the transmission magic circles himself. Also, he will ask the Grand Cardinals of the other four churches to do the same. Those who are not enchanted by him will be ambushed by us under his cooperation.” Fernando looked at Lucien and said, “With your understanding about Sard, is there a problem with this?”

Lucien shook his head. “I only know that he had been keeping my relationship with Natasha a secret to the pope, which befits his purpose right now. I don’t see any loopholes yet, but none of us know what he got from the World of Souls, and we have to be prepared for other changes.”

Fernando did not say anything more and simply reminded Lucien, “Forward the issue to Natasha and ask her not to mention anything about this in front of Sard. She can give connivance and cooperate in secret, but she must not leave any textual or vocal evidence, so that there will still be chances for us to make a comeback.”

“Master, are you suggesting...?” Lucien was more or less surprised.

Fernando nodded solemnly, “Before you calculate your victory, you have to be prepared for an utter defeat.”

The South Church was very powerful. It had 24 legendary experts and one demigod by itself. As for the countries attached to it, even without Holm and other countries beyond the Storm Strait, there were still thirteen legendary knights. It was the well-deserved greatest force. While the Congress of Magic had been flourishing, there was still a major gap between them, and competing with the Church was definitely full of dangers.

“I’m getting nervous because of you, master.” Lucien breathed heavily, “Then, should we postpone the paper on the special theory of relativity for a year? We cannot afford any accidents in such a critical period.”

Fernando shook his head. “Since we did not foresee that Sard would ask for cooperation so soon, we already raised Oliver’s transformation formulas. Even without our guidance, considering the vogue and the progress of arcana studies, some arcanists will discover it on their own in half a year at most. So, it is unnecessary for us to keep it a secret. All we need to do is to tread more lightly.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 543: Identification

Halfway through the Month of Fire (July), sweltering air had already swept across Rentato and Allyn, making it impossible for many people to go to sleep. They could only enjoy brief peace under the cool breeze in the morning.

However, in the cool morning, some thirty people, strangely, gave up the chance to sleep, and waited outside of the Allyn magic tower.

They were of different genders and ages. Some were wearing double-breasted suits, some were in the most common magic robes with capes, some were covered in well-cut long dresses, and some were simply donned with a white shirt with a regular waistcoat. The only thing that they had in common was the anxiety and hopefulness on their faces.

Having lost the apprentice's robes which could reduce heat, Lowi had passed a few rough days. Since he was also staying late for studies, his face was pale, and he couldn't have looked more haggard.

He observed his 'competitors' around him, greatly pressured. Of the almost forty people, only ten were apprentices. The others were formal sorcerers and level-one arcanists. Some were even middle-rank sorcerers.

“The fact that I passed the previous exams and interviews suggests that I have shining parts, too. I cannot lose my confidence.” Lowi encouraged himself. Then, to relieve his anxiety, he asked the few sorcerers and apprentices nearby, “What do you think Mr. Evans’ questions be in his interview? Will it involve the new alchemy?”

One male apprentice, who was mumbling something nervously, turned a deaf ear to him and continued his final preparation. Two sorcerers looked at Lowi and, upon noticing the apprentice badge on his chest, turned their heads away, resuming their own conversation.

A female sorcerer whose round face was like an apple was stunned for a moment. Then she smiled, “I don’t know. Mr. Evans was not involved in the previous exams and interviews. The questions given happened to be within my research field. I’m rather nervous right now, because I haven’t understood many concepts in the new alchemy. What were the questions for you during the interview?”

She wasn’t pretty, but her smile was amiable and made whoever saw it feel warm.

Lowi thought for a moment and repeated the few questions about elements and electromagnetism that Jerome asked him. In the end, he asked, “What about yours?”

“Right, I forgot to introduce myself. I am Erica.” The round-faced lady repeated her questions during the interview and exchanged their experiences, speculating what Mr. Evans would focus on asking today.

Seeing that, a few sorcerers and apprentices nearby joined their conversation.

Not far away, Blake smiled at Alfalia, who had the typical features of Holm. “Do you want to go over and listen to them? Their experience may be of use soon.”

Alfalia replied with a casual smile, “Alright, but I find it odd that the final interview hosted by Mr. Evans is set at nine in the morning. The Allyn magic tower is only just opening at such a time. For the interviewees, we have to wait outside in advance for the meeting.”

“Maybe this strange request is meant to test our punctuality and obedience. After all, we are expected to be apprentice-level assistants, not arcanists with independent research programs.” Blake thought for a moment and analyzed carefully.

Looking at the magic tower that rose to the sky, Alfalia nodded softly, “I think so, too. Mr. Evans is definitely not one of those people who enjoy torturing the interviewees. His request must have deeper meanings.”

On the eighteenth floor of the Allyn magic tower, Lucien, with Rock, Jerome and his students, stood next to the window and looked at the interviewees down below.

Hearing the scene forwarded by Sprint, Rock smiled at Lucien, “Why do I feel that you do have fun torturing the interviewees?”

While talking, he turned his eyes to the poor students such as Annick. Under the torture of Lucien’s ‘Arcana Build-up School’, while their arcana and magic expertise soared, they had always been gnashing their teeth.

Heidi nodded her head quickly. Her teacher was a ‘devil’ who loved tormenting them with abundant exercises and profound knowledge.

Lucien coughed, “This is to observe their real personality and their ability in daily communication. They are here as apprentice-level assistants. Only if they are good at both aspects can they be melted into the institution sooner and take over the chores for you.”

“Fair enough. Those who are too arrogant to communicate with the lesser minds are unsuitable for the institution.” Jerome agreed with Lucien’s opinion. Then he asked curiously, “Will the assistants we recruit also become your students in the future?”

Sprint and the rest of them immediately focused their eyes on Lucien, wondering about their teacher’s answer.

Lucien shook his head. “Six students are already too many. I have my own magic studies, arcana research and daily life. I can’t teach more students. If you find any of them promising, you can direct them yourselves.”

It was a shared attitude of the senior-rank arcanists, who would rather focus their attention on only a fixed number of students, unless some of the students perished, or they encountered a rarely-seen genius. Also, the students of such high-level arcanists enjoyed their halo in the first place, and their behavior represented their teacher. If there were too many of them, there would also be unnecessary incidents.

Katrina and other students were relieved. Although they were kind in nature, they did not really look forward to new classmates, because it meant that the time their teacher spent on them would be reduced.

Nine o’clock soon came, and Lowi as well as other interviewees entered the magic tower with trepidation, reaching the Atom Institution in the lift.

“You can go in together. Before the final interview, there will be a magic contract for you to sign.” Rock was waiting for them outside of the Atom Institution with a very genuine smile, because the troubles would be over very soon. There was no way that he would ever take such a mission again!

“A magic contract? What’s that?” Asked a middle-aged, slightly-fat sorcerer in confusion.

Lowi recognized that it was Mr. Issac whom he talked to just now.

Rock replied with a smile that he thought to be charming. “The Atom Institution explores the cutting edge of the elemental field. A lot of secrets are kept here. Therefore, I need everyone to sign a confidentiality agreement. Also, since Evans is a grand-arcanist-to-be and a target that the Church and other forces are desperate to get rid of, the other arcanists of the Atom Institution have unfortunately become collateral targets, too. Therefore, to avoid assassins, the new hires have to sign a relatively rigorous magic contract.”

“Rigorous...” Alfalia and the rest of them became solemn. Although they could understand the Atom Institution’s decision, rigorousness still made them worried.

Issac frowned. “I hope that the magic contract is not outrageously rigorous.”

Rock smiled. “Rest assured. You will not be treated as slaves. Only those with ill intentions will feel uncomfortable.”

Lowi couldn’t care less about the contract. He only wanted to enter the Atom Institution and study under Mr. Evans. For him, anything was acceptable as long as he did not have to sell his soul or his body.

Under Rock's direction, the interviewees entered the Atom Institution's conference room.

Lowi, Blake, Alfalia and other apprentices and sorcerers, unable to contain their curiosity, peeped respectfully and excitedly at the two sorcerers who were already seated.

That was Mr. Jerome, whom they met before, and... and this should be Mr. Lucien Evans, right?

In Lowi's eyes, it was a young man with a dense black hair and an unbelievably handsome face. However, his black eyes that seemed to contain countless mysteries and his confident, casual smile made everybody completely overlook his face. Lowi had no doubt that he was a formidable sorcerer and a wise arcanist.

"Good morning, Mr. Evans." Led by a few sorcerers who met Lucien before, Lowi and other interviewees greeted him.

Lucien nodded and hinted for them to be seated. Then, with his eyes even deeper, he pointed at the parchment papers on the table and said, "These are the magic contracts you need to sign. They will be guaranteed by the duke of the first level of hell, and violators will be punished by him. Take a look now. We will begin if there isn't any problem."

Hearing Lucien's words, all the sorcerers and apprentices grew nervous for some reason. Then, they picked up the contracts and began to read in silence.

Suddenly, Issac stood up, blushing. “What kind of contract is this? This is purely a one-sided slavery contract!”

“Whoever exposes anything about the Atom Institution or Lucien Evans, intentionally or unintentionally, and in whatever form, will be captured by Agostinho, duke of the first level of hell!”

“... Their mind will be completely opened. Whoever has the thought to hurt Lucien Evans or other arcanists in the Atom Institution will immediately be detected by Agostinho!”

...

“This contract is more than rigorous. We are not regarded as human beings at all. I will not sign it or participate in the interview!”

While he complained in fury, three sorcerers and apprentices followed him and stood up, despising the contract in excitement.

Issac was about to leave, only to discover that Lowi, Blake and the rest of them were looking at him strangely. He was disappointed, “Do you have any backbones? Are you going to sign such a contract?”

