The Genius Son-in-law of the Swordmaster Household—Blessed by Authority

Chapter 111 : Birthday (1)

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Time passed quickly, and before he knew it, it was August.

It was Ian's birthday.

He received presents from an incredible number of people.

'I don't think I've ever told anyone about my birthday...'

How on earth did everyone find out and send presents like this?

The Heavenly Sword Lord also sent a handwritten letter this time, along with a birthday gift.

The handwriting was still neat, and the page was densely packed with words.

If Ian were to summarize the contents...

First, a heartfelt birthday congratulation.

— To my precious gem, Ian.

— First of all, I sincerely wish you a happy birthday.

And a mention of the recent assault incident.

— I heard that demonic humans attacked the deserted island test site.

— I received a full report of your efforts: how you protected my daughter and the talents in that perilous situation, and even rescued the kidnapped Kargon.

— I feel endless gratitude and indebtedness to you. Ian, do you have any idea how much reassurance and peace your existence brings me?

— When I go on expeditions, I always worry about my family and my clan. Even someone called a 'demi-god' like myself is no exception. Anxiety has always followed me.

— But now, Ian, I have you. Once again, happy birthday.

— As the years go by, you'll only grow more reliable. I will support and protect you with all my heart and strength so that your splendid potential can blossom magnificently.

Next, a story about the bet proposed by the Holy Kingdom.

— I heard that the Selveris Holy Kingdom made a ludicrous bet. At first, I was quite displeased, but then thought it might be a good opportunity. I'm sure you can win it easily. Show them what you're made of, and let's claim the Holy Sword Heliodin.

Then, an explanation regarding the birthday present.

— While on expedition, I captured a rather strong demonic beast. It had remarkable horns. Since it was a horn from a demonic beast, it took some time to purify it, but I'm glad I managed to send it to you in time for your birthday. There were three pairs of horns in total, and I'm sending them all to you. They're a bit too soft to be turned into weapons, so I recommend boiling them down into a tonic like deer antler and consuming them as a nourishing elixir.

The rest was...

A message asking him to send regards to Sophia, and remarks about the changeable northern weather.

"Goodness..."

Ian carefully took out the horn sent by the Heavenly Sword Lord from the box.

What on earth is the family head fighting against up north?

The horns sent by the Heavenly Sword Lord resembled the antlers of a deer made from clumped, pure white snowflakes, and the total amount of magic power contained in the three pairs together was equivalent to a mid-level Grandmaster.

'Crazy...'

That much magic power would be about the same as three millennial golden elixirs.

'With this... my plan for advancing my aura level will become much easier.'

The process of duplicating the millennial golden elixir is always slowest in the early stages.

That's because, at first, the amount of aura that can be stored in the dantian is the smallest, so it takes more time to duplicate the elixir and the process itself is more troublesome.

But after Ian boils the horns into a tonic and increases his aura capacity, duplicating the millennial golden elixir would become much easier.

'He's sent me an elixir three times more precious than the main reward of the Sword Dragon Hall...'

Even direct descendants of the Hisperion clan might not receive a reward like this more than a few times in their lives.

In short, Ian was receiving care from the Heavenly Sword Lord that exceeded that given to even his own children.

Of course, Ian had accomplished that much more than the main lineage, so it made sense to give him this degree of treatment and reward—but still, in this world, not everyone is compensated justly for their achievements.

'I didn't do it expecting quite this big of a reward.'

Still, being treated so thoroughly did make him feel good.

If he entrusted the white horns to the caretaker Cheryl, she would surely know how to brew them into an elixir.

'I'll leave these in a safe place... Now, as for the rest... Wow, there really are so many.'

Ian looked at the stack of presents in the corner of the living room with a faraway gaze.

Just unwrapping everything would take a while.

He was grateful for each one, but the thought of having to return all these favors one day made him feel a bit overwhelmed.

'Now, who is this one from...?'

Ian began unwrapping the presents one by one.

The red box had come from Lady Marceline.

She had sent a red gemstone brooch along with a short letter.

— To my beloved family, Ian

Reading it, it seemed that she would have liked to hold a small party for Ian, but knowing his personality, she figured he wouldn't enjoy such an event and might find it burdensome, so she was simply sending this letter and gift.

She also asked him to remain close with Kargon and Charlotte, and wished him good luck in the upcoming bet with the Holy Kingdom at the start of next year.

The red gemstone brooch was like a token of gratitude from Marceline's birth family, the Rubenstein House.

'... Wow, she's actually giving me this?'

