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

Chapter 4 : Escape (2)

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[Tutorial completion rewards are as follows.]

[1. Opening of mana circuit optimized for Authority use.]

[2. Registering basic items, skills, and traits in your storage list..]

[3. Full recovery of health.]

'The rewards are...'

Number 2 seemed like I'd have to check the contents, and number 3 was just the kind of thing that would be nice to have, but...

'This is better than expected!'

Number 1 was an option I desperately needed in this situation.

'Mana circuit opening!'

Currently, Ian's mana circuit was so twisted due to a congenital defect that it was impossible to accumulate aura or train.

However, if the power of this special reward opened even a single normal mana circuit, at least minimal training would become possible.

'Even just a little...! If I can accumulate just a little bit of aura, that would be enough!'

With a body completely incapable of storing aura, even with a transcendent power like the Authority of Projection, it would be like a pearl necklace on a pig's neck.

But if he could at least start slowly accumulating aura, everything would change.

'If I can start accumulating aura, then I can gradually alter my twisted mana circuit using the Authority of Projection.'

He would project the normal mana circuits of others and gradually implant them into his own body, one by one.

Just by projecting the mana circuit of the Sophia right in front of him, he'd become a Swordmaster much faster than in his previous life.

If he could start developing from there, then eventually he'd be able to project even the ultimate mana circuits possessed by Yuria.

'Let's check right now! How do they open the mana circuit?! Can I start aura training immediately?!'

Ian first checked reward number 1.

[Claiming reward number 1.]

In response to his will, the blue letters in front of his eyes rapidly flashed and updated.

[Reward number 1 has been delivered!]

[A new mana circuit has been opened in your dantian!]

'Oh, ugh...!'

The moment the message updated, an icy chill pierced his crown and ran all the way down, stabbing through his lower abdomen.

'... What an unbelievably brute force method...!'

He could feel it clearly. The shape of the new mana circuit.

The reward had created a mana circuit that ran in a straight line from the dantian, through the heart, up to the crown of the head.

It was a form specialized solely in filling the dantian with mana.

'It's like there's a pipe stuck right through my core...'

With this structure, it was still impossible to reinforce arms and legs with aura, but there was no hindrance at all to absorbing natural mana for aura cultivation.

'With this, I can immediately train my aura and escape this place!'

Using 'Heavenly Dawn Technique', the aura cultivation method learned from Yuria before returning, about ten minutes would be enough to amass aura sufficient to take on the bandits outside.

'But before that—'

[2. Registering basic items, skills, and traits in your storage list.]

[3. Full recovery of health.]

He needed to check the remaining two tutorial rewards.

'Number 3, full health recovery, must be literal.'

As it said, it would bring his condition to its very best.

[Claiming reward number 3!]

[Your health has been restored to its maximum!]

'Mmm...! As expected.'

A refreshing sensation, like stretching at dawn, washed through his body, and the fatigue from three days of confinement melted away like snow.

'Now, the only one left is....'

Reward number 2. Registering basic items, skills, and traits into the Authority's projection.

'Let's see what they gave me.'

[Claiming reward number 2!]

[Four items including Iron Sword Lv.10, two skills, and one trait have been registered in the storage list of 《Authority of Projection》!]

[For detailed contents, please check the 《Authority of Projection》 status window!]

'Status window?'

The very moment he thought, 'What's that?' a translucent window appeared in front of him.

—《Authority of Projection》—

◆ Items

[Iron Sword Lv.10], [Round Leather Shield Lv.8], [Primitive Wooden Bow Lv.5], [Primitive Stone Arrow Lv.3], [Straw Lv.0]

◆ Traits

[Strength of the Orc Lv.15]

◆ Skills

[Magic Shield Lv.10], [Wind Cutter Lv.8]

———————

'Oh...'

Where there had only been straw before, now there were weapons that could be used immediately, along with basic magic and seemingly useful traits all neatly added.

'I think I get how to open and close the status window, too.'

Just like opening and closing one's eyes, the status window could be summoned or dismissed at will.

'Good. Now all that's left is to escape from here.'

With the rewards given by Authority, he'd instantly gathered all the materials needed for escape.

Now, he only had to proceed step by step, slaughter the traffickers, and escape from here with Sophia.

'In my previous life, I couldn't help but wait helplessly for rescue as I was trampled on.'

For the past three days, the slavers hadn't touched Ian or Sophia.

They'd made an effort not to damage their "goods" so they could get ransom from their families as planned.

