

The Mafia 141

Chapter 141 Unexpected Alliance?

Weapons like the ones Vicente and his group used didn't exist in the Polaris Realm like the items this young earthling used. However, some items were similar to them in terms of usefulness.

Shelby knew this, and because she knew the difference between Vicente's items, which were destructive even in the hands of weak men, she felt that he could go far with help and a little luck.

Vicente's magic form is quite powerful, and he still had Rory on his side, a? young man with green talent who could quickly become an Acolyte.

Shelby knew quite a bit about this group from the research she had done before meeting Vicente and had chosen this young man to develop her plans.

He seemed to have the audacity to do the things she wanted, which was why she was with him and had helped him with Casey.

"Mr. Fuller, you lost your family because of these arrogant individuals who don't mind riding roughshod over others and using the weaker ones as they please. The nobles are no different from the Sovereigns who caused your mother's death. They act the same way, but they do it much more often.

Join me, and we'll rebel against the order of things in Millfall!"

Vicente listened silently and made another move on the chessboard, understanding this woman's motives.

She might want to choose her own fate and take revenge on some of her enemies. It was understandable. Not everyone needed to lose their parents to crave blood and mayhem.

In possession of relevant information and in contact with a man like him, Shelby could really do whatever she wanted and bring a storm to this city with ease.

Vicente then said. "I can help you. If, and only if, you make a Magical Agreement with me. I don't want to risk you telling the truth about me out there." He looked at the redhead beside Shelby.

"Of course. If you talk about my goals out there, even my father would be ready to chop my head off." Shelby said to Vicente.

He then asked her. "What about your siblings? Don't you love your family, Miss Staples?"

"I do. And I care for my younger siblings." She sighed. "But the life of a nobleman or a member of royalty differs from that of an ordinary person, Mr. Fuller. From a young age, we are taught things that make it difficult for such feelings to arise or develop.

My siblings would be willing to sell me as a breeding mare if they could profit from it.

I wish I could love them more, but I have to love myself first."

Vicente loved his family and was willing to sacrifice himself for Nina and even Lauren, even though he didn't know where she was or what she was doing.

But he wasn't a limited person, incapable of understanding the differences he had with other people. He fully understood that not every father loved his children, and not every sibling would be willing to do anything for their siblings.

"All right. So what do we do now? You must have plans for this, right? I wasn't planning on bringing chaos to Millfall until now." Vicente changed his tone, ready to move on.

"I do, but first, let's talk about you. What has Cesar been up to lately?" She smiled at him and finished the game, beating him.

Vicente knew he had to train harder to beat this woman, but he didn't mind. "He's hiding, of course. It's hard for someone like him to go out on the streets with such a high price on his head... But soon, he'll show himself again."

"Oh? Are his plans to change the current situation working?" She asked him.

"Yes. You'll soon see their effects. Things will happen before his latest deal with the Scarlet Syndicate expires."

"Good. Don't interfere with what you've already planned." She said, aware that she couldn't act with Vicente to create chaos for her targets right now.

"My plans depend on him overcoming the problem with Defiant Tyranny. So, I don't intend to act on them for now. But if he needs any assistance, I'm at his disposal." She said before taking a sheet of paper and a pen from a spatial storage item.

"Maybe his plans will hurt the Staples family a little," Vice said, looking seriously into the orange-haired beauty's eyes.

She paused momentarily and looked at the paper in front of her but didn't bother. Just don't be too aggressive. I need my influence to get my plans off the ground."

"Don't worry." Vicente smiled before agreeing with Nina's teacher on how their relationship would work.

After they both signed the Magical Agreement, Vicente asked some questions about what Shelby knew about his family and things that could help him solve his current problems.

Once that was settled, he got up to leave and said. "I intend to settle my affairs with Defiant Tyranny and leave Millfall for some time soon after."

"Leave? Why?"

"I will be looking for Magic Pentagrams compatible with me and my staff." He answered Shelby while he was already walking beside her to the exit of this residence.

"Then I'll wait for your return. You'd better have your second pentagram when we start our plans." She didn't find that strange and readily agreed that he would have to do that.

When they arrived outside the mansion, a man watching from a distance frowned when he saw an unaccompanied man standing beside Shelby.

'Who is this one?' He wondered, this being the first time he had seen Shelby with Vicente.

"The young master won't like this at all." Another person commented to the person keeping an eye on Vice and Shelby.

"We should tell him. The young master hates it when men approach Miss Staples."

With that, one of the two left to dispatch the information to Shelby's fiancé while the other kept an eye on the orange-haired woman's movements.

As Marcus Symons' fiancée, to say that she was a possession of the Symons family was no exaggeration! They had to keep an eye on her and make sure she didn't tarnish their noble name!

'I'll investigate this boy later.' The man thought about what he would do when his companion returned. 'But I hope he's not another fool trying to get close to the young lady!'

Meanwhile, Vicente had no idea what he had gotten himself into. As soon as he said goodbye to Shelby, he returned to his estate in the town center.

Chapter 142 100%

Vicente was in his training room hours later, finishing another hour of practice with his hammer.

After doing so, Vicente suddenly felt a different sensation in his body. He once again felt as if restraining chains had been quickly removed from him.

He ignored the muscle fatigue he usually felt when he had to train with the hammer and looked at the last piece of ore waiting for him to use it.

As the glowing red pentagram appeared in front of one of his hands, Vice focused all of the mana in his body on the approximately 150-kilogram piece of rock.

In an instant, he felt the weight of extracting metal from a piece of ore. Still, this sensation was much lighter than the one he had felt a few days ago when he had done it for the first time under Benson's supervision.

Feeling a tremendous weight, but more than 80% weaker than the one he had felt that day under Benson's supervision, Vicente quickly moved the metal particles in the ore into the center of the stone.

The stone violently shook as he did so, cracking at every corner and making noises loud enough to be heard by people outside the house.

After two minutes, Vicente saw the stone collapse in front of him, this time in a very different way than the first time in front of Benson. Instead of the stone splitting into two halves with a metal ball in the middle, the stone broke into more than 30 small pieces. In contrast, a large ball with a radius of 60 centimeters floated in the air.

Vice saw the remains of the mineral fall to the ground and looked at the metal object, which contained three different metals.

Noticing this, Vice quickly separated them into pure metal bars before flying them to the corner of this area, where several bars of different colors were gathered in six different piles.

These were the metals that Vicente had been accumulating since he began this special training Benson showed him, metals he had been saving for the moment he reached the peak of his first stage as a blacksmith.

Vicente was curious about making a new weapon, but being tired, he decided to meditate first and recover the mana he had used up in the last hour.

After feeling that his regenerated power was getting stronger and stronger, approaching the middle of the Senior Apprentice level, he didn't hesitate to create some of those metal bars.

He quickly produced each component of a long-range rifle, forming them according to the new techniques he had learned, but much faster than he had done in front of Benson days ago.

Vicente also created some new bullets until 5 minutes after he finished his rest, he took the pieces of his gun and quickly connected them, forming a beautiful black rifle about 1.5 meters long.

This weapon was heavy, weighing about 15 kilograms.

