

Sixth 521

Chapter 521: Second-Level Fire Spell

The Heart of Molten Fire is extremely dangerous, especially after the outer layer of black stone is stripped away.

The usage of the Heart of Molten Fire is quite simple, which is to use magic power to shatter the outer crystal, and then begin to comprehend the power of fire element rules.

But this process is very dangerous.

When the crystal of the Heart of Molten Fire shatters, it emits high temperatures and can even produce extremely high-temperature flames.

One wrong move might result in death by high temperatures and flames, so one must prepare protection in advance.

Herag wasn't too worried about this because he possessed the talent ability of the Dragon Race lineage, high-level flame resistance.

Still, to be cautious, he armed himself fully to avoid any accidents.

Once Herag was ready, he held a small red crystal in his enormous palm.

He slowly infused it with some magic power, and as the magic power entered, cracks began to appear on the crystal exterior of the red crystal.

A few seconds later, with a crisp sound, the red crystal shattered instantly.

At the same time, the surrounding temperature rose sharply.

Even in his current form, Herag felt the temperature around him was a bit too high, estimating it to be around 200 degrees Celsius.

Ordinary people couldn't survive such an environment, and even Herag felt uncomfortable.

He endured it with effort, adjusting his state as he began to carefully comprehend the rules.

His past experience as the Master of the World benefited him greatly, especially during the comprehension of rules when his past experiences proved very helpful.

Herag had once "seen" the existence of most rules and had clearly felt these rules.

At this moment, for him, as long as the fire element rules showed even a trace, Herag could quickly capture it.

The temperature in the laboratory gradually increased, reaching an ambient temperature of over 300 degrees.

Some flames appeared abruptly, burning vigorously in the surrounding air.

Herag closed his eyes and keenly sensed the fleeting fire element rules, then began to comprehend them.

The extreme heat around him seemed imperceptible as he fully immersed himself in comprehending the fire element rules.

Herag's absolute defense kept up, blocking the approach of those flames.

But it couldn't block the high temperature, which had risen to 500 degrees.

Herag felt that without his high-level flame resistance, he wouldn't be able to endure such a high-temperature environment for long.

The Key of Rules like the Heart of Molten Fire belongs to a very dangerous category.

There are many kinds of Keys of Rules; some have no danger, while others have very harsh usage conditions.

Half an hour later, Herag opened his eyes, having successfully comprehended the power of fire element rules.

The surrounding temperature slowly decreased, like a boiling pot of hot tea after the heat source is removed, gradually cooling down.

Nonetheless, the process was quite slow, and the temperature drop required some time.

Herag did not rashly leave the basement because the temperature in the laboratory and outside was too different. Suddenly opening the door would cause problems.

Although it wouldn't affect him much, Reese was still at home, and Herag didn't want her to get hurt because of this.

Herag reached out and touched forward, feeling the time, space, and fire element rules he could see, just like when he first saw free energy particles.

The rules he saw now had no physical form; they existed but were intangible, yet omnipresent.

As he waited for the laboratory temperature to drop, Herag pondered which second-level fire spell to learn.

The power of rules can be comprehended in advance, and after successfully comprehending it, one can directly learn the corresponding magic.

Herag didn't plan to exchange second-level fire spells from Serlandir's Secret Vault, as contribution points were becoming increasingly important to him.

Second-level spells can be obtained through other means with magic stones, but contribution points are very hard to accumulate.

Serlandir's Secret Vault is currently the only stable way to obtain a Key of Rules, making the required contribution points even more valuable.

Now with only 1600 contribution points left, Herag was worried about how to gain more.

It still seemed that participating in the plane opening war was the fastest way to gain contribution points.

But recently, there seemed to be some issues on the Elf Plane side...

Herag had only heard a little, without much detail, and the Expedition Team hadn't revealed anything externally.

Parker was still recovering from injuries, staying continuously in the Floating City above Silver Moon City, and hadn't appeared once.

Herag had a vague feeling that something significant must have happened inside the Elf Plane.

...

The next morning, Herag arrived at the Pointed Hat Magic Shop.

The Pointed Hat Magic Shop is a famous magic shop and considered a family business operated by the Clare Family.

This wizard family also has a very long history, reportedly tracing back to the distant Era of Radiance.

However, no one can verify this, as many wizard families claim to be ancient families existing since the Era of Radiance.

In reality, they might be only a few centuries old.

Herag had made an appointment in advance and had informed the shop owner Terry in Silver Moon City about his needs beforehand.

The Pointed Hat Magic Shop usually sells level 0 and level 1 spells, and level 2 spells are very rare.

To avoid wasting a trip, Herag had Terry prepare in advance.

Among second-level spells, time and space magic are the rarest and very uncommon.

But second-level fire spells, being elemental, are relatively easier to find.

At least through the Clare Family's channels, there's no issue.

"Mr. Terry," greeted Herag as he entered the Pointed Hat Magic Shop.

Terry was a young man who appeared to be in his twenties and also a level 2 wizard.

Herag had met him before in social events like dances, although they weren't very familiar due to not much interaction, but they understood each other somewhat.

"Mr. Herag, you're here. I have prepared three second-level spells for you this time. See if there's anything you are interested in," Terry said, taking out three thick books from his Space Ring and placing them on the counter.

"These three spells are: 'Fire Element Flight,' 'Thermal Reversal,' and 'Eternal Night Heart Flame.' Have a look," Terry introduced.

Herag curiously examined the three spell model books and said, "Let me take a look first."

He intended to briefly review the three spells to understand their characteristics before deciding.

The first spell Herag looked at was 'Fire Element Flight,' which utilizes the power of fire element rules to cover the body with a thin membrane of elementalization of the fire element.

With this membrane, one could fly through the sky at an extremely high speed.

Chapter 522: Elementalization

Herag was quite interested in the Elemental Flight magic, as it involved much knowledge related to elementalization.

From what he understood, many wizards were exploring the direction of elementalization.

Elementalization refers to transforming one's body or spiritual power into elements.

After spiritual power elementalization, a wizard can only use corresponding elemental magic.

Though there are some limitations, it allows for achieving a very high level within the respective elemental domain, and subsequent progress seems different from ordinary wizards.

By undergoing body elementalization, the body composition completely changes, essentially becoming elemental life.

Many Level 2 and Level 3 Wizards, hopeless in advancing further, choose to become elemental life.

Once one becomes elemental life, lifespan becomes nearly unlimited, and one can be immune to most non-elemental attacks.

However, there are significant downsides—the susceptibility to targeting.

Though strong after elementalization, one is merely single-element life.

If someone intends to harm you, they can design specific strategies against you in advance.

Wizards typically handle elemental life in the same way.

The Fire Element Flight magic draws on the principles of elementalization to enable flight effects and speed similar to elementalization without actually transforming the body into elements.

Herag recalled Crystal City's Irina; the magic Irina used back then was quite similar to Fire Element Flight's described effect—it might just be the same magic.

Back then, Irina hadn't undergone elementalization, yet could fly swiftly with Herag.

Having understood this, Herag decided to buy the magic, asking, "How much for this Fire Element Flight?"

