

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 51: The New Message

After pressing the last key, Lucien slowly removed his hands from the keyboard. A feeling of accomplishment rose in his mind. Through the three weeks of diligent practice, now Lucien could play the masterpiece relatively fluently with some simple skills. Of course, it was not perfect, but Lucien believed that Mr. Victor could easily tell its value.

“Lucien... you...” Felicia was standing beside the door with her hand on the doorknob, looking very confused but also surprised.

“Felicia, sorry, I didn’t notice you were here.” Lucien stood up and pushed the piano stool under the keyboard, “What did you say?”

“The song you played... was quite impressive. You’ve... made great progress.” Felicia looked away. She was not used to making compliments, especially to Lucien.

“Thank you, Felicia.” Grabbing his music sheets, Lucien walked to Felicia, “I gotta go now. It looks like a storm is coming.”

In the Month of Harvest (September), there was always a downpour every few days. The weather today was very muggy, and the sky was much darker than usual.

“Yes... Sure. See you tomorrow, Lucien.” Felicia was kind of distracted.

When Lucien came downstairs, he saw Athy asking the servants to do cleaning there. Lucien walked toward him asked, “Mr. Athy, did you see Mr. Victor? I have something to tell him.”

“Mr. Victor just left for the cemetery. I’m afraid he might not be able to come back until late.” Athy was always polite and serious, “Would you like to leave a message?”

“It’s alright. I’m not in a hurry. Thank you, Athy.” Lucien waved his hands. He could talk to Victor in person the next day. Tonight he had some magic experiments to carry out, which were his priority.

In the last few weeks, Lucien managed to read the journal, Arcana, many times. With the help of the literature stored in his spirit library, his basic knowledge foundation grew more solid. Combining that with what he had learned about vibrational frequency, Lucien improved the spell “Homan Oscillation” and created two new apprentice-level spells.

For most apprentices, the development of their spiritual power often was much faster than the accumulation of their knowledge. Lucien, on the other hand, was facing a totally opposite situation due to his background. His spiritual power was still insufficient for casting ten apprentice spells consecutively at a time.

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In the early evening, on his way to auntie Alisa’s place, Lucien noticed that there was a new secret message on the wall.

“We have news about the evil creatures. Tonight. Ten o’clock. The same place,” said the secret message.

Lucien kept walking as though he saw nothing. In his mind, he was guessing the intention of this message. He never attended the meeting after his first appearance, so it seemed they were using the information to lure him.

Another reason that Lucien was this cautious was the raven he saw last time on his way back home from the apprentice meeting. When Lucien first encountered the raven, he didn’t put any thought into it, since there were countless ravens in Aalto. However, afterwards he recalled what he had read in the notes – raven was the most common summoned pet. The more he thought about it, the more concerned he felt. Now Lucien couldn’t help worrying that the message might be a trap, in case it would probably have been set by the raven’s master.

However, the attraction exerted by the information was irresistible. Lucien always yearned for the Crying Soul potion, which could reveal the power hidden in a developed body. He had been looking for the ingredients for quite a long time. Now, he already had the Corpse Mushroom and the brain tissue of the Aquatic Zombie, so Lucien wanted to get Revenant Dust and Moonlight Rose as soon as possible. Except for using the blood of a revenant to summon another, Lucien couldn’t come up with a second way to get any revenant dust in Aalto, especially under the watch of the church.

Chewing his bread, Lucien was thinking carefully, struggling between his feeling of insecurity and his desire. Finally, Lucien decided to accept the invitation. However, before going there, he needed to be prepared.

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Nighttime, in Lucien’s lab.

On the magic circle carved on the stone table, a cup-sized black container was being heated over the blue fire, in which a certain kind of thick red liquid was boiling.

Lucien's face looked very serious. He was stirring the liquid in the container with a long ceramic stick. In his right hand, there was a test tube with some black liquid in it. Pouring it into the container, Lucien slowly mixed them up.

Every drop of the black liquid brought a gauze of white mist. As if it was alive, the red liquid kept shrinking fiercely and became thicker and thicker, like gel. Lucien knew that a tiny mistake would cause a devastating explosion. He must keep concentrating.

Mixing all the black liquid with the red one, Lucien pressed his right hand on the circle and use his spiritual power to change the way the circle worked. Many red thin lines emerged and covered the container. Meanwhile, Lucien started casting. A white beam of cold light showed up between his fingers and flashed into the container.

Heat met cold, but the magic red lines prevented the gel from exploding, and it slowly became more stable.

When the white mist around it slowly disappeared, only a small amount of flame-colored gel was left in the black container. Lucien carefully put the very thick gel into a glass tube and sealed it, which was the last step required to make the Flame Gel.

Lucien found the making process in the witch's notes. According to her description, he guessed the Flame Gel should be as powerful as napalm.

In order to improve its power, Lucien was about to add some nitroglycerin into the formula, but in the end he decided not to, because he didn't want to turn his new lab into a heap of ruins for being too hasty.

In a box in the corner of his lab, there were seven tubes, each of them containing different potions. Two of them were Flame Gel, two other were Storm, which was used for fast healing and boosting energy, and the last three were Brown Owl, which could accelerate the speed of spiritual power recovery.

Lucien put all seven glass tubes, along with the Flame Gel he had just made, into the small pockets of his black robe. They were made specially for safely carrying different potions and magic reagents.

Then, he opened his own notes lying on the table, in which he wrote down the structures and the principles of the two new apprentice spells that he had created. Based on his knowledge of vibration and frequency and after hundreds of tests, Lucien improved the spell Homan Oscillation, and thus he had his own new spells: one called Bat Screaming and the other The Professor's Oscillating Hand.

After closing the notebook, Lucien climbed back to the room and lay down on his bed to have a bit of rest.

Lucien left his shack that night at nine forty.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 52: Baron Laurent

The night was hot and suffocating. A storm was coming.

Lucien purposely chose a different way, approaching the abandoned house from beside the tall willow, which took him more than ten minutes. Standing in the shadow, he did not approach the building immediately. Instead, he stayed there for a while and noticed there were three people dressed in black robes standing in front of the abandoned house.

From their figures, Lucien could tell one was Smile and another one was Philosopher. However, Lucien could not recognize the third person. Thus, he did not lower his guard. Grabbing a black, weird-shaped magic reagent in his hand, he silently cast a spell.

The thing in his hand started trembling faster and faster, and ultrasonic waves began to expand outwards in all directions.

That was Bat Screaming, the first spell created by Lucien on his own.

Lucien was inspired by bats using ultrasonic waves to detect objects, like a radar. By reading the witch's notes Lucien became aware that many sorcerers and sorceresses would hide their magic aura, which was brought by their spiritual power, on purpose to avoid being found by their enemies. When Lucien was learning the apprentice spell called Magic Aura Detection, he realized that the apprentice-level detection spell would be ineffective when facing corresponding defensive spells of higher levels.

Thus, Lucien combined Magic Aura Detection with his knowledge of ultrasonic wave and created Bat Screaming, which could even detect objects with no spiritual power or that released no magic Aura.

Of course, Bat Screaming could also fail if a sorcerer or sorceress knew the spell in advance. They would still have other ways to avoid being found. Therefore, choosing proper spells was of great significance in a magic battle.

The ultrasonic waves were like invisible water waves spreading around Lucien. When the waves hit something, they would reflect back to the black reagent in his hand. Lucien kept focusing on the spell and gradually pictured the surroundings, as if he was observing all around him carefully in broad daylight.

“The detection range has a radius of about 100 meters. And it is a three-dimensional detection.” Lucien thought to himself, “There’s an owl on the tree... yes, it’s Doro. Well... there’s a raven... the raven.”

Lucien recognized the raven that he encountered the other night. This time, Lucien felt the magic power in this pet, but he could tell the raven’s master was very cautious as nothing weird happened since he met it the first time. Its master was only watching and waiting for something.

“I should come up with an infrared spell, then I would be able to see the inside of the buildings.” A new idea hit Lucien’s mind. The black thing Lucien was grabbing was a dried bat pituitary, and after some time it turned into a small pile of ashes and slipped through his fingers. For now, his spiritual power was not enough to cast the spell without using the additional component.