But in the hands of a 1st-grade blacksmith, its weight felt like that of a pen.

Vicente picked it up and pointed it in the direction of the rifle scope he had in the training area. But when he assessed his weapon and saw the level it had reached, he didn't have the heart to fire it from where he was.

Gulp!

'If I do that, I'll bring down the house and attract the attention of the local experts.' He thought as he felt a bead of sweat run down his forehead.

But seeing that the weapon was nearly 100% efficient, Vicente felt it could withstand the full power of Senior Apprentices like him.

He quickly put it in a box and left.

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After a few minutes, Vicente noticed someone following him as he left Millfall to test his weapon.

After noticing this, he increased his speed towards the forest on the outskirts of town until he was on a tree.

Vicente realized that the man watching him had momentarily lost sight of him and quickly lay down on a log, pointing his weapon in the direction he had come.

'Let's see who you are...' He thought as he focused his mana into one of his eyes, keeping the other closed as he looked ahead.

Seeing a movement of leaves about a kilometer ahead, Vice moved his weapon and loaded it with ammunition.

'Is it an assassin?' He worried, but since he knew it was a level 3 Acolyte, he wouldn't fight him directly to ask.

He would still have a hard time fighting level 3 Acolytes, so with a clean shot at such an opponent, Vice didn't hold back in testing his new weapon. He put 90% of his mana in the weapon and pulled the trigger when the target was in the rifle's sight.

BOOOOOM!

A sound similar to a cannonball being fired came from Vicente's gun as a six-inch bullet departed from the barrel of Vicente's rifle.

This bullet rotated on its axis as it flew forward, glowing in seven different colors as it appeared to be on fire.

The air around it exploded as it flew, creating a rather distinctive sound that spread thousands of feet from the shot.

Vicente barely saw the bullet move. One moment, he was pulling the trigger of his gun. The next, the bullet hit the enemy's neck.

When it hit the body of that level 3 Acolyte, the man chasing Vicente had no chance to scream or react. The bullet pierced his neck, destroying that part of his body until his body continued to run forward, his head spinning in the air, detached from his moving corpse.

Vicente saw the power of his shot and was impressed, noting that although he had misfired a little, he had succeeded with the destructive power of his weapon.

'Phew! It had destroyed his entire neck, even the lower part of his head, and the upper part of his chest!'

He continued to look in that direction with only one eye, seeing what the rest of his body looked like for a second before he stopped moving properly and 'flipped' dozens of times across the ground, destroying several trees in the surrounding area.

Seeing that his enemy was dead, Vicente smiled and got up from where he was, looking at the gun in his hands with joy.

When he saw the smoke coming from the gun barrel, he closed his eyes and inhaled it.

"Ah, I love this feeling!"

With that, he walked towards the corpse, noticing that there was no one else in the area.

His expression quickly changed when he reached the headless body as he realized where this person had come from.

"Shit!"

'The damned Symons family!'

He swallowed his saliva as he realized who was following him, feeling cold sweat drip down his back.

Afraid of being associated with this death, he quickly destroyed this person's entire body and left immediately after, ensuring he would return to Millfall without being seen by anyone else.

Fearing that this would lead to complications for his group, Vicente returned to his house, anxious to produce weapons so that his group would have something to count on in case the powerful Symons family turned against them.

'Hell! Why did that bastard come after me?'

If remorse could kill, Vicente would definitely be between life and death right now!

Unfortunately, the milk had been spilled, and now he could only use what he had to contain the damage!

'Shit! I'll make about 10 weapons like this, and I'll send them to Rory. Then I'll go to Benson. If I can get the resources I need, I can produce weapons like this with 100% efficiency.'

According to Vicente's calculations, even though his weapon could withstand the power of a Senior Apprentice, it was still only 91% efficient.

If his top Senior Apprentices used all of their power on this new rifle version, it would probably still be damaged, even though it could withstand a lot of the power of such people.

With this in mind, Vicente was eager to get his license from the Blacksmiths' Association, an essential step for him to reach the peak of the 1st stage in his forging skills.

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While Vicente was on his way, Marcus heard that someone had come to visit his beautiful fiancée this morning.

"Who is this bastard? Who dares to approach my fiancée?" He asked aloud to the man who had just told him about it after he left his training room.

"I don't know yet, young master. But one of our men is already after this person, while others of us are investigating his identity.

By the end of the next day, we'll have his name." The man from earlier said.

"Very well. Find out who the bastard is. After that, I want you to bring him to me. I'll teach him his place!" Marcus said, feeling his blood boiling and wanting to crush whoever it was.

He thought he'd made it clear to the local brats that none of them were to be around Shelby. But as it turned out, he had to show them who was boss in this town once again!

Chapter 143 Skills beyond the Necessary?

The following day, the Viscount's family was already investigating the death of one of their men, while some men were searching for information about Vicente.

Having not yet discovered his full name and whereabouts, this group had not yet knocked on the doors of the Fuller residence.

Meanwhile, Vicente made weapons for some of the Senior Apprentices in his group, the most he could do with the resources he had at the moment.

After working almost all night on these weapons, he had reached a mana density that put him in the last half of his current magic level. When he had finished what he had to do, he used one of his communicators to alert his people that he would be leaving his new weapons at the facilities where his men worked every day.

He couldn't go to his headquarters and risk running into his people. But he could leave these weapons with his contractors, and they could deliver the new weapons to Vice's men.

There was no way anyone would know about it because Vice's new weapons were practically identical to the old ones, and everything would be done in secret.

When Vicente left his house in the morning, after wishing Nina a good day at school, he quickly drove to four establishments in his area, where he left the weapons he had produced.

He had finally managed to get some storage space the previous day before isolating himself in his house to produce these artifacts. That way, no one saw him walking through the local streets with boxes of weapons this morning.

After that, Vicente quickly made his way to his master's estate.

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"Are you here already? How was your time with the materials I gave you?" Benson saw Vicente at his door and was surprised.

For someone with a Yellow talent, Vicente was a very fast learner!

If it had been any other of his students, Benson would not have expected to see results in less than three months. But in a matter of days, Vicente was probably out looking for more material.

Vicente saw his master, and as soon as he entered the building, he said. "I have finished reading the material and part of the training. I'm just a few points away from reaching the level needed to create artifacts with 100% efficiency, master."

"Oh?"

"That's why I came here this morning. I want help to finish mastering the 1st stage of forging and get my license from the Association." He said, already inside the building that looked like a warehouse.

Benson frowned when he heard that, and his lips curled. "Have you reached that level? How? You'd have to be a Senior Apprentice."

You didn't have to have a high level of magic to create efficient or pure things. It depended more on intelligence, creativity, and affinity than on mana itself. However, considering the short time Vice had started training in the forging art, it would be impossible for him to reach that level so quickly without a breakthrough.

Vice smiled and stopped hiding his magic level, showing his master that he had reached the Senior Apprentice level.

After noticing his disciple's cultivation, Benson's expression changed to a satisfied smile when he saw that this young man had easily passed through the 1st stage.