Lowi scratched the back of his head and asked in confusion, “Mr. Issac, that’s not the contract that we are reading.”

“What?” Issac was stunned.

Lucien opened his mouth. “Those magic contracts have been processed with ‘Implicit Words’, a eighth-circle magic. Whoever sees it will be grabbed by ten times of their horror, and the content of the contract will change accordingly. What is it that you are scared of?”

“No, no!” Issac and the rest of them shook their heads palely.

Lucien looked at the door of the conference room. “There’s no need to answer my question. Explain it to the Affair Committee. Thompson, thank you for your trouble.”

Thompson walked in and brought away Issac and his fellow complainers.

Rock asked in the telepathic bond curiously, “Why were they scared? Such unequal contracts do not entail any restraint at all.”

“The hint has been started when you told them the arrangement outside. Also, what I said before stressed that Agostinho will guarantee the contracts but neglected the specific consequences. In the meantime, I hinted that we would sign the contracts if there was no problem, not after the interview. Through the multiple hints and my ‘Image Creation’, they were already convinced of the authenticity of the contracts.” Lucien explained briefly. “It’s easy to identify a sorcerer who believes in the God of Truth, but it’s hard to resist a spy who sells secrets and partners for money and materials.”

While Lowi and the remaining interviewees looked at him in shock, Lucien smiled, “Now, read the real contracts first. They are not too harsh. If you are willing to take it, we will begin the interview.”

After reading the new contract, Lowi and the rest of them all agreed to sign it if they passed the interview. Then, they looked at Lucien with expectation and anxiety, wondering what his questions would be.

Mr. Evans, please don't ask us about the new alchemy. I don't know anything about it. Lowi and other apprentices begged in their hearts, because they only understood the general model and concepts of the new alchemy.

Lucien smiled rather delightedly, "Everybody, tell me why you want to enter the Atom Institution."

"Then, tell me your shining points and your drawbacks, as well as your plan for your life."

Huh? What is that all about?

Alfalia, Blake and all the other interviewees were bewildered.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 544: Violin

After the interview, Lowi and other interviewees left the conference room with weird looks. The knowledge in the atomic field and the tricks of control magic circles that they prepared in advance proved to be of absolutely no use. Mr. Evans' questions were unimaginably strange. Did they need to confess their life plan? Wasn't it all about advancing from level one to level two, from level two to level three, and so on?

However, such a simple answer was obviously not going to satisfy Mr. Evans. Therefore, every interviewee added certain parts that they believed to be helpful. For example, Alfalia talked about her goals in her knowledge system, and Blake introduced his plan to return from the Solar Islands to Allyn. Many people also put the Atom Institution in their life plan.

The moment he recalled how he introduced himself early on, and that he somehow added finding his love to his life plan, Lowi felt that his face was burning and dared not look at his fellows, fearing that he would be mocked. For him, it was a most shameful interview.

The other people were more or less the same. Just now, many interviewees told their poor pasts in the spur of the moment, hoping that it would earn sympathy, but now that the interview was over, they only regretted that they could not take off their clothes and cover their heads.

Rock said with a rather sunny smile, "Wait ten minutes here. Lucien will make a decision soon."

Such an usual interview was rather fun for him, especially when the interviewees expressed themselves unskillfully.

Hearing Rock's words, Lowi was no longer embarrassed. As Rock entered the conference room and shut the gate, their hearts beat faster and faster and louder.

Dum. Dum. Dum. Lowi felt that he had to say something, or he would pass out from anxiety. He opened his mouth and asked, “Erica, who do you think Mr. Evans will choose?”

Lowi was scared by himself after he spoke. He never thought that his voice could be that dry and hoarse.

Erica said in a low voice, her nose flapping, “Everything is superfluous right now. We have shown what we have.”

Not far away, while Blake was nervous, as a man who advanced into a formal sorcerer on the harsh islands, he remained calm on the surface. He said to Alfalia in a rigid smile, “I think you have a good chance. Your performance was good.’

Alfalia replied with a shallow smile, “Stop talking like that. You’ll make me look forward to it more. The more hopeful one is, the more disappointed they tend to be.”

She spoke casually, but she clenched her hands at some point.

In the suffocating atmosphere, the gate was opened again. They raised their heads and looked at Mr. Evans both expectantly and anxiously.

Lucien smiled, “You are all very remarkable and full of potential. However, the Atom Institution only needs ten assistants right now. Therefore, I have to make a rather tough pick to select those who better suit our needs. The first candidate, Mr. Balterley.”

The middle-aged man, who was Lowi's teacher in school, waved his fists in excitement, but as a second-circle sorcerer, he managed to retain his manners.

"The second candidate, Alfalia." Lucien warm voice found its way into Alfalia's ears.

Not realizing what happened, she raised her head and looked at Lucien in bewilderment, only to see that Lucien nodded at her with a smile.

It was not until then that she realized she had been picked by the Atom Institution. Her blue eyes were suddenly filled with water.

Such a success had been earned fair and square, without bribery of money and materials, without the trading her body and feelings, but solely with her magic and arcana abilities!

For Alfalia, who had to leave Allyn for certain reasons, it was a hard-earned affirmation. She covered her face with her hands, not showing anybody her brief weakness.

Hearing Mr. Evans' announcement and the exclamations around, Lowi became more and more excited. He held his breath subconsciously. Mr. Blake passed, Erica passed, and two apprentices he knew earlier also passed, but why wasn't he chosen?

"The tenth candidate, Lowi."

Lowi felt that stars were floating before his eyes, and he almost tripped over himself. Intense joy and excitement burst out like a volcano, leaving his head swooning and his eyes wet.

“Don’t pass out. If you are unwell, I’ll consider a refund.” Lucien talked with humor that nobody could get.

But in Lowi’s eyes, it was as pleasant as an elvish song. He hurried to say, “No, no, Mr. Evans. I’m in perfect health!”

Everything in his eyes became lovely all of a sudden.

After asking Jerome to settle the ten assistants, Lucien left for the Affair Committee, intending to check up on Thompson’s interrogation.

“They have confessed. Two are spies of the South Church, one is associated with the North Church, and one was allured by an intelligence worker of the Holy Heilz Empire. They were all promised that they would be heavily rewarded if they sneak into the Atom Institution, and they will be paid for every piece of intelligence they provide about the institution or yourself later.” Thompson handed the files to Lucien and asked confusedly, “Why does the Holy Heilz Empire care about you? Isn’t the Church the leader in dealing with sorcerers?”

Lucien brushed his eyebrow. He sabotaged Rudolf II’s plan in the alternate dimension, and he was obviously connected to the Silver Moon. How could the guy not pay attention to him? But of course, the top secrets of the Highest Council was not for Thompson to know.

Skimming through the files, Lucien's eyes were finally frozen. The image of the night watcher who hired Issac was so familiar.

"Minsk... Juliana..." Lucien recited the two names.

Lucien knew that something was wrong with Amelton when Rhine was projected into the joker's dream. He also learnt the identities and looks of the few night watchers that hung around with the joker.

That wasn't supposed to be a problem. Lucien had met Lend before, and it was perfectly normal for them to be relocated together with Amelton. However, according to Issac, the two night watchers had been meeting him in turns since three years ago, hoping that he could reach Lucien. That is to say, Sard had been preparing for this three years before he became the Grand Cardinal of the Holm parish.

"No wonder he kept the things between Natasha and me a secret. But it was such a long plan. Was he so confident that he could be deployed here?" Lucien was more or less confused. Then he spoke to Thompson, "Tail the two night watchers but do not get rid of them yet."

"Also, ask the magi to protect John's family in secret. Don't let them know, and don't burst into conflicts with the guards that Natasha deploys."

The two night watchers hated his guts. Lucien was worried that they might go out of control at some point.

"Okay." Thompson was more and more polite to Lucien. Not just his positional change thanks to 'new alchemy', the improvement of his magic capabilities alone had already foreshadowed the next legendary sorcerer.

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On July 30, Queen Nekso Palace, having been through an assassination sponsored by the conservatives, reached the royal magic tower of Holm and declared that she would have dinner and celebrate her birthday with the seniors of the royal family here, and that she would not return to the Nekso Palace until the next day.

Considering that Duke James and Duke Russell must be furious after the assassination, the conservatives did not object to the plan.

As night fell, Natasha, who was celebrating her birthday with members of the royal family in the magic tower, left under the excuse that she was going to meet Hathaway.

Lifting her dress, she rushed to Lucien's office like a charging knight.

She was about to knock on the door, but the door opened on its own. In the meantime, the pleasant sounds of a piano echoed inside, rippling out beautifully and refreshingly. The whole room was immediately enshrouded in a dreamy and romantic atmosphere.

Natasha closed the door quietly and looked at Lucien whose fingers were bouncing on the piano. He was wearing the black formal attire that he usually wore in Aalto, and his face was gentle and devoted. His eyes that looked back at her now and then were so deep that it could almost attract souls.

Lucien, on the other hand, suddenly felt amazed. Natasha was not wearing a deep-color dress today, as she usually would, or a knight suit and armor. Instead, she was in a white long dress with simple laces, as well as gloves and silk stockings of the same color. Her tied hair and her broad-edged hat made her look like a bride that had just barged in. There was additional pureness and freshness in her violent glamor.

The room was arranged in a similar way to last time. The only exception was the flute, oboe, cello, brass, violin and other musical instruments around the piano, as if the orchestra had been there but was gone all of a sudden, leaving their equipment behind.

Looking at Lucien in the eyes and listening to the delicate music, Natasha found her previous agitation all gone. She approached Lucien with a smile and stopped next to the ground table.