"For Mr. Herag, I'll give you a deal, thirty thousand magic stones," Terry said with a smile.

Herag nodded, "Okay, I'll take it."

He knew the market price for a Second-Level spell; it's basically this price.

Also, Fire Element Flight is obviously rare, usually priced higher.

Nevertheless, Terry quoted only thirty thousand magic stones, which was perfectly reasonable.

After picking up Fire Element Flight, Herag then began examining the other two magics.

Thermal Reversal is a somewhat special fire magic, whose principle is converting high thermal energy in fire magic into usable thermal energy.

This magic also offers immunity to fire magic, allowing most of the fire magic's power to be transformed into energy for self-use.

Of course, this conversion has limits; it can't be done indefinitely.

If the opponent's fire magic power is too strong, the immunity can't be complete.

It was Herag's first time seeing such magic—he was quite intrigued, unsure who designed this magic.

The design idea of this magic was to transform externally applied high thermal energy to thermal energy centered around the body.

The converted thermal energy can be used for self-energizing or released back to the outside.

"This magic is interesting, how much is it?" Herag asked.

"Twenty thousand magic stones—I'm glad Mr. Herag is interested. These three magics are all carefully selected by me; they're all top-notch," Terry said with a smile.

"Mr. Terry is diligent, much appreciated," Herag responded.

Terry indeed took care in preparation, not just using some ordinary fire magic as casual offerings.

The effectiveness and design concepts of these magics were absolutely top-notch.

The price wasn't high either, truly worth more than their value.

Herag put down Thermal Reversal and started examining the final Second-Level Fire Magic, Eternal Night Heart Flame.

It was the only offensive spell among the three Second-Level Fire Magics.

Eternal Night Heart Flame's effect involves invoking fire element rules within the target to burn them.

If the target has a heart, the effect heightens dramatically with the heart as a sacrifice, fully burning the target till the end.

After reading, Herag couldn't help but marvel how utilizing Rule Power was indeed incredibly strong.

Against wizards who can't use rules, it's essentially a dimensional-downstrike.

Directly invoking fire element rules to burn a target poses almost no defensive measures for Level 1 Wizards.

Even shields are useless, as this employs Rule Power to burn internally.

Unless the opponent is also a Level 2 Wizard, capable of sensing Rule Power's presence, they may evade in advance.

For instance, if someone uses Eternal Night Heart Flame against Herag now, he could sense the change in fire element Rule Power.

Upon detecting shifts in Rule Power, he can anticipate someone's use of Rule Power against him, making counter-moves.

While others employ fire element Rule Power, Herag can also use it to disrupt their casting.

Eternal Night Heart Flame's price is twenty thousand magic stones; the three spells together amounted to seventy thousand magic stones.

Herag bought all three spells, leaving only over eighty thousand magic stones in the talisman stone.

Profits from Nightingale Commerce Association would take some time to transfer, likely a substantial amount next time.

Business there was thriving, earning enormously.

Herag carried the three magics home, immediately starting to construct corresponding spell models.

He needed to quickly enhance his own strength.

Because the Abyssal Aura in the surrounding world was becoming increasingly dense—it's a very ominous sign.

"Shenlan, begin analyzing and inputting the spell model for Fire Element Flight," Herag instructed.

"Task has been archived..."

...

Half a month later.

Herag activated the Night Witch Array, blocking observations around the manor to prevent being seen.

Magic Power surged within him, infusing into one of the newly constructed spell models in his mind.

Subsequently, fire element rules billowed around, countless fire element free energy particles attached around Herag, forming a thin film.

With a thought, he flew into the air, trailing a fiery elemental energy tail behind him.

He transformed into a red stream of light, flying around in the manor.

The space here was still too small, unable to fully display the speed of Fire Element Flight.

Herag thought for a moment but decided not to go out and test the magic, as he should hide his capabilities.

Too many people were watching him openly and covertly; the less others know about his intelligence, the more advantageous for him.

Even if people knew he bought three Second-Level Fire Magic spells at Pointed Hat Magic Shop, they would not expect him to master them so soon, which is a kind of information gap.

After experimenting with Fire Element Flight, Herag was quite satisfied with the magic's effect.

Chapter 523: Joining the Expedition Team

For others, this might just be a magic spell for travel.

But for Herag, it's a spell that greatly enhances his mobility and flexibility.

He excels in close-quarters combat, and with the Elemental Flight spell, his speed achieves a qualitative leap.

The Fire Element Flight spell also resolves his biggest problem, which is his lack of aerial capability.

Although Herag has the Feather of Flight, a witchcraft artifact that allows for flight,

its flying speed is too slow to be of any practical value in combat.

Herag then immediately shifted into the Titan Power form, his body rapidly expanding.

In this form, he used the Fire Element Flight again.

Herag discovered that the speed was not diminished at all, remaining as fast as in his normal form.

For Elemental Flight, the weight added from entering Titan Power was negligible, hardly affecting speed.

After verifying this, Herag released his Titan Power form, standing naked in the yard pondering future offensive and defensive tactics.

In future battles, his tactical options had instantly increased, allowing him to handle more situations.

After a while, Reese walked into the yard, seeing Herag standing there, and couldn't help but roll her eyes at him.

"Aren't you ashamed?" Reese said as she hugged Herag from behind, her full body making direct contact, giving a great sense of comfort.

Herag chuckled, "There's no one around here who can see inside anyway."

"You never know, someone might have a special means to see through the Witch Array, and you'd be standing naked in front of them," Reese said.

Herag replied, "I don't mind being naked."

...

Several days later.

Herag took out the Talisman Stone, preparing to contact Bannings.

Bannings had been meaning to invite Herag to join the Expedition Team for years.

But at the time, Herag felt his strength was insufficient, and joining the plane-opening wars was too dangerous.

Now, he barely considered himself capable of some self-defense, and with the Toad as his ally, his safety increased significantly.

To steadily gain contribution points, Herag realized he had to participate in the plane-opening wars.

With contribution points, he could directly exchange for Keys of Rules, accelerating his advancement to Level 3 Wizard.

If he continued progressing at the current rate, who knows when he would acquire multiple Keys of Rules.

Not everyone is like Mayer, willing to sell such things as Keys of Rules.

Most of the time, money can't even buy them; no one would sell.

Now, the Abyssal Aura was growing stronger, suggesting the time of abyss invasion was not far, making Herag feel even more urgent.

This pressure meant Herag couldn't proceed as he previously thought, which was to advance slowly over time and eventually reach Level 3 Wizard.

It was the safest and most secure way, without taking too many risks.

However, through the Sands of Time, Herag saw some future fragments, showing that if he continued as before, he would perish shortly after the Kala Continent was split in two.

Since the slow-paced method had proven unfeasible, Herag decided another path must be chosen.

After much thought, joining the Expedition Team seemed the most suitable choice for Herag.

As a wizard without background, participating in the plane-opening wars was the quickest way to advance.

The danger was evident, but the rewards were equally rich; otherwise, so many wizards wouldn't participate in the plane-opening wars.