"I didn't expect that... Well, it doesn't matter how you did it. It's good that you got stronger." He said, knowing that everyone had their own secrets and it was not his right to question them.

"I want to see what your current ability is like Vice. As we improve the quality of our powers, we will naturally find it easier to create better things and understand the world around us.

But first, let me tell you that you don't need to reach 100% efficiency to obtain the Association's 1st-stage blacksmith license. If that were necessary, there would be almost no such blacksmiths in our world." He laughed when he saw the mistake his student had made.

"Huh?"

Benson explained. "Earlier, I told you that you needed to master that material to pass the Association's test. But I thought you'd only raise your efficiency to 60%. That's the minimum the Association requires of its 1st-stage blacksmiths.

You would reach that level of efficiency if you finished studying that material while you were still an Intermediate Apprentice. But after you raised your magic level, you should have surpassed it after your breakthrough."

Vicente's natural talent for forging was already high, Benson sensed. Even though not all Senior Apprentice blacksmiths could produce items with a high level of efficiency, that wasn't necessarily the case for Vicente.

In Benson's vision, if this young man applied himself, he could even dare to produce items for level 1 Acolytes before he even became an Acolyte!

The items' efficiency would probably be very low, but given his talents, he might be able to accomplish such a feat!

Realizing his mistake, Vicente learned that he could try to join the Association. "Then I can just go to..."

"No. First, I want to see what you've learned. I doubt you've assimilated everything in those books in such a short time." Benson said, pointing Vicente to the training area of his forge. "I want to see what you're capable of and help you correct inevitable mistakes before we go to the Association.

As much as I don't like to get involved in the Association's affairs, there are many benefits for new blacksmiths who join our group with a perfect score. So, let's make sure you can make something 100% efficient with a hammer before we take the Association test."

Benson saw Vice as the future of his projects. He wanted this black-haired young man to get the most out of joining the Association. At the same time, he wanted to see the look of shock on the faces of some of his companions when they saw his student reach the pinnacle of the 1st-stage at only 14 years of age.

Vicente then asked. "Won't I get in trouble? I don't want to attract attention, master."

"Do not worry. The Association's test is individual, and only some elders who evaluate new disciples know the results of each one. At the same time, you won't use your magical ability, so it's unlikely that anyone will know your origin from an extraordinary result." Benson said to ease his student's worries.

"Anyway, let's get started. We can go to the Association this afternoon if you're quick enough."

"Yes, master," Vicente said, wasting no time in beginning to extract metals from ores, showing Benson how much he had improved since the last time he had come to this estate.

Eventually, he would use his skill to produce a sword, showing Benson an item with almost 95% efficiency.

After seeing his students' first actions, Benson gave Vicente some tips and showed him easier ways to create artifacts.

After resting from the first part of this test, Vicente would work with the hammer, finding it more challenging to create artifacts this way but still achieving 89% efficiency with the final product he would create.

This would all happen before noon, and in the early afternoon, Benson would show Vicente some alternative ways to solve his problems.

Once again, Vice would use the hammer in the afternoon, using the techniques Benson had refined to try to increase the quality of what he could produce.

As he did so, Vice felt his understanding of forging reach a new level and new avenues open up before him.

He finished his rest at the end of the afternoon, and Benson looked him in the eye.

"Vice, I can't tell you what quality the next artifact you produce will be. But with what I've seen you do this afternoon, I feel it's worth taking you to the Association as you are now." Benson said, confident his student could achieve 100% in the attempts he was allowed in this group of blacksmiths.

Considering how Vicente had improved over the last few hours, Benson was confident that his student would increase his understanding of the forging by the last of his attempts at the Association test.

Vicente looked at his master and clenched his fists, feeling how much he had improved. Although he was still a little short of producing items with 100% efficiency with his hammer, he was confident that he could do so with his skill.

Not only that, the quality of his powers was improving, and he already felt he could control even the metals in the Intermediate Apprentice's bodies.

'Good. Forging is the best way for me. Today's training with Benson has given me better results than all the combat training I've ever done.' Vicente thought as his master gave him some gifts.

"Vice, I know you're going to pass the Association test, so let me give you some congratulatory gifts." The old man said as he showed him a hammer with red inscriptions on it, but also a silver bracelet with some strange symbols on it.

Seeing this, Vicente narrowed his eyes and noticed the quality of these two items.

Chapter 144 Millfall Blacksmiths' Association

'2nd-grade items?' Vicente immediately noticed the hammer's weight and the magical fluctuation from the silver bracelet.

Benson said. "I want you to save this hammer for when you reach the peak of the 1st stage. You're not far from reaching it, so it will be useful to you soon."

The importance of artifacts in everything in Polaris Realm was gigantic. A good artifact could make the manipulator's job much more manageable.

But good artifacts wouldn't turn poor talented people into experts. In a way, having a good artifact or tool was like having a good car.

Some good drivers did impressive things on Earth in simple, ordinary cars. However, some individuals had access to very rare cars with the best technology and features for a racing car. But with bad drivers behind the wheel, they could lose even to those with less impressive vehicles.

When it came to the artifacts in Polaris Realm, the relevance of the talent of the one who controlled such items was the same as that of the driver of a car in a race on Earth.

In the case of the hammer in Vicente's hands, it could help him produce resources of quasi-2nd-grade quality while he was still in the 1st stage.

With it, he could more easily understand some of the rules of forging and more quickly advance to the next level by preparing his mind and body.

Not only that, but he could produce 1st-grade items with it more easily than he could with his 1st-grade hammer.

Benson said. "As for this bracelet, it has a similar effect to a magic stone. But it's a support item specifically for blacksmiths. It only works when you are practicing your craft, and it only activates when you are close to exhaustion.

In any case, it can give you an extra 20 to 30 minutes of training, which will help speed up your understanding of the forging."

Just as mana increased with each level or magic level, the understanding required to create higher-quality items also increased exponentially with each tier.

As a result, any support item could make a massive difference in the lives of magicians like them.

Vicente heard this and immediately put the silver bracelet on one of his wrists, adjusting it so that it would be almost impossible for anyone to see it when he wasn't wearing it.

After thanking his master, he saw him lead the way to the Association. He just followed Benson, eager to get his license to buy the ores and metals he needed to arm his entire group with weapons with 100% efficiency.

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Ten minutes after leaving the previous estate, Vicente and Benson were already in front of the Millfall Blacksmiths' Association building in the town center.

They stopped in front of the beautiful building of the Association, an organization present in practically every state of Polaris Empire, and got out of the carriage they had come in.

Benson's metal dummy drove the blacksmith's carriage into the building's parking lot while its creator walked alongside Vice to the main entrance.

As Vice walked alongside Benson, the man told him about the Association.

"Vice, the Association is one of the largest institutions on the continent. You can accomplish a lot here, even if you're not interested in becoming a well-known public figure.

By becoming a member of the Association, you will not only be able to work as a blacksmith anywhere on the continent, but you will also have access to resources, techniques, spells, and much more. You can even contact other high-level blacksmiths who can change your life.

As much as I am respected and considered an expert in Millfall, there are even 6th-stage blacksmiths in the association. If you can develop your talents to the peak, even hiring someone like that or getting advice from them is possible.