She knew that it was 'A Poem For Natasha', the piano verse that Lucien prepared last time. However, they were so passionate after figuring out what was in each other's hearts last time that they completely forgot about it. When they talked about it later, Lucien postponed it to her birthday.

The notes filled the room like flowing water, rising up and down gently and comforting her mind. The romantic tunes and rhythms echoed in their eyes.

After Lucien was done playing, Natasha clapped her hands and was about to hug her knight.

However, Lucien shook his head with a smile, hinting that there was another episode.

"This is the birthday gift for you."

Lucien picked up the flute and played a rhythm that was different from anything in the past and sounded like a bird song.

When the flute song was just ending, the oboe flew to him on its own and presented the scenery of spring.

Natasha looked at Lucien in confusion. That was a music style she had never heard before. Was it his new creation?

Lucien got the violin in his hands at some point. Staring at Natasha, he played a poetic melody.

As the gentle sound from the violin entered Natasha's ears, her mind seemed to have been hit by something. The music was so beautiful and romantic, and yet it seemed to contain vague sorrow that invited empathy.

It was different from any music that Natasha learnt in the past, but it was so touching and astoundingly beautiful that Lucien seemed to be telling the love in his heart.

The best music had no differences in styles. Looking at Lucien who was playing the violin gracefully, Natasha was captivated by the rhythm.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 545: One Man's Orchestra

After the gloomy melody, a cello appeared before Lucien, who turned it around delicately and played music that was as profound as a man's voice. The violin, having lost support, simply floated in midair.

Enshrouded in the romantic atmosphere weaved by the conversation of the mellow cello and the soft violin, Natasha recalled her first encounter with Lucien. Because of a Symphony of Fate, the two of them were first connected, and because of their mutual interest in music and Lucien's humor and delightful self-embarrassment now and then, she gradually became his good friend, which allowed her to discover his advantages other than music. He was calm, gentle, smart and fun. There was no pressure to hang around with him, and she could be herself freely.

Those were the days that were as beautiful as the spring of April. Perhaps, it was in their deepening relationship that she gradually forgot Lucien's gender. Their love sprouted for the first time.

In the easy and pleasant melody, musical instruments behind and next to Lucien echoed on their own with his violin.

Those musical instruments seemed to be given their own souls and gathered into the concert of an orchestra. It was also as if many transparent musicians were playing together with Lucien.

Thanks to magic, Lucien's solo performance sounded like a minor orchestra.

The soft violin and the magnificent cello 'stood' together again. The deep feelings and the reluctance to say goodbye surfaced in Natasha's heart clearly. That was the farewell after their life-and-death escape and their support for each other. Lucien was about to leave Aalto for Holm. She believed that they would meet again, and she knew it was in the best interests of Lucien, so she let him go generously, but she still found herself missing him although they hadn't been separated yet.

Perhaps it was at that time, when Lucien carried her through the dark forest determinedly, that their friendship transformed. However, because of the pain that Sylvia brought her and her negligence, she merely regarded their feelings as those between two good friends.

From the brass instrument, a creepy, rigorous melody spread out. Grief, fear, panic, sorrow and other feelings flowed out while the violin was competing with the allegro in the band. Natasha seemed to have sensed Lucien's hesitation and agony after he realized that he fell in love with her. She also recalled her suffering back when she was in the abbey. The sole comfort for her at that time was the letters from Lucien. However, having walked further and further down the path of magic, and having disgraced the Cannon and the Doctrines again and again, he seemed unable to even keep being a good friend to her, a devout believer and the future duchess.

The violin let out resolution and anger. Natasha seemed to have heard Lucien's sigh when he made up his mind, and remembered how she treated Lucien as her best friend just like before, overcoming her psychological barriers. However, the pressure from the Church, the duchy, her father, the Violet family and the citizens cast everything into shadow again. They raged like storms and presaged the possible tragic ending.

In retrospect, Natasha realized that she had regarded Lucien as the most peaceful and gentle part of her mind since then, but her perception was enveloped by the mists of her habits back then.

Lucien continued playing the violin, and the cello began to play itself while nobody was around, as if it were listening to the violin's subtle confession of love. Then, Lucien turned to the cello, and the

violin started to play on its own, as if the time had come for the gentlemen to tell his feelings and for the lady to listen.

It reminded Natasha of the beautiful scene when they met again in Holm and finally told each other their feelings towards each other. It was sweet and warm, but the lovely memory did not last when the melody turned hasty and sharp. The situation in Holm, the danger one year later, and her worries for her father who was far away in Orvarit all turned into rapid notes that constituted a grievous scene. The melody that feathered the wonder of love emanated the sorrow that could make souls cry in such an atmosphere.

Natasha had seen such devastation before, but her emotional experience with Sylvia was not as deep. The moment she thought that Lucien and her would end up like this, she felt that the music whose sadness reached her soul was speaking for herself. She clenched her fists and vowed to break all the obstacles.

But what if her father was the obstacle, and it was a helpless choice for Lucien's safety?

Obstacles were not so easy to be broken!

Natasha's face was somewhat twisted while she struggled in her heart. As her sorrow reached the summit, she finally took a step. Any difficulty could possibly be resolved, and giving up meant that they would never see the dawn. At such a moment, she could only press forward and try to resolve the difficulties until she died!

As if moved by her determination, after the intense grief, the flutes played the soft, splendid melody again together with the harp. Natasha seemed to see the view of Mountain Paradise where all pains were gone and only happiness was left. In the end, the violin began to play the thematic melody in solo again.

This time, there was no more vague sorrow, but only comforting beauty.

Such an atmosphere was like two hands that still held each other after all the vicissitudes of life, the warm eyes of understanding after all the difficulties were overcome, and two butterflies that danced with their dreamy wings around each other after breaking away from the thick cocoons that shackled them.

The music stopped, but the melody still lingered, awing everything into silence with its beauty.

“I have never heard such a music style before, but it is also the most beautiful violin melody I have ever heard. Thank you for your birthday gift, and thank ‘Lucien Orchestra’ for their performance.” A long time later, Natasha finally said hoarsely, “I like the final part best. It seems to have sublimed the whole music.”

Half a month ago, after much deliberation, Lucien selected The Butterfly Lovers’ Violin Concerto ¹, which was composed by Mr. He Zhanhao and Mr. Chen Gang. While it was a tragedy, the ‘Turning Into Butterflies’ part represented beautiful hope, and he could express his feelings with it after slight adaptation. It was also fit for the conditions between himself and Natasha.

Putting down the violin, Lucien stood and bowed, “I’m honored that you like it.”

“I noticed that you used a lot of different tricks when you played the violin. For example, sometimes you only used two strings.” Natasha walked to Lucien’s side with a smile and pulled him back to the table. Seeing that he was about to explain, she hurried to hint that it was unnecessary and simply went on. “It’s not easy to see you play the violin. Its charm is entirely different from that of the piano. However, it is not the time for this right now. The music just now let me scrutinize our relationship in retrospect. I find it hard to hold back my feelings. I only want to have you and feel you.”

Lucien smiled, “It’s your birthday today. You’ll be the queen.”

Naughtiness beamed out of Natasha’s smile. “Is that so? Excellent. That’s what I want, too. Since today is my birthday, I’ll take the lead of everything. You can only accept and cannot take any action until I tell you to. Do you understand?”

Lucien was about to reply, when Natasha added, “Rest assured. I won’t cross your boundaries. In fact, I tried to transform you into a girl exactly because I wanted to ‘care for’ you. Your current status will do. There will be even the additional feeling of conquest. Would you like to cooperate with me?”

Lucien smiled. “You are the queen today.”

Natasha chuckled, “For me, music is an excellent birthday gift, but there is only one best birthday gift, which is you.”

While talking, she picked up a piece of cream from the table and smeared it on Lucien’s throat, before she licked it. When Lucien tried to hug her, she stopped him: “Don’t move. Follow my commands.”

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The messy velvet quilts covered their naked bodies, and the air of love filled the room.

Lucien felt lucky that he had changed his bed to a magic bed, which saved him from another collapse experience. Natasha, on the other hand, was like a kid who was occupying her favorite toy. She tied Lucien up with both hands and legs as she breathed steadily sound sleep.

“She had been taking the lead the first couple of hours. She must be exhausted.” Lucien’s right hand was under Natasha, so he extended his left hand and eased the vague worries on her face.

Suddenly, Natasha opened her eyes and said in a daze, “It’s already dawn? I fell asleep.”

“Not yet. Sorry for waking you up.” Relied Lucien gently.

Natasha put on a brilliant smile. “That’s great. I didn’t plan to sleep at all. It’s probably going to be half or one month later before we meet again. How can we pass the night sleeping? Even random talking is better than that!”

Lucien smiled, “Not a problem. Right, I’ve been confused about something. Why is Sard not worried that the pope will notice what he is doing?”

Lucien did not find it inappropriate to discuss such matters on such an occasion, and Natasha felt nothing wrong, either. Continuing using Lucien’s right hand as her pillow, she said, “Because I am the queen of Holm.”

“Huh? What do you mean?” Lucien was puzzled.

Natasha smiled, “That’s a secret way that the pope checks the major parishes. After the schism of the North Church, the pope discovered that some northern nobles had detected anomalies a long time ago but they were killed when they tried to report the issue. Henceforth, emperors, kings and duchies have been given ways to directly contact the pope. Once the Grand Cardinal behaves inappropriately, they can report it to the pope.”

She stopped calling the pope as His Holiness.

“Perhaps, other nobles and night watchers can reach out to the Church in secret, too, but the right to talk to the pope should still be a royal prerogative. I certainly would not report to the pope that something wrong is going on in my kingdom, so Sard is not worried at all.”