Lucien was still hesitant since he could not make sure who the third person was. At this time, the person started talking in a relatively loud voice, “Mr. Professor, I think you’re here but you’re still watching. I’m White Honey, Mr. Professor. It was my mentor who found the trace of the evil creature. He respects your profound knowledge and he hopes to meet you.”

A moment later, Lucien walked out of the shadow and approached the willow slowly. “Nice to see you again, White Honey, ” Lucien nodded to her, “It’s my honor winning your mentor’s respect, but at the same time, it seems like your mentor doesn’t trust me very much.”

“Mr. Professor...?” White Honey looked very surprised.

“The raven. You know what I’m talking about.” Lucien looked into the darkness.

“You... you found Ashley?!” White Honey looked in the same direction.

“It’s impossible...” White Honey wondered, “It’s nighttime, and the magic light of the raven has been hidden on purpose. How did he notice Ashley?”

She now felt that the mysterious Mr. Professor was even stranger.

When Lucien looked in that direction, the raven on the branch started to fall to the ground as if it was suddenly struck by lightning. Fortunately, the raven spread its wings in time and swiftly flew away, disappearing in the dark sky.

“You’d better explain this, White Honey.” Smile and Philosopher asked in great anger.

White Honey lowered her head and apologized sincerely, “I’m sorry that I didn’t tell you about this. And I also brought some gifts to show my sincerity. My mentor... he just wanted to see Mr. Professor. If anything unexpected happened when Mr. Professor was hunting the evil creature, my mentor might be able to help as well through the raven, Ashley. Now Ashley just left.”

Smile and Philosopher were aware that in fact there was nothing they could do about what White Honey had done, since they did not know how powerful her mentor was.

“Well... hopefully it will be a lesson to you, White Honey.” Smile cleared his throat a bit, “In Aalto, what your mentor just did can easily put him in trouble. Many of us will take your mentor as a spy from the church. I hope he isn’t, though.”

“I’m terribly sorry, but I assure you he is not, Owl.” White Honey apologized again.

Lucien walked in front of them and asked in his pretended harsh voice, “White Honey, now, can I know where the evil creature is?”

“In the old house of Baron Laurent, in the Noble District.” White Honey replied, “No one in the last three generations of the house has successfully awaken the Blessing, and thus the status of the house has been declining. Furthermore, there are just few servants still serving the family. The other day, when my mentor’s raven flew over the old house, Ashley found it was a bit noisy down there. Out of curiosity, it flew down and found the people in the house were having... a sex party.”

“What?” Owl sounded very surprised.

“In fact it was more than just a sex party. My mentor believed that it was an evil ritual. When the people were crazily having sex in the chamber, Baron Laurent was standing in an altar at the center of the place and seemed to be gathering some kind of unknown power. At that time, Ashley noticed the demon’s smell in him.”

Philosopher was more sophisticated than Smile. He nodded with thoughts, "I'm quite sure Baron Laurent is not the only one. Many nobles who failed to awake the Blessing or to get the Holy Water from the church turned to demons and other evil beings to seek power. Their titles are worth the risk."

Unless a noble house violated one of the first ten articles of the Holy Law, the hereditary land and title of the house could forever be passed on to the next generations. However, if no one of the house could awaken the Blessing in a few generations, the house would start to decline. Other houses would gradually devour its land and leave the house with only an useless noble title. In the end, the house would disappear on its own and the nobles would become common folks. No one would remember the family's past glory.

Lucien had his own guess about the party. He believed it was the heretical ritual of Argent Horn. After two months, Lucien believed that they started taking action again.

"Do you know how powerful the creature is? How can I get to the Noble District?" Lucien asked.

The area the nobles lived was enclosed by the inner city wall. At this time, the city gates were already closed. City guards would only open the gates for the nobles who lived there.

"From the scale of the altar, my mentor speculated that it should be a low-rank demon of an ordinary knight level. But before the ritual is finished, the cast shadow of the demon should be only of a high-rank knight squire level." White Honey explained. She did not think a powerful sorcerer with such profound knowledge like Mr. Professor would be in any danger when facing a cast shadow of a low rank demon.

"White Honey didn't know how to find Owl, so she found me first. I happened to know a secret passage to the Noble District, and so I came with them here tonight, hoping that I could be of some help. After all, Mr. Professor, your explanation and guidance helped me a lot." Philosopher lowered his head to show his respect, "If you don't mind, Mr. Professor, I am more than willing to kill it for you. It's just a low rank demon. There's no need for you to do this personally."

Lucien was feeling concerned that the heresy might bring some unexpected trouble into the action, and having more helpers on his side was definitely a good thing. After thinking for a moment, Lucien nodded, “Thank you, Philosopher. After this, you may ask me a question.”

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At the same time, Lucien viewed her as a hostage. Thus, he instantly said “yes”.

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Guided by Philosopher, Lucien, White Honey and Smile headed toward the Nobel District.

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Chapter 53: The Professor’s Oscillation Hand

It was very late in the hot and suffocating night, but even then there were several people wearing black robes quietly walking on the streets. Aside from them, only a few drunkards were loafing around aimlessly. However, Lucien and his companions did not lower their guard at all. They had to be very careful to avoid the night watchers of the church. Those church watchers were like hounds wandering at night, chasing after the scent of evil. The black gloves those watchers always wore were the shared nightmare of every sorcerer in Aalto.

After ten minutes, Philosopher stopped and said to Lucien in a low voice, “Mr. Professor, we’re here. The passage is in the house.” The house was sitting on the boundary of the Noble and Aderon Districts, looking pretty plain, even old, and was enclosed by a few dilapidated buildings.

Each of them examined the house separately to make sure there was no magic trap in the building, while Lucien used Bat Screaming and secured the surroundings. Then they followed Philosopher and entered the house.

From the thick spider web hanging down from the girder and brushing his forehead, Lucien could tell this place had been abandoned for a long time. “Some beggars used to stay here overnight. But recently, all the beggars in Aalto went missing.” Philosopher said casually when he was walking.

Neither Lucien nor White Honey replied. Only Smile asked out of surprise, “All missing? What’s possible for the beggars to do? Where could they have gone?”

“I have no idea as well, Owl,” answered Philosopher, “Some said this had something to do with the evil creature.” While Lucien and White Honey remained silent.

When they came to one of the bedrooms, Philosopher started removing some old crates which were hiding a secret entrance behind them. Cold wind came from the passage, but the air smelled fresh. That meant it was being used pretty frequently.

“How does Philosopher know the secret passage? Is he one of the nobles?” Lucien felt a bit confused. However, obviously, he could not ask that directly.

When they all came into the secret passage, Philosopher prudently closed the entrance behind them. Lucien noticed many magic circles on the ceiling.

“Philosopher,” Smile noticed them as well, “What are these for?”

“Don’t worry about it. In case of emergency, the magic traps will be activated to destroy the passage.” Philosopher answered with a smile.

“I like your prudence.” Lucien commended in his pretended harsh voice.

“I agree. I’m feeling more assured now.” White Honey smiled.

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Another ten minutes later, Philosopher, Lucien, Owl and White Honey climbed out of the secret passage from a dark corner. Under the cover of the shadow of the tall trees, soon they came in front of Baron Laurent’s old three-floor house.

Beside the iron gate of the house stood a guard wearing a set of plain leather armor. Compared with the many guards on the other nobles’ properties who were wearing silver chainmail, the single guard here was clearly showing the family’s decline.

“Only one guard is here. We can go in there directly.” Smile proposed.

“Leave this to me.” Philosopher took a step forward, “Leave this to an apprentice from the School of Astrology.”

“I agree. Philosopher can handle this.” Lucien nodded under his hood.

“Then let me help you, Philosopher.” Smile came closer to Philosopher.

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Luke was yawning in front of the big iron gate, complaining about the Baron in his mind.

“Party, party and party. Baron Laurent doesn’t even have enough money to pay us guards. Ten Nars every month for standing here the whole night? Come on... The old Baron was paying my grandpa and dad twenty Nars a month!”

A sudden owl hoot interrupted Luke’s thought, since it sounded a bit weird. “Go and catch your mice! You nasty thing!” Luke swore.

Luke couldn’t see anything in the darkness. However, when he turned around, he suddenly saw a ghost in a black robe standing a few steps away from him.

