

## **Sixth 391**

### Chapter 391: Reward

Five months passed quickly.

During this period, apart from eating and sleeping, Herag was busy compressing his spiritual power. The liquid spiritual power in his mind had already shrunk a bit.

In those five months, the airship stopped at many cities, staying two to three days at each one.

Except for the stopovers when he could get off and take a walk, Herag spent all his time on the airship.

Silver Beach City is too far from Silver Moon City, located at the southernmost part of the Land of Dawn, and the airship couldn't fly there directly. It takes considerable time stopping at other cities along the way.

Standing on the deck, Herag watched as Silver Moon City came into view, a sense of returning home washed over him.

Back then, Franz activated the witch array, throwing him deep into the pollution zone.

This time, he truly experienced a near-death journey to barely make it back alive.

The airship slowly docked at Silver Moon City's harbor, and Herag could already see Reese from the deck.

He had only told Reese the exact time of his return; others only knew the approximate timing but not exactly when he would arrive.

As soon as Herag stepped off the airship, Reese rushed into his arms.

"It's okay, I'm back," Herag comforted, patting Reese's back.

The harbor of Silver Moon City is located at the northernmost part, and after leaving, the two hailed a carriage to go home.

A few hours later, Herag got off the carriage, looking at the familiar yard and the surroundings of King Street.

It was nighttime, at nightfall, when they reached home.

As soon as Herag and Reese entered the house, they clung to each other closely.

Reese wrapped her arms around Herag's neck, stood on her tiptoes, and kissed him with her soft red lips.

After being apart for so long, the brief separation felt like a fresh honeymoon.

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Early the next morning, Herag looked at the mess in the house, and although he was not satisfied yet, Reese was exhausted, so he let her rest.

Herag was full of energy now, lying there holding Reese, feeling her softness as he closed his eyes and entered a meditative state.

His current plan was to dedicate all his energy to compressing his spiritual power for the foreseeable future, striving to advance to the crystalization wizard stage as soon as possible.

Having experienced a series of events in the pollution zone, Herag deeply sensed his own weakness.

The environment inside the Land of Dawn had left him too comfortable, but the world in the pollution zone was the real world.

There, no one would guarantee your safety, and no one could create a safe environment for you.

Now Herag had only one thought in mind — to become stronger.

He checked the balance on his talisman stone, noting he had 130,000 magic stones, and his space ring contained another 40,000 magic stones.

This amount of magic stones was only enough for a few months of meditation practice at the Wizard Tower, though he no longer needed to practice there every day.

The purpose of meditation practice at the Wizard Tower was mainly to increase the speed of spiritual power growth slightly.

Herag's spiritual power had reached a bottleneck now, unable to grow further until he advanced to the crystalization wizard stage.

Therefore, for daily living, the 30,000 magic stones were more than adequate.

Herag's bloodline mark stored the energy of a divine core, and he wasn't sure if it could be used to complete the compression process of his spiritual power.

Herag meditated until afternoon when Reese finally woke up.

Over the following days, Herag didn't leave the house, staying home with Reese, laboring day and night.

A few days later, Herag finally left the house to find Pries.

During previous communication through the talisman stone, Pries had already informed Herag to see him after returning as there were things to discuss.

Herag took a carriage to the City Hall, observing no changes along the way.

The impacts from the events in the Mozambique Slums had completely vanished; it seemed people had discreetly forgotten about them, as no one talked about it anymore.

Herag alighted from the carriage and walked into City Hall to find Pries.

When Pries noticed someone staring at him, he looked up to see Herag and smiled, "Finally you're back; you really are one lucky guy to come back alive from the pollution zone."

"It was just luck. Had things gone worse, I wouldn't have made it back," Herag replied with a laugh.

Pries walked over and patted Herag's shoulder, aware of how difficult it must have been for Herag to return.

Pries knew well how dangerous the pollution zone was, and even if he were thrown in, he might not make it out.

"Here's a document for you to sign; there's a reward of 1,000 contribution points," Pries said, taking out a parchment from his space ring.

"A thousand contribution points? What kind of reward is this?" Herag asked, surprised.

Contribution points were hard to earn; previously, Herag had earned only 870 contribution points through the exhausting task of catching Abyssal Cultists, 500 of which came from breaking the Wheel of Fortune Witch Array.

Receiving 1,000 contribution points all at once left Herag a bit bewildered.

Pries laughed, "These contribution points are a reward for thwarting Franz's scheme. A thousand points is actually quite low, not matching the contribution you made. If some people weren't blocking it, you'd definitely have gotten more contribution points."

"Someone was blocking it?" Herag was puzzled.

Reflecting, Herag realized he had indeed foiled Franz's plan, resolving a potential threat that nearly saved everyone in Silver Moon City.

Such a significant achievement deserved ample reward, so why was anyone deliberately obstructing it?

Pries explained, "The matter had too big an impact, so it reached our high-level authorities in Serlandir. There were two opinions on how to handle your case, one advocating for a reward, the other for punishment."

"Punishment?" Herag was speechless — who would want to punish him, when he hadn't wronged anyone?

"The ones advocating punishment believed, after the investigation, that your actions were too reckless. A minor mishap might have plunged the entire Silver Moon City into ruin. After a basic reconstruction of the events, it was found that Franz's scheme wasn't something a Level 1 Wizard could prevent. It was probably due to your good luck that you unexpectedly thwarted Franz's plan," Pries explained.

"But after calculations showed your failure probability was extremely high, there was a strong likelihood you'd not only perish but implicate everyone in Silver Moon City," Pries elaborated.

Herag pondered and slowly comprehended.

Back then, Franz nearly activated the witch array, only for the divine core to be absorbed by chance by him.

His ability to absorb the divine core was due solely to the ancestral bloodline power; no other wizard could have stopped Franz.

Therefore, it was understandable that the high-level authorities in Serlandir found his actions reckless and risky, and they didn't want to encourage such reckless behavior.

## Chapter 392: Three Years

Herag said, "But in the end, the outcome is good, so you can't punish me for it."

Pries nodded, "That's right, it's also because of this reason, plus our arguments, that you weren't punished, and even received some rewards. However, because of these factors, the rewards you received are relatively few. A thousand contribution points seem like a lot, but they don't match your actual contribution."

"Of course, the main reason is that when your position suddenly disappeared, we all thought something had happened to you. So naturally, there wouldn't be any punishment, and in any case, you probably wouldn't have gotten those thousand contribution points."

"After all, you sacrificed for Silver Moon City, and at times like these, we definitely can't punish you, or it would chill the hearts of other members."

"Who would've thought, a few months later, you came back on your own."

Herag smiled, picked up a quill, and signed the parchment, fearing that those thousand contribution points might slip away.

If those above wanted to renegotiate, it's likely that those thousand contribution points would be gone, so he signed first.

"Alright, it'll be sent to you later," Pries said as he put away the parchment.

Herag thought for a moment and spoke, "My talisman stone was destroyed by the people from Eye of the Storm."

He thought he should mention these things to Pries, at least to make them aware since it involved another wizard organization.

"Eye of the Storm? I did hear you smuggled over from their Beilu City, Brad mentioned it to me. Tell me more specifically about your experiences in the contaminated area," Pries pondered.

Herag then recounted his experiences in the contaminated area, though he concealed many parts of his experience.