"Thinking of joining our Expedition Team?" Bannings replied on the Talisman Stone.

Herag said, "I do have that thought; is there still a need for people now?"

"Of course, we need especially talented wizards like you. Now that you're a Level 2 Wizard, you qualify to participate in the plane-opening wars officially," Bannings said.

Herag asked, "Which plane-opening wars are ongoing now? Can I choose which plane to participate in?"

"There are several ongoing. If you're certain you want to join, I can slowly introduce them to you. Once you have enough information, you can choose which plane's war to join. It's all voluntary; the Expedition Team won't force you to participate in any plane war," Bannings said.

Herag asked, "If I join the Expedition Team, do I need to go to the Central Region?"

"No need. Each Wizard Organization has a department that manages Expedition Team matters. You can join and complete the formalities directly in Silver Moon City. The Central Region only has multiple Teleportation Altars for different planes, and you'd only need to go there if you need to use a specific altar. But not every plane's teleportation altar is there; many planes have more than one altar," Bannings said.

"I decide to join the Expedition Team," Herag said.

"Great, welcome aboard. If you're in Silver Moon City, just contact Pries to help you with the formalities," Bannings said.

Although the Expedition Team is directly managed by the Wizard Alliance, inside the Expedition Team, wizards from the Six Great Wizard Organizations are present.

Therefore, there are corresponding departments within each Wizard Organization for unified management of personnel.

In practical plane-opening wars, many wizards choose to act alongside those of the same faction.

Herag then contacted Pries to inform him of this decision, and afterward went to Silver Moon City's City Hall.

Upon arriving at the City Hall and meeting Pries, Herag learned that Parker was in charge of managing the Expedition Team in Silver Moon City.

Parker was an old member of the Expedition Team, who has long participated in various plane-opening wars.

Usually, he manages some affairs of the Expedition Team and doesn't involve himself much in Silver Moon City's daily matters, which he transferred to Pries.

However, as Parker is injured and recuperating in the Floating City, these responsibilities temporarily fell to Pries.

"You sure are busy," Herag said.

Pries, while pulling out a stack of files, gave a bitter smile, "Ah, no choice. With Master Parker injured, I naturally have to shoulder more responsibilities. By the way, what made you suddenly decide to join the Expedition Team?"

Pries didn't quite understand. Everyone knew about Herag's current profitable relationship with the Nightingale Commerce Association.

Under such circumstances, he could completely lay back and enjoy life, so why engage in plane wars again? This is no game.

Pries hadn't anticipated Herag's eagerness to advance to Level 3 Wizard.

For a typical Level 2 Wizard, who just reached this stage, advancing to Level 3 seems like years away.

Chapter 524: Sudden Change

No one would be like Herag, just promoted to Level 2 Wizard, and already preparing for promotion to Level 3 Wizard.

Herag said, "I joined the Expedition Team to improve my power faster. Staying in Silver Moon City every day is safe, but progress is slow."

"Seeing you work so hard, I feel a bit ashamed of myself," Pries teased.

Pries, of course, was not lazy either, but much of his energy was spent on internal affairs.

The requirement for a Level 2 Wizard to advance to Level 3 Wizard is very high, and as a very young wizard, Pries hadn't thought he could advance quickly.

So, he chose to work under Parker to learn many things outside of cultivation.

This is also a choice for many wizards: follow a big shot for a few hundred years, accumulate some resources, and then see if they can advance to Level 3 Wizard.

Many ordinary wizards find it not easy to take this path because it requires connections. Not everyone can work under a wizard of Parker's level.

Herag and Pries chatted idly while beginning to fill out the tedious paperwork.

The procedure to join the Expedition Team is quite complex. It's not like you can join just because you want to.

Many forms require detailed information, and after layer upon layer of review, they will decide if you can join.

Although Herag was acquainted with Bannings, he still needed to go through these procedures.

A whole month later, Herag was finally officially part of the Wizard Alliance Expedition Team.

This was already considered fast, as Bannings, Pries, and others helped speed up many processes.

Even so, it still took a month.

Once successfully joining the Expedition Team, Herag received a lot of intelligence from Bannings.

First was news about the Elf Plane; it seemed the Wizard Plane was planning to abandon the invasion of the Elf Plane.

It wasn't because they couldn't defeat the Elf Plane, but some changes prompted the Wizard Plane to consider giving up.

However, Bannings did not explain what those changes were, nor did he reveal any clues.

Originally, the Wizard Plane was confident in conquering the Elf Plane because, although the Elf Plane was also a middle-tier world, they lacked Level 6 powerhouses.

The strongest entity in the Elf Plane was actually the World Tree, which didn't have strong combat abilities, serving more of a supportive role.

This was the initial reason the Wizard Plane decided to invade the Elf Plane.

But now, it's unknown what change occurred, forcing adjustments to this plan, or even a complete abandonment of the invasion.

Herag was a bit troubled; he had intended to make the Elf Plane a fallback.

If the Abyss Plane invaded, he could hide in the Elf Plane.

The Elf Plane is very similar to the Wizard Plane, and even the environmental conditions there are much better. The cultural environment is nice too, very suitable for living.

Herag himself also knew the language there, and Asuna was also from there.

If he could take Reese and others to the Elf Plane, they could live well there.

The Elf Plane doesn't have any particularly dangerous beings, so its safety is high.

Currently, the most dangerous beings in the Elf Plane are wizards from the Wizard Plane...

The Elf Race itself loves peace, making the danger level relatively low.

Considering these factors, Herag regarded the Elf Plane as one of his potential fallback options.

However, according to the information revealed by Bannings, something might be wrong with the Elf Plane, or the Wizard Plane wouldn't cease their warfare efforts.

They invested so much up front, and without gaining sufficient benefits, how could they be willing to give up willingly?

Herag pondered it over and over and decided to visit the Elf Plane first to assess the situation.

Since the Expedition Team hasn't fully withdrawn yet, he could go in and find out what's really going on.

Herag speculated that Parker's injury was somehow related to these changes inside the Elf Plane.

The hearsay he gathered suggested that Parker wasn't seriously injured by the natives of the Elf Plane.

Herag didn't want to consider the Demon Plane and similar planes as retreat options due to their high danger levels.

The Demon Plane is already considered a relatively human-friendly plane, let alone other planes unsuitable for human survival and even less so for living.

After much consideration, Herag informed Bannings of his intent to visit the Elf Plane.

"Are you sure you want to go to the Elf Plane? There may not be many opportunities for military exploits there now, and the overall strategy is more conservative," Bannings said.

Herag said, "It's the first Other Plane I visited, so I want to see it again, lest I miss the chance in the future."

"Hmm... Alright, I'll arrange it for you. Even if we retreat later, it's not like there'll be no opportunity. The space channels are already built, and reactivating the teleportation altar can be done when needed," Bannings said.

Bannings' meaning was clear: the space channels are like a road.

Even if the road is temporarily blocked, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

Unless the entire road is completely destroyed, it can still be accessed again if needed.

Bannings handled things efficiently. Within a few days, Herag became a member of the Expedition Team in the Elf Plane, ready to enter at any time.