“That explains a lot...” Lucien nodded. Then he recalled something else. “Sard’s goal is unclear. In case of accidents, give the structure of the divine power circles in the Nekso Palace to me when you have a chance. I’ll try to improve them. Then, you’ll ask Richard to change them accordingly, so that Sard will not control the defense of the Nekso Palace all of a sudden.”

Natasha was stunned, “You are going to improve the divine power circles?”

Wasn’t it supposed to be the clergy’s job?

Lucien smiled, “You forgot what happened before? For a sorcerer, the greatest difficulty to improve the divine power circles is that they may accidentally cut the power source of such circles. After the incidents with Ell and Francis, I am already able to identify the central part that distributes energy and make unrecognizable changes on other parts.”

Besides, he also had ‘Sun’s Corona’ as a reference.

“You’re more and more capable now. I’ll give the structure to you when there’s a chance to.”
Natasha teased Lucien.

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After another half night’s lingering, Natasha put on her dress and left affectionately when it was dawn.

Lucien, slept for another half day, then returned to Allyn in a pleasant mood but unsteady feet.

“Master, Arcana and Magic have been published in advance. The discussion is rather heated.” The next day, when Lucien walked into the Atom Institution, Heidi and other students greeted him with the journal, asking half in confusion and half in excitement, “But why isn’t your paper published? The guys who are in favor of the wave theory all claim that you... you have recognized the reality.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 546: Theater of Destruction

Looking at the infuriated Heidi, Lucien smiled. “What’s to be angry about? So many arcanists of the elemental school share my opinion. Why do I need to waste my time on a worthless paper? Such a

hypothesis which uses the result as the premise, until it is proved by experiments, can only be used for mathematical and methodological reference. Did any arcanist write a rebuttal?"

Annick browsed through the journals and shook his head. "None of the five grand arcanists published any papers. Mr. President and the Lord of Storm, on the other hand, discussed the transformation formulas' application in the Douglas system under different frames of reference."

"Mr. President published a paper?" Since he did not review it, it was the first time Lucien heard about it. He took over Annick's 'Arcana' and began to read.

Douglas had obviously noticed Oliver's paper last month but was not as upset as the senior-rank arcanists, because it only offered a theoretical explanation and the corresponding transformation formulas. No experiment results or phenomena could prove the theory and explain the light-speed experiment. Instead, Douglas was more interested in the transformation formulas, as the transformation formulas in the past were rather inept after the Brook electromagnetic system was established.

Reading Douglas' paper, Lucien nodded his head. This was the best he could expect. After Mr. President studied the major part of the paper, with his understanding of the electromagnetic system, he would soon recognize something and gain certain preliminary insights. Only in such a case would he not be faced with the special theory of relativity without any psychological or knowledge preparation.

As Lucien read the paper in silence, Heidi murmured, "I know that you are unwilling to demean yourself by discussing such speculative papers, but the arcanists who support the wave theory think otherwise. They believe that you have been hit by the paper and realized your bigotry in the past, and that's why you quietly backed off and did not argue. This is a sign that the wave theory is making a comeback."

By 'comeback', she meant the problem whether or not 'Ether', the medium through which waves were transmitted in the vacuum, existed.

The few students were rather excited about the wave theory advocates' slanders against their teacher. It seemed more insufferable than themselves being humiliated.

"What's their opinion on the photoelectric effect and the Brook scattering experiment?" Lucien was holding 'Arcana' and 'Magic' in his hands. Obviously, the arcanists that they knew and were in touch with couldn't have published any papers in the two journals.

After he blew up a tremendous amount of heads with the light quantum hypothesis and won the Silver Moon Medal, the arcanists who persisted in the wave theory clinging to the classic experiments stayed far away from Lucien in fear. As a result, he could only learn their progress through journals.

Sprint snorted, "They attempted to construct more complicated wave models to explain the photoelectric effect and the scattering experiment, but that's only for discussion and of no actual value. They almost didn't pass the review."

"Then what are you angry about? Besides, can the particle theory explain the classic experiment images?" Lucien smiled, rather amazed by the wave theory supporters' efforts. However, their efforts were destined to be in vain due to the lack of theoretical guidance.

Heidi found her teacher's casualness very perplexing. "But they are vilifying you, aren't they?"

"They'll be slapping my face only when they present detailed experiment results." Lucien focused his attention on the two journals. He realized that after he proposed the light quantum hypothesis and Mr. Brook proved it, the supporters of the particle theory were soaring in number. Many arcanists had changed their opinion and believed that light could be a very strange particle.

However, since the classic experiments still could not be explained with particles, the supporters of the traditional wave theory, after the intense shock at the beginning, got back on their feet again. On 'Arcana' and 'Magic' of this issue, Joaquin, Pesor, Tina-Timos and other senior-rank arcanists all expressed their acknowledgment of Oliver's paper, but they prudently maintained that experiments should be devised according to the theory in order to prove it, and that they should not trust it too much until then. That was a good lesson that they had learnt after Lucien's consecutive revolutionary papers.

Based on the experience from Earth, Lucien knew that the War between Wave and Particle would be long and involve the mysteries about the nature of this world. Therefore, he did not find it strange at all.

Her teacher's attitude calmed Heidi down. She asked curiously, "What's your paper this month, master? I saw you working on it before."

"An essay on tensor analysis. It has been published in 'Nature'. You should read it sometime." Lucien replied, without bothering to raise his head.

Annick, Katrina and other students all looked awful. It had been three years since 'Nature' was established, and it was gradually known as 'the most abstruse journal in history'. Even the advanced arcanists who were adept at mathematics and logic were often too overwhelmed to understand what the papers on it were talking about. The series of papers that their teacher and Mr. Levski worked on in regard to Evans Geometry, in particular, were the best tools to help them go to sleep at night.

Noticing the silence, Lucien raised his head and looked at him with a vague smile, "Only with a good knowledge in mathematics and logic will your future studies on arcana and magic be easier. Do you need to be fortified in that aspect?"

“Haha. Master, I just recalled that I still had an unfinished experiment. I’ll be on my way. Take your time reading your paper. I’ll go find Alfalia.” Smiling, Heidi spoke as she backed to the door.

Alfalia had been assigned to her as her assistant.

With Heidi as their example, the excuses such as arcana experiments and magic analysis and construction surged out of the mouths of the students. After only ten seconds, Annick was the only person left in the office.

Lucien looked at Annick, finding it weird, “Do you not have any unfinished experiment? Or do you really want me to give you more lectures on mathematics and logic?”

Annick scratched his head and said in a low voice, “Master, my plan was to read the journals...”

Lucien lowered his eyes, only to discover that Annick’s journals were in his hands.

Lucien was finally able to read and learn the papers after the steel golem delivered his journals from the Review Board. He realized that, because Oliver’s paper was too dazzling, the journals were filled with discussions about it. Other articles were the achievements in other fields or improvement in magic. The heuristic paper that Annick and Sprint proposed about the contradiction between the theoretical performance of the cyclotron and its actual performance received absolutely no attention.

That’s not going to work. Lucien thought for a moment and took out a piece of paper. Picking up the quill, he wrote: On the Problems in the Application of the Cyclotron.

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Inside the ‘Theater of Destruction’, collapsing and perishing stars were everywhere.

In the dark, terrible end of the world, certain brightness spread out gently but firmly. It seemed to be the last symbol of civilization.

As one approached it, they would discover that the shimmer was from a high-rising magic tower that was full of artistic air. Every window was ablaze with lights.

In the library, Oliver, whose magic robe had been changed into a sloppy pajama, was holding his quill haggardly and smoking his tobacco pipe, unable to write a single word for a long time.

His eyes were filled with the zealotry typical of artists. He seemed to have ignited and dedicated all the feelings in his heart to this long poem of love.

Suddenly, the tower guard’s pleasant voice echoed, “My lord, Mr. President has come to visit.”

Oliver put down his quill, frowning. A ‘poet’ and ‘playwright’ whose inspiration was disrupted tended to be agitated. He violently pushed the paper on which the love poem was written to a pile of paper on his desk, clearing an empty space. Then, he took a few deep breaths and resumed calmness on the surface. Finally, he rose and greeted Douglas at the door of his magic tower. In terms of both seniority and prestige, Douglas deserved his full respect.

Soon enough, Oliver led Douglas back to his library. Rubbing his eyebrow, he asked, “Mr. President, is there anything I can help you with? I’m not in the best mood recently, and there’s something urgent I need to accomplish. I won’t be away from Allyn for now.”

It was a subtle refusal of being sent out for missions, which was also a privilege for the grand arcanists.

Douglas smiled. “You can stay in Allyn and study the Douglas. There are no missions that require your help. I’m here mainly to discuss the application of transformation formulas with you. Have you seen my paper on ‘Arcana’ today?”

He, too, was aware of Oliver’s recent divorce, and naturally did not assign any mission to him.

Oliver was more or less relieved. “The transformation formulas? I’m glad to discuss it with you. Fernando and I had so many unresolved problems.”

“You discussed it with Fernando?” Douglas found it strange.

Realizing his mistake, Oliver hurried to explain, “You know that Fernando is adept at many fields. He is a great partner to discuss with. I communicated with him before I submitted the paper.”

Douglas nodded in approval and sat on the opposite side of the desk. “Let’s discuss this problem.”

As if he felt that oral description might be too difficult, he took up another quill on the desk, drew a piece of paper, and was about to write the problem down.

On the paper, however, were a few lines of beautiful and affectionate poetry. Douglas shook his head and apologized, “Did I interrupt your creation?”

While talking, he put the paper of poetry back to where it used to be and drew the pile of paper that was below it at the beginning. He thought that the paper down below was blank.