For instance, he didn't mention things like murals and steles; there was no way he could divulge these to anyone.

Herag mainly talked about his encounters with Eye of the Storm's pioneers, how conflicts arose, and how he escaped.

After listening, Pries nodded and said, "I understand, rest assured that now you're back, they can't do anything to you. Even if you killed some of their people, so what, they were the ones who attacked you first."

"I'll report this matter up the chain, and not only will they not punish you, but they'll also definitely reward you. When dealing with external matters, especially when confronting the Eye of the Storm organization, you need to handle it like this."

Serlandir and Eye of the Storm, these wizard organizations, often have many frictions, having had various grievances for a long time.

Herag's small matter is really insignificant, and nobody would question it further.

The two Level 2 Wizards encountered in the contaminated area are uncertain if they're still alive. Herag asked Pries to help keep an eye on the news from over there, so he could be mentally prepared.

In case those two are still alive, he needs to consider the possibility of encountering them again later.

Herag silently remembered these two people, right now he can't beat them, but once he advances to a Level 2 Wizard, it would be a different story.

He and Pries talked for a long time, even having dinner together, before finally heading home.

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Upon returning home, Herag immediately began planning his next steps.

The primary goal is to advance to a Crystalization Wizard, and compressing spiritual power is a lengthy process.

For typical wizards at this stage, it usually takes twenty to thirty years to advance to a Crystalization Wizard, even for those with good aptitude.

For wizards without aptitude, they simply can't complete this step, hence unable to advance as a Crystalization Wizard.

Based on the current progress, Herag estimated he only needs three to four years to complete the compression of spiritual power.

He plans to devote the coming years entirely to the step of advancing to a Crystalization Wizard.

After planning, Herag plunged into a daily routine of practice.

During these days, Herag did nothing but compress spiritual power, eat, and sleep, occasionally going out with Reese.

Reese dutifully took on the role of the mistress, helping with all sorts of mundane affairs, so Herag could focus on his practice wholeheartedly.

In order to avoid unexpected events, Herag didn't take on any tasks and turned down almost all social activities.

Until he advances to a Crystalization Wizard, he doesn't plan to do anything else.

Ironically, Reese is the happiest during this time, as she gets to spend every day with Herag.

Previously, Herag was always busy with various things, spending the least amount of time at home, and hardly had time to accompany Reese.

Herag feels like he's a scholar concentrating on studying at home, and Reese is like the caring wife waiting for him to succeed in the examination.

Sometimes Herag thinks, perhaps living such days continuously isn't bad; the happiness level is quite high.

But reality always drives people forward, and Herag knows he can't indulge in momentary comfort.

To survive longer, there's only the path of becoming stronger until he can fully control his own destiny.

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Three years later.

Herag sat in the center of the room, meditating with his eyes closed, sitting on a soft velvet mat beneath him.

This room was cleared out by Reese, specially prepared as a Meditation Room for Herag.

The Meditation Room was set up with some Witch Arrays to allow Herag to focus on his cultivation, undisturbed by the outside world.

In Herag's mind, the liquid spiritual power was no longer visible, replaced by a jelly-like substance.

This transparent jelly-like substance was light blue, the result of Herag's three-year-long compression of spiritual power.

The original liquid spiritual power gradually transformed into this jelly-like form over three years.

This is the final step in advancing to a Crystalization Wizard; the next step is to refine this jelly mass into a Spiritual Crystal.

Herag entered this stage a year ago, and every time he refines the jelly, a sharp pain would strike his mind.

Whenever the pain comes, a cold sensation comes from the Bloodline Mark, instantly sweeping away the pain from refining, while making the jelly more condensed.

The energy from the Divine Core in the Bloodline Mark seems endless, not yet exhausted even after three years.

Furthermore, Herag feels there's still ample energy stored in the Divine Core, like a vast ocean, virtually inexhaustible.

He's achieved such progress in compressing spiritual power within three years entirely by relying on the energy of the Divine Core; otherwise, the progress would not have been this fast.

The spiritual power has been in a jelly form for a year now, appearing as if it can transform into a crystal at any moment, yet it's still missing something.

Herag didn't become impatient or anxious but continued with the orderly refinement of spiritual power.

### Chapter 393: Advancing to Crystalization

Every time Herag tempered the gel-like Spiritual Power, the shape of the gel-like Spiritual Power would undergo subtle changes.

He now seemed like he was using a sledgehammer, constantly hammering the gel-like Spiritual Power.

For a year, Herag had lost count of how many times he had tempered it, it could be described as a thousand times tempered.

Herag's heart was calm as still water, repeating the tempering actions over and over again, neither hurried nor impatient.

This time was as usual, still repeating the tempering over and over.

But this time, some changes occurred.

After Herag tempered it once, a cold sensation emerged from the Bloodline Mark to his mind, and there was a mutation in the gel-like Spiritual Power.

The gel-like Spiritual Power suddenly began to transform on its own, its surface was continuously pulsating, with some places rippling like the surface of water.

The gel-like Spiritual Power, originally formless, slowly began to develop edges, gradually displaying some structured shapes.

In this process, every transformation of the gel-like Spiritual Power was accompanied by the energy from the Divine Core in the Bloodline Mark, tempering the gel-like Spiritual Power once.

Herag observed the changes in the gel-like Spiritual Power, refraining from acting rashly, allowing it to continue transforming.

This process seemed very long, but in reality, it did not take much time, it was just that in Herag's perception, the process of change seemed extremely prolonged.

Half an hour later, the original gel-like Spiritual Power had completely transformed into a rhomboid crystal.

At the moment the Spiritual Crystal formed, Herag slowly opened his eyes, a beam of brilliance flickering in them.

He observed the Spiritual Crystal in his mind, feeling that this crystal was incredibly solid, a product of highly concentrated Spiritual Power.

From now on, both his meditation speed and casting speed would significantly increase.

Compared to before, Herag now was equivalent to having a particularly powerful engine replaced.

"Shenlan, check my current physical data."

"Herag Merlin: Power 31.6, Agility 31.6, Constitution 33.2, Spirit 75, Magic Power 30%."

The enhancements in power, agility, and constitution were not much, but the increase in Spiritual Power by ten points was quite significant.

However, after advancing to Crystalization Wizard, the increase in Spiritual Power was not the most important; the most critical aspect was enhancing Herag's growth limit.

Herag's Magic Power showed only 30%, not because he used up 70% by tempering the Spiritual Power, as tempering did not consume this much Magic Power.

The 30% display was because Herag's Magic Power container had expanded, but the amount of Magic Power had not changed much, so the percentage became smaller.

Upon advancing to a Crystalization Wizard, he could continue to increase his Spiritual Power through meditation.

At the crystalization stage, theoretically, the growth of Spiritual Power was unlimited.

But in reality, the growth of Spiritual Power became increasingly difficult as it progressed.

Once Spiritual Power reached a certain level, it would enter a phase of extremely slow growth, possibly taking hundreds of years to increase by just one point.

This phase was also known as the bottleneck period of the Crystalization Wizard, during which one might as well give up continuing the growth of Spiritual Power.

Because at this time, attempting to increase Spiritual Power further was very cost-ineffective.

At this moment, it was more sensible to seek the opportunity to advance to a Level 2 Wizard.