Before Luke opened his mouth to scream, he saw the ghost’s face under the hood: except for the two eye holes, its nose, mouth and ears were blurred together.

The ghost slowly raised its head. It was looking at Luke through the two dark holes, in which there were countless stars. The stars were shining like a dream.

“Stars...” Luke murmured. All of a sudden, he felt completely relaxed, as if he was facing the person who he trusted the most in the world.

Philosopher clearly knew that Luke had been hypnotized. Walking closer to Luke, Philosopher whispered in his ear, “We are Baron Laurent’s guests. Open the gate and let us in. Be quiet. Don’t let other people know.”

“Yes, sir.” Luke slightly opened the gate following Philosopher’s command, “Please, sir.”

Carefully, Philosopher, Lucien, Smile and White Honey went through the gate and headed toward the house.

After they went in there, Luke did not close the gate. Instead, he turned around and started guarding the gate with great passion as if his chest was on fire! He did not know why, but he wanted to do more for the mister.

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The house’s wooden door of the house was tightly locked, and the heavy curtains were also tightly drawn. In the big hall, a number of naked or half-naked men and women were having intercourse. Men’s gasps, women’s groans, a sweet aroma and the smell of certain fluids were mixing together. The hall was warm, even hot.

On the couches, carpets, and even on the long table, pairs of man and woman, man and man, woman and woman, were moaning during coitus. They were having sex as if they were totally crazy. Some women’s dresses were rolled up around their waists, while some other women were completely naked, and men were humping them like beasts.

Only one person in the licentious sex party was totally different. It was a middle-aged man in a silver robe. He did not join these people. Instead, he raised his hands up and closed his eyes, as if he was enjoying the moans and was listening to someone talking to him. His face looked extremely excited, lightened with ecstasy.

Black mist gradually rose up from the crazy people and slowly gathered behind the middle-aged man. The man was standing in the center of the pattern of an argent horn drawn on the altar, from which many silver lines stretched out and enclosed the shadow. Then the shadow became darker and darker, mixing with the colors of pink and black. Gradually, it turned into a tall and big shadow with two horns on its head.

“Are you ready for my power?” The shadow suddenly spoke.

The middle-aged man, Baron Laurent, answered in his lunatic tone, “The Great Master of Argent, the forever lasting silence, I’ve given my soul to you. Please, please endow me with your power!”

Slowly the shadow approached him and started entering his body, bit by bit.

Laurent’s face contorted. Obviously, merging was not a very pleasant process. However, the pain was suppressed by the ecstasy shining in his eyes.

“No one can stop me now. No one can stop me from regaining the glory of my family anymore.” Apart from the ecstasy, there were also tears in his eyes.

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Outside the house, Lucien and the other three apprentices did not intrude obtrusively. They first had to make sure there were no magic circles or traps around.

“Mr. Professor, it will take at least half an hour to eliminate all the magic traps here.” Philosopher said to Lucien.

“No, we can’t.” White Honey sounded nervous, “We’re relatively late, and I can feel the demon already. We only have up to ten minutes. Ten minutes later, the demon will arrive in its complete form. Then we will be too late.”

“Going into the hall directly will also cost us lots of spiritual power as well to deal with the traps.” Smile turned to Lucien, “Professor, you must have some more powerful spells that can eliminate all the magic traps at once.”

All the three apprentices were looking at the mysterious sorcerer. Similar thoughts came in their mind. Although they all knew that the sorcerer was very profound, none of them ever saw in person how powerful the mysterious Professor was.

“Is Mr. Professor a real powerful sorcerer?”

“How powerful can he be?”

“Is he even stronger than White Honey’s mentor?”

Lucien knew clearly what they were thinking. He was prepared. Under their gaze, he answered with confidence, “No problem, Smile. I’ll handle this.”

Lucien came close to the wall of the house and pressed both of his hands on it. Moving his lips silently, Lucien started casting the spell.

Invisible waves spread out of Lucien's hand. The waves hit the wall instantly and were reflected back. The following waves thus became different.

In Philosopher, Owl and White Honey's eyes, nothing happened. They exchanged worried glances with confusion but did not say anything.

Suddenly, White Honey felt the earth was shaking.

"Are you trembling?" Philosopher asked her at the same time.

"Not me." She answered with surprise.

"Look!" Smile was pointing at the building, "Look! The whole house's shaking!"

White Honey and Philosopher immediately looked in the direction of the house. The old three-story house was shaking forward and backward, and the movement was becoming fiercer and fiercer. They could hear the glasses were shattering.

"Earthquake?!" White Honey wondered.

“No, it’s the house itself!” answered Owl.

“Mr. Professor?” Philosopher looked at Lucien and was shocked.

Lucien’s hands were still pressed against the house’s wall. His whole body was shaking along with the building. His lips were still moving.

“The house’s gonna collapse!” White Honey took a step back.

Philosopher could not believe his eyes, “Even a third circle spell Fireball could not completely destroy a whole building at once! What is this spell?!”

“What... is... this...!” Doro, the owl, was standing on Smile’s shoulder, yelling.

No one noticed when the raven caught up with them again. It almost fell down from the tree once more, because of the sudden shaking.

“What’s the circle of this spell!” The raven cried as well.

Only Lucien knew it was just an apprentice spell, the Professor’s Oscillation Hand. The spell could detect the frequency of vibration of a building and created a resonance to destroy the construction. It worked the best with bridges!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 54: Calm Hunters

Inside of the hall, Laurent, wearing a silver robe, was standing in the center of the altar. His distorted face was full of excitement and ecstasy.

He could feel it. He could feel the shadow entering his body. His blood was running and crying, gradually changing his body.

Forty years, forty years of waiting and dreaming. Today he could finally start regaining the glory of his family.

The mixed moans in his ears changed into the applauses and cheers on his knight title conferring ceremony. However, at this time, the whole house started shaking all of a sudden.

"Earthquake?! It this a punishment?!" Although Laurent had changed his belief in order to chase the dark power, in his mind, he still respected and feared the God of Truth. However, now he was just one step away from the great success. He could not give up at this point.

The ceiling of the hall started falling. Chunks of stone and wood fell on the ground, and some of them fell on Laurent's head. Of course, he was afraid. The only hope he had was the dark power he was going to be endowed with soon.

"Do not panic, Laurent." The shadow spoke to him as if it could read his mind, "It will take another six to seven minutes for you to fully merge with me. If the house collapses, you will die. Stop the ritual at once. You've got a small part of my power, which already rivals the top senior-rank knight squire. We can complete it next time."

The shadow spoke very fast. Within ten seconds, the shadow's thought had all passed to Laurent.

Laurent was very angry. He could not stand watching his great plan being interrupted in the final stage. "No, I'm not leaving!" Laurent shouted, "The house won't collapse! The earthquake won't last!"

The windows broke in the violent shake. The strong wind of the upcoming storm blew in the hall and instantly drove the sweet and dreamy fragrance away. The people who were crazy with their desire suddenly sobered up.

"My god, earthquake!"

"Run, run!"

People were yelling. Some were wearing clothes in a hurry, some were running towards the gate naked, while some were even trying to escape through the windows.

The evil ritual took away their strength. They stumbled in panic and fear. One of the women slumped to the ground and was crawling towards the gate. The man who was having a pleasant time with her ran directly past the woman without a glance.

Watching these people leaving, Laurent knew his ritual had ended. The silver lines on the pattern disappeared with the shadow. With an angry shout, he stepped out of the altar and joined the panicky crowd. On his way running towards the exit, he hurriedly destroyed the magic traps one by one.

Behind Laurent, a man in black suit who was seemingly enjoying the sex party just now looked out of the window, with his face looking serious.

...

In the shadow of the house, Philosopher, White Honey and Smile were standing there, looking at Professor with their mouths and eyes widely open. Taking back his hands, the mysterious Professor said to the apprentices in a very calm tone, "They're leaving the house. Be prepared. Hunt the evil creature."

"Why not just make the house collapse, Professor?" White Honey asked.

"I prefer not to," Lucien stretched his hands a bit, "If the creature dies in the ruins, it'll be quite inconvenient for me to collect the blood. On the other hand, the sound of collapsing will alert the church. We don't want this big trouble."