So don't underestimate this place. It may not be an influential post in the Association, but it will allow you to reach faraway places. You just have to worry about taking one step at a time here."

"I'll keep that in mind, master," Vicente said as he listened to Benson's introductory speech while he saw the people in the building looking at him and his master with interest.

Benson was one of the few 3rd-stage blacksmiths in Millfall. He was a member of the Council but also one of the most difficult men to see.

The moment he and Vicente passed the entrance to the Association, the guards in the area and the blacksmiths coming and going stopped to observe them.

'It seems that the old King is teaching a new student...'

'This young man has an extraordinary Magic Gem... But his talent is not impressive. Does he have a secret? Benson doesn't accept teaching ordinary people.'

Some level 4 and 5 Acolyte blacksmiths in the area looked at Vice with curiosity, knowing that this young man was not registered at this post.

There weren't many blacksmiths in Millfall. If one counts the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stage blacksmiths, there should be less than 200 professionals in the city. Therefore, most of the members of the Association knew the blacksmiths registered at this post.

While the 1st-stage blacksmiths looked at Vicente with envy because most of them would like to be in his place and be a student of a 3rd-stage blacksmith, one of the council members in another part of the building sensed Benson's arrival.

"It looks like I'm going to see a disciple of our friend Benson King today." He commented in a low voice to another council member who was there today to handle some of the Association's day-to-day bureaucratic matters.

The other blacksmith, Henry Woodward, Luke's master and the first elder of the Millfall Blacksmiths' Association, heard this and said. "Would you like to accompany the Elder King? I have some business to attend to in my shop."

"Are you sure? Didn't Benson King challenge you a few years ago after that trouble?" The other 3rd-stage magician asked.

"I'm not interested," Henry nonchalantly said, confident that Benson would never surpass him and reach the 4th stage, as he had said on that fateful day when they had almost fought over a disciple.

"All right, I'll accompany this boy's test. After all, Benson always brings good talents to the association."

Meanwhile, Benson and Vicente arrived at the area where new blacksmiths registered with the institution, where tests were held every day in the early evening to issue new blacksmith licenses.

Chapter 145 Registering with the Association?

Arriving at the registration area for new blacksmiths, Benson saw the doorway open in front of him.

There was no line for the initial registration of new blacksmith candidates. The line was only for the 3 tests each blacksmith had to pass to be approved to join the association.

Stepping up to one of the three Association officials on hand to register those interested in taking today's test, Benson said. "Enroll my student. Deduct the cost of his enrollment from my merit points."

Immediately upon hearing these dry words, one of the officials began to register Vicente, collecting the young man's data but not charging him anything.

There was a fee of 1 gold coin for new blacksmiths to attempt the Association's exam.

Many young apprentice blacksmiths tried several times to get their licenses because not everyone could improve their skills as quickly as Vicente. However, blacksmiths needed to get a license to sell their items and earn their own coins.

Due to the number of young people constantly trying to pass the exam, the Association charged a fee, not only for the service rendered but also to discourage some young people from coming to the place daily.

However, the council members could exchange some of their merit points for the right to test their students, so Vice wouldn't have to pay anything for today.

After Vice gave that official his basic information, he said. "Young man, you are number 9 today. You'll have to wait your turn when the tests start." This man pointed to a black screen where red lights formed the symbol 0, indicating that the tests had not yet begun.

Vicente nodded and listened. "Do you know what you'll need to pass the Association's exam?"

"No."

The official explained while Benson was already talking to some elders in the area and people he hadn't seen for months.

"Well, the Association's license exam has three tests. In each of them, you have up to 30 minutes to meet the minimum requirements.

If you fail to meet the minimum requirement on one or more of these tests, you will be disqualified and will have to come back here in the future to retake the exam."

"What is the minimum requirement to pass?" Vice asked casually.

"60%. Whatever you're asked to do has to be at least 60% efficient." He said. "You'll be tested by three professionals from the Association in these side rooms in this area. You'll have 30 minutes on each test, the maximum time you have to produce something that meets our requirements."

"There's no theory or skills test?" Vice questioned.

He thought that in association exams like this, people would want to see how one's magical talents affected one's abilities.

However, these were exceptional characteristics of magicians, and such associations usually didn't test such things to protect their members. All they did was test these professionals' production capacity and determine the quality of the items they produced.

"No, if you can pass what we consider essential, the level of your talent, your creativity, or the way you act when producing items will not be considered. But these things can eventually be used to get you contacts within the Association.

There are contests and events where our blacksmiths can show off their skills and even win prizes. But that's for the stimulation of our members. It's not something that a new member needs to have."

For a long time, the Blacksmiths' Association served as a regulator of the profession. You wouldn't have to worry about the qualifications of the professionals classified by this organization.

By meeting a blacksmith and seeing their credentials, one could easily be sure that such a person had the minimum skills to produce weapons and items in general.

In a way, this group's license was like a seal of approval.

The official guiding Vicente then finished his explanation. "Each test will work on different types of items. Be prepared to produce armor, shields, and offensive items. It's our representatives who choose what you have to produce."

The production of defensive and offensive items required completely different techniques. Some might find it much easier to make defensive items, others the opposite. However, every blacksmith had to be able to produce every type of artifact in order to be approved by the Association.

Even one type of artifact, such as a weapons, could have variations that require very different production techniques. A bow and arrow, for example, was much more challenging to make than a simple dagger.

Knowing this, Vicente thanked the man for his guidance and then sat down in the waiting area.

As he did so, the screen changed its symbol after the clock struck 6 p.m., calling the first youth of the day to the test in room number 3.

There were 9 rooms in the area where Vicente was, 3 for each of the tests.

The teens with tokens number 2 and 3 were quickly called, reducing the number of people waiting with Vicente in the waiting area.

While his master disappeared from the area, Vicente saw some of the young apprentices from the forge looking at him with interest.

That evening, he was the only student of a 3rd-stage blacksmith there to take his test. What's more, Vicente's master was the most unusual of them all but also someone who had a long track record locally and was known for teaching prodigies.

'I want to see what this new student of Mr. King's is capable of...' One of them looked at Vice with an ugly expression, remembering the day he had been rejected by Benson.

Meanwhile, another young man there, a disciple of Henry's disciple, looked at Vicente with a smile.

"Hey, what's your name?" This young man, who also had black hair like Vicente, asked as he looked at him with interest.

"My name is Vicente."

"Vicente? Nice to meet you. I'm Eli. I hope we can pass this test together. Our masters are old acquaintances, so I'm sure we will be too." He said and looked at Vicente as if waiting for something.

Vicente didn't understand what this person wanted and just said. "Yes, I hope so. Good luck, Eli. Who is your master? I'm not very familiar with the local blacksmiths."

After hearing that, the young man's expression froze as someone behind him burst out laughing.

Chapter 146 Bet ?

"It seems that Benson King's new disciple doesn't know how to recognize the symbol of the glorious master Landon Fraser." A voice said after a long laugh.

Hearing this, Eli looked back and saw one of the new disciples of Zane Smith, his master Landon's greatest rival.