Still in a trance, Oliver was about to say that it was alright because he already had insights and he could continue his work in a right mood later, but all of a sudden, his eyes widened and he turned around like a wild storm, shouting, “Not that paper!”

Douglas avoided Oliver’s robbing out of instincts and looked at the paper in his hands, feeling it strange, only to catch the title on it that was in a very familiar handwriting.

“On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies and Mass-energy Equation”

Oliver’s face immediately turned gloomy. The destruction in the cosmic theater out there seemed even more horrifying and dark.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 547: Ungullible Douglas

“This paper is based on relativity and the constant speed of light. For that, I stipulate that...”

After he skimmed through the paper, Douglas’s smile was replaced by graveness. He raised his head to look at Oliver, only to discover in surprise that the pile of papers before him, including the poem, the play and the papers, had been obliterated into dust and dispersed into the air.

Failing to take over the front page of the paper in Douglas’ hand, Oliver destroyed all the items on the desk in his anxiety when he tried to clean up the traces!

He was now full of regret. Due to the turmoil in his love life recently, he hadn’t been himself. After he took out the paper and studied it, he forgot to put it back before he started the creation of his long poem. Later, he simply forgot everything and did nothing when he directed Douglas into his library.

I should’ve enhanced myself with ‘Mechanical Mind’ when the tower guard informed me! His facial muscles cramping, Oliver couldn’t have regretted it more.

Douglas looked at Oliver, puzzled. “Why did you destroy it and stop me from reading it? Is there a problem that Lucien inferred equations based on two premises?”

The front page of the paper mainly included two postulates and their respective descriptions.

Oliver looked at the bookshelf and, with a self-mocking smile, spoke convincingly, “They were just the ideas that Lucien and I discussed, nothing more than speculations and fantasies. They are full of flaws and errors, so I would rather nobody else reads them. You know that I am a perfectionist. In both the creation of plays, poetry and paintings and the studies of arcana and magic, I would rather destroy the works if I’m not satisfied than present them to anybody.”

Such words would’ve been ridiculously funny if they were said by somebody else. However, when they were said by a grand arcanist who was brimming with the vibe of a great artist, together with his long beard and his sad face, they sounded particularly true.

Douglas seemed more or less convinced. He smiled. “Speculations and fantasies are not bad, either. They can give me inspirations. Let me guess what you discussed. Huh, the constant speed of light... The popular paper that explained the light speed experiment recently... Did Lucien infer your transformation formulas based on the two premises?”

Oliver held his head. Could you please not be so smart, Mr. President? “No, not exactly...”

Douglas did not seem to hear him at all. He took out a pile of paper from his storage bag and picked up the quill, starting his deduction based on the two premises on Lucien’s paper.

“No...” Oliver stepped forward, trying to stop it, but when he saw Douglas writing busily, he suddenly fell silent. Now that Mr. President had the idea, he could deduce it after he returned even though Oliver stopped him right now. Therefore, he might as well supervise him and see if he could offer any guidance in case of a tragedy.

If things are beyond control... Thinking about that, Oliver activated the highest clearances of the magic tower, so that he could jump out of ‘Theater of Destruction’ at the critical moment.

He could be heavily wounded at most if the demiplane was destroyed. He could always map and produce another one.

Oliver finally showed some responsibility at such a moment and did not inform Fernando and Lucien to come, in case they were affected, too.

Based on the two premises, and since he already had a goal, Douglas soon deduced a series of formulas, but the more he inferred, the slower he became.

Hum... The Theater of Destruction outside of the magic tower whimpered, and the exploding stars seemed to be collapsing under the attraction of a certain force. Although it was shabby and imperfect, it released the air of destruction that was even more horrifying than the doomsday just now.

Oliver was soaked in cold sweat. It was indeed as expected of an expert at the peak of legendary. He was able to cause the change of stars in a demiplane that was not under his control. Would anything really happen?

After enhancing himself with spells, Oliver ruled out all his feelings and stared at Douglas, his black eyes as frozen as ice.

The floating dust became sluggish, and time seemed to have stopped fleeting. The space in the library was vaguely constricted. Veins bulged on Douglas' hand that was grabbing the quill. His skin turned lackluster, as if he had grown old by decades in just one moment.

Finishing the last stroke, Douglas read the paper silently and gloomily.

“Mr. President?” Oliver called him.

Douglas, as still as a statue, did not reply. When Oliver was about to call again, he raised his head with a bitter smile. “Although I had realized that my motion theories were problematic after Brook established the electromagnetic system, I still feel that my past thousand years of life have been denied watching them get overruled and disrupted ruthlessly.”

“No, they are just helpful supplements for your theoretical system.” As a famous artist/playboy, Oliver told lies without the slightest awkwardness. “Are you alright?”

He heaved a long sigh of relief. Mr. President’s head seemed still intact, and his cognitive world was not frozen.”

“There’s no need to console me. I know very well what I have inferred. Lucien... Lucien is more dangerous than Brook...” Douglas shook his head with a bitter smile. “What a burden it must’ve been for Fernando to be his teacher. I feel lucky that I didn’t compete for him at the beginning... Thankfully, the paper is still only a hypothetical deduction that is not proved by any experiments or phenomena yet.”

“Also, it does not agree with the time error on the artificial planets. According to the deduction, time should be slower, but time is in fact faster...”

Self-obsessed, Douglas asked himself, “What is space and time? Why do they change according to matter? Why are they the functions of speed...”

Oliver was more or less surprised. It seemed that Douglas did not notice the paper that Lucien's students published. That's great! That's great! He would be less shocked later if he spent his time in the world of whys for a while.

Weighing his tones, Oliver expressed his opinion, "In the past, we believe that time and space are absolute, independent, mathematic, but we may have to view it from a different perspective now. If we can figure out the mysteries of time and space, I believe that we won't be too far away from the truth of the world."

He was alluring Douglas, a curious sorcerer, with the bright prospects in the future, hoping that Mr. President would think that it was one step closer to the truth, not that his own system had been disrupted, when he discovered the relativistic, so that his head would not blow up.

Douglas was back to himself from the shock. In an unpredictable voice, he said, "I've accepted a few disruptive theories in a row in only a hundred years. If I hadn't recalled the concepts of relative truth and absolute truth that Lucien mentioned, my cognitive world might've been frozen like Brook. While this paper hasn't been proved it, I did realize some problems during high-speed battles."

Oliver rubbed his forehead, thanking Lucien for finally doing a good deed. He said solemnly, "Lucien said that your motion system is not wrong."

"Huh? Not wrong? Douglas looked at Oliver in confusion.

Oliver nodded carefully, "He said that your motion system is a relative truth, and an approximation of the theory in the low speed. Your path is not wrong; it's just that you haven't walked far enough yet."

As a playwright, it was more than easy for him to make up quotes, but Lucien did use the term 'low-speed approximation'. As for the rest, they were just 'descriptors'!

Douglas nodded slowly and accepted the theory. Then he frowned. "Judging from your tone, has it been preliminarily proved by experiments?"

Oliver's face was immediately frozen. His response could easily betray him when he dealt with a man like Mr. President.

"Not yet. It's just that Lucien is very confident. You know, his previous success filled him with confidence." Oliver kept lying and pushing the problem to Lucien, describing him as an egotist.

Douglas stood up. "Alright... My head is a bit messy. I need to go back now. Perhaps, this paper will be the starting point of my future research..."

Instead of waiting for Oliver to reply, he left the magic tower and sighed, "How could Lucien have done that? He wouldn't have discussed the paper with you without experiments."

Half overjoyed and half grieved, he felt that his heart was torn apart.

After returning the Land of Truth, Douglas asked the tower guard to bring him Lucien's papers in the recent issues.

“Tensor analysis... Why isn’t there any?” Douglas knew that what he was doing was dangerous, but his shaking cognitive world made him unable to control himself. He seemed to be reaching the exit of the labyrinth that had trapped him for years. Whether it was a good ending or a bad one, it would be an answer after all. How could he stop?

Not finding anything after a long search, Douglas picked up the issue of Arcana where Oliver published his transformation formulas and perused it. He believed that Lucien must’ve made preparations before submitting such a revolutionary paper.

Based on his understanding about Lucien and Fernando, Douglas reached the end and suddenly saw two familiar names. “Annick... Sprint... Aren’t they Lucien’s students?”

Focusing his attention, Douglas began to read the paper carefully. Gradually, he furrowed his brow, and the rug in the magic tower displayed a formula he inferred earlier under the attraction of his spiritual power.

“If we start from the formula where mass increases with speed, there may be an explanation.” Douglas calculated nonstop as if something was chasing after him. Obtaining the data in the end, he knew how to change the electrical field now.

He entered the laboratory without running simulations in his cognitive world. Activating the newly-added cyclotron, he adjusted the electric field.

A moment later, the beautiful scenery outside of the magic tower was suddenly enshrouded in darkness. Both space and time seemed to be in chaos.

Douglas left the cyclotron and walked to the window, heaving a deep sigh: “What is time? What is space? What is life?”

The light was restored in the Land of Truth, which seemed undamaged, but Douglas’ eyes were still filled with bewilderment. His philosophical opinions in the past hundred years had embraced a drastic change.

“Thankfully, I still have the gravity theory... But what’s the source of gravity? Based on what is it generated? How did gravity appear at the very beginning?”

“Does absolute truth mean...”

.....

Lucien did not have the time to submit his heuristic paper yet, when he suddenly received Fernando’s message: “Come over now. That stupid idiot Oliver screwed up again!”

Huh? Lucien was stunned and even vaguely heard his teacher roaring at Oliver.

What happened?