However, it was not the most important reason. Actually, Lucien did not have enough power to make the house collapse completely. Compared with a bridge of simpler structure, the structure of a house was more complicated, and its vibration frequency also varied. Lucien could only follow one of them. Therefore, destroying a bridge might be within Lucien's ability, but definitely not a house.

The power stunned Philosopher, Smile and White Honey. They never saw a sorcerer who could cast such a powerful spell without using any reagent. Now they had no doubt toward the mysterious and profound sorcerer, Mr. Professor.

White Honey was the first one who calmed down among the three. With the help of a magic item, she started tracking the crowd,

"Evil light detected. Fifteen meters away from the nearest window. We move one meter to the left to better release the spells," she calmly said.

Philosopher quickly moved to the left and said to Smile, "Owl, cast Homan's Oscillation."

Homan Oscillation was also a sonic attack magic, which used high decibel to hurt people. In the most serious case, it could even take a person's life. Other people nearby would get hurt in their eardrums and might black out.

"Then you use Silence Wall, Philosopher," Smile also answered calmly, "To prevent the night watchers from noticing us."

"Merged with a low-rank demon shadow. Senior-rank knight squire level. Five meters away. " White Honey reported, "No acid and fire magic. I'll use Arrow."

"One meter. Get ready." she said.

Within just a few seconds, the first round of the attack plan had been made. That was the first time Lucien saw how the well-trained apprentices fought.

In order to get out of the house as soon as possible, Laurent roughly pushed the guests in front of him away. In just a few seconds, Laurent came to the window, hit the glass with his body and jumped out of the house.

At this time, a loud blast struck his head, as if he was hit by a thunder. All of a sudden, his head started buzzing and he felt bad nausea and dizziness. Losing his balance, he almost fell on the ground with his head.

Before Laurent could see anything in the darkness clearly, a metal arrow directly shot in his right eye. His blood was darker than common people, with a special smell of sulphur. The great pain made him break out in a frightful yell but his voice was blocked by Silence Wall. Laurent finally realized the fact that he got attacked.

However, it was too late. The second metal arrow flew directly into his throat. Laurent struggled a bit and soon his body stopped moving.

Lucien couldn't believe that killing this evil baron who had just merged with a demon was this easy. He was also very glad, since casting a spell silently cost him more power than usual, and his remaining spiritual power was only enough for using about two apprentice spells.

Beside the Baron Laurent lied several naked and half-naked women and men, all unconscious. The panicked crowd running toward other directions paid no attention to what just happened here.

Using Mage Hand, Lucien and the other three apprentices started collecting the baron's blood. After putting three glass tubes of blood into his pockets, Lucien stood up and said to them,

"Time to go."

"Yes, sir." Philosopher, White Honey and Smile answered.

When they were about to leave, all of a sudden a man jumped out of the house from the nearest window like a ghost and dashed toward Lucien with a sharp dagger in his hand, aiming at Lucien's heart!

He was waiting in the house. Now he knew it was the best chance to kill this powerful sorcerer! And he only got this single chance!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 55: Midnight Bang

The black shadow was even faster than Baron Laurent, faster than what most people could see. If the men and women who were screaming and escaping had stopped at this time, the only thing they would see was a blurry shadow.

Only a person who had awakened Blessing in their blood could be this fast. The person was a genuine knight!

Within two seconds, the dagger already came close to Lucien's back.

None of them realized what was going on behind them but Lucien. He suddenly sensed the great danger when the dagger was only a few centimeters away from him.

However, Lucien knew he was no rival to the attacker. Also, it was too late for him to cast any protection spell, thus the only choice Lucien had was to fiercely leap forward as fast as he could.

Although Lucien was smart enough to create his own spells, he was still of apprentice level, and a magic apprentice was not able to construct a spell structure using his or her spiritual power in one's soul, which was the premise of casting a spell instantly.

Lucien was clearly aware that very likely he would still be badly injured, but as long as the attacker could not kill him in a single strike, Lucien would seize the chance to fight back with his Ice Revenger Ring.

Suddenly, when the dagger was almost at him, with a loud caw from above a light appeared and instantly covered Lucien's whole body, protecting him like a chain mail.

It was the 1st circle spell, Mage Armor.

The spell was cast by the raven, Ashley, which was standing on the branch. Ashley was the pet of the genuine sorcerer. It could not only see clearly during night time but also borrow its owner's power and cast some of the spells.

The armor was totally beyond the black shadow's expectation. But the momentum of the dagger was so fierce that even the magic armor cannot fully stop it. In the blink of an eye, the transparent armor broke into many pieces, shinning in the darkness. However, the shadow did hesitate for several seconds.

It was already enough time for Lucien, and he knew it was his only chance. Lucien swiftly turned around and activated his ring. Three rays of cold light were shining in his left hand.

Lucien activated the 2nd circle spell in the ring, Palmeira's Frost Blades!

At this key moment, Lucien knew that the attack was the best form of defense.

The ring also strengthened Lucien's willpower, or he would be totally stunned and lose the ability to fight back by the knight power of the attacker.

The three rays of white light were shining, and they targeted directly the attacker's throat, chest and the lower part of the body.

Facing the frost blades, the attacker quickly covered his body with dark flames, which were full of the evil power of tyranny and destruction. Although he could have used the protecting power "shadow" coming from Blessing, he decided to be more careful. The guy in front of him just ruined his whole plan. Of course he wanted to kill him right on the spot, but he had to guarantee his own safety first.

Wielding the dagger, he precisely shattered the two blades targeting his throat and chest. At the same time, he brought up his right leg and melt the blade with the dark fire. The pieces of the blades scattered and were shining like falling snow.

After solving all the troubles, the knight turned the dagger in his hand around and continued chasing Lucien. He also noticed two black balls shooting out of the raven's beak. It was another 1st circle spell, Magic Missile.

This time the 1st circle spell would not be a problem for him, since his whole body was still covered by the sinister fire. Now the only thing he wanted to do was to kill this sorcerer in front of him who just destroyed his plan.

All of a sudden, the tiny pieces of ice from the frost blades turned the air around the knight freezing cold. For a couple of seconds, he was frozen still and the two magic bullets shot him directly in the body.

That was the power of Palmeira's Frost Blades — not only blades, but also the coldness of ice and snow.

“A level two knight!” Ashley screamed.

Philosopher, White Honey and Smile finally found out something was going on behind them, and then they saw the attacker.

Without too much thought, both Philosopher and White Honey activated their magic items immediately.

Waves of light spread out around Philosopher. Within the radius of ten meters, all the ordinary people quickly collapsed and fell asleep.

1st circle spell, Sleep.

A strong onset of tiredness hit the attacker's brain, but as a level two knight, the 1st circle spell was still not powerful enough to drag him into his dreamland. He shook his head and drove the drowsiness away with his willpower.

But a powerful air blast followed and hit the knight right into his chest. With a big bang, the power threw him directly back into the house through the window behind him, with lots of broken glass scattering on the ground.

1st circle spell, Force Wave, carried by White Honey's magic robe.

"He's a level two knight. He won't die this easily." Ashley flew closer to Lucien, "Mr. Professor, keep attacking please."

When Lucien was about to take out his Flame Gel, the old house suddenly started shaking fiercely. The ceiling was dropping and walls collapsing. Within only a few seconds, the whole house finally came down and buried the knight under the ruins.

Lucien's spell already damaged the structure of the old house before, and with the heavy hit of the knight, now the place was totally destroyed.

Boom...Boom! The collapse of the house was extremely loud like an earthquake. And it was too late for Philosopher to block the huge noise.

Instantly, all of them realized that they were in trouble — the Night Watchers would come soon.

Now they did not have time to find and kill the knight attacker. Without any hesitation, Ashley, the crow, turned into a cloud of shadow and enveloped White Honey.

“See you next time, Mr. Professor.” said the crow.

And then it flew away quickly and disappeared in the sky.

“We gotta go now as well, Mr. Professor.” Philosopher and Smile made a slight bow and also ran into the darkness.

In their mind, Mr. Professor was so powerful that there was no need for them to give him a hand in this case. It was taken for granted that Mr. Professor would have assorted ways to get out of here easily.

However, actually, Lucien did not.