Now as an Expedition Team member, Herag had significant freedom.

He could decide when to enter the Elf Plane and when to leave on his own.

He didn't have to stay inside for a year and demonstrate excellent performance like during the original examination.

The teleportation altars in the Elf Plane are located in two places: one at Augustus Academy in the Barren Land and the other at the Twilight Temple in the Central Region.

Herag planned to use the teleportation altar in the Barren Land to go to the Elf Plane.

Firstly, the Twilight Temple was too far, and the journey to the Central Region would take too much time.

Secondly, he hadn't been back to the Barren Land for years, and Herag planned to visit and have a look.

When Herag informed Reese of this news, Reese felt both joy and worry.

The joy was being able to go home finally; although the trade routes between the Land of Dawn and the Barren Land were open, allowing a return to the Barren Land,

the potential threat from Fran prevented Herag from allowing Reese to leave Silver Moon City alone, to avoid unexpected incidents.

Moreover, they needed to be vigilant against the Taylor Family, which hadn't caused trouble so far.

However, Herag indeed tricked them out of so many Magic Stones, and Reese, the old fox, would definitely not let it go easily.

Currently, their focus is still on finding Medel's whereabouts, with no time to cause trouble for him temporarily.

Chapter 525: Return to the Barren Land

Herag had always been very attentive to the movements of the Taylor Family, preventing them from secretly targeting him or those around him.

So far, there were no such signs. As long as the matter with Medel hadn't been discovered as his doing, it hadn't yet reached a desperate state.

Reese wasn't worried about this but was concerned about Herag's journey to the Elf Plane.

Participating in a dimensional war is always filled with danger; no one knows what might happen.

Although Herag was a Level 2 Wizard, in the dimensional war, it merely meant he had the ability to protect himself.

"It's okay, even if I can't win, I can still run away, and I'll return safely," Herag said.

Reese knew she couldn't change Herag's mind, so she could only pray for his safe return.

"I've already booked the airship for half a month later, so I'll be able to return then," Herag said with a smile.

Reese nodded, feeling a mix of emotions.

Over the years in the Land of Dawn, she had indeed made significant progress, becoming a Level 1 Alchemist with the Magic Pharmacist Association and advancing to a Liquidation Wizard.

For most wizards, such achievements were already excellent.

But compared to Herag, they seemed insignificant. However, there were not many who could match Herag.

Even Lillian, an outstanding wizard, was still just a Crystalization Wizard, with a long way to go before reaching Level 2 Wizard.

The hurdle from Crystalization Wizard to Level 2 Wizard was the accumulation of Spiritual Power through Meditation.

This is an extremely long process, and most wizards will linger here for many years.

Even wizards with outstanding aptitude like Lillian, who have the support of various resources from Augustus Academy, need a long time to complete this accumulation process.

Malcolm was already in his fifties when he reached the peak of being a Crystalization Wizard.

So in contrast, Herag appeared exceptionally outstanding, being only thirty years old and already a Level 2 Wizard.

Herag was well aware of why he could advance so quickly, largely due to the energy assistance from the Divine Core.

Without the Divine Core, he couldn't have advanced so quickly.

...

Half a month later, Herag and Reese boarded the airship heading to the Barren Land.

The flights from the Land of Dawn to the Barren Land were very few at this time, with typically only one trip per month, missing one meant waiting another month.

On the airship, in a luxurious suite, the bathroom.

Herag and Reese lay in the giant bathtub, the water temperature was just right, making their bodies feel comfortable.

The two had just been through a big battle, and there was still some sweat on Reese's forehead.

Herag's hands were still restless, moving in the water.

"Still misbehaving," Reese said with a slightly flushed face and breathed lightly, scolding softly.

Herag chuckled, turned over, and pressed down on her.

Water splashed everywhere, creating waves.

...

More than a month later, the airship landed on a huge square at Augustus Academy, which had been transformed into a temporary airship port.

Herag, holding Reese's hand, had just stepped off the airship when he saw people from the Cheqi Family and the Nightingale Commerce Association waiting below.

Several people from the Cheqi Family were there, with Booker and a middle-aged man at the forefront, and an old man with some silver hair between them.

Herag had informed the Cheqi Family of his return in advance through the toad, as well as the approximate time.

Almost all the important figures from the Cheqi Family were present to welcome Herag's return.

The representatives from the Nightingale Commerce Association were a man and a woman, a couple who seemed to have been Vernon's capable assistants for many years.

Vernon had entrusted the management of all affairs in the Barren Land to this couple, and indeed they were very capable, managing everything efficiently.

Herag immediately spotted Booker at the forefront, who now looked a bit older than before.

Looking at Booker, Herag felt a bit emotional; soon after leaving the Moonlight Forest, he had entered the Black Rock Valley and met Booker.

At that time, Booker was a Crystalization Wizard, an absolute master to Herag.

Now, in the blink of an eye, Herag was already a Level 2 Wizard, while Booker remained a Crystalization Wizard, showing some signs of aging on his face.

The silver-haired old man beside Booker was the current patriarch of the Cheqi Family, Mayer Cheqi, also Larry's biological father.

The man next to Mayer was named Lucas, he was Reese's biological father.

Originally, Lucas's branch within the Cheqi Family didn't have much influence and had a weaker presence.

But because of Reese's current relationship with Herag, Lucas's branch became one with significant influence within the Cheqi Family.

"Father!" Reese exclaimed with surprise upon seeing Lucas.

Lucas smiled a little shyly, being an honest and straightforward person, not very good at expressing his emotions.

Upon seeing Reese, Lucas was naturally very happy but didn't know what to say. After smiling, he said, "It's good to be back." after a short while.

Herag's gaze moved past the people in front to see a familiar figure, Larry Cheqi.

Larry still appeared very young, wearing a trendy robe and smiling at Herag.

Larry was still a Liquidation Wizard, not yet advanced to the stage of a Crystalization Wizard.

He had good aptitude, but spent a lot of time on Magic Potion, causing his meditation practice to lag behind.

Now that the Cheqi Family had opened trade with the Land of Dawn, the magic trade required more manpower, so even Larry had been called back.

The position in the Moonlight Forest was left unfilled for now, with no plans to return.

For the Cheqi Family, investing in Moonlight Forest was no longer worthwhile.

Now, just Herag alone was worth far more than the entire Moonlight Forest, at least from the Cheqi Family's perspective.

"Herag, this is our Cheqi Family's Patriarch Mayer, this should be the first time you two meet," Booker said with a smile.

Herag looked at the silver-haired Mayer, extended his hand, and smiled, "Hello, Grandpa Mayer."

Upon hearing this, Mayer was slightly stunned, then extended his hand and said with a smile, "Welcome back."

Mayer was Reese's grandfather, and Reese was Herag's woman, so calling him grandfather was perfectly fine.

Herag was also demonstrating an attitude, showing that although his strength and status far surpassed the Cheqi Family, he had not forgotten their help.

Without the Cheqi Family's assistance, Herag couldn't have come this far so smoothly.

Herag is someone who knows to return a favor.