This wasn't just a simple certificate of commendation—it was more like a guarantee that the Rubenstein House would one day, without fail, repay the favor.

If Ian ever desperately needed someone's help, he could bring this brooch to Rubenstein, and they would do their best to grant any reasonable request.

Of course, if the request was unjust or unreasonable, it would be too much, but as far as Ian had heard, some mercenaries had even married daughters of Rubenstein and some knights had been taught the family's secret martial arts just with this brooch.

It could be used when he needed the political support of Rubenstein, and, naturally, it could be used to obtain their backing in times of war as well.

'So, this is why they never give this out lightly.'

No matter who used it, this item would have a huge impact on Rubenstein's honor and fate.

'Lady Marceline must have pulled immense strings with her family.'

This brooch was something even the head of the Rubenstein House wouldn't give away unless you had saved his life.

Of course, saving Kargon was a huge merit, but still—he didn't expect to receive this.

'I really have to take good care of this.'

The Rubenstein House is one of the Hisperion's seven most loyal vassal families.

Being able to borrow the military power of Rubenstein was a sweet deal, but more than anything, the political support was the most significant.

It could eventually help when reestablishing Yuria as the Heavenly Sword Lord, or prevent division within Hisperion before wars with the demon grand dukes.

Ian carefully placed the Rubenstein brooch in his valuables safe, determined not to lose it.

"Sheesh. That's only two sorted out."

Ian kept opening more gifts.

A truly overwhelming number of people had sent gifts.

There was a present from Sir Javier, the leader of Investigation Division for the Heavenly Sword Order.

What he sent was an automatic emergency call device.

'Huh. He's actually giving me this?'

This was an artifact given to investigators in real danger by the Investigation Division.

If an investigator was wounded or lost consciousness during an investigation, this device would immediately send a call for help to the Investigation Division.

'Giving this as a birthday present. Isn't that an abuse of authority?'

But it was a very useful item.

'I should give this to Sophia rather than keep it for myself.'

If Sophia wore this, then when Ian was doing activities apart from her, he'd feel a bit less worried.

"... Oh."

Ophelia, a high-ranking knight in charge of supervising Charlotte, had also prepared a gift.

What she sent was comfortable training wear.

It looked perfect for sparring or practicing martial arts at Lunabreeze.

— Bzzt!

Sir Kelbian, the trusted aide to the Heavenly Sword Lord, also sent a gift.

It was a top-grade manastone.

The lump was larger than a fist, and clear as blue glass.

It was great material for making artifacts, and as a pure chunk of mana, could also be fed to Vladiark.

— Clink!

Ian crushed the manastone with Vladiark and absorbed it right away.

'This is essentially the same as getting an elixir.'

This magic power would be used for projecting the millennial golden elixir.

Besides these, there were still many more gifts left.

Charlotte had given a pair of luxurious, comfy shoes; Kargon gave elbow and knee protectors.

Lunabreeze caretaker Cheryl gave him cosmetics, saying it's best to start caring for your skin when you're young.

Kuga also gave him a gift.

He had made a wooden figurine by hand.

How could those big, rough hands—like giant iron pot lids—carve something like this?

It was a bear figurine so detailed, it was hard to believe.

According to him, it was supposed to ward off nightmares and help you sleep well.

Receiving a gift filled with such genuine good will and care left Ian a bit touched.

He thought Kuga only knew how to fight, never imagining he would have this side to him.

"Young master Ian!"

And then, he received a gift from Sophia as well.

She had given him pajamas.

"Oh...?"

The pajamas were so thin that they were a bit see-through.

They were also very light and soft, and cool to the touch.

They were the perfect summer pajamas.

"How is it? Do you like it?"

Ian nodded right away.

"Yeah. You have great taste. Thank you."

Although the summer was already more than half over, it was still a hot time of year.

"Hehehe... Now if you sleep in this, when I hold you at night, it won't be as hot."

"Huh?"

Ian blinked at Sophia.

"What? You gave me this for that reason? So it'd be cool when you hold me at night?"

"Eh, no, of course it's for you, young master, so you can rest coolly~."

"... Why does this feel more like a gift for you, instead of for me?"

And Sophia...

Isn't it about time to graduate from sleeping together?

It's understandable when you're young, but now both of them were experiencing puberty.

"How much longer do you plan to crawl into my bed?"

"Hehehe. Until you get married, young master! Hehe."

"..."

A childhood habit that had persisted to this day was proving hard to break.

"No matter how I look at it, this isn't a present for me."

"... You caught me."

Ian chuckled a bit.

"So you admit it?"