Vicente looked back and saw a young man with a Magic Gem the same color as his own.

"Nate, I didn't expect to see you here today," Eli said, looking at the man he had met a few days ago after a meeting with the local blacksmiths who had accompanied their masters.

As younger disciples of their masters, the two had met and exchanged a few barbs, following the tradition of disciples taking part in their masters' intrigues.

Masters were like parents to young magicians. And when someone so important to them was challenged or insulted, many naturally became defensive, sometimes aggressive.

Zane and Landon were rivals, so of course they saw each other that way.

Nate laughed and said. "I didn't expect you here. Even though your master isn't bad, I didn't expect him to free you to come here today... Are you nervous, Eli? You won't humiliate your master by failing, are you?"

"Nate!"

Seeing this, Vicente didn't bother with these two and stopped paying attention to them.

He didn't care who their masters were and if either of them had any problems with Benson. Their past affairs were none of his business.

But in doing so, Vicente caught the attention of the two young men looking at each other strangely.

"Hey, did you really say you didn't know my master?" Eli asked with a serious look on his face.

"I heard about him from a friend. But I don't know him personally, and I definitely wouldn't know how to recognize one of his disciples."

"Haha, people can't even recognize their master's disciples nowadays, haha." Nate laughed, imagining that Vice was trying to diminish Landon's figure.

Eli fell for Nate's teasing and gave Vice a dirty look.

Landon was a student of Henry Woodward, Millfall's greatest blacksmith. In addition, Landon was the most talented 2nd stage blacksmith in the area. As a student of Benson's rival, Landon naturally had a rivalry with Vicente's master and such a man's disciples.

The young man felt insulted that Benson's disciple didn't recognize him, which, in a way, was like saying that he and his master were nothing.

"You..." Eli clenched his fists and felt like punching Vicente. But inside the Association's evaluation and registration area, he held back and challenged. "I want to see if you're good enough to act so arrogantly! Let's see who does better in this evaluation, Benson's student!"

Nate liked what he heard and looked at the black-haired young man's expression as Vice looked at Eli.

Vicente looked at the idiot picking a fight with someone who was just solving his own problems and remembered his time on Earth.

'Oh, that's right, there are people like that.' He sighed.

In his early years as a criminal, he once saw a man killed for something that had nothing to do with him, just because he got involved in something that wasn't his problem.

In other situations, Vicente had met people who were looking for trouble for no reason. He had dealt with half a dozen such people himself and had some experience with arrogant and foolish individuals.

Noticing the type of person near him, he simply said. "What would I gain by competing with you? Is there any advantage in beating you?"

Nate almost couldn't stand it when he heard this, as Eli looked into Vice's eyes with hatred.

"You bastard! I'll bet you a kilo of Perpetual Tear! If I don't beat you, I'll give it to you. But if I do beat you, you'll have to kneel before me in front of everyone and call me your father!" He said, confident that he would defeat this young man who seemed to have just awakened his powers.

After one's magical powers awaken, determining one's exact age would be very difficult. But considering that Vice hadn't been a student of Benson's for long and was there to get his license, he must have been between 14 and 15 years old, a little younger than most of the people who had come to this place once or twice before.

Not every master invested as much in their disciples as Benson did in Vice, so this Association test also functioned as a way for some youths to assess their progress. That's why it was common for young people like him to come to this place once or twice before getting their licenses.

But Vicente was there for the first time. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been tutored by the Association official earlier, as these two had seen while watching him.

'This bastard must be an Intermediate Apprentice at best. With a yellow talent and less than 15 years old, there's no way he can beat me.' Eli thought, inwardly smiling as he imagined such a young man on his knees, humiliated.

"Perpetual Tear?" Vicente frowned, recognizing the name of a valuable crystal for 1st and 2nd-stage blacksmiths.

Such a resource could be used to increase the success rate of forging an artifact. At the same time, because it was found only in the depths of the sea, this crystal was very rare and cost several dozen gold coins per kilo.

Vicente imagined that such a young man had won this item from his master, and even though this bet might get him into trouble later, he accepted it. "Very well. We'll do as you say. You'll give me 1 kilo of Perpetual Tear if I beat you. If I lose, I'll do as you say."

Seeing Benson and Landon's disciples arguing made Nate very happy, and he said. "Haha, I'm a witness to your words. If either side backs down later, I'll spread the word in the city."

"Humph!" Eli left their side and went to his test, noticing that his number was being called in room 2.

Meanwhile, Nate advised. "Vicente Fuller, you should use everything you have. That guy is already a Senior Apprentice. And he spent the last 6 months preparing for today's test."

"Why do you say that?"

"Wouldn't it be better to see the guy lose his Perpetual Tears?" Nate laughed before leaving Vice's side and heading to his own test.

Vicente's number was soon called, and he made his way to room number 3, where he found a 2nd-stage blacksmith waiting for him.

Chapter 147 The First Test ?

Upon entering a room of about 30 square meters with gray walls, Vicente immediately ignored the things there. He looked at the man sitting next to a small table.

This person was dressed in the traditional overcoat the Association's blacksmiths wore. In this man's case, there were two stars above his left chest, something that indicated his classification as a blacksmith.

He had a serious look on his face, while he had a large book in front of him in which he was writing something.

"Vicente Fuller..." He muttered as he turned the page and saw Benson King's newest student. 'Is this brat his disciple? Didn't the rumors say this guy only took people with green talent or higher?'

He looked at Vice's forehead for a moment and asked. "How long have you been under the elder King's tutelage? Do you come from a forging family, Vicente?"

"A few weeks. And no, I don't have a forging background, senior." Vicente replied, standing in the middle of the area he needed to use, where there were some tools and instruments useful for what he was about to do.

'Weeks?' The bald man frowned, the only part of his face with hair. Thinking that this young man was just there to be tested or to show off his talents, the man didn't give it much thought and said. "Very well, you may begin. For this first test, you need to make a shield-type defensive item.

You have 30 minutes to develop something that exceeds the minimum requirement, Viciente."

With these words from his assessor, Vicente immediately grabbed his materials from the area and got to work with a hammer.

The only items that could be used in the Association's tests were those provided by the organization. To prevent cheating with high-level resources, this institution didn't allow people to use their personal items.

However, they could use their skills and spells, which were considered inseparable characteristics of magicians.

Vicente had no intention of showing his powers to anyone other than Benson. That would be too risky, as it might expose his powers to more people than he thought acceptable.

With Benson, he could be carefree because his master wouldn't harm him by revealing this information. But with people he had no control over, like the members of this association, he didn't want to take any chances.

Picking up the hammer from that area, he made his first move by using a body balancing technique and positioning his body appropriately to move the heavy object.

When he made his first move against a metal bar, Vicente immediately made the evaluator, watching him without much interest, change his expression.

'What?' This person opened his eyes wider, not only because he felt that the mana was too dense for a young man who had only awakened his powers a few weeks ago but also because he saw the refinement of Vicente's technique.

Unlike the youth early, this evaluator knew Vicente's exact age. Not only did he know that this young man was more talented in his magic cultivation than the color of his gem would suggest, but he could also sense the sophistication of this young man's technique.