Chapter 526: Landing

Although Herag's status and power have risen, he doesn't use his position to oppress others or put on airs in front of the Cheqi Family.

He's not interested in such things and wouldn't do them.

"Mr. Booker, Mr. Lucas!" Herag immediately greeted the other two.

"Mr. Larry!" Herag then greeted Larry behind them.

Larry smiled and said, "Don't call me 'teacher' anymore; you're much more capable than me now."

Larry's words weren't just modest; Herag's prowess in both wizardry and Magic Potion is extremely high now.

During this time, Larry has also been studying the Magic Potion formulas that Herag refined, feeling Herag's profound skill in Magic Potion from them.

Only by having deep knowledge in Magic Potion and understanding various Magic Potion Materials thoroughly can one achieve such levels of Magic Potion formula refinement.

Of course, Larry doesn't know that this is primarily Shenlan's contribution.

With a lot of data support, Shenlan found it effortless to refine these Magic Potion formulas, able to modify them at will according to Herag's requirements to achieve the desired effects.

Such data analysis and calculation ability are beyond ordinary people's reach.

Even though wizards are outstanding individuals with brilliant minds, they still can't compare to Shenlan.

Herag laughed, "Mr. Larry will always be my teacher."

Larry chuckled and said, "I never expected the student I casually accepted back then to be a real gem; I really hit the jackpot."

Larry's words were echoed by others from the Cheqi Family.

If Larry hadn't let this student stay with the family for a while back then, the Cheqi Family wouldn't have had those subsequent opportunities.

Herag's achievements were reliant on various helps from the Cheqi Family, and now the family is also enjoying the benefits Herag brings them.

Larry was very kind to Herag at the time, a sort of investment now yielding countless times the return.

Without Larry's help, Herag would have struggled to escape the war with Green Cottage and might have died in it.

Herag remembers that after the war when he returned, many people he knew previously had vanished.

More importantly, after advancing to Level 1 Wizard, Larry provided Herag with a refuge, a place to go.

Otherwise, Herag might have wandered in the Barren Land for some time.

Regarding the later opening war of the Elf Plane, it would have been hard to have the chance to participate without the Cheqi Family's quota and information channels, unable to join the Land of Dawn.

During the time in the Land of Dawn, Herag deeply felt the importance of resources and channels.

In the Barren Land, it's almost impossible to advance to Level 2 Wizard due to lack of crucial resources, which blocked him.

"I heard you joined the Wizard Alliance's Expedition Team, heading to the Elf Plane?" Larry asked.

Herag nodded, "Yes, I'm preparing to explore the situation there."

"Compared to you, I seem to enjoy the comfort too much, when are you setting off?" Larry sighed.

Herag said, "There's no rush; I plan to go in a while."

"Herag lad, first heading back to Black Rock Valley? You haven't returned for years, those two young ladies have mentioned you many times." Booker said with apparent grievance.

After Herag left, Chatiya and Asuna stayed living in Black Rock Valley.

With the protection of the Witch Array, it was the safest, and the Cheqi Family also sent reinforcements to strengthen the defenses.

With Herag's growing importance, Black Rock Valley gradually became heavily guarded by the Cheqi Family.

In any case, Chatiya and Asuna must not encounter any problems.

Booker is also personally stationed there, never leaving unless it's urgent.

However, it's also wearying for Booker.

Asuna is quite understanding and mature, though she misses Herag, she knows he's doing important things and can't return yet.

But Chatiya is different; despite being over a hundred years old, her mentality is still like a young girl.

She expresses her longing for Herag, making noise, often asking Booker when Herag would come back.

Booker doesn't know when Herag will return, so he can only placate by saying it should be soon.

Chatiya obeys Herag completely because she's his servant with a Master-Servant Contract.

But to others, Chatiya is not that obedient or understanding.

Every time she causes a commotion, Booker finds it unbearable.

He can't hit nor scold, just endure it.

Asuna can manage Chatiya somewhat, like an elder sister, always coaxing and tricking her back, afterward smiling apologetically at Booker.

Herag nodded and said, "Alright, I'll return to Black Rock Valley directly later."

"We didn't dare tell them we were fetching you this time; otherwise they would certainly have come. I couldn't let them leave Black Rock Valley; you know the situation here now..." Booker whispered.

Herag understood his meaning; now that the Barren Land and Land of Dawn have been connected, many people from the latter have entered the former.

The wizards from Land of Dawn are vastly more powerful and skilled than those from the Barren Land.

Particularly, some appear with very strong power levels, leaving Booker and others, just Crystalization Wizards, utterly defenseless against Level 2 Wizards, unable to ensure Chatiya and Asuna's safety.

Thus, Booker could only conceal Herag's return, planning to inform them once Herag arrived at Black Rock Valley, and then those two would naturally learn of it.

If told earlier, bringing Chatiya and Asuna out and encountering danger en route would be disastrous.

Herag said, "Thank you everyone for looking after them during this time."

"It's our duty." Mayer smiled.

At this time, two people from the Nightingale Commerce Association approached.

"Mr. Herag, I'm Gennadi. President Vernon asked us to greet you on his behalf. During your time in the Barren Land, if you need anything, feel free to reach us." The man from the Nightingale Commerce Association couple said.

Herag said, "Mr. Vernon mentioned you two to me beforehand. Thank you both for your efforts."

These two were arranged by Vernon to assist Herag, temporarily putting many internal affairs of the Nightingale Commerce Association aside just to serve Herag.

Herag thought he didn't have much for them to do, but having help available in case of need is certainly convenient.

He naturally accepted Vernon's goodwill.

Chapter 527: Return to Black Rock Valley

After chatting for a while, the group of people began to walk outside.

Herag held Reese's hand as they walked down the main road of Augustus Academy.

All around were mostly wizard apprentices, all quite young, some even looked about seven or eight years old.

"I heard someone from the Danton Family used connections to get to the Land of Dawn. I really envy him; he went over as an apprentice, and he'll definitely be much stronger than us in the future." On a nearby bench, two wizard apprentices were chatting casually.

"Indeed, now that connections to the Land of Dawn are open, it's much easier to go there than before. But for us, who lack background and aptitude, it makes no difference. We have no chance to get over there," another sighed.

...

Even though Herag was far away from them, he could still hear their conversation clearly.

Now that the Land of Dawn has opened up to the Barren Land, it's definitely a big advantage for the wizards here.

Although it's still mostly those with connections and background who have the opportunity to go over.

To those wizard apprentices without background or aptitude, it seems like nothing has changed.

But that's not actually the case; the changes just haven't fully manifested yet.

Once trade is established between the Barren Land and the Land of Dawn, the most apparent change will be the easier access to various resources.

With all sorts of resources flowing out from the Land of Dawn, it's naturally easier to acquire them in the Barren Land.

Although items like the Key of Rules are still difficult to obtain, it's still much better than before when there was no hope at all.

Now it's just hard to acquire; before, there was simply no avenue to obtain it.

The only source was the Death Swamp, but that was just a trap.

The Death Swamp Ruins were a bait set by the Wizard Alliance for the wizards of the Barren Land, enticing them inside.