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 548: Notorious

“Don’t act as if this is all because of the failure of your love life! It’s because your love life is sh*t that we are caught in such a disaster!”

“Sh*t! Your view about love is pure sh*t! If you truly love Florencia, you wouldn’t have hurt her again and again! You are as filthy and ugly as sh*t!”

By then Lucien reached Fernando’s library on the thirty-third floor of the tower, he could still hear his teacher’s astounding roars. Oliver, on the other hand, kept his body on one side and dared not face the Lord of Storm at all, as miserable as a small boat in a huge storm.

“Master, what happened?” Lucien tried divination while he was on the lift, only to no avail.

It was then that Fernando held back his flying saliva. “This ass*ole whose head has been filled up with libidos and s*it forgot to hide your paper after he read it! He led Douglas into his library just like that!”

His head humming, Lucien asked in shock and concern, “Is Mr. President alright?”

“He’s fine. Douglas’ head did not explode, and his cognitive world was not frozen.” Oliver was wearing a bitter smile, his facial muscles vaguely twitching.

Lucien’s heart fell back to where it was. “That’s good. It fixed the problem that we had been worried about. I wonder if Mr. President could find a path to advance into a demigod.

Fernando glared at Oliver. “Why didn’t you finish? Douglas only read the postulates of your paper and inferred the rest of the contents on his own. He hasn’t discovered the relativistic effect yet. If he happens upon it when he reads the journals and runs experiments, Oliver, you will be the most glorious saint of the Church!”

“I don’t think anything will happen. Mr. President left in a steady mood. Also, he had armed his head with Lucien’s philosophical notions about absolute truth and relative truth. I believe that, even if he reads the papers and does the experiments, he will accept them after the initial shock.” Oliver was rather optimistic about it. Or rather, there was nothing he could do except be optimistic right now.

Fernando contained his fury. “Oliver, one day you will die from your messy love life! Let’s go to the Land of Truth first, which I hope still exists...”

The demiplanes of the seven grand arcanists and the ten legendary arcanists were all connected to the Allyn magic tower. Therefore, Fernando opened the gate of the space.

Seeing that the Land of Truth was as beautiful as before, and the lake was rippling in glimmers under the gentle breeze, Fernando felt much less apprehensive. He glared at Oliver and said, “You are quite lucky.”

Led by the puppet, the three of them passed the long corridor and reached Douglas' library, only to discover that he was staring at the window.

"Douglas, I'm told that you read Lucien's paper. What's your opinion?" Fernando grabbed Lucien for this visit exactly as an excuse.

Douglas was still wearing a black tailcoat, but the bow-tie had been loosened as if he tried to make it easier for him to breathe. He turned around and looked at the three of them gravely. "In fact, you may be late. I have already done the experiments with the cyclotron."

"Your cognitive world is broken and solidified?" Fernando could deal with such a result.

Since Douglas was still standing, the worst consequence couldn't have been too terrible.

Douglas shook his head, his weary face filled with confusion. "Thankfully, I was more or less mentally prepared. I ran into similar problems in the past, and I thought of Lucien's ideas about absolute truth and relative truth. Finally, I constructed the framework of the cognitive world from a higher level and included my previous knowledge in it. Although it was shaken and damaged, my cognitive world is not broken and solidified yet."

Lucien clicked his tongue in shock. It was indeed as expected of an extraordinary person who built the Congress of Magic from scratch. Few of his peers, juniors and students, after the development of arcana, the theoretical disruptions and the assassinations of the Church, were still alive. He could be called legendary in every aspect. If it were Lucien, he might not have such an open mind to accept it. Chances were that his cognitive world would've already been broken and solidified.

“It seems that you can advance further.” Fernando and Oliver’s previous concerns were finally gone.

Douglas shook his head in a bitter smile. “Not yet. I was lucky this time because the greatest shock from Lucien’s paper was not the disruption of the motion system but the new understanding of time and space.”

“During the previous studies and battles, I already had similar ideas about motion, except that I was too bound by my obsolete knowledge to overthrow my own thoughts. However, the understanding of time and space that was beyond imagination truly disrupted my knowledge. The world that was rather clear to me was suddenly blurred. Thankfully, I could tell that your exploration in time and space was still preliminary and flawed. That’s why I could manage to bear it.”

Lucien smiled, “It’s indeed not easy to accept or understand a relativistic time and space. I hope that Mr. President can explore the mysteries of time and space together with me in the future.”

“Wait until this paper is digested.” Douglas smiled gently, his clear eyes more or less rippled. “What is time, and what is space? Those questions are bothering me.”

“You will probably advance into a demigod after you digest Lucien’s paper.” Fernando intentionally changed the subject in case he was mired in the world of whys.

Douglas hinted for them to sit and smiled, “It’s barely possible. The change in motion system can slightly improve my strength, but it is only because casting spells will be easier. In order to advance into a demigod, I have to fully understand the changes of time and space, or to grasp gravity on a much deeper level. It’s like Brook had to truly recognize electromagnetic waves and

grasp the electromagnetic power in order to reshape his cognitive world. Only things connected to the origin can help a person ascend into a demigod.”

He had spent long enough at the peak of legendary, and he had profound wisdom. Even though he hadn’t found a right path of advancement, he had indeed found something.

After that, he did not continue the topic but smiled at Lucien. “I inferred Oliver’s transformation formulas, but why did I fail to get the mass-energy equation in your paper?”

Lucien knew that they had come too soon. Otherwise, with Mr. President’s wisdom and arcana expertise, he could’ve figured it out very soon. So, Lucien asked the puppet to bring paper and pen and inferred on the spot.

“Mass, energy... No wonder your atomic fusion could be so powerful.” Douglas observed the formula with his eyes glittering. “Although many key models haven’t been explained yet, I believe it will take much shorter time for me to construct ‘Eternal Blaze’.”

He had been trying to construct it with his spiritual power.

As he spoke, he began throwing out questions again. “Why can energy and mass be turned into each other? What is the nature of matter...”

Fernando sniffed, “Douglas, now that you’ve accepted Lucien’s paper, let’s discuss the things about Sard and be prepared that he circumvents his promise in other ways. Lucien has offered a plan.”

Douglas calmed down and smiled, “I like plans. Nobody is smart and powerful enough to calculate everything. The key is to gather information and simulate all possible scenarios in advance. That’s exactly a sorcerers’ strong suit.”

The four of them discussed for a long time. When he saw Lucien, Fernando and Oliver off, Douglas smiled, “I look forward to the day you start studying gravity, Lucien.”

“I hope that I can have your guidance when the day comes, Mr. President.” Replied Lucien modestly.

Looking at their back while they left, Douglas suddenly sighed, “I’m confused about gravity myself. Where does it come from? How is it generated...”

.....

One day in April, 824, inside the Allyn branch of the Moonsong League.

Two senior-rank sorcerers of electromagnetics happened upon each other and therefore discussed the latest trend of arcana studies.

“Annhora, is there still no rebuttal paper from Lucien Evans regarding the Oliver transformation?” One senior-rank sorcerer asked Annhora, who was a member of the Arcana Review Board.

Annhora was wearing a white wig and looked more like a noble than a sorcerer. He replied with a bitter smile, “No. In the past eight months, except for the few papers on the new alchemy and the cyclotron, all his results are about tensor analysis and Evans Geometry. He wrote ten papers independently and worked with Levski on another six. Together with the contributions of Levski, Neeshka, Milina and Samantha, a new mathematical system is taking shape.”

“But I don’t understand the mathematics at all.” An old middle-rank arcanist was quite upset. “Also, what we are most concerned about is his opinion on the Oliver transformation...”

Another seventh-circle sorcerer sighed. “Exactly. We know that the Oliver transformation is only mathematically applicable for now, and that it cannot prove the existence of ‘Ether’, but it can explain the light speed experiment with the Ether theory. It is by far the most perfect hypothesis, and we are all willing to support it. But... But why is Lucien Evans not publishing any paper in that regard? I’ll always be ill at ease before I learn his opinion.”

Annhora nodded solemnly, “Every time I recall the gore he caused and the disruptive theories he proposed, I find it impossible to trust Mr. Oliver’s paper until he offers his opinion. I’m always looking forward to something with worry. It’s like I can’t be reassured in a thunderstorm until the raindrops do fall.”

“I always told other people that Lucien Evans dares not discuss the problem because he recognized his mistake, but I cannot sleep tight at night without his opinion. Sometimes I even have nightmares.” The old middle-rank arcanist said in agitation.

The nightmare where brains and blood litter the ground still freaked him out.

Annhora was about to reply, when his pocket suddenly beeped. He immediately took out a fine-looking box and pressed a button on it. “Hello? Mr. Oliver? I’m on my way!”

It's a mobile communication item that the Allyn Telephone and Telegram Company recently developed. It had a lower requirement and would not conflict with other magic items.

Seeing off his partners, Annhora reached Oliver's office on the thirty-fourth floor of the Allyn magic tower, only to discover that a familiar arcanist was already seated there, and Mr. Oliver hadn't come out from his inner library yet.

"Mariana, why has Mr. Oliver summoned us?" Annhora asked the middle-aged lady who had shiny black hair.

Mariana, holding a broad-edged hat in his hands, were equally puzzled. "I have no idea."

At this moment, Oliver walked out with two papers in his hands. "Mariana, Annhora, no formalities are needed. I asked you to come here because there's papers for you to review. It should be acceptable for the members of electromagnetics to review it. Take a look at it first. If everything is alright, I'll give it to the Sorcerer Administrative Department and ask the alchemical life in the Arcana Review Board to assign it to you."

Mariana and Annhora, both having a premonition, asked simultaneously, "Whose paper is it?"