There was no time for being hesitant now, Lucien knew. He quickly turned around to find the entrance of the secret passage through which they just came here.

A burst of thunder just arrived. Rain drops fell from the sky in a crazy way. The long-awaited storm finally started.

Under the ruins, small clusters of dark flame were raised one by one. Quickly they burned down the pieces of the broken ceiling and stones, then a black figure scrambled to his feet in the rain.

In the lightning, the man's face was revealed.

He was Rosan Aaron, the head of Aaron's Gang.

Aaron stared at the direction where Lucien disappeared and thought to himself, "He could not cast a spell instantly, which means currently he's still an apprentice... He is much weaker than I thought..."

For a few second, Aaron's mind was dominated by his anger, which almost made him try to catch up with Lucien and kill the guy.

But soon Aaron calmed down. For now his priority was escaping from the coming night watchers. He needed to leave now as well.

.....

Lucien was running in the cold rain, feeling pain from the falling rain drops. Luckily the glass tubes and waterproof cloth worked pretty well. His magic reagents and potions were still fine in his robe.

Lucien did not have any companion nor support. He was alone, running towards the secret passage.

Luckily, Lucien saw the entrance was just over there, hidden by the trees, bushes and grass.

However, what Lucien saw was not only the secret passage, but also a man in white suit, his wet red hair sticking to his forehead.

And he was wearing a pair of black gloves.

The man was a night watcher.

In the lightning, they saw each other.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 56: The Night Watcher

Translator: Kris_Liu Editor: Vermillion

The moment when Lucien saw the night watcher, he threw the tube of Flame Gel in his hand toward the guy without hesitation, then continued running toward the entrance of the secret passage.

He had cast the spell in the Ice Revenger Ring, so the Flame Gel was now his most powerful weapon. He was aware that Bat Screaming couldn't work well in such a stormy night. The only thing Lucien could blame now was his bad luck.

The night watcher, wearing a pair of black gloves, was also very experienced in fighting with magic apprentices, sorcerers, as well as evil creatures at night. And the gloves he was wearing were also a decent magic item, enchanted with different demon-constraining spells. That was why there were not many night watchers from the church. Besides, every night watcher was by no means being unskilled. Some of them were high level squires, some of them pastors, and some were even knights.

The night watcher firmly caught the first tube of Flame Gel flying towards his face. Being controlled by the maker's spiritual power, the gel was supposed to explode instantly, however, grabbed by his hand in the black glove, the momentum of explosion was suddenly stopped, like a fuse on fire suddenly being extinguished by a bucket of water.

In few seconds, the second tube of Flame Gel followed. Unexpectedly, this time, the tube did not target the night watcher directly, but hit the ground and exploded fiercely before the night watcher could react. The fire of the explosion also set fire to the tube of gel he was grabbing. Immediately, the night watcher's body was covered with raging flame. Since the comburent was gel, even the pouring rain couldn't put out the fire easily.

Lucien had no time to check if his enemy was down. He quickly ran to the entrance.

Before he entered the passage, a great pressure suddenly struck his mind. He couldn't help shaking. Thanks to the ring he was wearing, at least he could still stand.

Lucien subconsciously looked back and instantly realized what was going on there.

In the bright lightning, the night watcher was still chasing him, with the upper part of his body covered with fire, but it seemed the pain was not bothering him at all. However, his skin had turned into pieces of scarlet scales, protecting him from further burning.

The night watcher was a dark knight with an awakened Blessing, and his Blessing was called "red dragon"!

With the help of Ice Revenger, Lucien did not panic under the pressure from the night watcher. He was calculating the distance between them.

"Twenty meters...ten..."

Then he threw his last tube of Flame Gel at the night watcher, who was only around five meters away from him. The great power of the blast spread fiercely and the wave separated them apart.

While the night watcher took a step back, Lucien was directly thrown into the secret passage. Since there was a slope near the entrance, he kept rolling for quite a few meters in there.

Lucien felt like he was struck by a huge hammer in his stomach and great dizziness took over his mind. A mouthful of blood just burst out.

Lucien had to hurry, knowing that the night watcher would catch up with him in few seconds. However, he was also very confident, since he had a plan.

When the night watcher was about to enter the passage, Lucien activated the magic traps set by Philosopher, which could instantly turn stones into piles of mud.

In only a second, the entrance was blocked by the mix of stones and mud. The night watcher couldn't stop himself in time and ran directly into them. The last thing he saw was the sorcerer slightly making a bow, mocking him.

"We'll wait and see, you wretch." The night watcher punched the mound of dirt with all the strength.

...

While he was running, Lucien took out a tube of Storm and unplugged it. He needed the potion for fast healing and energy boosting. At the same time, he triggered the magic traps one by one to destroy the tunnel. However, he did not trigger all of the traps to prevent the night watcher from tracking him by following the sound.

With the potion's help, Lucien managed to get out of the passage way faster. Then he removed all the remaining potions and reagents from the pocket of his linen shirt, and burnt down his robe, since his robe had a special herbal scent which was used for hiding Lucien's own smell. Lucien did not want to leave the night watcher any chance to somehow find him.

When he finished doing all of these, Lucien went back to his shack and stored safely all the tubes and reagents. After drying his shirt and pants, he finally collapsed into bed, exhausted at the end of the day.

He did not realize how weak he was until his head hit the pillow. Storm boosted the energy for some time but also drained him completely. He was not very worried about the church, partly because of the bad weather, and more importantly, Lucien was pretty sure that the church would focus on investigating the dead baron, Laurent, since obviously, he was more related to the heresy, Argent Horn.

Soon Lucien fell into sleep.

The rain was still pelting down outside.

...

In the early morning, the rain did not stop.

Lucien was awakened by the different sounds coming from the people's work in the neighborhood.

He felt sick, and his body was very heavy, so Lucien decided to skip his shift this morning. The library was never busy, and Pierre was there all the time.

Later, Iven was sent by his mom to see why Lucien did not show up for breakfast. Lucien made Iven go to the library to ask for a sick leave.

Then Lucien went back to sleep and did not wake up again until noon. He felt much better, but still a bit sick. He had lunch with auntie Alisa's family and left for Victor's place.

There were just three days left before the due time for Victor to submit his last piece of work for the concert.

...

Ten in the morning. Victor's practice room.

Victor was very distressed, feeling desperate with the new melody. Then he heard a knock at the door. It was Lott, Felicia and Herodotus, who were supposed to come in the afternoon.

"Why so early?" Victor was surprised.

"Well... Mr. Victor..." Lott was a bit hesitant, "Mekanzi asked me to tell you that... um... Baron Othello wants you to go to the association as soon as possible. The princess is there today. Her Highness wants to see your work, Mr. Victor."

"...?!" Victor's face suddenly turned pale, but he could not speak a word.

Then with a long sigh, he nodded, "I will be there in half an hour."

...

When Lucien arrived, Victor had already left his place.

"Mr. Athy, where did Mr. Victor go?" Lucien asked.

"Mr. Victor's was summoned by the Princess in the morning," answered Athy, looking rather worried, "Her Highness wants to know about Mr. Victor's three pieces of work for the concert today."

"What?!" Lucien felt very regretful for being absent from work today.

"Mr. Victor left around ten forty. If you want to wait, Mr. Victor should be back soon." said Athy.

Now it was twelve thirty-five in the afternoon.

"No, I need to find him now. Thank you, Mr. Athy." Lucien grabbed his umbrella and dashed into the rain toward the association.

Chapter 57: Take Fate by the Throat

Chapter 57: Take Fate by the Throat

Translator: Kris_Liu Editor: Vermillion

Eleven twenty in the morning, inside the director's office in the Musicians' Association.

"You gotta pick one out now. These are all your good works from the past," said Othello with his eyebrows frowning, "We've been waiting for you for about twenty minutes."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Othello...Can... can I have some more time?" Victor's face had a deadly paleness. His dim eyes had been losing focus for a while, and the musical notes were not making sense at all to him.

Wolf was there as well, sitting right across the desk with Director Othello. A contemptuous smile appeared on his face, "Stop struggling, my friend. Just randomly pick one out, after all, they look pretty much the same to me. Mr. Othello still needs to have lunch with Her Highness later."