'How could that be? Is this the Three Hearts Technique?' He clenched his fists as he saw a 14-year-old youth using an essential technique for 1st and 2nd-stage blacksmiths with ease.

The Three Hearts Technique was a breathing and body control technique in which one used one's calves to increase the power of one's movements as if one had three hearts working in one's body.

It facilitated the blacksmith's mastery of the hammer but also increased the magician's sensory ability to perceive changes in the metal they were working on.

Vicente used it for his first moves, drawing the attention of the blacksmiths watching him from behind a false wall on one side of the room.

Three men were behind this false wall, which was actually a pane of glass that made its area invisible to the people in the testing area.

One of them was obviously Benson, while the other two were a member of the council and one of his students.

"Oh? It seems that this young man is really talented. Not only has he reached the level of Senior Apprentice so quickly, but he has also managed to master the first level of the Three Hearts Technique." The man who had been talking to Henry earlier said as he watched Vice's movements with interest.

He hadn't expected someone with a yellow talent to be so special!

'No wonder this cunning fox accepted this young man.' The level 5 Acolyte, next to his master, looked at Benson out of the corner of his eye. 'He really only accepts monsters as disciples!'

Benson heard his fellow council member's comment and laughed, pleased that his disciple was attracting attention.

He wasn't particularly interested in other people's opinions. But some of the old men on the council doubted his abilities and some of his old promises.

It was always delightful for him to see them behaving like such a Mage!

"Isaac, don't be so impressed yet. You'll see something impressive at the end of this exam." Benson said, making the guy look at him.

"What are you talking about?"

"Haha, just watch and see. Vicente is the most talented blacksmith I've ever taught. One day, he'll even surpass Elliott Preston."

"Elliott?" The level 5 Acolyte looked at Benson, doubting that this would come true.

Who was Elliott? This was the greatest blacksmith in the Seidel Kingdom, the current First Elder of the state Blacksmiths' Association.

While Isaac wondered if his colleague was joking, Vicente used everything he could without using his unique ability and worked hard for 30 minutes until he finished his shield, 1 minute before his time ran out.

When he stopped moving, Vicente was sweating like a pig about to be slaughtered, breathing so hard that people on the other side of the false wall of this room could hear him.

But while he was exhausted, no one there paid attention to him. All eyes were on the silver shield on a table in the room.

This shield wasn't stunning, but in tests like this, blacksmiths usually didn't care about the design of their products. The important thing was that it worked.

When the evaluator saw such a shield up close, he couldn't say that he was shocked because of Vicente's movements in the last 30 minutes, he would surely produce something efficient. But when such a man analyzed the shield, he couldn't help but open his mouth in surprise.

"98% efficiency!" He said out loud, not believing that he had such an excellent 1st-grade item in his hands.

Chapter 148 He Must Go to the Tournament!

?

It was rare for blacksmiths to reach 100% efficiency in producing items of the same grade as their magic stage!

Most would advance to the next stage before even reaching 95% efficiency. In fact, the normal range was between 80% and 90% efficiency on items of the same grade as a professional progressed through the ranks.

Most would only gain access to the understanding needed to produce items of 100% efficiency or purity when they changed magic stages and were able to see the world differently.

As one advanced through the ranks, one would not only experience an improvement in the richness of one's mana but would also undergo a qualitative evolution that would increase all of one's attributes. Among them, talent and the ability to see the world evolved, and it became easier for people to see old mistakes and how certain things would work better.

In this world, advice is good for guiding people. But to solve a problem, it wasn't enough for someone to tell you what to do. You had to understand why you were making a mistake and why it was causing you to make a mistake. Until you understood that, even if someone told you, it wouldn't make a difference in solving the problem.

This was the reality for 99% of the magicians in Polaris Realm, and the case of people who managed to achieve a level of mastery over their own abilities as high as Vicente's was very infrequent.

Hearing Vicente's score from that evaluator, the men watching him from behind the false wall of that room opened their mouths in shock.

"98%?"

Gulp!

"That boy..." Isaac became more serious, seeing that Vicente wasn't just a good talent but a one-in-a-million prodigy!

Benson smiled in satisfaction when he heard this result and noticed that the shield Vicente produced was already of a higher quality than the last weapon the young man in front of him had produced earlier.

'He'll probably get 100% on the third test.' Benson thought to himself as he saw his student reach his goal.

"Who is this boy, Benson? What is his innate ability? He hasn't used a single bit of his special power." Isaac asked in a low tone.

"Haha, that's not for you to know, my friend. Vicente won't use his power." Benson laughed, still looking at the exhausted young man in the room.

"Don't talk nonsense. This is a matter of great importance to the Association." Isaac said in a louder tone. "With a talent like his, we can improve our chances in the annual Forge Tournament. He could bring us a lot of resources and opportunities!"

"But master, this year's tournament is only three months away. There won't be time..."

"Tsk! I'm not talking about this damned year. In 2 or 3 years of preparation, Vicente could represent our post and win first place! But that depends on how his skills develop." Isaac said to his foolish pupil.

"Oh?"

"Isaac, I don't mind my disciples competing. But I've never forced them to participate in these events."

"Let me talk to him. He certainly has ambitions that can be fulfilled by participating in this tournament," Isaac said, confident in the competitive spirit of the younger generation.

"Good luck, hehe."

Meanwhile, the level 5 Acolyte said. "But he won't be able to hide his powers for much longer. He'll have a hard time in the next trials."

It was tough to have a blacksmith with the same ability to create all kinds of artifacts. Each would have more difficulty with certain types of artifacts and more ease with others.

Vicente probably had an easier time making defensive items based on his efficiency in making that shield. With that in mind, the 2nd-stage blacksmith was confident that the black-haired young man would have to use his skills in the next tests.

Benson heard this and said nothing.

These men didn't know it, but the type of artifact Vicente found most difficult to make were shields!

He said to Isaac. "If you want to see his skill, you must convince him to show you. I promised him I'd never talk to anyone about his skill."

Hearing this and seeing Benson move to another area where they could watch Vicente's next test, Isaac frowned.

'Fucking King! You don't give a damn about your class! That's why you'll never be better than Henry!' Isaac clenched his fists.

...

After leaving the previous room, Vicente returned to the waiting area, where there were fewer people now that some of the young blacksmith apprentices had failed the first test.

But when he returned, Vicente not only saw Nate and Eli already sitting on the waiting bench, but he also saw a ranking of the young people who were taking the test for the 1st-grade blacksmith's license that evening.

On one of the walls in this area, a ranking appeared, showing the position of these young people, considering the preliminary results so far.

More than an hour after the first tests began, and with 15 people registered for today's tests, Vicente was in second place, behind only one young man who had already passed the second test of the night.

Seeing Vicente's name above his own, Eli frowned when he saw the rank update, something the Association used in all tests of this type to encourage its members.

"How is this possible?" Eli stood up from where he was and asked himself in disbelief.

He scored 88 points on the first test, an impressive score that would have put him in first place on standard days.

But still, had Vice passed him?