However, according to Ian's memories before returning, that only lasted a week at best.

When the family delayed sending the ransom, the traffickers began to take their frustration out on Ian and Sophia.

'... It was brutal.'

They'd serve horse dung in ashtrays and call it food, or pull out fingernails and molars to send as a warning to the families...

Of course, Sophia was not an exception to the torment.

In fact, Sophia suffered much more brutally than Ian.

From the first day, they tried to violate her, but at that time, Ian bought some time with quick thinking.

'I lied that she was the witch's child and sleeping with her would bring a curse...'

Perhaps because bandits and thugs have so many sins, they were always afraid of curses and superstitions.

But even that trick became useless after a week had passed.

With only men for company for too long, their patience had run out.

Once their self-control was gone, lust overcame superstition.

At first, they ordered Sophia to dance naked; next, they forced her into degrading acts.

The more time passed, the more depraved their behavior became, and naturally, Sophia's bright demeanor became increasingly sullied.

When the family knights finally came to the rescue about a month later, Sophia couldn't smile like she used to—not until the brink of death.

'Tsk. Memories I really didn't want to recall...'

But now, there was no reason to feel miserable over those memories anymore.

'... Now, I can change things!'

After all, he had regressed fifteen years into the past.

All the wretched events of the past could be undone with this chance.

From now on, depending on Ian's actions, he could alter that tragic fate as much as he pleased.

'My master... Yuria, too...'

If Yuria Hisperion was definitely alive somewhere, Ian would be able to change her fate as well.

'The future has already begun to change. Everything that was screwed up in the previous life—all of it can be changed...!'

He had the knowledge and memories from his past life, as well as the powerful transcendent Authority of Projection.

He would never get another opportunity as generous as this second chance.

If he set his mind to it, not only could he change a miserable fate, but he could even become a much greater entity than in his previous life, and personally behead those detestable grand dukes of the demon realm, one by one.

'First, I need to escape from here as soon as possible.'

He would prove, right here and now, that he could change his own future with his own hands.

He would launch that first salvo successfully.

'First, aura cultivation.'

Before summoning weapons with the Authority of Projection and fighting the bandits outside...

No, even before that, he needed aura just to cut these tight ropes.

'Heavenly Dawn Technique...'

One of the strongest aura cultivation methods on the continent.

Originally, it was a secret art passed only to direct descendants of House Hisperion, but in his previous life, the situation of humanity had become so dire that Yuria eventually taught Ian the Heavenly Dawn Technique for the sake of strengthening their fighting power.

'With a ruined mana circuit and dantian, I can't use the whole Heavenly Dawn Technique flawlessly...'

But now, with a mana circuit running straight from his dantian to his crown, as long as he selectively used the chants he could immediately harness, he could accumulate aura smoothly in his dantian.

'First, close my eyes...'

"Y-young master! Are you sleeping?! Are you planning to sleep?!"

Just as Ian began cultivation, Sophia—tied up opposite—interrupted his focus.

"....."

"Hey, hey, sleepyhead! Didn't you say you'd think of an escape plan? ... Ugh! Owww my stomach...! Woo...."

"... I'll get you out of here in 30 minutes. Just hold on a bit longer."

"W-what? Th-thirty minutes!? ... What are you planning? Y-you're not thinking of doing something dangerous, are you?"

"You'll see."

Ian closed his eyes again, blocking out distractions to resume training.

"... No matter how I look at it, you're just trying to sleep again! You liar!"

"... I need to concentrate for a bit, so be quiet."

"Sniff sniff... meanie..."

Ian deliberately ignored Sophia's sniffling and ran the Heavenly Dawn Technique.

'The mana circuit's performance is beyond belief.'

Combined with this supreme aura method, the circuit created by the Authority caused aura to fill his dantian much faster than anticipated.

— Hisss... Hoo...

With each breath, natural mana poured into his dantian like a waterfall.

'Good. This should be enough.'

After about five minutes of training, he'd quickly accumulated just enough aura.

— Throb!

'Ugh...!'

Unfortunately, because of the disformity in his dantian, just containing the aura caused severe pain.

Any more, and the aura would just leak away through the cracks in his dantian.

'Once I escape, I'll have to fix my dantian and mana circuit first thing.'

He'd love to fix them right now, but he could tell even by feel.

No matter how much he used Authority of Projection and the Heavenly Dawn Technique, his condition was not something that could heal in a day or two.

First, escape from here—once safety was secured, he'd spend at least a week, focusing just on recovery.