Once advanced to a Level 2 Wizard, not only would the bottleneck automatically disappear, but the strength would also greatly improve, it could even be stated that the life tier would have risen.

After feeling the changes brought by advancing to a Crystalization Wizard, Herag then closed his eyes to begin meditation, recovering Magic Power while planning subsequent actions.

Within his body, the Magic Power recovered rapidly, and now the total amount of Magic Power was several times that of before, not to mention he still had two backup Magical Sources, so generally, there would be no shortage of Magic Power.

Herag would continue to meditate subsequently, aiming to reach the bottleneck phase of the Crystalization Wizard as soon as possible.

Next, the more important task was accumulating Contribution Points to exchange for items containing Power of Rules.

Such items were generally referred to as the Key of Rules by Wizards in the Land of Dawn, helping Crystalization Wizards to unlock the door to Rule Power.

Meanwhile, Herag needed to prepare a Second-level Spell, and the Power of Rules required by this spell must match that of the Key of Rules to successfully construct the Spell Model of the Second-level Spell.

The Spiritual Crystal in the mind of a Crystalization Wizard serves as the carrier for the Second-level Spell during the advancement to a Level 2 Wizard.

To advance to a Level 2 Wizard, the constructed Second-level Spell Model must be placed inside the Spiritual Crystal, unlike the previous Level 1 and Level 0 Spell Models that were directly placed in the mind.

Because at that time, the Crystalization Wizard had not yet advanced to Level 2, and the body did not have the capacity to control Rule Power.

If the Second-level Spell's Spell Model were directly placed in the mind, the only end would be the mind exploding due to the inability to withstand Rule Power.

But the Spiritual Crystal in the mind of a Crystalization Wizard is extremely solid, possessing an incredibly stable structure capable of carrying the Spell Model of the Second-level Spell.

Once the Spell Model of a Second-level Spell has been successfully constructed in the Spiritual Crystal, it opens the door of the body to Rule Power, completing the process of advancing to a Level 2 Wizard.

Upon advancing to a Level 2 Wizard, naturally, one could place the Spell Model of the Second-level Spell in the mind.

At that time, Wizards would have truly elevated to another tier of life, capable of perceiving and using some Rule Power, no longer ordinary people unable to perceive the existence of Rule Power.

To Wizards, whether they could use Rule Power was a qualitative transformation point.

Herag had a profound understanding of this; at the time, trapped by a Second-level Wizard's magic, the Eye of the Storm, he was utterly incapable of escaping.

Even if he could inflict a little damage to the cage with the World Tree Bow, relying on the World Tree Bow to completely destroy the cage was virtually impossible.

Because the opponent would not just watch him slowly destroy the cage; if the Incinerator had not suddenly appeared, he would have already died.

Rule Power is the watershed between a Level 1 Wizard and a Level 2 Wizard, with a world of difference in strength, entirely different tiers.

Next, what Herag needed to consider was first finding a suitable Second-level Spell, then finding the corresponding Key of Rules for it.

The Second-level Spell and the Key of Rules must match; you can't choose a Second-level Spell for the Earth Element and use a Key of Rules for the Fire Element, as that would be entirely useless.

This was relatively manageable in the Land of Dawn, with Herag backed by the Wizard Organization, Serlandir, there was always a chance to find a matched set of these two items.

But if it were in the Barren Land, this step would be as difficult as reaching the sky, potentially leading all Crystalization Wizards to despair.

Because in the Barren Land, even if Crystalization Wizards could acquire a Second-level Spell, finding a Key of Rules perfectly matching it would be exceedingly difficult.

#### Chapter 394: Key of Rules

Second-level Spells are relatively easier to obtain; in the Land of Dawn, there are no strict restrictions in this area, and oftentimes, it can't be completely restricted.

Magic belongs to the realm of knowledge, so spreading it is relatively easier, hence there are no strict restrictions.

Anyway, even if you obtain a Second-level Spell, you need to have the ability to learn it.

However, the Key of Rules is an individual entity, with very few in number, making it easy to control.

Even in the Land of Dawn, a Key of Rules is an extremely precious item and is hard to reach the Barren Lands.

Hence, for so many years, there have been no Level 2 Wizards emerging from the Barren Lands.

Even if there were, it was only after reaching the Land of Dawn that they became Level 2 Wizards.

Herag thought about it, for him, the Key of Rules could be obtained through channels on Serlandir's side.

As long as the historical Contribution Points reach three thousand, he has the eligibility to apply for a Key of Rules, and then it will depend on whether the review passes.

Herag felt that the current probability of approval would be low because he is not yet very experienced, and may not pass.

However, there is no need to rush; Herag glanced at the Talisman Stone, the current historical Contribution Points are 1870, with remaining points at 1600.

He still lacks over a thousand points to meet the minimum requirement to apply for a Key of Rules, which needs time to accumulate.

Moreover, Herag cannot advance to a Level 2 Wizard in a short time, he has just advanced to Crystalization Wizard and still requires a long period of Spiritual Power accumulation.

One cannot be hasty, rashly advancing to a Level 2 Wizard.

Because in the process of advancing to a Level 2 Wizard, the strength of the Spiritual Crystal is very crucial.

If the Spiritual Crystal's strength is insufficient, it is quite possible to shatter because it can't withstand the Spell Model of a Second-level Spell.

Once the Spiritual Crystal shatters, even if you don't die, you can no longer be a Wizard.

For someone about to advance to a Level 2 Wizard, becoming an ordinary person is undoubtedly the cruellest event in the world.

Thus, the stage of being a Crystalization Wizard is particularly important, a Wizard must ensure their Spiritual Crystal is as strong as possible.

Most Crystalization Wizards push their Spiritual Power to its limits before attempting to advance to a Level 2 Wizard.

Because this opportunity comes only once in a lifetime, they can only succeed, not fail; failure would be an irreversible disaster.

Therefore, the vast majority of Crystalization Wizards are extremely cautious about advancing.

Naturally, Herag is the same, he is determined to cultivate his Spiritual Power to the extreme before attempting to advance to a Level 2 Wizard.

Though slower, it is steadier.

He very much desires to become strong quickly, but he also understands the principle of "too much haste, less speed," and that these matters cannot be handled recklessly.

Herag observed the newly formed Spiritual Crystal in his mind, knowing there is still a long way to its limit, so he is not anxious.

Herag then considered the second issue, which is choosing which Second-level Spell to use during the advancement.

Second-level Spells have many types and are numerous.

Herag doesn't have to worry about obtaining Second-level Spells, he can exchange for them from Serlandir's Secret Vault or purchase them from other places in the Land of Dawn.

As long as he has enough Magic Stones, there's no worry about not being able to buy Second-level Spells.

Herag needs to consider what type of Second-level Spell to choose.

Normally, most Crystalization Wizards choose Second-level Spells corresponding to their specialization.

Unless their specialization Spell type is particularly obscure, they would choose other types of Spells.

Because specializing in a Spell means you have a high affinity with that category of Energy Particles and can more easily sense the corresponding Power of Rules.

But Herag currently does not have this restriction; he was originally specialized in Dark Energy Element.

After absorbing the Royal Elf Bloodline, he directly became specialized in Full Element Mastery, able to quickly learn and master all types of Spells.

Herag thought, Time Type and Spatial Type Spells are certainly the optimal choices.