Oliver rubbed his fingers. "Lucien Evans."

Boom. Annhora felt that a thunder rumbled in his head. He asked with a pale face, "Mr. Oliver, can I refuse it?"

While talking, he secretly observed Mariana's head, only to discover that Mariana was also observing him, with her eyes also focused on his head.

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Oliver was rather amused by their reactions. He smiled, "Rest assured. Your head should still be intact after you read it, which is both my estimation and the prophecy of astrology."

Mariana was still unrelieved. "Mr. Oliver, you know that Mr. Evans' papers can be quite disruptive and... destructive. Also, you have summoned us in advance for the review. In my heart, I feel that a terrible devil has been projected into my cognitive world, and that my head will explode after one moment of carelessness. Could you tell me why you made such an estimation and why you chose us?"

Coughing to hold back his laughter, Oliver had an even deeper understanding about Lucien's image in the eyes of most arcanists. His name obviously sounded more distressing than the Lord of Hell and the Will of Abyss, particularly when his name was associated with a paper. Such an irregular review procedure was exactly like Brook before.

"I chose you for the review because, based on your papers in journals such as 'Magic' and 'Electromagnetism' in the past three months, you already had a rough idea and started researching it. Therefore, your cognitive world will certainly not be broken." Oliver spoke of the real reason.

Of course, he did examine their fates with astrology in advance.

“We had a rough idea?” Annhora recalled in suspicion and soon remembered something. “Do you mean the studies on your transformation formulas and the deeper understanding about the relationship between time and space?”

Oliver nodded softly. “That’s right. I believe you will earn a lot after reading this paper.”

Not entirely convinced, and taking over the paper with shivering hands, Annhora and Mariana both saw the title of the paper: On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies and Mass-energy Equation.

Huh. The title does not look very disruptive, does it?

Therefore, the two of them began to read carefully, with quills and blank paper next to them for them to calculate with.

As he read on, Annhora’s left hand, not occupied by the quill, scratched his hair subconsciously and turned his white wig wryly. He seemed both interested and overwhelmed by the research, and his head was swooning.

Mariana, on the other hand, bit her lip as she often did when she was still a little girl. She mumbled, “Time? Space? How can they be like this?”

His fingers crossed, Oliver looked at them peacefully on the surface, but his eyes were rather solemn because of their reaction. After eight months of preparation, there shouldn’t be another incident of massive brain explosions, right?

Also, the view on time and space in the theory of relativity was not perfect yet. They should be able to see the problems. Their worldview might be messed up, but their cognition wouldn't collapse for now.

After a long time, Annhora suddenly raised his head and said both frantically and confusedly, "I find it hard to believe that time is the speed's function, but it is such a charming thought. Also... Also, there are a lot of problems."

"As Lucien said himself, this is just a preliminary, inconclusive paper that hasn't introduced many things beyond the inertial frame of reference. There are also many unanswered problems. However, I think that the view on time and space is very interesting." Said Oliver with a smile. For a man of liberal arts, such a view of time and space better fitted his appetite.

"This paper completely renews our understanding of time and space. Had it not been for the consideration in the past months, perhaps my cognitive world would've been broken and solidified because the chaos. Well, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Evans must've proposed the paper several months ago, right? The discussion since then was meant to psychologically and intellectually prepare us?" Annhora suddenly realized what happened.

Oliver nodded. "Yes, it was written before my transformation formulas were published. This paper made groundbreaking contributions to the macroscopic and high-speed studies. Perhaps that was part of the reason why some planets are still undiscovered. I believe you can see its worth as well as its imperfect parts."

"Yes. I believe that most of the senior-rank arcanists in the school of electromagnetics and the school of Light-darkness can accept the paper, however reluctantly. It is based on the classic electromagnetic theory and extrapolates it by sweeping the obsolete ideas in it." Annhora said in approval.

Mariana, next to him, murmured to herself in bewilderment, “But what about Ether?”

Annhora frowned. It was not until then that he discovered that, based on the paper, Ether was no longer of any use. It had quietly withdrawn from the stage of history. The foundation of the wave theory probably needed rectifying.

Hearing Mariana’s words, Oliver said with a bitter smile, “Ether, waves and particles, we’ve been arguing about them for nobody knows how many years, but it is more and more difficult to understand them as time goes on.”

“It’s like two groups of knights in a battle. Both parties are fighting vehemently, but neither of them can crush the enemy and secure the final triumph.” Mariana was back to herself. “Mr. Oliver, this paper needs to be proved by experiment phenomena and results in order to be aptly assessed.”

Oliver took out another paper and unfolded it before them. “This is Lucien’s paper on how to improve the cyclotron, where the relativistic effect has been observed. Also, I have certain problems regarding artificial planets here that involve the changes of time and space.

Oliver only dared to present the paper after seeing that the previous paper was still acceptable.

After reading the paper, Annhora knocked his head hard, “If I had focused more attention on the discussion of this problem in that issue of ‘Arcana’, it probably wouldn’t have taken so long, and I could’ve inferred Mr. Evans’ paper in a couple of months.”

“It means that Mr. Evans’ ideas and direction are right, although the paper is not perfect yet.” Mariana also offered her input and then praised the mass-energy formula.

After the new alchemy was proposed, they began addressing Lucien as Mr. Evans instead of Member Evans, but its meaning was entirely different.

When he returned to his office in the Arcana Review Board, Annhora soon received the paper assigned by the alchemical life. Without further reading, he simply wrote his comment with the quill:

“This is a sublimation on Mr. President’s motion system. It fixes the limitations that the motion system was only accurate in low speed and extrapolates the concept of motion to a macroscopic and high-speed scale. It has also preliminarily resolved many problems in the melting of electric and magnetic theories, giving us the hope of establishing a unified theory in arcana.

“Also, based on Mr. Evans’ proposition that we should infer from as few hypotheses as possible, we discover, to our surprise, that our understanding about time and space seems to have reached a marvelous and chaotic intersection. It is entirely different from the time and space we knew in the past. Not only does the paper disrupt the structure of time and space in our cognitive world, but it also disrupts our concepts in daily life that are founded on absolute time and space. It makes me more bewildered than ever, and I’m even starting to question the value of my life.”

“It’s hard to believe that time slows down, and space constricts, as speed increases. It is in violation of our intuitive perception and our imagination based on that, but the formulas presented by the paper seem convincing enough and closer to the origin of the world. Also, Mr. Evans has already noticed the theoretical effect of increased mass caused by accelerated speed during an experiment with the cyclotron. At this moment, a hallowed gate in my heart seems to have collapsed, but from the ashes rises a brand-new one.”

“Although the system of relativity that Mr. Evans established is not perfect, and the problem that it is only limited to the inertial frame of reference but not universally applicable remains unresolved, the value of this paper is unquestionable. The mass-energy formula that mark the relationship between mass and energy, in particular, are full of mathematical and magical beauty. It is concise,

powerful, and contains unimaginably profound mysteries, just like the poetic Brook formulas. Whoever is not shocked and attracted by them does not have any talents in arcana!”

“Mass and energy, time and space, they are the wonders of this world. Perhaps, we can obtain extremely powerful strength from it. In light of that, here is my assessment on Mr. Evans’ paper: This paper, after perfected, will change the paradigm and give us a wiser understanding about time and space, mass and energy. Also, it is doubtless that a relativistic system will be founded on this paper. Therefore, I suggest a reward of 3,000 arcana credits and 80,000 arcana points.”

Because there were still a lot of insidious problems, and a system was not established yet, Annhora did not offer a remark and reward as impressive as what was given for the new alchemy before, and nor did the Congress grant Lucien the title of grand arcanist. However, Mariana, who had made a similar remark, felt suffocated, because it meant that Lucien Evans seemed to be growing into a real grand arcanist based on either the new alchemy or the special theory of relativity!

.....

On the thirty-third floor of Allyn magic tower...

“It took them eight months before they understood the prelude of the theory of relativity. Those guys are dumber than I thought!” Fernando’s estimation at the beginning was half a year at most.

Lucien, on his opposite, smiled and said, “It is not an easy conversation to break one’s own conceptions. However, after such a long time of preparation, probably none of the senior-rank arcanists will have brain explosions.”

If another massive brain explosions took place, Lucien would feel that he had picked up an innate magic of clearing everybody on the street wherever he went.

“With the credit reward, your arcana level should be able to improve to level eight, right?” Asked Fernando casually, who did not really care about it.

The higher the level is, the more difficult object enchantment would be. The effects of arcana and magic badges could not be further improved.

Lucien nodded. “The feedback from the new alchemy over the past eight months is truly terrifying. The paper, the innovations on the materials, and the lowered difficulty to craft magic items all brought me abundant revenues. Plus the credit reward, I may be able to upgrade into level eight in another two to three months.”

In particular, the discovery of the splitting of spectral lines under strong magnetic field and the theoretical explanation on the new alchemy brought him the Jurisian Silver Moon Medal in the electromagnetic field. It also made Lucien’s cognitive world more stable and accelerated his studies on eighth-circle and seventh-circle magics. Up until so far, he had learnt nine of them in each category.

“‘Arcana’ will be issued tomorrow. If there are no major events, we can focus on the preparation for July.” Fernando looked at the window and said solemnly. The upcoming battle would decide the Congress of Magic’s fate in the near future.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 550: Sorrow and Joy

On the first day of the Month of Flowers, inside the Allyn branch of the Moonsong League...

Jurisian, in the attire of a battle sorcerer, with a six-star arcana badge, a five-circle magic badge and a badge of crescent moon on his chest, slowly walked into the hall.

“Good morning, Mr. Jurisian.” The few middle-rank arcanists who just got down from the stars greeted Jurisian respectfully the moment they saw him.