'First, let's get these ropes off.'

Luckily, the tutorial reward had given him exactly what he needed.

— 《Authority of Projection》 —

◆ Skills

[Wind Cutter Lv.8]

————————

Wind Cutter—a basic wind-element magic.

Couldn't ask for a better spell to cut ropes.

'My first time casting magic in my life.'

Even though Ian had never used magic, not even once, not even before regression, manifesting magic via Authority was not difficult at all.

— Snick!

— Snap!

Just as he'd done in the tutorial, he simply selected the projected magic and channeled aura—done.

Wind Cutter manifested precisely where Ian wanted it, swiftly slicing through the ropes holding him fast.

'Truly, authority magic is different from ordinary magic.'

Even though Ian had never used magic in his life, he'd fought beside many mages on the battlefield—he knew at least the basic steps for spellcasting.

'There's no chanting, no calculation—just instant magic...'

It wasn't so much "casting" as it was "summoning" magic.

'That's why Yuria in her previous life was so feared by the Mage Tower mages.'

In her prime, Yuria could casually cast high-level spells with a mere gesture—spells so powerful that tower master-level mages needed lengthy casting sessions.

With no need for chants or calculations, even the most potent magic became like rapid-fire shots in her hands.

The combination of Yuria's overwhelming aura and transcendental Authority poured forth high-class spells in destructive barrages resembling natural disasters.

'But that very power ended up giving the towers a reason to turn on her.'

Afraid Yuria would steal their secrets, the tower masters began thoroughly concealing their magic from her.

They did their utmost to avoid standing on the battlefield with her, and ultimately, that became one of the many reasons why Yuria, fighting alone against a coalition of demon grand dukes, was doomed to fall.

'She should have hidden her power until the time was right.'

If hiding it wasn't possible, she should have stolen their magic by force.

'But Yuria wasn't like that.'

Even though she had the strength to seize their secrets at any time...

She chose to take all the burden on herself, saying that war with the mage tower would cost too many lives on both sides.

If only her temperament had been a little harsher...

Her fate might not have ended so tragically.

'But I am different.'

Ian would protect only those truly precious to himself.

For that, he'd be willing to sacrifice the entire world...

Without batting an eye.

'To save Yuria in this life... I'll have to become far stronger than she ever was at her peak...!'

He would steal every last bit of the tower masters' secrets Yuria never managed to claim.

He would project every divine relic and treasure in the world with Authority, amass overwhelming aura, and seize power that would utterly surpass even Yuria's prime.

"Young master...! Young master...!"

As Ian was lost in thought, Sophia called to him in a low voice.

"Young master! How did you undo the ropes!? You're amazing! Please hurry! Hurry and untie me too!"

Sophia looked at him with a hopeful smile.

A brightness he had failed to protect in his previous life.

That light—he would never let it be lost in this one.

Renewing his resolve, Ian stepped toward Sophia to untie her.

"Agh! These punks...! You're gonna keep whispering over there? Got caught slacking off thanks to you idiots! You brats!"

"... Gasp!"

— Clank! Clank!

The sound of locks being undone came from outside the tightly closed storeroom door.

It seemed the slaver was coming in to raise hell.

"Perfect timing."

"Y-young master! Hurry! Please, untie me! And then hide behind me!"

"... Hide behind you? Rather than that—"

Ian whispered, keeping his eyes on the door.

"You. Act as bait for a moment."

"Eh? EEHH?! Use me as bait?!"

"That's right. Just draw their attention for a second. Then I'll handle him."

"Wa-wait! Young master! You're weaker than me unarmed! I-I should do it instead—!"

"..... Don't worry, just do as I say."

"H-how can I not worry! You weakling!"

"... Shh! He's coming in! Draw his attention!"

"Eeeek! At least untie me first! Hey! Hey, you jerk!"

Though Sophia whispered frantically, Ian ignored her and pressed himself close to the entrance.

— Shing!

Then he summoned the Iron Sword from the Authority of Projection and gripped it tightly.

"... Gasp!"

Sophia stifled a gasp at the sight of a sword being conjured out of thin air.

Ian glanced at Sophia and pressed a finger to his lips.

— Clank! Clank!

It sounded like the last of the locks was being undone.

'I'll slice through his lungs in one stroke so he can't even scream—death will be agonizing.'

The foes who had stolen Sophia's bright smile before regression.

Now was the moment when the Swordmaster, returned after fifteen years, began his revenge.

Author-nim setting up every other faction as potential enemies...