Generally, no Wizards choose these two categories of Spells mainly because these two categories of Second-level Spells are extremely rare, especially Time Type Spells, which are very scarce.

Additionally, very few people are specialized in Time and Space Elements, as these two categories belong to particularly rare attributes; most people have conventional attributes.

Lastly, because any Magic involving time and space is inherently complex and difficult to master.

Correspondingly, Time and Space Rules are also the hardest to fully understand, and difficult to sense.

Most people prefer a safe advancement to Level 2 Wizard, and choosing Space, Time Type is too adventurous.

Herag thought about it and decided not to pursue these two categories of Spells, indeed the risks are too high.

Even if he wants to learn the corresponding Spells, he can completely wait until after advancing to Level 2 Wizard to gradually study them, there's no need to choose such Spells during advancement to increase the difficulty.

While pondering, Herag suddenly opened his eyes and glanced at the Space Ring.

He remembered that in the Space Ring, there were two Stone Slabs, the contents of the second slab he couldn't currently read with his Spiritual Power, it was at least a Second-level Spell.

Herag suddenly thought if the first Stone Slab records the Great Dark Heaven, a Level 1 Spell with a very high ceiling, then the Spell on the second Stone Slab must also be substantial.

If possible, it might be worth trying to analyze the Spell on the second Stone Slab, and if suitable, it could be solidified into the Spiritual Crystal as a Spell.

Solidified Spells within the Spiritual Crystal are similar to Talent Spells, they do not require Magic Power or incantations and can also be seen as a form of Talent Spell.

Herag then took out the large Stone Slab; the room's ceiling height was sufficient to accommodate it.

He did not look at the contents of the second Stone Slab, as gazing too long at such things could damage Spiritual Power.

"Shenlan, if we analyze the contents of this Stone Slab at a daily Magic Power consumption rate of 30%, how long will it take?" Herag asked.

"Analyzing and calculating..."

"Estimated to require 397 days."

"Over a year..." Herag pondered for a moment and then instructed Shenlan to commence the analysis of the Stone Slab's contents.

This time estimate is based on a daily Magic Power consumption of 30%, but actually, it doesn't need to take this long.

Because when staying at home without any errands, more Magic Power can be spent to accelerate the analysis speed.

Of course, when something comes up, to preserve one's state, the consumption should be about 30%, or the analysis could be paused altogether.

There's no rush with analyzing the Stone Slab, it shouldn't interfere with normal daily life.

After having Shenlan start the analysis, Herag stored the Stone Slab back away, it couldn't be seen by others.

Chapter 395: Salary Increase

Herag took out a Talisman Stone and sent a message to Pries: "I've been promoted to Crystalization Wizard."

He remembered that after being promoted to Crystalization Wizard, the benefits seemed to improve a bit.

Herag's current monthly salary was a thousand Magic Stones, which was determined based on his strength when he first came to Silver Moon City.

As long as there is a breakthrough in promotion, the salary will increase a bit, though for Herag it's just a drop in the bucket, it's better than nothing.

"You've been promoted to Crystalization Wizard?" On the other side of the Talisman Stone, Pries was a bit shocked to see this message.

If he didn't know Herag, he would have thought he was joking with him.

Pries knew that for the past two years, Herag had been meditating at home, never leaving Silver Moon City, and not receiving any tasks.

He originally thought Herag wanted to rest for a few years, after all, he had just returned from a life-and-death experience in a polluted area.

For a Wizard, three years is a very short period of time, and resting for a few years is common.

Pries didn't expect that these past few years, Herag had been wholeheartedly compressing his Spiritual Power, and didn't expect him to ascend to Crystalization Wizard so quickly.

In his view, it would take Herag at least twenty or thirty years to be promoted to Crystalization Wizard, and that would be considered fast.

"Just lucky." Herag replied.

"..."

Pries: "You think I haven't been promoted to Crystalization Wizard, that this can be luck?"

Which Crystalization Wizard has not been through the grinding process of compressing Liquid Spiritual Power bit by bit until they finally succeed.

Herag laughed: "I heard that after being promoted to Crystalization Wizard, there are better benefits?"

"What's there to think about such benefits, even a Crystalization Wizard only gets about fifteen hundred Magic Stones a month. Rather than caring about these, you should think about how to earn more Contribution Points to prepare for promotion to a Level 2 Wizard." Pries said.

"That's so stingy, only an extra five hundred Magic Stones for a Crystalization Wizard." Herag complained.

"With so many Wizards in Serlandir, if that kind of basic benefit was high, who could afford it?" Pries said.

Serlandir, being a large Wizard Organization, has countless Wizards beneath it.

The fifteen hundred Magic Stones Herag receives are without any conditions, as long as you're alive, you'll have it.

So if you want to do nothing, then at least you'll still have fifteen hundred Magic Stones per month, though very few Wizards choose to do nothing.

When the numbers add up, these expenses become a very large sum.

Herag naturally wasn't bothered about this small amount of Magic Stones, he was just informing Pries that he had been promoted.

For a Wizard Organization like Serlandir, there are too many internal personnel.

With so many people, resources are limited and will only be prioritized for distribution to more excellent members.

If Herag kept quiet, he wouldn't receive the appropriate resources, which would slow down his speed of promotion instead.

There are many forms of resources, and various opportunities are also a form of resource.

Herag responded: "I'm also worried about the Contribution Points, if you have any good opportunities, don't forget me."

"Don't worry, if there are any good tasks or such, I'll definitely let you know." Pries said.

The fact that Herag could be promoted to Crystalization Wizard so quickly already indicates his potential.

For a Wizard Organization like Serlandir, they don't care how you improve, as long as your final results are excellent enough, they'll naturally pay more attention to you.

Herag asked: "How many Contribution Points are generally needed to exchange for the Key of Rules?"

He wanted to understand the specific price, three thousand Contribution Points is just a threshold requirement, but the specific amount needed for exchange is still unclear.

Pries answered: "It's not definite, the prices of different types of Keys of Rules are different, and they even vary at different times. But you should at least prepare four or five thousand Contribution Points, and also see if the approval goes through."

"Are there standards or requirements for the approval?" Herag asked.

"The approval mainly checks if there's anything suspicious about you, to prevent you from being an Abyssal Cultist or an undercover from another force. It also checks what contributions you've made to Serlandir, which is very important."

"Generally speaking, if you've made some particularly outstanding contributions, there shouldn't be any problems." Pries explained.

Herag asked: "What counts as particularly outstanding contributions?"

"It's hard to say, there's no standard, generally it means doing something very important for Serlandir." Pries said.

After hearing this, Herag felt he likely didn't have much of a chance since with his current capability, he couldn't accomplish too many things, after all, he's only a Level 1 Crystalization Wizard.

"When you have time, go to the City Hall to register, it'll make it easier to improve your benefits." Pries mentioned lastly.

After chatting with Pries, Herag began to think about how to earn Contribution Points.

Up till now, his Contribution Points were mainly obtained through dealings with Abyssal Cultists, other methods were too slow.

The majority of Serlandir members aren't as quick in promotion as Herag is, for them, obtaining Contribution Points through various daily methods is usually enough when it's time to promote to Level 2 Wizard.

Herag's promotion speed is too fast, causing his Contribution Points to fall short completely compared to his rate of promotion, making it seem so scarce.