Even Nate frowned. He had scored 87 points, but he couldn't help but be shocked by Vicente's preliminary result.

'Could it be that he was tested on the item that was easiest for him to produce?' He wondered, thinking that he might get a better result in one of the next tests since he hadn't been tested on his preferred type of artifact.

Vicente ignored them and quickly sat down to wait his turn.

With fewer young blacksmith apprentices present for the following tests, it wouldn't be long before Vicente was called again, this time to room number 6.

In a room similar to the previous one but with a different examiner of a higher level than before, Vicente was soon asked to make a spear.

He had plenty of time to rest between the 1st and 2nd tests, so he had no trouble showing off his forging skills and surprising his observers once again!

Chapter 149 1st Stage Blacksmith?(1)

"99%!" The 2nd examiner shouted as he picked up the spear that Vicente had just finished making.

The men behind the false wall of this room heard this. They realized that even without using his skill, Vicente had produced something of even higher quality than the previous shield.

Even though the difference between the two was small, even 1%, close to the upper limit of an item's quality, was worth a lot.

To give you an idea, if Vicente had one spear with 98% efficiency and another with 99%, he could sell the latter for about 130% of the value of the 98% one!

Every step one had to take to get to the top got higher as one got closer to the top. This was true for the quality of items in a rank but also for much of what existed in this magical world, including the magic rank.

A spear with 99% efficiency would have much greater durability and power than an item with 98% efficiency, even though the difference in efficiency was so slight.

Therefore, it was challenging to produce items that were only 1% or 2% better in quality when you were already at such a high level.

Even though Vicente had done well in the previous test, this current result still surprised the two men who didn't know him and saw his performance.

Isaac clenched his fists when he realized that this young man would not show his skill in the last test remaining to complete the 1st stage blacksmith's license exam.

Seeing that Benson had no intention of talking to him about anything, he didn't want to wait, so he left where he was and went to the waiting room where the apprentice blacksmiths could wait for their tests.

When they got there, Isaac and his apprentice saw Vice sitting down in one of the waiting chairs to wait for his final test.

As Vice sat down, Nate looked at the rankings in front of him without understanding and saw Vice's name in first place while his name was in third.

One of the young men there to get his license had even taken the last test and passed as a 1st stage blacksmith. But even with 3 results on his account, this young man still lost points to Vice, who had only taken 2 tests.

'How is that possible? Did he score over 90% on both tests?' Nate clenched his fists as he looked at Vicente and realized that this guy must be a genius.

He scored 86 points more in the last test but still lost to Vice and the runner-up. But considering that the runner-up had 3 tests, meaning he had accumulated more than 180 points, there was only one possibility for Vicente's position.

He had scored over 90 on each of his tests!

'What kind of genius is this?' Nate looked at Vicente wide-eyed, realizing that he had underestimated this guy earlier.

But the one who had a bet with the wrong guy had been Eli, so as much as he was shocked, Nate didn't feel too bad about the preliminary result of this test.

While looking curiously at Vice, Isaac and his disciple appeared in the waiting room, attracting the attention of all the young people there.

Seeing a 3rd-stage blacksmith was very rare for most of these young people, so when they saw the symbol on Isaac's clothing, several stood up from where they were and looked respectfully at this elder.

Isaac ignored them all and stopped in front of Vicente.

"Young Vicente, congratulations on your accomplishments so far. I didn't expect someone so talented to appear in my Association, but you really are a pleasant surprise." He said, praising the black-haired young man. "Vicente, you will have a bright future if you focus on the path of forging. I don't think it will be long before you reach my level, haha."

Upon hearing this, Vicente stood up and greeted the elder Isaac.

He didn't know what was on this person's mind, but Vice wasn't arrogant enough to despise this elder's act of coming to him.

Whatever the reason, he couldn't afford to do the wrong thing and miss out on the benefits he could gain from interacting with this person.

"The elder is exaggerating. I have a long way to go before those words describe me." He said with a subtle smile at the corner of his lips.

Isaac liked Vicente's personality, while the level 5 Acolyte beside him also liked the young man's words.

Then Isaac got right to the point. "Unfortunately, you're already Benson's disciple and can't accept me as your master. Otherwise, I would do my best to teach you, young man. But that's not why I'm here.

Would you like to be the representative of our Association? As a representative, you would have access to our entire collection at this post, resources, and regular opportunities.

In return, all you would have to do is defend the association and help it reach a higher level."

When Vicente heard this, he immediately understood that the man wanted to help him so that he could help him later. Basically, he would only receive benefits in the short term, and then he would have to help this post, probably giving up some of his freedom.

In a way, it was similar to financing college on Earth.

'No way...' He thought to himself. 'If I accept this, I'll have to get involved in commitments that will take up a lot of my time, and I'll be stuck in this city for a while.'

As nice as it would be to be supported by someone stronger and more influential, one always had to think about what one would have to pay for later. There were no free lunches, and Vicente thought about the future more than most young people his age did.

Then he laughed and said. "How could I represent the Association, elder? I don't even have a blacksmith's license. I'm just a junior who has just awakened his powers.

I need some time before committing myself to something so important. I don't want to profit now only to be disappointed in the future."

Isaac was experienced and knew that Vicente would simply reject him.

This young man didn't need time to decide about something so beneficial to him. Who would turn down such an offer because they weren't sure?

Almost anyone in Vicente's situation would accept it immediately. Only someone who was not interested would come up with such an excuse!

But he couldn't force Vicente to do it, lest he tarnish the Association's image. On the other hand, the way this young man had declined the invitation wasn't bad.

"Really? I guess I got a little ahead of myself when I saw your skills." Isaac commented in a humorous tone, but inside, he was very angry with Vice, especially with Benson for giving his students room to act like this.

"Then I'll give you some time to think about it, young Vicente. My words will still be valid for the next few days, so once you've made up your mind, all you have to do is go to the council." Isaac said before turning to leave.

But as he did so, he looked at one of the men in the area and said. "Give priority to this young man's third test. Once he's rested, continue with his final test."

"Yes, elder."

The men in the area did not refuse the magician's order and looked at Vicente curiously. But with this man's order, none of them would give young Fuller a hard time, and as soon as he was done resting, he would go to room number 7 for his last test of the day.

...

While Vicente was finishing his entrance test for the Millfall Blacksmiths' Association, Casey had already completed more than 60% of his work in Martell Village.

After arriving there a few days ago, he quickly wiped the memory of Vicente's weapons from the minds of the weakest, who had virtually no way to defend themselves against his actions.

But of course, he had discovered what Vice wanted to hide: the weapons identical to those used by Cesar's group...

As a man who worked with noble families and the underworld, Casey knew what was going on in Millfall to connect Vicente's and Cesar's weapons easily.

Now he knew for sure that Cesar's identity was really Vicente Fuller!

However, even with this information, he had a mission to complete before returning to Millfall, so he kept it in the back of his mind. But once he was back in his town, he wanted to meet Vice again.

Even if he couldn't reveal the truth about Vice to the world, he had no other way to get resources because of the knowledge he had recently acquired.

After resting from the last time he used his ability this afternoon, he looked at a list of names that had already crossed off more than 150 names and looked out the window of his house.