"Well..." Othello took out his pocket watch, "The lunch will be at one o'clock. I will give you... another ten minutes. If you still can't make a decision by then, I'm afraid the association might need to have someone else for the concert. Wolf just came back from Ratacia Palace. He should be able to handle this."

Ratacia Palace was the royal concert hall of the Duchy of Orvarit.

Wolf couldn't hold his excitement back, "Victor, I'm sorry to see you struggling. But we, as the musicians in our association, we should regard the interest of our association as the top priority. What do you think?"

Victor did not say anything. After another two minutes, Victor fell back into the chair and pointed at a piece of paper, "That one then."

The three words took away all his strength, but he also felt a bit relaxed. Victor did not want to spend more time and effort pursuing the piece of work which he had been working on for nine years.

"Maybe it's a good thing." Victor thought to himself.

"Good," Othello clapped his hands, "I'm glad you finally made the decision. I have some medicines that may be helpful your to mental state, but they can have some side effects. Anyway, I gotta take a little nap, you guys can leave now."

After they left the office, Wolf threw a bitter glance at Victor, "Enjoy your last chance playing in the Psalm Hall. Don't let your wife down in heaven."

"You..." Victor's face was a bit distorted with anger.

"Me?" Wolf snorted, "It is you who will disappoint your wife, not me."

Then he quickly walked downstairs.

Victor felt very sick and his head became dizzy. Lott, Felicia and Herodotus, who were waiting outside, quickly came close to their teacher.

“Are you all right?” Felicia asked worriedly.

“I’m okay. Just need some rest. We’ll start practicing this afternoon.” Victor answered in a weak voice.

.....

Lucien was running in the heavy rain.

He had not fully recovered from his injury. Holding the umbrella, the wind was preventing him from running faster, but he had to. The earlier he could get to the association, the better his chances would be to give Mr. Victor the new piece of work before the princess saw the song list.

Finally, he folded his umbrella under his arm, so he could run faster.

He just wanted to try his best, he didn’t want any regrets.

.....

It only took Lucien six minutes to get to the association from Victor's place, a quarter of the usual time.

Twelve forty-one in the afternoon. Lucien pushed open the gate, soaked wet, with water drops falling down from his face on the floor.

"Lucien!" Elena approached him in a hurry from the counter, "are you all right?"

"I'm fine, Elena. Where's Mr. Victor?" Lucien asked without delay.

"Should be in his own office. I saw Felicia brought him lunch," answered Elena.

"Thanks!" Leaving his umbrella at the gate, Lucien rushed upstairs.

"What is going on there?" Elena wondered.

.....

It was Lott who opened the door, whose face looked pretty gloomy. Lott did not ask Lucien why he was there. He just nodded to Lucien.

Lucien entered Victor's office. He saw Victor was sitting behind his desk, looking very absent-minded. The lunch tray was sitting in front of him, remaining untouched. Lucien saw Rhine was also there.

"Did Mr. Victor hand in the music list for the concert?" asked Lucien.

Lott, Felicia and Herodotus just ignored him. Only Rhine nodded, "Yes, the third one was from Mr. Victor's past work."

Taking a deep breath, Lucien went directly to Victor and said to him aloud, "Mr. Victor. I wrote a great piece of music! I hope you can give me a chance to listen to it! I'm sure my work can give you some inspiration! Can we change the list afterwards?"

Lucien was too urgent and nervous to select his words. He sounded too direct, almost stupid.

"What the hell are you talking about?" Herodotus was shocked.

Lott walked to Lucien and was about to pull Lucien away from Victor's desk.

Hiding his face in his palms, Victor answered weakly, "No, we can't. Director Othello went for lunch with Her Highness ten minutes ago. The list has been sent already. We cannot change it now."

"Mr. Victor, it's raining heavily outside! Mr. Othello can still be on the way. We still got a chance!"

“No, we don’t.” Victor murmured like being in a dream. He was not listening.

Being pulled back by Lott, Lucien did not know what to say.

The rest of the students had given up as well.

“Stop, Lucien. We tried, and that’s it.”

“It’s too late. Mr. Othello must be in Ratacia Palace now.”

“Even if he’s not there yet, it is too late to write a new piece of symphony. We’d better just practice what we have now... it can still be a success.”

“.....” Lucien took a few steps back, feeling rather tired. Maybe it was the arrangement of God. Maybe it was God who prevented him from going to work in the association today.

“Anyway, it’s not my concert, not my business.” Lucien thought to himself, and became gloomy as well, like the rest of the people in the office.

However, when Lucien was sitting in the couch, images of Mr. Victor teaching him, taking care of him, and encouraging him for the past several months suddenly hit Lucien’s mind. He was

reminded of the hard work Mr. Victor, the other students and he had to practice for the concert, and of his effortful running in the pouring rain.

However, looking at these people in the room now, why their efforts couldn't bear fruits?

Lucien did not want to end up like this.

As long as there was still a slight of chance, he couldn't just give up like this and accept the result. As long as they were still there, there had to be something else they could do instead of just complaining. As long as he still had hope and faith, he should keep fighting until the last second.

And this was not the last second yet.

Taking a deep breath, Lucien looked around the office and walked to the piano.

"What are you doing, Lucien?" Lott yelled at him.

Lucien did not answer him. Sitting in front of the piano, Lucien laid both of his hands on the keyboard.

Even Rhine was very surprised. He had no idea what kind of music Lucien, as a new music learner, would present.

However, the first several notes shocked all the people in the office.

The notes were more powerful than ever. Victor raised his head up and turned to look at the piano, looking confused.

The following several bars of the symphony came like an overwhelming storm, fast, intense and fierce. They were like the misfortunes in life, one after another, like huge raging waves in the ocean, like the continuous call to the battlefield, and like countless enemies coming for you.

There were some bars of relief, but they were followed by even more intense and desperate struggles.

However, the fight of the warriors never stopped. No one ever gave up. They kept fighting: Sailors were fighting against the monster-like waves on top of their ships; Soldiers were fighting against their enemies in the battlefield. People died in waves and arrows, in tears and blood, but there were more newcomers following.

The students were shocked. Rhine stood up from the couch.

Lucien kept playing with all his effort.

Why give up? Why?

They still had time. They could catch up with Baron Othello. If it failed, they could still persuade Princess Natasha with the charm of the symphony.

Why give up?

There was still a glimmer of hope. They couldn't just give up!

The first chapter of the symphony grew more and more vehement. Lott and Felicia were shaking with both fear and excitement.

Was it fate that made you give up, or was it yourself?

Was it fate that beat you, or was it the difficulties and obstacles?

The music was asking. The player was asking.

Victor stood up straight. He felt the questioning. The question was addressed to him as well.

Lucien's soul had just been entirely devoted to the music. More thoughts rose in everyone's mind:

"I want to have a peaceful life. I miss my family. But I somehow came to this world and lost everything.

“I saw people here burning a woman to death.

“I went through the sewers.

“I wanted to learn how to read and wanted a better life, but I was beaten by gangsters.

“I wanted to learn magic to protect myself, but being a sorcerer here in Aalto meant I had to risk my life everyday, wandering between light and darkness.

“Did I give up? Do I want to give up?

“No!

“I’ll keep fighting against the so-called fate until the last second of my life!

“I can change the fate. I can change my life!”

Lucien almost had a heart attack. He just let all his emotion out. He wanted to speak out loud:

“Was it fate that made you lose hope, or was it yourself?

“Was it fate that made you lower your head, or was it yourself?

“Is it fate that decides your life, or do you choose your own destiny?

“Me, Lucien, Xiafeng, will never give in to fate.

“I’ll take fate by the throat and beat all the difficulties. I’ll never stop moving forward!”

Victor stood up from his chair, both of his fists clenching tightly.

P.S.

The author: Thank you to my friend, Cheese Cat. It was he who wrote the many questions towards fate in this chapter. He did a better work than I did. Many thanks.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 58: This Is Fate

Translator: Kris_Liu Editor: Vermillion

It was the first time Lucien, a shy and rather introverted guy, expressed his emotions completely through music. Lucien's persistence and faith were on full display in his playing.

Although Lucien was still a bit unskilled, it did not affect the audiences in the room. Felicia, Lott, Herodotus, Rhine and, of course, Victor, all felt what Lucien wanted to tell them, while they had different understandings.