Herag sighed, there was no rushing these matters, better to steadily engage in Meditation Practice first.

Abyssal Cultists aren't encountered every day, being anxious wouldn't help either.

Herag walked out of the Meditation Room and found Reese wearing an apron cooking in the kitchen, bending over to check the soup in the pot.

Recently, she learned all sorts of culinary skills, specifically to prepare meals for Herag.

Reese was a young lady of the Cheqi Family, who had never done these things, and now she learned entirely for Herag.

Herag walked over, hugged Reese from behind, and softly said: "I've been promoted to Crystalization Wizard."

Reese's spoon dropped into the pot, and she turned back amazed: "Promoted?"

Herag never mentioned to her about his progress, so Reese didn't know when he could be promoted to Crystalization Wizard.

In Reese's understanding, it would take many years to be promoted to Crystalization Wizard.

In the Cheqi Family, there are also Crystalization Wizards, but without exception, each of them is over a hundred years old, some even two to three hundred years old.

Herag is now only twenty-four, too young.

A Crystalization Wizard in their early twenties is absolutely extraordinary in the Barren Land.

In the Land of Dawn, although not as prominent, he's still definitely considered as a genius.

The genius characters from various Wizard Organizations in the Land of Dawn have various supports from behind since childhood, allowing them to be promoted to Crystalization Wizard in their twenties or even promote to Level 2 Wizard.

But they have extraordinary conditions and also excellent talents to achieve such accomplishments.

And for Herag, coming from the Barren Land, it's extremely challenging to achieve this.

Chapter 396: News of David

In Reese's view, although Herag had exceptional talent, it would still take him decades to become a Crystalization Wizard.

She hadn't even considered that during these three years, Herag was aiming to become a Crystalization Wizard, she just thought he was meditating in seclusion.

So when she heard Herag say he advanced to a Crystalization Wizard, Reese was so unexpectedly surprised.

Holding her, Herag laughed and said, "What's so unusual about that? I will eventually become a Level 2 Wizard. By then, with greater strength, I can better control my own destiny."

Reese was delighted and kissed Herag again and again, but then she suddenly thought of something, and her expression became somewhat melancholy.

"What's wrong?" Herag noticed her change in expression and asked.

"You're progressing too fast..." Reese said with a melancholic expression.

Herag looked puzzled: "How am I fast? You should know very well whether I'm fast or not."

Reese chuckled, giving Herag a light punch: "Where is your mind wandering? I mean your progress is too fast, I feel that in this lifetime, I can never keep up with your pace. As you continue to move forward, the distance between us will only grow farther."

Herag was momentarily speechless, if he continued to ascend to higher levels, it would indeed increase the distance from people like Reese who were around him.

In the end, it's very likely they would no longer be on the same level of life, even holding each other like this could no longer be possible.

Not to mention, once he advanced to a certain level, his lifespan would grow longer, but the people around him would only age and not have such a long life.

In the current situation, many years later, it would likely just be him continuing on alone.

Reese clearly thought of this, knowing that she probably couldn't accompany Herag through his entire life, which is why she was so saddened.

Tears slipped down Reese's face as she leaned against Herag's chest, "It's okay, I've figured it out. I may not accompany you through your whole life, but I can use my whole life to accompany you, as long as you don't mind me getting old."

Feeling the dampness on his chest, Herag embraced the soft Reese in his arms and said, "Don't overthink it, once I grow stronger, I'll naturally find a way to solve these problems."

This issue seems unsolvable for now, but Herag believed that while it might appear to be a difficult normalcy for others, it might not be the case for him.

As long as Herag progresses quickly enough, there's a chance that he could at least let those around him live longer.

He's only twenty-four now, the road ahead is long, and time is plentiful.

They tightly embraced each other, deeply moved, leading to another intense session.

...

A month later.

During this time, Herag practiced meditation daily at the Wizard Tower, with the main goal of stabilizing his newly advanced spiritual power and adjusting his state.

He utilized this time to gradually stabilize his spiritual power, which was no longer fluctuating and unstable as when he had just advanced.

The stability of spiritual power is extremely important for a wizard, as it determines whether the wizard's routine casting, spell model construction, and magic potion experiments can be carried out stably.

It seemed like a minor point, yet it's actually extremely significant.

On this day, as usual, Herag exited the Wizard Tower and was walking down King Street, on his way home.

From a distance away from home, he spotted a middle-aged man with a round face wearing a black top hat, who had just alighted from a carriage and was looking toward Herag's house.

"Is there anything you need?" Herag asked upon approaching, not recognizing the man before him.

The round-faced man glanced back at Herag, then politely smiled and asked, "Are you Mr. Herag Merlin?"

"That's me, how can I help you?" Herag replied.

"Oh, oh, hello Mr. Herag. My name is Toby, and I'm the vice president of the East Source Commerce Association. I specifically came to find you because there's something I need to tell you, and I thought you should be informed." Toby said with a somewhat complex expression.

"East Source Commerce Association?"

Herag thought for a moment and remembered what kind of association it was.

Back when David left Silver Moon City to scout future trade routes for the Cheqi Family, he had joined this East Source Commerce Association.

The East Source Commerce Association was considered a relatively large commercial organization, with businesses spread throughout the Land of Dawn.

For David to join this association was surely a good thing, as working with them for some time would give him a rough understanding of the Land of Dawn and allow him to accumulate resources and connections.

But now that the vice president of the East Source Commerce Association had come specifically to find him, it could only be about David. Could something have happened to David?

Herag immediately asked, "Did something happen to David?"

Toby hesitated, not knowing how to say it, and sighed: "Mr. Herag, I'm sorry. We did not take good care of him. Some time ago, while he was working with one of the association's trade caravans outside the Crystal City, they were attacked by Abyssal Cultists."

"Many people from the association were either killed or scattered, and now most are in polluted areas, with their fates unknown. You know how dangerous those places in the polluted areas are, so their situation is probably not very good."

Herag promptly asked, "Tell me the details."

Toby nodded and recounted the events in detail.

At the time, when the airship was still some distance from Crystal City, an attack by Abyssal Cultists suddenly occurred inside, causing the entire airship to crash into the polluted area.

Those with stronger abilities, or who were luckier, had already escaped to Crystal City.

However, many were still in the polluted area, with their fates uncertain.

Although the East Source Commerce Association had a broad business network, they didn't have the capability to go into the polluted area and retrieve everyone.

Moreover, for a business-oriented association like the East Source Commerce Association, the price to retrieve everyone was too high.

Those in the polluted area were just ordinary association members and didn't have the status that warranted a necessary rescue.

So whether those members in the polluted area could return alive was entirely up to their own fate.

Toby came specifically to inform Herag because Herag is an official member of Serlandir and the records showed David was Herag's follower.

Because of this relationship, Toby came to inform Herag, so he wouldn't be in the dark.

After hearing, Herag silently contemplated something.

At that moment, Reese had also come out, and she had already heard the news, with tears at the corners of her eyes.

She knew how extremely dangerous the polluted area was; Herag had narrowly escaped death there, so with David's abilities, it was likely he wouldn't return.

Reese had always been grateful to David, her cousin, for taking care of her and always accommodating her since childhood.

Chapter 397: Departure

"With such a major incident like the airship crash, didn't Serlandir send people to rescue?" Herag asked.