Since the Influence Factor was introduced, it was not rare for the arcana level to surpass the magic level, but the senior-rank arcanists were still rare. An insurmountable barrier that many people couldn't cross in their lifetime seemed to lie between level five and level six. With his discovery of the splitting of spectral lines under strong magnetic field and his theoretical explanation four months ago, Jurisian proved the prophecy in the new alchemy and finally earned six silver stars. Had it not been for the fact that his cognitive world was still not substantiated yet, he would've advanced into the sixth circle and become a senior rank.

Jurisian had always been amiable when he was not on a mission. He replied in a smile, “Good morning, are you waiting for today's ‘Arcana’, too?”

“Yes. Debates have remained unabated about Mr. Oliver's transformation formulas recently. We can't wait to see the latest explanation and application. Perhaps somebody has already proved it with experiments.” Bobby, the middle-rank arcanist in the lead, was a tall, muscular man, with narrow and long eyes.

Jurisian chuckled, “Me too, but I'm more worried that I might see Evans' paper on that someday.”

Upon hearing that, the fairly large number of arcanists in the hall suddenly fell silent. The name had been haunting them like a nightmare. They could never trust Mr. Oliver's paper as well as the papers of other arcanists too deeply until he offered his opinion on the transformation formulas. Waiting and being scared seemed to have become their habit.

After more than ten seconds, Bobby was back to himself, he was about to reply to Jurisian, when a few receptionists carried the journals including 'Arcana' and 'Magic' out and placed them on the counter. So, he dropped the subject and said, "Mr. Jurisian, the papers are here. After you."

Seeing that Bobby was right before the counter, Jurisian shook his head and said jokingly, "Let's respect the queue. You can check if there is Evans' paper first so that the rest of us can be prepared."

He intended to refuse Bobby's generosity subtly and humorously, but after he spoke, all the arcanists who were squeezing forward to purchase the journals stopped.

Their eyes were focused on Bobby, as if they agreed with Jurisian's proposition that he should check if there was Lucien Evans' paper first, and what it was about if there indeed was.

Bobby did not think much at the beginning, but when so many people gazed at him, he immediately recalled the magnificent accomplishments of the Headcrusher. His forehead immediately beaded with sweat, but the arcanists behind him gave him so much pressure that he still picked up a copy of 'Arcana' after a long hesitation.

Realizing that his joke seemed to have been misinterpreted under the special circumstances, Jurisian stepped forward and planned to stop Bobby so that he could 'examine' it himself.

Suddenly, Bobby blurted out, “There is Mr. Evans’ paper!”

His voice was uncontrollably high, and it was obviously shaking. The whispers in the hall were entirely gone. The place seemed to have been frozen in time.

“What paper?” Asked Jurisian subconsciously.

Bobby breathed in relief. “It’s about the electrodynamics of moving bodies and the mass-energy equation. It sounds like research on the motion theories in electromagnetics and doesn’t appear to be disruptive.”

After he was reassured, he simply read the paper that was put on the first page of the journal on the counter in his curiosity. The other arcanists, cleverly, did not interrupt him but focused their eyes on his head. Jurisian, on the other hand, was deep in thought because of the ambiguous title.

After a while, Bobby’s facial muscles began to twist, and his sweat was dripping from his cheeks. Then, he raised his left hand and pressed his head, as if he were in agony. His eyes were chaotic and confused.

The hall was caught in a weird silence again. Murmuring something, Bobby turned around, only to discover that all the arcanists around him including Jurisian, regardless of their rank, had retreated to at least ten meters away from him. He was surrounded by emptiness, as if a devil had just taken a bite here.

“What are you doing?” Asked Bobby, puzzled.

All the arcanists eyed him weirdly. Jurisian coughed and said, “We saw that you were in pain and therefore gave you a peaceful environment for you to recover. What is this paper about?”

“Oh? You were afraid that my cognition would collapse and my brain would explode?” Bobby realized what happened and smiled, “How is it possible? Mr. Evans’ paper infers Mr. Oliver’s transformation formulas based on two hypotheses. There’s nothing disruptive.”

Upon hearing that, Jurisian and the rest of them took another three steps back. “What? It’s an explanation about the Oliver transformation?”

“Then why were you pressing your head so painfully?”

Bobby looked at his feet rather in embarrassment. “I could understand the formulas in it, but the descriptions about time, space, mass and energy were too bewildering for me. I couldn’t think them through and just knocked my head to see if I could get any inspiration.”

Hu. Everybody’s breath of relief almost gathered into a wind. So, the guy was only thinking hard because he could not understand it. Their worry was for naught.

Knowing that it was Evans’ explanation that they had ‘long expected’, the middle-rank arcanists of the Moonsong League were finally calmed down, but none of them dared to read it carefully.

After a while, thinking that nothing happened to Bobby, Jurisian summoned his courage and read Lucien's paper by the counter.

As time went by, Jurisian became more and more grave. His muscles were tightened, and he was gritting his teeth. His shiny forehead was brimming with cold sweat, his eyes were filled with confusion and shock, and he kept murmuring space and time, mass and energy to himself.

Also, what was most weird that uncanny changes seemed to be happening around him, as if the rays of light were brighter.

Bobby immediately understood their previous fear after seeing Jurisian's status. He hurried to rush into the crowd, while the other arcanists clenched their fists and stared at Jurisian's head in fear.

After a long time, Jurisian suddenly 'screamed', and the uptight arcanists immediately backed off in a flurry, and the hall was in a mess.

After they retreated further and were braced for a headless body, they discovered, however, that Jurisian was standing joyfully, utterly refreshed.

"Mr. Jurisian, are you alright?" Bobby emboldened himself to ask.

Jurisian laughed in wild joy. "While the paper is not exactly perfect, it is a major shock for me and has settled certain problems that bothered me. Therefore, my cognitive world half substantiated just now!"

With his spiritual power that was more than sufficient and his control over magic, it meant that he would become a sixth-circle sorcerer soon.

“Really? Congratulations on you becoming a senior-rank sorcerer in advance. But why did you scream, Mr. Jurisian? We thought that your brain was going to explode...” Said Bobby frankly.

Jurisian replied in a chuckle, “I was ecstatic, so I wanted you to share my joy.”

Witnessing that Jurisian broke the greatest obstacle to the senior rank, the middle-rank arcanists in the hall had no time to condemn his mischief but all surged to the counter to buy ‘Arcana’, hoping that a similar ‘miracle’ could happen to themselves, too.

After a long time, only a few of the dozens of middle-rank arcanists were deep in thought, as if they were both enlightened and confused. The rest of them were just like Bobby. They could understand the deductions, but they couldn’t grasp their specific meaning. They were all at a loss.

However, they all realized that the paper seemed to have overthrown President Douglas’ motion system. Their cognitive world that was founded on that was shaken as a result. Thankfully, Lucien arduously explained that the previous motion system was a low-speed approximation of the new theory in the latter half of his paper with abundant examples, which stabilized their cognitive world again. It was not a disruption but a sublimation!

Even so, the fact that their knowledge was incomplete and unsolid still made them more bewildered than ever.

Right then, a hawk-nosed man walked in, with the badges of a seventh-circle arcanist and a seventh-circle sorcerer on his chest.

Noticing the queer behavior of his fellow arcanists, he broached a few questions.

After hearing their reply, he frowned and picked up a copy of 'Arcana' to read the article. As he read on, he observed in disgust, "Absurd! How can time and space be like this! This is in utter violation of observation and imagination! Has Lucien Evans' head been muddled because of his impractical mathematic studies?"

"Also, there are still many loopholes in it!"

While talking, he went upstairs with the journal, planning to lambaste it.

"Mr. Alvaro, it's mine..." The middle-rank arcanist whose journal was taken away eventually gave up trying, because he knew that Mr. Alvaro was a seasoned arcanist who had unimaginable persistence in the three laws of the Force Field, the motion system and the absolute time and space.

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Inside the royal magic tower of Holm...

Looking at his teacher mumbling the words such as 'mass', 'energy', 'time' and 'space' before him, K suddenly felt indescribable fear and focused his eyes on the 'Arcana' in his hands.

Suddenly, Larry breathed heavily and clenched his fists hard. He announced with his eyes glittering, “If perfected, it is going to be a paper that changes the era!”

“Master?” K asked carefully. He was already a level-four arcanist and a fourth-circle sorcerer.

There was no telling the look on Larry’s face, which was covered in his furry, yellow beard, but he spoke in apparent joy, “My cognitive world has half substantiated.”

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On the thirteenth floor of the Allyn magic tower...

Lucien sat in the office of the Affair Committee, waiting for Thompson to confirm that none of the sorcerers had cognitive world meltdowns.

“None so far.” Thompson walked in. “That’s because you haven’t presented the improvements on the experiments with the cyclotron yet. Also, after more than eight months of discussions, most arcanists should be mentally and intellectually prepared.”

“However, a few senior-rank senior-ranks of the school of force field did have intense reactions.”

Lucien said helplessly, “I hope that only their cognitive world was broken and solidified. Or maybe, they can indeed find the mistakes in the paper and propose new opinions.”

Thompson was not bothered but consoled him, “Something good also happened. Today, at least six fifth-circle sorcerers’ cognitive world half substantiated because of your paper. Four of them are from the school of electromagnetics and the school of Light-darkness, including Jurisian you know. Two are elemental sorcerers, one of them being Larry. At least in the short run, the good influence of your paper outweighs the bad influence.”

“As far as I know, such scenes only happened when ‘Mathematical Principles of Magical Philosophy’ and the Brook formulas were proposed. Of course, their influences were even greater. Some people’s cognitive worlds even substantiated on the spot.”