Felicia, as the only girl present, was holding her hands and twisting her fingers together. Her father did not inherit the family's title, so she almost gave up her music dream and married a random noble. She often doubted herself, asking herself if she could really make her dream come true, if her choice was right.

Hearing Lucien's fully dedicated playing, all her worries came to her mind:

"Can I overcome all the difficulties and become a female musician?"

"Will I be respected because of my own achievements and be able to choose my own love?"

She did not know. The music thrilled her.

Lott and Herodotus also had their own pressure in the family, and their fates were doomed as well — they would not be able to inherit the titles. They could indulge themselves hopelessly in wine and women, or they could do something greater, such as becoming great musicians.

Lott's hands were shaking. The music reminded him of his cousin, Mekanzi.

Herodotus took a few steps back. He had always been weak among his family.

Even Rhine was feeling something. His face, which was always serene, was now lightened with excitement. He was beating time with the music, feeling the long-lost intense emotion.

Victor was the most excited one among them all. His hands were clenching, his face was slightly distorted, and his whole body was shaking. The music reminded him of so many things in the past: his first failed concert; the encouragement from his wife; his hard work and his successful second performance. He thought of the great grief when his wife passed away, and of all his effort and the hard time Wolf and Othello gave him...

The music notes were like sharp arrows, going directly to his heart.

Victor could tell the sense of insistence and stiffness in it.

"I failed so many times, and I recovered the same amount of times.

"Then, why give up this time?

"Winnie, is that you encouraging me?"

Lucien started feeling tired. He knew it was because of the injury he got, but he couldn't stop playing. As a musician, or just a music student for now, it was his responsibility to finish the whole work.

"I'll let Mr. Victor feel it!" He thought to himself.

His listeners could tell he was exhausted, feeling rather worried. Lucien's playing was like walking on a tightrope, but it did not stop.

Lucien seized the chance to have a bit of rest through the relatively softer and slow rhythm in the end of the first movement. And then the intense part came back again, which was just like a long battle.

The second movement was more soothing, like sunlight driving away dark clouds and the raging waves in the ocean calming down, like the soldiers going back to their campsite for a short rest during the break.

The following third and fourth movements were interwoven with each other, and the tune became pressing and overwhelming again.

The sunlight disappeared and the dark clouds came back again; the seemingly quiet ocean was secretly building even bigger waves; The soldiers picked up their weapons and headed toward the battlefield.

The greatest and final battle was about to come.

The feeling of anxiety, worry and fear gradually accumulated with the development of the music.

Eventually the storm came, throwing a fishing boat up above the raging waves and, in the next second, fiercely dropping it down. Faced with the power of nature, the little boat seemed so helpless and weak; In the battlefield, the final round was about to decide the fate of the soldiers, who were fighting, killing or being killed, but they were still brave.

The fishing boat did not give in to the roaring waves; The soldiers were beating back their enemies.

In the last movement, the music became gentle again, which sounded a bit grieved, as if the soldiers were lamenting their dead comrades in the battlefield, as if the sailors were missing their families in the waves.

There came the darkest hour before the dawn. The listeners felt nervous again.

What was waiting for them in the end? Failure or victory?

Did they overcome the difficulties, or get completely defeated by the difficulties?

Did they finally take fate by the throat?

Or did they give in to fate?

Suddenly, the exciting and splendid chapter arrived and directly struck the listeners' hearts. That was a chapter of great victory!

Feeling excited and encouraged, Victor could not stop himself from raising his arm. He wanted to cheer, cheer for the sunlight driving away the dark clouds, for the sailors surviving on the fishing ship, for the soldiers successfully protecting their land!

The rest of the listeners were feeling gratified and excited as well, as if they got the faith and power for themselves to fight against their own sufferings.

Rhine, who always looked calmer than others, was also smiling.

Lucien moved his hands from the keyboard and wanted to stand up, but found himself so weak. The playing consumed all his strength and energy.

"This is..." murmured Victor, as if he was asking Lucien, or asking himself.

Rhine, Lott, Felicia and Herodotus all looked at Lucien, waiting for his answer.

"This is fate." Lucien tried hard to stand up, and replied him.

Rhine was the first one applauding, then followed by the rest of the students. Victor also joined them, applauding hard.

"This is music, genuine music!" Victor walked close to Lucien and commented.

Lucien smiled, and he said sincerely, "Thank you, Mr. Victor. Since you like my composition, I wonder if I could have the honor of having you revise it for me. We can tell Mr. Othello and Her Highness that we want to alter the list. I'm sure they would agree and you will find it a good piece of work for your concert, Mr. Victor."

Lucien's intention was clear to everyone in the room — he wanted to give his work to Victor and he was willing to give up the honor and fame he deserved. They turned their eyes on Victor, waiting excitedly for his response.

A mixture of emotions spread over Victor's face: ecstasy, relief, excitement, greed, hesitation... An inner struggle was going on in his mind.

"You can put my name on the second position, if you want. I cannot refine it, and your work will be really important, Mr. Victor." Lucien tried to make his teacher feel less guilty for taking his student's work.

After a while, with a long sigh, a smile appeared on Victor's face and he turned to Lucien.

"No, I won't. It is yours. This is your great work. I already can see your name being registered in the history of music. Apart from God and Winnie, who are supporting me, I still have my moral creed. That's what Winnie appreciated most."

This was Mr. Victor, his music teacher. Lucien could feel the tears in his own eyes.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 59: Confirmation

Translator: Kris_Liu Editor: Vermillion

"Mr. Victor!" Lott and Herodotus couldn't believe that their teacher refused to accept this precious gift.

Although there were still some problems with Lucien's playing, this was still a great piece of work. If Victor was willing to revise it and recompose it into a symphony, it could possibly become one of the greatest works in the music history, the most brilliant gem on the crown of symphony! Even Felicia felt that what Mr. Victor just said was unbelievable.

Waving his right hand, Victor stopped them and turned to Lucien again.

"Mr. Victor..." Lucien realized that he couldn't persuade his teacher unless he cast a spell on him. He did not know what to say.

"Thank you, Lucien. Thanks God." Holding his hand over his heart, Victor smiled, "It is the most touching music I've ever heard. Thank you. Now I have a new understanding toward music. And... can I have the honor to present this great piece of work on the concert as conductor?"

"Thank you for your comment, Mr. Victor... Wait, conductor?" Lucien was very surprised, "I don't get it... It's your concert."

"Did anyone say that I cannot be a conductor on my own concert?" Victor grinned.

"Idiot..." Felicia commented in a very low voice, "Mr. Victor is going to introduce your work to all the distinguished audiences on his concert." She envied Lucien for having such a great chance of gaining much fame within a short period of time. However, she also admitted that Lucien's talent did deserve this chance.

After hearing Felicia's words, Lucien hurriedly said to Victor, "It is my great pleasure."

"I have a question for you, Lucien." Herodotus asked him from a distance, with his hands holding tightly, "Does the work really come from you? Yes, or no?"

The rest of the people in the room just now realize that Lucien was only a very inexperienced music student. How did he manage to compose such an exciting, brilliant solo?

Was he really a genius, a hidden gem?

Everyone was looking at Lucien.

Lucien did not know how to explain to them, and he also couldn't. With regard to being righteous and honest, he was no way close to his music teacher.

Now, there was only one thing Lucien could do — stick to his plan.

"Yes," answered Lucien, "The inspiration of the solo came to my mind a long time ago. At that time, I had not received any formal music education before I met Mr. Victor. I had no idea how to write down the pieces of tunes in my head."

Victor looked at Lucien and nodded.

"The inspiration came from my daily life, from poverty, desperation and struggle. Every time I saw other people dressing decently, or having fancy dishes, I wonder why that was not my life. I want to fight for my own future."

"That's why you came to look for Mr. Victor?" asked Rhine.

"That's right. But becoming Mr. Victor's music student was something out of my expectation. I never thought I could be so lucky. After all, I started from learning how to read, not music." Lucien answered, "Although I met lots of difficulties in the past several months, I'm really grateful for all the support and encouragement you gave me, Mr. Victor."