He had been in seclusion for training recently, and hadn't been keeping up with events elsewhere.

Crystal City is located in the eastern part of Serlandir and is quite a sizable city.

Toby said, "Serlandir rushed to rescue as soon as they heard; those who could be saved were saved. However, abyssal creatures appeared on the airship at that time, and many people scattered trying to escape. Those scattered across the polluted areas couldn't be rescued and had to rely on themselves to make it back."

An airship crash is certainly a big deal, and Serlandir sent people to rescue right after hearing the news.

However, by the time they arrived, aside from some abyssal creatures and a few survivors near the airship, there weren't many people left.

Most of the surviving individuals fled to various parts of the polluted area to avoid attacks by the abyssal creatures.

This made things difficult for Serlandir as well; they had no way to rescue those scattered everywhere.

The cost would be too high, and sending people to rescue was already fulfilling their basic obligation.

Those scattered across the polluted areas had to rely on themselves, or various factions could send their own people to rescue them.

Serlandir was only responsible for handling matters near the airship; beyond that, they couldn't do much.

"When did this happen?" Herag asked.

"It was last night. After I received the message from David, I hurried over to contact you. Recently, I happened to be managing business around Silver Moon City," Toby replied.

After a moment of contemplation, Herag said, "Mr. Toby, could you send me more detailed information? I'm planning to head to Crystal City tomorrow to look for David."

"Herag..." Reese couldn't help but grab Herag.

She hoped for David's safety but didn't want to see Herag risking himself in the polluted area.

Herag held her hand and smiled, "Don't worry. The polluted area inside the Land of Dawn isn't as dangerous as the ones outside. My experiences are rather rich, at least I can ensure my safety."

"Besides, if I don't go to save David, no one in the Land of Dawn will care about his life or death."

Herag always acted cautiously, but this time he decided to take a risk.

Considering their relationship, the Cheqi Family had helped him so much along the way, he felt obligated to go once.

From Mr. Larry's various helps at the beginning to the later opportunity to visit the Elf Plane, all were given by the Cheqi Family.

Without their assistance, Herag wouldn't have come this far, at least not so fast or so easily.

Moreover, David was a decent person, and Herag always found him quite satisfactory.

Although he spoke little and was reserved, he always worked without complaint or fatigue.

Herag brought David and Reese to the Land of Dawn naturally hoping they would improve.

Now knowing David's life was uncertain in the polluted area, Herag was aware of the risk but would still go.

Just as Herag said, only he could go to save David in the Land of Dawn.

"I'll go with you," Reese said.

Herag shook his head, "You stay at home. The polluted area isn't about having more people to solve problems. I can handle many situations flexibly on my own, trust me."

Reese was still a bit uneasy, but Herag reassured her with some persuasion.

Eventually, Reese stopped insisting on going; she didn't want to be a burden to Herag.

"I can help Mr. Herag contact a small airship; it's the airship of our East Source Commerce Association," Toby said, admiring Herag's courage and volunteering to assist.

"Then please, Mr. Toby," Herag thanked.

...

Toby efficiently contacted the airship of East Source Commerce Association to approach Silver Moon City, expected to arrive at Silver Moon City pier in a few hours.

Herag took this time to learn more about the details of the airship crash near Crystal City.

Crystal City isn't far from Silver Moon City; it's about a six-day trip by airship.

Usually, six days isn't long, but right now it feels a bit prolonged.

However, there's no choice as the airship is the fastest form of transportation.

After some simple preparations at his home, Herag left to go to the Silver Moon City pier with Toby.

While at home, through the channels of Pries, he had obtained detailed information about the airship crash incident near Crystal City, confirming that what Toby said was indeed true.

For safety's sake, Herag also asked Pries to help check the crew's list from that airship; David was indeed on it and remains missing.

He did this to guard against any ulterior motives Toby might have, as they weren't well-acquainted, and he couldn't fully trust Toby.

But the information channels from Pries are reliable enough.

Herag informed Pries of his situation here, though Pries couldn't spare any manpower at the moment to help Herag with this personal matter.

Herag didn't intend for Pries to send anyone to help, he just wanted to inform him of the situation.

The pier in the northern part of Silver Moon City was a bit quiet since it was already late at night.

Airship arrivals usually occur from dawn until shortly after dusk, generally not opting to arrive at a city deep in the night.

Due to the loud noise of airships, landing in the middle of the night is too disruptive to residents.

However, the airship of East Source Commerce Association is a small one, with much less noise, and arriving at the pier at night causes less noise pollution.

Herag arrived at the pier and saw the airship parked in the pier square.

This airship looked like a regular three-layered ship, but its internal and external structures were quite different.

Small airships don't have open decks and have a much smaller internal space.

The airship had five people in total, all members of the East Source Commerce Association, responsible for the airship's daily operations.

Toby followed Herag aboard the airship; he also needed to handle some related matters at Crystal City.

Once the two boarded the airship, it immediately took off, heading toward Crystal City.

The interior decoration of the airship was very luxurious; the space was small, with few seating, but it wasn't meant for ordinary people.

This kind of private airship is prepared for those with wealth and status.

After a brief conversation with Toby, Herag returned to the room assigned to him, entering a state of meditation.

While meditating, he planned his next steps; Herag knew well the dangers in the polluted area.

Though the internal polluted area in the Land of Dawn is relatively safer, he must still remain vigilant.

A map flashed in his mind; it's a rough terrain map of the polluted area outside Crystal City.

#### Chapter 398: Airship Ruins

During the airship's flight, Herag not only continuously monitored the actions of others on the airship but also paid attention to the flight's direction and distance.

So far, everyone else behaved normally without needing special attention.

The flight direction of the airship was also fine; the route was the usual flight route.

Any slight change in route would immediately alert Herag.

Being on an airship is akin to being inside another isolated space.

No one else had gained enough trust, so one had to be extremely cautious not to be led into a trap.

On the sixth day, the East Source Commerce Association's airship was about to arrive at the location outside Crystal City where the airship crashed.

"Is it over there?" Standing by the window, Herag gazed at the airship wreckage on the ground ahead, deep in thought.

Toby, standing nearby, nodded and said, "Yes, Mr. Herag."

Ahead on the ground, a massive airship was completely broken in half and lying on the ground, clearly exposing its internal structure.

Judging from the various burn marks, a huge fire must have broken out on the airship, followed by some tremendous force snapping it in half.

This type of airship was a behemoth; Herag found it hard to imagine what kind of power could achieve such feats.

From the data, it was revealed that Abyssal Cultists on the airship summoned a gigantic demon.

The demon not only broke the airship but also claimed many lives.

For wizards, merely falling from the airship was not fatal.

The Feather Fall Technique was just a Level 0 Spell; for wizards, it was a survival skill akin to swimming, and most wizards could perform it.

However, the death count discovered from this airship crash already reached over six hundred, with countless injuries.

The massive casualties were primarily caused by the summoned demon.

Fortunately, Serlandir members from Crystal City reacted quickly and rushed to the scene to eliminate the demon.

Besides the demon, two young men were also killed, both of whom were Abyssal Cultists.

However, an old man escaped, and he was the mastermind.

Serlandir couldn't capture him at that time, and he fled into the pollution zone, where they lost his track.