"That's why I prepared something else! Take this, too!"

"Huh?"

Sophia suddenly handed him ten slips of paper.

Spreading them out, Ian read, 'Young master's special wish coupon.'

"What's this?"

"Wish coupons! I'm feeling generous so I gave you ten!"

"..."

Ian stared at Sophia.

"What are they for?"

"Hehe. If you use them, I'll do anything you ask."

"Anything? Anything at all? Whatever it is?"

"Yes. You could say these wish coupons have nearly the binding force of a mana oath."

Sophia said this with a solemn face.

"If you use one, I won't be able to refuse, even if it's a much more difficult and special request than your usual ones."

"... Really?"

Ian immediately picked up one.

"Then I'll use one right now. From now on, stop crawling into my bed."

"Gasp!"

Sophia swallowed hard.

"Not that! You can't use it for that!"

"... Didn't you just say anything?"

"Anything but that!"

"... What kind of wish coupons are these..."

Completely arbitrary wish coupons.

..... Useless.....

"....."

Still, Ian folded them neatly and put them away.

There might come a time when they'd be useful.

Like when Sophia threw a tantrum during training, or when he needed to slip out alone and leave Sophia behind.

"Sophia. Then at least help me organize the presents."

"Yep! I'll do that for free anytime!"

Ian continued sorting gifts with Sophia's help.

Aris had sent a gift as well.

"Oh... this."

She had sent a bottle of 'Dragon's Blood'.

It was a top-tier ingredient for making elixirs, potions, poisons, weapons—anything, really.

And in modern times, with almost no active dragons left, it was a priceless resource.

'I didn't do anything much to deserve this... Is Aris really this generous?'

He shook his head immediately.

He'd never met a woman as calculating as Aris.

There had to be an ulterior motive if she sent something this valuable.

'Still, the item itself seems fine.'

He didn't sense any evil magic or poison.

'I should take good care of it.'

He'd keep it safe and make sure to project it later.

If he gave Dragon's Blood to Scarlet in the future, she would love it.

"Young master!"

Just then, Sophia called out to Ian.

"Hm?"

"This one doesn't have a sender's name, just a unique crest."

"Oh, that."

The symbol was a full moon and a nightingale.

It was a gift from the information guild, Nightingale.

He opened it up, and it was a box of chocolates.

There was nothing else—just really ordinary chocolates.

"Hm."

Ian immediately popped one in his mouth.

"Gasp!"

His eyes widened on their own.

'Crazy! I didn't know this kind of flavor existed!?'

It tasted insanely good.

The aroma, sweetness, texture, aftertaste, rate it melted—everything was perfect.

Ian immediately gave one to Sophia, too.

"W-what is this!? It's unbelievably delicious!! The god of chocolate!!!"

What on earth was this chocolate?

There was a brand mark, but neither Ian nor Sophia recognized it.

Later, when Ian gave some to Charlotte and asked about it, it turned out this chocolate was extremely famous in certain circles.

It took a long time to make each batch by hand, so only a small quantity was produced even in a whole year.

It was so prized among noble ladies who loved tea parties that there was no fixed price—just whatever people were willing to pay.

When asked where he got it, Ian just vaguely answered that it was a present from close acquaintances.

Nightingale had truly sent him something rare. It must have been hard to get. He couldn't help but feel grateful.

He was determined to repay them someday.

"...?"

There was someone quite unexpected among the senders.

"The Bellator family sent something...?"

The Bellator family.

They were one of the Seven Pillar Families under Hisperion, and a long-time rival of the Greysel family.

Especially the current head of the Bellator family, madam Katrina, was famously at odds with Greysel patriarch Hugo.

It was said that whenever they met, she would pick a fight.

Katrina toward Hugo, mostly.

'Honestly, she has every right. I understand Madam Katrina.'

Because Hugo had turned his territory into a cesspool, the repercussions had spread to neighboring Bellator land.

Illegal immigrants kept crossing over, and criminals swarmed in to expand their markets.

But Hugo was never apologetic, never showed remorse, just full of vanity and arrogance, bragging every chance he got, and his depraved intentions were obvious even on the surface. Katrina, who suffered directly from all of this, had every reason to be upset.

'The present is...'

He unwrapped it—a book.

A biography.

It was about a wise ruler who ousted his tyrant father and rebuilt a fallen house.

"..."

On the first page of the book, in Katrina's handwriting, was the phrase: 'I support Young Master Ian.'

It was a gift open to many interpretations.

Ian is well-loved in this life...

Hmm, oh yeah, Hugo is still the lord of Greysel....