Even in the Land of Dawn, not many people knew this insider information.

At least from Herag's current understanding, most people didn't know, likely only the top levels of the major wizard organizations were aware.

With the connection opened between the Land of Dawn and the Barren Lands, the flow of resources and knowledge is destined to quickly enhance the overall strength and quality of the Barren Land.

Apart from a few wizard organizations, there are also a lot of independent wizards in the Barren Land.

During his time avoiding the war, Herag had dealings with them and had some understanding.

These wizards hadn't even undergone systematic knowledge learning, and the resources they could obtain were very limited.

For them, knowledge is fragmented and scattered.

What knowledge they learn, what magic they master, depends not on what they want to learn but what they can get.

This results in most independent wizards being like wild mages, with very poor fundamental theoretical knowledge, and naturally, a low ceiling.

The construction of a systematic knowledge system is essential, and the underlying principles of various knowledge must be mastered.

This knowledge is the foundation and must be solidly laid.

Otherwise, even if one's power increases, it would be like a castle in the sky, teetering and unstable.

There are very few scattered wizards in the Barren Land who have advanced to become official wizards; even those who reach the rank of Third Class Wizard Apprentice are rare.

Among them, there are actually quite a few wizards with good aptitude, but without guidance, they take many detours and waste a lot of time.

By the time they have learned from many pitfalls, age has become a limitation.

The best age to advance to an Official Wizard is before eighteen; the older you are, the lower the chance of advancement.

But now things are different.

The outflow of resources and knowledge from the Land of Dawn is the best news for these independent wizards or those with potential wizard aptitude.

Previously, all resources were controlled by the major wizard organizations, but now with the outflow of resources from the Land of Dawn, access has become much easier.

In the future, there will be fewer and fewer wild mages in the Barren Land, and the breaking of information barriers will help many people get on the right wizard path.

As resources become richer, the promotion of wizards will become relatively easier, and more wizards will find it easier to advance, no longer being stuck in need of magic potion cards for years.

Herag is becoming more certain that the Wizard Alliance must have noticed the movements of the Abyss Plane; otherwise, they wouldn't be taking such actions now.

He doesn't think the Wizard Alliance is being generous, blocking off the Barren Land for so many years, and suddenly starting to help it improve its strength.

It's only when there's enough external pressure that this happens.

Combining this with his own sense of the Abyss Plane's presence, Herag could naturally draw this conclusion.

Thinking of this, Herag couldn't help but feel a little urgency.

He still hadn't found a suitable retreat, a way to survive for himself and those around him.

Herag now places his hope in the Elf Plane, although there are some changes he needs to understand clearly.

Soon, Herag boarded a carriage from the Cheqi Family and set off for the Black Rock Valley.

On the carriage, Herag and Reese looked at the scenery outside through the window.

Everything looked the same as before, as if nothing had ever changed.

The carriage jangled as it arrived outside the Black Rock Valley.

Herag noticed that there were more outposts around the Black Rock Valley, staffed with wizard apprentices and even official wizards.

These were all people from the Cheqi Family, and their purpose was to guard the Black Rock Valley.

From this, Herag could also see the Cheqi Family's emphasis on Chatiya and Asuna, ensuring their safety at all costs.

The carriage stopped at the entrance of the valley. Herag held Reese's hand and got off, looking at the Black Rock Valley ahead with mixed feelings.

After first leaving the Moonlight Forest, he had come to this place. After all these years of wandering, he had come back as a Level 2 Wizard.

A Level 2 Wizard was an absolute pinnacle existence in the Barren Land of the past.

As long as the hidden powers of the various wizard organizations didn't appear, a Level 2 Wizard was invincible here.

Booker and others behind Herag also looked at his figure with much appreciation.

No one could have predicted that a newly-promoted official wizard they had accepted could grow so quickly.

This was completely beyond the Cheqi Family's expectations.

They had only intended to make a small investment, not expecting such a big return.

Since collaborating with the Nightingale Commerce Association, the Cheqi Family felt, for the first time, that they were slightly lagging in manpower and ability.

They had never done such a big business before and found it hard to handle for a moment.

Fortunately, the Nightingale Commerce Association had a very good attitude, sending people if the Cheqi Family lacked them, and directly sending trainers for things they didn't understand.

Chapter 528: The Castle

For the Nightingale Commerce Association, it would naturally be better if the Cheqi family could grow stronger, as business cooperation in all aspects would be smoother.

So they do not hesitate to help the Cheqi family, offering various supports.

When Herag walked into Black Rock Valley, the first thing he saw was still that Magic Potion Garden.

At this time, quite a number of wizard apprentices were working inside. Most people Herag no longer recognized; it seemed many had changed over the years.

Herag remembered that there were many ordinary people here back then, not even wizard apprentices.

Now, looking around, they were all wizard apprentices; it seemed the Cheqi family had indeed become better and better.

Herag didn't know how many people now wanted to work for the Cheqi family.

Even if it was just to do odd jobs at Black Rock Valley, they all wanted to latch onto this opportunity.

However, the Cheqi family wasn't so easy to get into now, especially in a place like Black Rock Valley, with very strict requirements.

Everyone's background would be thoroughly checked, ensuring there were no issues before they could enter.

Not only that, but you also needed someone familiar to introduce you to have a chance.

As Herag and his group walked in, these wizard apprentices curiously looked over.

Many of them didn't know Herag, just had heard of him.

But these wizard apprentices didn't know that Herag would come back today; only some of the Cheqi family members and some from the Nightingale Commerce Association knew about this.

They didn't recognize Herag, but they recognized Booker and some people from the Cheqi family.

Seeing these people just following behind Herag, they couldn't help but be surprised and curious.

Most of them recognized Mayer and Booker, the current patriarch of the Cheqi family, and also their direct supervisor.

For Mayer to be following behind, it showed that the young man walking in front had a high status.

Herag's group continued forward, heading toward the northern castle.

Herag noticed that a tall fence had been built on the northern side of the Magic Potion Garden, covered with green vines.

"This is to separate the Magic Potion Garden, to prevent any random people from disturbing Asuna and Chatiya," Booker explained.

Inside Black Rock Valley, the castle to the north was a forbidden area, and those wizard apprentices working in the Magic Potion Garden were prohibited from approaching it.

Not only could they not enter, but even getting close was not allowed.

If anyone tried to approach, they would face severe punishment.

Herag and Reese reached the castle there, while the others temporarily rested elsewhere.

According to the arrangements, a grand banquet would later be held at the Cheqi family to celebrate Herag's return.

Herag, holding Reese's hand, walked along the road, looking at the quiet castle ahead.

He noticed that the castle had gained many trees and flowers, the entire castle was beautifully decorated, as if in a forest.

"What's the matter? Missing your little Asuna?" Reese teased.

Herag smiled, holding Reese's hand, without saying anything.

After a while, the two arrived at the castle gate.

As soon as they reached the gate, they saw that the inside of the castle was like a garden, with all kinds of flowers planted.

Chatiya and Asuna were in the courtyard, trimming flowers, watering them, very focused.