During the attack, many wizards fled into the pollution zone to evade the demon's attack.

These past few days, some managed to return to Crystal City, but most remained missing.

Without sufficient experience, it's challenging to return from the pollution zone.

Direction orientation alone was an issue, as it was difficult to determine direction within the pollution zone.

"Let's land here; I'll disembark here," said Herag.

Toby nodded and instructed the operation of the airship to slow down and gradually descend.

Once the airship touched the ground, Herag left without looking back.

"Be careful, Mr. Herag!" Toby shouted from behind.

Herag waved his hand, indicating he understood.

The airship took off again, heading towards Crystal City after dropping him off.

They dared not linger in this area and hurriedly left.

Herag first inspected the airship's wreckage, which was now deserted.

Debris from the airship was scattered everywhere, and the ground was gouged out with a massive pit.

Parts that could have been salvaged from the wreck had been collected by Serlandir, leaving nothing of use behind.

Those remnants were difficult to handle and were left there abandoned.

In the coming years, this airship wreck might become a landmark of sorts.

The bodies from inside the airship had been removed and dealt with, as it was common sense not to leave corpses in the pollution zone.

The demon's carcass was also removed for research, leaving behind only traces of huge claw marks on the scene.

Although Herag had not seen the demon, he could sense faint traces of Abyss Plane's aura on the wreckage.

Despite the passage of many days, this aura still lingered over the wreckage.

Herag recalled the wooden carving with the insect he had once found on the airship, which had undergone some changes, swelling and enlarging.

At that time, to avoid trouble, he let out a bit of aura to intimidate the red insect.

In the end, he crushed the red insect, and to this day, he still didn't know what might have happened if it had continued to transform; perhaps a tragedy like this would have occurred.

Herag circled the airship wreck but found no valuable clues.

His goal was to find the missing David; even if he was dead, he wanted to bring his body back for burial.

Currently, David's status was unknown, and the surrounding land was a vast expanse of blackness, making the direction of the search crucial.

If the direction was wrong from the start, it would waste a lot of time, and the chance of David being alive would decrease significantly.

Herag stood in place, contemplating for a moment when the corner of his eye glimpsed a withered potted plant, sparking an idea.

He quickly approached the pot, which contained a Lu Luo plant.

However, the Lu Luo plant was now almost entirely withered, with all its leaves turned yellow.

This was the result of its life energy being absorbed by the desolate pollution.

The black earth had developed this life-energy absorbing trait after the desolation pollution.

Wizards could move freely in the pollution zone because their bodies were fortified by energy particles, allowing resistance to the desolation pollution effects of the land.

If an ordinary person entered this place, they would slowly die due to loss of life energy, even if they faced no other dangers.

Lu Luo plants entering the pollution zone would perish quickly if not protected.

About seven days had passed since the airship crash, and the Lu Luo plant seemed completely dead.

Herag placed his hand on it and, with his innate elfin blood that naturally attunes to nature, sensed the Lu Luo plant wasn't entirely dead yet.

He quickly pulled out some Magic Potion Nutrient Liquid from his space ring, designed to aid the growth and cultivation of plants.

Herag poured a little of the magic potion into the pot, and it quickly seeped into the soil and the roots of the Lu Luo.

He sensed a slight increase in the Lu Luo's life energy but knew it was only temporary.

The Lu Luo was severely polluted and could only hold on for a little longer.

Herag went to these lengths hoping to glean any clues through All Things Have Spirit from the Lu Luo.

He immediately performed All Things Have Spirit on the Lu Luo, perceiving events from a few days ago through its perspective.

Chapter 399: The Scene

Corridor, lady in black stockings, enormous red claws, flames...

Through Lu Luo's perspective, Herag saw various scene fragments from a few days ago.

This is a unique spell method of the Elf Race, allowing communication with nature.

The scenes are fragmented and cannot form a continuous process.

Herag didn't miss a single fragment, carefully observing each fleeting scene.

He gathered a lot of information from these fragments and roughly deduced the situation back then.

Although he didn't find David's figure in the images, he knew the general direction of the crowd's escape.

From these scenes, it seemed that the majority of people were running south.

Because to the north was the area where that red demon was, people were forced to move away, so they headed south, with some shadows running to the sides.

However, the number of people running to the sides was much smaller, with the vast majority heading south.

To the south, there were no cities, only a vast area bordering the endless pollution zone.

After organizing the picture fragments, Herag analyzed them and decided to head south.

Since there was no sign of David's body at the scene, the probability of David escaping south with the crowd was relatively high.

"Titan Power."

Once Herag decided on the direction, he immediately shifted into Titan Power form, ensuring sufficient combat strength to handle any unexpected situation.

Since advancing to the Crystalization Wizard phase, due to increased spiritual power and the existence of spiritual crystals, the intensity of various spells has slightly improved.

The amplification of Titan Power naturally increased accordingly, as its essence still remains a spell.

Standing over four meters tall, Herag looked ahead, launched himself like an arrow, and sprinted away.

He took out the Feather of Flight from the Space Ring and pressed it against the back of his hand, ready to activate it at any moment.

Herag extended Shenlan's environmental detection and proceeded at extreme speed toward the south through the pollution zone.

Having covered roughly two kilometers, Herag saw a corpse.

It was a female wizard with a voluptuous body, indicating she must have been a beauty when alive.

However, she had since become a corpse, with a clearly large wound on her neck.

Such a wound was obviously not caused by cold weapons but rather by a spell similar to a wind blade, as the marks on the cut differed entirely from those made by cold weapons.

This person was killed by another wizard.

Herag speculated there must have been a grudge; otherwise, normally, people wouldn't think of killing others while fleeing for their lives.

There must have been an existing vendetta, initiating the attack in this opportune location.

The skin on many parts of the corpse's surface had turned black, resembling the blackness on the surface of a crafter.

Herag knew that if the corpse were left unchecked, a new Crawler would soon emerge.

With magic power converging in his hand, he cast a Fireball Technique over the body, entirely burning it away.

The lady probably wouldn't want to become an ugly Crawler after death, and this was all Herag could do.

Purifying the environment is everyone's responsibility.

After handling the soon-to-transform corpse, Herag quickened his pace and continued exploring.

He felt that David's situation might not be good.

The pollution zone was already hazardous, and now he had to be wary of threats from others.

With so many people fleeing in that direction, and all being wizards, none would be easy to deal with.

When food, water, and other resources become scarce, disputes are bound to occur.

Herag knew very well that in the pollution zone, it's almost impossible to find sources of food and water, relying primarily on pre-stored resources.

Because Herag had always been cautious, he had ample supplies stored in his Space Ring, allowing him to persist in the pollution zone for a while.

However, it may not be the same for those on the airship, as few, if any, prepare such supplies in their Space Rings.

Space Rings are expensive; the larger the space, the costlier it is, and most people use theirs with restraint.

...

It's the ninth day after the airship accident, and David is hiding in a pile of rubble, chewing on a piece of smoked meat from his Space Ring, and sipping some water to lubricate his throat.

There's still a lot of food, enough to last for months.

The only concern is the water supply, which is only enough for a month.

David didn't dare to drink excessively, only taking sips when extremely thirsty.

He's unsure when he'll be able to get out, or if he'll be able to get out at all.

So water needs to be used sparingly to last longer.