"Time to take care of the strongest in the village." He muttered before making his way to the royal guard post that existed in this village.

Later that evening, Vicente would finish his third test at the new blacksmith's testing area at the Association's post in Millfall.

As he used his hammer for the last time that evening, Vicente was once again exhausted, but this time, he felt a perfect sensation in his being.

It was always great to finish a job well done. But to achieve 100% efficiency in the forging art without even using his unique skill was incredible!

After almost 30 minutes of hard work, after hours in this Association building, Vicente had finished producing a sword with 100% efficiency.

Even his master was dumbfounded to see his student reach this level while being only a 1st-stage magician.

On the other hand, even though Isaac was angry with Benson and Vicente, he couldn't help but be less grumpy when he saw this result.

Whether Vice accepted Isaac's proposal, Vicente could still help this Association post with his phenomenal skills.

With this in mind, as he watched the evaluator of Vicente's test staring wide-eyed at that sword, he said to Benson. "Even if he doesn't want to be firmly supported by the Council and the Association, he will still be important for our post. I'm going to release some benefits for your student."

"Oh? I appreciate that. That will help a lot." Benson was sincere.

As much as he was a Council Elder, he wouldn't have been able to give Vicente the benefits Vice needed to access some of the possibilities of this Association post on his own. But with Isaac's support, he had enough to help his disciple!

Vicente probably wouldn't have access to the best there was, as the others, including Isaac, would undoubtedly have higher requirements for him to access such opportunities. But even so, Vice could begin his journey with more rights than his peers would have by joining this organization.

As the men left, Vicente received congratulations from the examiner, who didn't hesitate to take the sword with him as he left.

Vicente knew that the items produced in such exams belonged to the Association. After breathing more calmly, he left the room where he had taken his last test.

When he reached the waiting area in that part of the Association, he ignored the ranking and went to the staff counter.

The previous examiner had told him to pick up his identification as a 1st stage blacksmith and the gifts the Association gave its new members in such an area.

Vicente quickly received a black bag containing an identification crystal, an overcoat with the Association's symbol of a star on the left chest, and some pills and metal bars.

But as he rummaged through these things and put them away in his storage item, a scream suddenly alerted Vice and everyone else in the area.

"Impossible!"

Eli shouted as he saw the results of this exam and noticed Vicente's name in first place and his in second.

He scored an incredible 91 points on his last test. But he still hadn't managed to pass Vicente!

Thinking that there was something wrong with this, given Vicente's level of talent, he shouted in an unjustified manner. "There's something wrong with this rank. It's not possible that this person beat me!"

Vicente looked at Eli and remembered his bet with this guy over two hours ago.

Noticing that this person didn't seem willing to accept his defeat, Vicente looked at Eli contemptuously and said. "Now that you've lost, will you use that excuse not to pay for your promises?"

"Tsk! You bastard! I'm sure you bribed your examiners, and your ranking is wrong!"

The Association officials in the surrounding area heard this and gave Eli ugly looks.

The Association was very strict with its employees and had stringent rules against such acts, especially regarding the examinations for blacksmiths to advance in rank. If even one of them were accused of corruption, they would have a lot of problems in their lives.

"You damned brat! Our association is sacred and does not allow this kind of shameful act! Take back your words!" An Acolyte shouted, extremely offended.

Nate was impressed by Vicente's result, but unlike Eli, he had seen how much support Elder Isaac had given the young black-haired man. So he couldn't believe that something was wrong. "Eli, don't be a coward. You have lost. Vice is better than you.

Accept your defeat, and don't dishonor the name of your masters. Pay the? you promised Perpetual Tear to Vicente!" He said the last part out loud so that everyone in the area could hear it.

"What?"

"He wagered something so valuable?"

"What a fool! Who took this idiot as a student? I'm sure he'll have a bad reputation in Millfall after today."

"Hey, keep your voice down, he's Master Landon's disciple!"

Several people commented on Eli's foolishness, causing him to turn red with anger.

But some advised him to pay what he owed.

"Young man, pay what you owe. Not keeping such a promise could even harm your magical progress..."

Vicente remained silent as he looked at Eli, seeing that this young man looked like a pressure cooker about to explode.

He wouldn't stay still if this person moved, so he was on guard.

But just as the tension in the room was about to reach its limit and one of them was about to turn on the other, another of Henry's students came out of one of the evaluation rooms.

"Eli, did you make that bet?" That person, who was of the same generation as Landon, asked as he looked thoughtfully at Eli.

Eli recognized the voice of one of Henry's few disciples, someone whom his master, Landon, respected greatly.

He changed his expression and said in a hurt tone. "I did it, but something's wrong. I'm sure of it!"

Henry's student closed his eyes and shook his head negatively. "There is nothing wrong. Pay the young man what you owe him. You've lost."

Hearing that from the man was like getting punched in the stomach. But Eli remained silent, understanding the meaning of it all.

He had lost to Vicente, a young beginner in the forging art!

Unable to argue with his superior, Eli took the one kilo of Perpetual Tear from his stash and quickly threw it in Vicente's direction.

Not wanting to be humiliated any further, he quickly made his way to the exit, following the level 5 Acolyte.

"How is that possible, Mr. Kaleb? I thought I was going to get a first place after my seclusion!" He said as he walked briskly alongside the man.

"This young man is a monster. I examined him in one of his tests, and he scored over 95 points in making a weapon!" Kaleb said quietly, knowing that he couldn't tell what Vicente's score was, but sure Eli would understand why he had lost.

"Over 95?" Eli turned pale when he heard that.

...

Meanwhile, Vicente had stored the one kilo of Perpetual Tear in his storage item. He was soon moving around the Association building after leaving the previous area.

With his 1st-stage forging license, he could now buy and trade several resources in this establishment. Not only that, but he could also get in touch with many of the books in this place and learn a bit more about this craft.

It was evening, so most of the places he could benefit from within this Association were closed. However, he still decided to look around and familiarize himself with where he would be in the next few days.

He couldn't act until Casey returned, so until then, he would focus on the forge and this place.

But on his way to the Association's library, Vicente ran into his master.

Seeing Vice, Benson smiled and said. "Congratulations on your results. I'm sure you'll have your 2nd stage license in a few months.

But now I have to take you somewhere."

"Where?" Vicente asked as he frowned.

"As I told you, joining the Association like this would benefit you. And in fact, you'll get some unique opportunities, even without committing to representing the Association."

"Oh? What exactly will I gain from these benefits?" Vicente wondered.

"Access to the highest level and rarest resources, priority delivery of materials, access to special techniques, and access to the training and study area for 2nd-stage blacksmiths," Benson explained the main point.

Part of the reason why 2nd-stage magicians were better at what they did was because of their mana, extra pentagram, and greater understanding of the world. But in institutions like this, there were techniques you normally only had access to when you reached a particular stage.

However, that didn't mean that these techniques couldn't be learned by those of a lower magical level!

Even without having to earn any merit or pass the 2nd-stage blacksmith's exam, Vicente had earned the right to learn some of these techniques and spells.

"Perfect."