There was also a table behind them, with some fruits, snacks, and juice placed on it.

It seemed like it was their afternoon leisure time, and life was relatively comfortable.

Hearing footsteps from behind, Asuna turned her head and was stunned when she saw the two at the castle gate, not even noticing the watering can dropping from her hand.

Chatiya, not knowing what happened, turned to look at Asuna and followed her gaze.

She saw Herag and Reese, her eyes widened, and after confirming it wasn't an illusion, she directly threw away the scissors in her hand, ran over, and threw herself into Herag's arms.

Once in his arms, Chatiya murmured many words and even started crying.

Over the years, with Herag not around, she had never felt secure and didn't dare to go out and interact with others.

Now that Herag was back, she was naturally very excited.

Herag smiled, patting her head to comfort her, feeling that Chatiya had grown taller over the years, wondering if it was an illusion.

The lifespan of the Elf Race is very long, and ten years or so doesn't mean much to them.

After a while, Asuna slowly walked over as well.

"You're back."

Asuna's eyes were somewhat red, and her voice carried a slight tremor, evidently controlling her emotions.

With a smile, Herag beckoned to her and then embraced Asuna.

"You've become an initial-tier caster?" Herag, sensing the aura from Asuna, asked.

Asuna nodded, touched the corner of her eye, and said, "Yes, with the resources provided by Mr. Booker over the years, I've progressed quickly in my practice."

Casters in the Elf Plane are actually quite similar to wizards, and they require quite similar resources for their practice.

With Herag's connections, the Cheqi family naturally provided many resources to Asuna and Chatiya.

Asuna had not been idle over the years, always studying and engaging in meditation practice seriously.

She had never had such conditions for practice before, where she didn't have to worry about anything, just needed to study and practice.

In the past, Asuna had to struggle for survival, experiencing various dangers; now she did not need to.

Asuna had naturally high talent, and after consuming the World Tree sap, her aptitude improved considerably.

With these conditions, Asuna's promotion to initial-tier caster was only natural.

An initial-tier caster is equivalent to a Level 1 Official Wizard in the Wizard Plane, although their power is a bit weaker.

Herag had previously learned from some research that compared to wizards, the spiritual power of casters is indeed much weaker.

However, casters do not need magic potions to advance, making the difficulty of advancement much lower than that of wizards.

Yet in the same realm, wizards would be stronger.

"Will you leave again this time?" Chatiya lifted her head and asked, the tear marks still on her face.

Herag sighed and said, "I am only back for a short time; after a while, I will go to the Elf Plane."

"What are you going to the Elf Plane for?" Asuna asked.

Herag said, "To find an alternative path for us."

"An alternative path?" Asuna and Chatiya both looked puzzled, not quite understanding what Herag meant.

Herag glanced around and saw that there were no other people in the castle now.

The original two servants had left years ago.

They were just ordinary people and could not stay in this place for too long, or their health would suffer.

Wizards naturally emit some radiation, which can affect ordinary people.

Chapter 529: Reunion

Ordinary people living long-term with wizards will have their bodies progressively weakened by radiation, ultimately leading to a shorter lifespan.

If it were before, the Cheqi Family would definitely use these people to the end because they were just servants.

But now, both Asuna and Chatiya are rather kind-hearted, and upon learning this, they immediately told Booker to let the two leave.

They arranged a different job elsewhere for them to avoid being affected here.

Booker naturally had no objections and complied fully with their wishes.

Subsequently, ordinary people were no longer arranged to live in the castle continuously, but only came in every so often to clean.

In fact, Asuna also did some cleaning herself, even washing Chatiya's clothes.

Asuna didn't think much of it and took it for granted, treating Chatiya like her own sister.

"I'll tell you slowly once we get home," Herag said.

Herag and the three women entered the Inner Castle, then set up a Witch Array to prevent eavesdropping.

"Through some means, I have seen a troubling future; the entire Wizard Plane might be in danger then," Herag said seriously to Reese and the others.

Reese and the others, seeing him so serious and solemn, immediately understood he wasn't joking.

Herag hadn't mentioned these matters to Reese before and only said it now.

He briefly talked about the fragments he saw before and the possible future encounters of the Wizard Plane.

"So, that's why you want to visit the Elf Plane to see if it's suitable as an escape route?" Asuna asked.

Herag nodded, "Yes, we cannot wait until the Wizard Plane is invaded to leave. It would be too late by then, so we need to prepare in advance."

"Now the Wizard Plane is planning to abandon the invasion of the Elf Plane. If no other dangers exist, the Elf Plane is the most suitable retreat."

"Especially with Chatiya here, you belong to the Elf Royal Family, and as soon as you return, you might have some power to protect Asuna and the others."

Chatiya, upon hearing this, felt enlightened yet conflicted.

She naturally wanted to return but didn't want to leave Herag.

"Will you stay with us in the Elf Plane?" Chatiya asked.

Herag said, "If possible, I would certainly like to take refuge there, just worried that the situation might change and won't allow it. But regardless, I hope you all can be there safely."

Herag himself wasn't very concerned; he had many choices.

Even if he couldn't stay in the Elf Plane, places like the Demon Plane were also feasible.

Though somewhat dangerous, being alone made him more flexible, able to adapt to situations.

But Reese and the others were different; he had to think of a sufficiently safe and suitable retreat for them.

Herag continued, "The only problem now is that I don't know what's happening within the Elf Plane. I can't gather information, so I must go in and investigate on my own."

"If other dangers appear inside, I'll have to consider other escape routes."

This is why Herag insisted on going to the Elf Plane once, to figure out what's happening there.

Herag had already considered it; as long as the changes within haven't led to new dangers, the Elf Plane would be the best choice.

With Chatiya there, Asuna, Reese, and others' safety could be ensured.

"But shouldn't we be unable to reach the Elf Plane?" Asuna asked.

Herag explained, "I have a Witchcraft Artifact, and you can stay inside it, coming out after reaching the Elf Plane."

"Can we go together this time? Since there's a way, I'll be more at ease if I can go with you," Reese said.

Herag shook his head, "No, the situation inside is unclear, and there might be some dangers. I'll go in first to figure it out, then bring you all in."

The three women showed pleading expressions, wanting to enter the Elf Plane with Herag.

Herag hardened his heart, ultimately not agreeing to their request.

...

Nighttime.

"I want to sleep here!" Chatiya clamored, curling up in Herag's bed without coming out.

Asuna helplessly stood by the bed, not knowing what to say.

"I want to sleep with Asuna tonight; you should go back to your own room," Herag said.

Chatiya muffled herself in the blanket, speaking in a stuffy voice, "Why can Asuna sleep with you, but I can't? Don't think I don't know what you want to do; I want in too!"

As soon as she said this, Asuna's face turned red in an instant, embarrassed and slightly angry.

Herag was not planning to involve Chatiya for now because she was crucial to future plans.

When negotiating with the Elf Race in the Elf Plane, ensuring Chatiya's safety and integrity was vital for gaining their protection.

If Chatiya bore his scent, she would undoubtedly be hunted by the Elf Race, even if she was willing.

In such a case, Herag's plan would be ruined.