David learned to stockpile such food and water from Herag.

He didn't previously understand why Herag always carried so many supplies, but now he realized it was being prepared for unforeseen events.

Though David didn't understand this principle before, he thought Herag was impressive, with talent and intelligence, and knew it was never wrong to learn from smart people.

So when David went into business, he followed suit, storing plenty of supplies in his Space Ring.

Unexpectedly, it really became useful one day, even becoming a critical survival moment.

As David watched the sky darken completely, he realized he was entering another pitch-black night.

He figured that this time, he was likely not going back.

Having run far away in panic, he had lost any sense of direction when he finally stopped.

In this place, even the sense of direction is disrupted, making it difficult to pinpoint accurately.

David took out a Talisman Stone, and upon activation, found magic net usage still unavailable.

His only regret was not transferring the magic stones and gold coins he'd earned over the years to Herag and Reese promptly.

If he just dies like this, wouldn't that money go to waste?

Leaving it to Herag could enable him to acquire more resources and become stronger, thus benefitting the Cheqi Family.

Leaving it to Reese could let her buy more of what she wanted. With Herag around, she's probably not lacking in funds.

Either way, it would be better than letting it go to waste.

David speculated if Serlandir's bank could directly declare him dead and transfer the money out instead.

He sighed; though he still feared death somewhat, he wasn't so afraid anymore.

When David initially decided to go into business, he had already anticipated this day might come.

But after working for a few years, it seemed he hadn't achieved much or created much value.

David started feeling a bit drowsy and weary, but he knew he couldn't sleep.

The pollution zone was very dangerous, especially at night.

He had narrowly escaped death several times recently and even once used the Fire Salamander Bomb to explode at close range between himself and a demon to save his life.

Although David got injured and broke some bones, the demon died, and he survived.

Chapter 400: Sacrifice

David survived many dangers thanks to the Fire Salamander Bombs crafted by Herag.

These things pack a punch, are easy to use, and allow David, who is just a Gaseous Wizard, to unleash attacks at the Crystalization Wizard's Level.

David lay hidden in the pile of rubble, trying his best to suppress his breath and slow down his breathing rhythm.

Being an Earth Element Specialized Wizard himself, staying among these rubble helps him better utilize Earth Elemental Energy Particles to mask his own presence.

David's Talent Spell is Petrification Body, which allows his body to turn into hard rock.

After using this spell, his entire skin surface is covered with a thick layer of rock.

Coupled with the fact that David deliberately attracts a lot of Earth Elemental Energy Particles to cover around him, with the help of these Earth Elemental Energy Particles, David has become like a real stone, hard to catch anyone's attention.

This is also an important reason why David has survived until today, using this method to get through many crises.

Every time night falls, David makes himself into a stone to survive the difficult night.

Before nightfall, he would choose a suitable place and remain completely still, moving on only when dawn breaks.

The last few days were uneventful. Occasionally, demons passed by but never noticed him because no demon would be interested in a stone.

Everything was normal during the first half of the night, with no unusual disturbances.

However, in the second half of the night, an unexpected visitor arrived.

David, hiding in the rubble, saw an old man shuffling along.

Anyone who could appear at such a time and place would naturally not be an ordinary person.

David could see clearly; the old man's clothes were in tatters, with a creature that looked like a giant python entwined around him.

Upon closer observation, he realized it wasn't a snake but a very fat worm.

The old man exuded an extremely dangerous aura that made David feel very uneasy.

Fortunately, the old man hadn't noticed him yet and was muttering to himself.

"Finally... I am finally about to reach this moment. With enough sacrifices, the Gods will have a chance to descend..." The old man muttered incessantly, then stopped, gazing at the pitch-black sky.

Because it was extremely quiet around, David could clearly hear the old man's mutterings even though they were soft.

After listening to what the old man said, David realized who he had encountered – an Abyssal Cultist.

The airship's crash was the result of sabotage by an Abyssal Cultist.

The old man before him was evidently powerful and bizarre, clearly not someone David could contend with.

He could only hope that the old man would leave soon.

If he were discovered, things would turn grim swiftly.

However, the old man, having come to a stop here, did not leave but instead pulled out a quill pen.

The old man raised his left arm, using the right to stab the quill deep into it, pulling it out stained with blood.

Then, he bent down, using the quill to carve some strange runes on the ground.

"What is this old man doing..." David felt confused, unable to understand what the old man was doing here.

The old man kept carving on the ground with the quill, stabbing himself again whenever there wasn't enough blood, showing a decisive and quick action.

After several hours, a massive witch array etched out in blood had appeared on the ground.

The old man had turned into a bloody figure, with crusted blood shells and small wound marks all over his body.

He seemed to feel no pain at all, gazing at the witch array before him with a satisfied smile.

Afterward, the old man threw the fat worm entwined around him directly into the witch array.

"Next, it's time to welcome the descent of the Gods."

The old man spread his arms wide, gazing up at the sky as if embracing something.

Once the fat worm landed within the witch array, the runes illuminated.

Soon, an indescribable aura began to coalesce and spread around.

This aura grew thicker, instilling David with an instinctual sense of danger.

Just then, the old man suddenly turned his head, staring directly at David hiding amidst the rubble.

He seemed to have sensed David's presence through the spreading aura.

The moment David felt the gaze upon him, he knew he was discovered, and instantly got up to flee.

A blood-red claw lashed out from behind, directly seizing him.

The blood-red claw pierced deep into the rocky layer covering David's skin, grabbing the flesh and bone beneath.

The next moment, the claw exerted a backward force, pulling David entirely back to the old man's feet.

"Never thought at this moment I could bring fresh blood food as an offering to the Gods, it seems it's all the Gods' will, everything aligns perfectly."

The old man did not kill David directly but instead broke his limbs, tossed him into the witch array, seemingly preparing to make him a living sacrifice.

Inside the witch array, pain surged through David's limbs, cold sweat breaking out on his forehead.

He remained silent, contemplating how to escape.

Yet, even gathering magic power was difficult now, and his limbs had lost mobility, as if his life were to end here.

The unpleasant aura around grew thicker, causing slight ripples in the space spreading around.

Seeing this, the old man's face erupted into wild joy, eventually filled with tears, kneeling on the ground: "Here it comes, the Gods are finally descending!"

The space here rippled more intensely, becoming increasingly unstable.

Above the witch array, a black vortex began to slowly coalesce and manifest, the spatial fluctuations growing ever more intense.

Just at that moment, footsteps and a male voice emerged from behind the old man: "Yes, here it comes, your dad has arrived."

The old man, upon hearing the voice, his fervent expression froze instantly, turning around to look at the tall man fully clad in Dark Gold Armor.

"Who are you?" the old man asked.

"I told you, I'm your dad," Herag said with a smile.

David, lying within the witch array, upon hearing the voice, felt a bit incredulous, wondering if he was hallucinating as he approached death.

With effort, he lifted his head, seeing the dark silhouette, confirming the individual's identity.

Even though this shadow looked slightly different than before, appearing larger and the armor color having varied somewhat.

But upon one glance, David was certain—it was Herag.

In the next instant, Herag's silhouette flickered, appearing before the old man, raising a hand, delivering a slap, causing the old man's head to fly and land not far away.

A headless corpse was all that remained before Herag, which then collapsed silently to the ground.