Lucien's real experiences and lies mixed together, which made his words sound more persuasive, "I've been working on this for more than three weeks, and I was trying to make lots of improvement during these days. Lott, Felicia and Herodotus are my witnesses."

Rhine and Victor turned to look at the rest of the students, wondering why they never found the value of Lucien's work.

"Well..." Felicia looked at Lucien with a mixed feeling, "Probably it was our prejudice that made us deaf. Actually, I can recall some of the pieces that I heard while Lucien was composing and practicing. At that time, Lucien was still working on it, and his playing was pretty... awful. So we did not really pay attention to it."

Only Lucien himself knew that his awful playing was made on purpose.

"As Felicia said, our prejudice deafened us." Lott admitted, "Lucien, you are a genius. A great song like this usually takes months or even years of hard work."

Lott was very impressed with Lucien's playing. If his work had not been this good, maybe he would still feel a bit jealousy and angry, but now he saw the huge gap between himself and Lucien. He was well aware of the fact that being mean and hostile towards a possible great musician in the future couldn't bring him any benefit.

"Thank you, Lott. But I am not a genius... It also took me many years..." Lucien tried to explain.

"It's okay to just accept praise from others, Lucien." Victor smiled, "I've never heard anything similar to this before. I believe it's your own work."

Rhine also nodded, "I've been traveling in many countries. It's also my first time hearing it. I believe it is your tough life which gives you the inspiration. Suffering made you a genius. Thank you for bringing this to us, Lucien."

Lucien's face blushed. While other people thought he was just being shy, Lucien knew that he was feeling embarrassed and ashamed.

"I agree with Rhine. Sometimes, without the many boundaries and limits in mind, a new learner might be able to better release his or her feelings and inspiration and create great works, flying free in the world of music." Victor took over the words from Rhine, "I've been working on my fourth symphony for nine years in memory of my wife, Winnie, but I was having a hard time since I was constrained by my past experience and what I learned from my teachers. I thought a symphony was not suitable for expressing personal emotions, but serious religious theme instead. Thank you, Lucien, You provided me with a new insight of my work."

Then Victor turned around and clapped his hands with satisfaction, "All right, Lucien. Carefully write your work down and I will revamp it for you and turn it into a symphony. I will also talk to Mr. Othello to change the list. Then we need to do a lot of practice for the coming concert."

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 60: Lucien in Suit

Translator: Kris_Liu Editor: Vermillion

Although this was not his original plan, Lucien nodded, "No problem, Mr. Victor."

As long as no one would suspect him of being involved with sorcery or heresy stuff, Lucien did not really care if some people would accuse him of plagiarizing.

In many of the religious books in the library, music was compared to a treasure that God gave to people, the most powerful weapon that people had in fighting against all the difficulties. Thus, music was always regarded as a symbol of light and hope, having nothing to do with darkness and evil.

Besides, from the books he read and the conversations among Lott, Felicia and Herodotus, Lucien noticed the barrier between the church and the nobles. Although the nobles still revered God, the idea that religion and government should work separately started emerging in Aalto, the city where the church dominated almost everything..

Therefore, Lucien was pretty sure that the church would not easily suspect a new musician from the association, which had a close relationship with both the nobles and the church.

Lucien's only concern was that he might need to go through security inspection in the future, when being invited to attend concerts or evening parties. However, Lucien believed that if he could be relatively famous, there would be rare or even no security inspection toward him.

Rhine took up a pile of paper and a quill from the desk and handed them to Lucien.

Lucien grabbed the quill. Before he had the chance to write anything down, he suddenly sneezed. His hair was still wet, and several drops of water fell onto the paper.

Victor just noticed that Lucien's clothes were still wet, "You didn't bring an umbrella?"

Felicia's face slightly blushed, since she could see Lucien's fit body underneath his wet shirt.

"I did. But the rain was too heavy. I ran all the way," answered Lucien.

Victor was moved, "Let's find you some dry clothes first, Lucien. I got several suits here. Some of them should fit you well."

"I can do part of the work for you first, " urged Rhine. He took away the quill in Lucien's hand, "Go and change your clothes."

At that moment, Rhine's fingers touched Lucien's hand. Lucien surprisedly noticed that Rhine's hand was even colder than his.

...

In the changing room, Lucian dried his hair and put on Victor's white shirt, black coat, pants and leather shoes. By then he looked brand new—black hair, black eyes. In the mirror stood a good-looking young man.

"Look at you, Lucien! You look really good in this suit!" Victor nodded with satisfaction.

Seeing Lucien in this decent suit, Felicia, Lott and Herodotus felt somehow Lucien looked more reliable now.

Judging a person by one's appearance did not only happen on Earth.

"Lucien, come and check if this part Mr. Rhine just wrote down is correct," asked Victor.

When Lucien passed Lott, the latter said to him in a low voice with his standard, polite smile, "Hope we can exchange our ideas more often in the future."

"Sure," replied Lucien politely as well.

Hearing their conversation, Felicia bit her lips with her white teeth a bit and made a tough decision, "Lucien, you have my apology. I am sorry that I was being really mean to you because of my prejudice. I hope we can get along well and help each other in the future."

Her face blushed again.

Only Herodotus was still standing on the other side, his head lowered and his eyes staring at the feet, without saying anything.

"Not a problem, Felicia." Lucien nodded and then walked toward Rhine and Victor.

...

Three o'clock in the afternoon, Felicia saw that Baron Othello's coach stopped in front of the association building.

Victor looked very pleasant, "Great work, everyone! We are such an efficient group, aren't we? The excitement I felt from the music is still lingering upon my mind. Although the rewriting hasn't been finished yet, the rest of the work is pretty detailed. I feel like it's ready to be registered with the association now. And I don't think changing the list will be a problem either."

Lucien knew that his playing just now was still not very skilled, and thus he believed that it was his emotions infused in his playing that moved his listeners.

Following Victor, Lucien came to one of the rooms on the third floor, where an elder gentleman wearing glasses was sitting there.

"You got your work done, Victor?" asked the elder man.

"Joseph, not me, it's my student, Lucien. We want to get his great work registered," Victor answered and then introduced him to Lucien, "This is Mr. Joseph, a very experienced senior music critic. Mr. Joseph knows most of the music works in the world, including those of other nonhuman species like elf's music. At the same time, Mr. Joseph is also a pastor in training. He can tell if you are plagiarizing or it's really your own work. After that, Mr. Joseph will register your work with a time mark using his pastor power. Any work that comes afterwards which is similar to your work will be regarded as plagiarism."

"How long have you been learning music after Victor?" adjusting his glasses, Joseph asked, "A pretty promising young lad, uh..."

"Well... about... three months." Lucien felt a bit embarrassed.

"You must be kidding me." Joseph's eyes were full of surprise, "Three months?"

"Take a look at it first, please." Victor did not say anything else, but stood there with a smile on his face.

"All right. Let's see what are we looking at here." Joseph felt like it was somewhat a joke.

Soon the smile on Joseph's face was replaced by a serious look. His left hand was beating time when he was humming the music notes, as if he entered into a whole new world, or a fascinating story.

About ten minutes later, with a long sigh, Joseph told Victor with excitement, "What a great work! It reminds me of the years when I was helping the knights fighting against the evil creatures in the Dark Mountain Range. Oh those years, with courage, with faith and with hope..."

"I told you, Joseph." Victor looked proud.

"I... I still cannot believe it. You said it's your student's work... from this young lad?" Joseph's glasses were slanted on his nose.

"Lucien's a young lad who knows about tough life," said Victor. Then he shared some of Lucien's stories with Joseph.

"Well... I guess our association's gonna have another gifted musician then." Joseph was very impressed, but still found it unbelievable. He turned around and said to Lucien, "If you want to further prove yourself, keep working on new music themes. About every two years, you gotta have something new to prove yourself."

"In two years... I would have left Aalto already." Lucien thought to himself, while watching Joseph leaving a time mark with his pastor power on the music sheets.

"Does your work have a name? It's sort of a trend now." Joseph raised his head.

"Fate."

...

After Victor and Lucien finished the registration, they came to the Director's office.

Before entering the office, Victor suddenly smiled.

"I can't wait to see Mr. Othello's reaction to this."

Lucien realized that it had been a couple of months since he last saw this bright smile on Victor's face.