Thus, for the time being, nothing could be done to Chatiya.

Though it was also an option to settle in a small city within the Elf Plane, that was not a long-term solution.

If the protection of the Elf Royal Family could be obtained, safety would be significantly enhanced.

The Elf Race, as rulers of the Elf Plane, had the most power and resources.

Herag looked at the girl under the blanket, quite helpless himself.

Chatiya, although still with a girlish mindset, wasn't foolish, vaguely understanding matters between men and women.

She was just indignant about why she couldn't sleep with Herag when Asuna and Reese could; it wasn't fair.

Reese then entered the room, tied her hair up, then directly lifted the blanket, picked up Chatiya, and walked out, closing the door behind her.

She said while closing the door, "Tonight, I'll sleep with Chatiya."

Being a woman herself, Reese naturally understood women best and wisely decided not to disturb Herag and Asuna's reunion night, opting instead to take Chatiya to sleep in the adjacent room.

Asuna and Herag couldn't do much about Chatiya, but Reese was different.

Displaying the demeanor of a head woman of the household, she directly took Chatiya away.

Though Chatiya cried and fussed, it had no effect on Reese.

Reese didn't engage or entertain her attempts.

After a while, Chatiya, realizing it was no use, had no choice but to accept the situation.

Inside the room, Asuna and Herag locked eyes, the atmosphere somewhat amorous.

"I... I'll go change clothes," Asuna said, fiddling with the hem of her dress, seemingly both nervous and expectant.

Chapter 530: Wisteria Ridge

Herag held her and whispered, "No need..."

The two hadn't seen each other in a long time, and the emotions were overwhelming. After an intense encounter, they held each other tightly and chatted leisurely.

Herag had actually thought before that for Asuna and Chatiya, the Wizard Plane was always an Otherworld.

It was hard for them to feel any sense of belonging here unless he had a few children with them.

But given the current situation, the future was uncertain whether they could even survive, where was the extra energy to have children and take care of offspring.

For Chatiya and Asuna, staying in Black Rock Valley was not a good thing, it was almost like being imprisoned.

Herag also didn't want to imprison them like pets, so he was also considering their future paths.

For Asuna and Chatiya, the best option was naturally to return to the Elf Plane.

That was the place where they had lived since they were young, everything was familiar.

Herag could completely find a place in the Elf Plane to settle them down.

Chatiya's status was very noble, and with her background, she could entirely protect Asuna.

Herag even planned that if conditions allowed, he would take some people from his side to the Elf Plane to be cared for by Chatiya.

This was also one of the reasons Herag hadn't dissolved the Master-Servant Contract, he trusted Chatiya, but not the Elf Race behind her.

As for Asuna...

"Asuna, I'm dissolving our Master-Servant Contract. From now on, you will be completely free." Herag said.

Asuna buried her head in Herag's chest and said softly, "Don't dissolve it. For me, whether it's dissolved or not is no longer important. With this contract, I can still feel your heartbeat at any time, telling me you're alive and well, that's enough, it gives me peace."

No matter what Herag said, Asuna was unwilling to dissolve the Master-Servant Contract.

For her, her life was already revolving around Herag, whether it was dissolved or not was the same.

...

Three days later, the Cheqi Family sent a long convoy to welcome Herag and others to their territory.

The carriages were dressed lavishly and adorned with flowers, expressing a celebratory intention.

The Cheqi Family's territory was located in Wisteria Ridge, a historically longstanding family land.

It was said that this place had been around for more than a thousand years, but it was not initially owned by the Cheqi Family. The Cheqi Family bought it by chance to be their land.

In the beginning, the Cheqi Family was also very weak, with only a few people.

After hundreds of years of development, it has reached its current scale.

Now, taking advantage of the channels provided by Herag, the Cheqi Family was once again seeing a rapid development opportunity, expanding quickly, and the family's strength was rapidly enhancing.

"The changes at home are huge..." Reese lifted the curtain, watching the scenery outside and sighing.

During the years she was away, the family territory had also undergone substantial changes, also making her somewhat emotional.

Reese's most direct feeling was that the family land had increased significantly.

Now many of the wooden houses and small castles seen outside were newly built, which were not there before.

In Reese's memory, these places used to be a forested area, she even went on adventures here as a child.

These signs all indicate that the Cheqi Family's scale had expanded significantly. As the number of people increased, the previous places naturally didn't suffice for living, thus they could only expand outward.

The area of Wisteria Ridge was large, mostly mountains and valleys, with no other forces residing, enough for the Cheqi Family to develop for a long time.

In the Barren Land, many places weren't valuable.

Lands were vast and people sparse, most places were ownerless.

Even if there were owners, you could buy them at a very low price.

After the convoy entered deep into Wisteria Ridge, a vast cluster of castles appeared before them.

These castles at first glance seemed very historical, exuding an ancient aura.

In front of the castles was a wide and long river, with fast-flowing waters gushing loudly.

Above the river was a heavy stone bridge, quite wide and thick enough to allow the convoy to pass.

"We're home!" Reese excitedly pulled Herag off the carriage, introducing everything here to him.

Asuna and Chatiya were also very interested in this place, their mood quite high.

Herag followed the three women around, seeing the place where Reese grew up.

The Cheqi Family had prepared a banquet for Herag, which was about to begin.

Herag changed into formal attire in Reese's boudoir, with Reese tidying up for him from behind.

"David really can't make it?" Herag asked.

"I've asked, he's still at the Land of Dawn and can't make it this time. Ever since the business started, David has been particularly diligent, almost never taking a break, always busy running around," Reese said.

Herag nodded, not saying more.

"The banquet is about to start!" The door was suddenly opened, and Herag turned to see Chatiya, who had changed into a green long dress, smiling happily, and Asuna standing behind her, wearing a traditional female gown, smiling shyly.

"Let's go." Herag smiled, going over to pat Chatiya on the head.

The grand banquet officially began. It was said that the Cheqi Family invited many people to this banquet, and various Wizard Organizations in the Barren Land had representatives present.

For the Cheqi Family, this banquet was to announce their rising strength and status, becoming an unignorable force.

The focus of the banquet was naturally Herag, although Herag typically didn't like appearing much in such settings, he simply went through the protocol and then returned to his seat to eat quietly, many silently observing him.

To other forces' wizards, Herag was undoubtedly a somewhat Legendary wizard, able to reach this position in such a short time, arguably the first in the Barren Land's history.

"Mr. Herag, hello." A middle-aged man wearing round glasses came over.

Herag looked up at him, feeling somewhat familiar, and soon remembered, saying with a smile, "Hello, Mr. Salin, long time no see."

"Didn't expect you still remember me. Your departure was a great loss to our Moonlight Forest," Salin smiled.

This was the person who, when Herag was about to leave Moonlight Forest, had come to persuade him to stay, one of the managers of Moonlight Forest, Salin.

Herag said sincerely, "The experience in Moonlight Forest benefited me greatly, I learned a lot there, and grew much. Without the learning experience in Moonlight Forest, I wouldn't have the achievements I do now. Thank you all for your help at that time!"