

The Mafia 241

Chapter 241 Conversation with a Genius

After signing the Magic Agreement, the three envoys from the magic college finished what they had to do in the city and prepared to leave.

Before they did, Alice looked at Vicente and said. "Cesar, I hope you'll be able to fulfill that agreement. Regardless of our earlier position, you are a native of the kingdom, and if you can grow up to be an expert, it will be better.

Don't think we wish you the worst just because we ask for such an agreement. I hope to hear good news about you, and if you need anything in the meantime, I promise to welcome you to my office in the capital."

The Seidel Magic College had only one seat, which was located in the kingdom's largest city, the capital, Grandis.

Grandis was home to the royal family and all the known Sovereigns of the Seidel Kingdom.

As far as Vice knew, the strongest people in the state were Sovereigns, and most of them lived in the Diamond Province, the territory ruled by the royal family, where Grandis was located.

As much as Alice had forced him to make a bad deal, Vicente knew her words meant something. Any support in this highest place in the kingdom would be critical to anyone.

He thanked her for her words. "Thank you for the opportunity, senior."

Joshua and his girlfriend didn't say much after Alice's words, just saying goodbye and looking forward to the end of the 10-year period.

Left alone with his soldiers and the two Mages from Rexnelts Academy, Vicente pondered for a few seconds before director Scott looked at him and asked.

"Will you be all right, young Cesar?"

Director Scott could already imagine that Cesar was likely to have problems that would be particularly troublesome for him if today's problem wasn't solved the way it had been. No one without motivation would accept a contract as terrible as the one he had signed.

The director could easily see that and was curious to know what Cesar would do from now on.

"Hmm, thank you for your concern, senior Scott. But better a problem in 10 years than now." Vicente said, looking immensely relieved for them.

Unlike the vast majority of people in the world, Vicente knew exactly how compound interest worked.

How important was that? Well, his progress was like compound interest. The more time he had, the more magical his results became.

He was weak now, but in 10 years, he could go through various bonuses and increase his strength exponentially. There was no way to predict for sure where he would be when such a deal was struck.

Confident in the effect of compound interest on his magical progress, Vicente was calm even though he knew he had a long way to go.

Hearing Cesar's relieved tone, director Scott asked him. "Young man, why did you come here? I sense that you have more plans than just solving this problem."

"The director is right," Vicente remembered why he had come to this city and put the future aside for a moment. "I'm looking for knowledge. At first, I wanted to come to this academy to get advice on where or who to seek help from. But now that I've met senior Newton, I think part of my search is over."

"You wanted to meet me?" Newton looked at Vice.

"No. I didn't know your name. But now that I've heard how amazing you are, I can't help but wonder if you might be able to answer some of my questions." Vicente replied.

"Perfect. I'd like you to join me for a more in-depth conversation." Newton liked that.

To him, Cesar was a great anomaly, someone perfect for him to study!

He looked at director Scott and asked. "Do you have anything else you want to talk to Cesar about? I'd like to take him to my lab."

"Go ahead, professor Newton. I'll wait to hear about your conversation later."

Newton had a lot of freedom because of his potential. But director Scott didn't have much more to talk to Vice about anyway since the matter was already settled, and Newton could help the young man reach more capable scholars in this city than he could.

With that, Vice and his three men soon followed Newton's lead to the laboratory of the head professor of the Rexnelts Academy.

Halfway there, Vicente's men asked Newton about the director because of the man's last name. As they expected, the director was a member of the Scott family, the family of the current Duke of the province.

The director Scott was the Duke's eldest nephew, someone far removed from the Scott line of succession.

After discussing such a curiosity, the group arrived at a laboratory of over 200 square meters, a large cylindrical chamber on one of the highest levels of the academy building.

Inside the laboratory, they saw a bookcase that could easily hold more than 2,000 books of various types, all perfectly cataloged by specialty and level of difficulty.

In addition, there were various tools useful for different professions around the area, including items for blacksmiths, which Vice naturally recognized when he looked at the well-organized surroundings of that laboratory.

Vicente's men paid attention to the beautiful view of a part of the city and the sea from there, something neither Vice nor Newton paid much attention to when they arrived there.

Then, after closing the door to his lab and activating various security mechanisms, Newton lowered the curtains on the windows and turned on the lights.

He asked the question he had been waiting to ask for a few minutes. "Cesar, what color is your first pentagram?"

Vicente's men looked at him, not understanding this simple question since it was so obvious.

What other pentagram, besides a red one, would anyone have? The first pentagram was given to magicians by the Magic Gem they received upon awakening. How could anyone have anything else?

But Vicente understood almost immediately what Newton was asking. 'Good question... Let's see where you take me.'

"Red, of course." He said, narrowing his eyes under his mask.

"Impossible!" Newton exclaimed. "In my work as a scholar, I've accessed the records of more than 10,000 talented young people who have awakened their powers throughout the kingdom. But when I checked their progress, none of them could even come close to what you've done.

Cesar, what happened to you wasn't initiated by you, but many talented magicians try to absorb pentagrams better than they should in order to achieve something fantastic. That happens every year, even though we scholars have long explained the risks of doing so.

Of the 10,000 cases I studied, 100 young people tried to do what you were forced to try. One of them had a Cyan talent. But even he failed.

So either you have a first pentagram orange or a phenomenal talent, probably above Cyan. Those are the only possibilities, or your body couldn't take it."

"Why?" Vicente asked, playing dumb. "Maybe there's another explanation."

"Either your body has been changed by some natural essence that has left a trace on you, like a pentagram, or your talent is so high that you can control the yellow pentagram perfectly without letting it harm you," Newton said.

"There may even be an additional explanation, but it's related to what I said. So, there must be something that explains it. Then, what is the level of your talent?"

Chapter 242 Solution to the Problem?

"Yellow," Vicente responded.

Meanwhile, his men looked at Newton and saw him make a thoughtful expression and look at their leader.

"And what is your magical form? Are you going to tell me it's ordinary, too?" Newton asked before making conclusions about Vicente's situation.

"No. It's unusual. I'd say one of the most unusual you can imagine." Vicente answered the first thing Newton had expected him to say.

But even though he knew that Vice's magical form was unusual, that alone wasn't enough to justify the fact that Vicente had been able to absorb a yellow pentagram.

'Is it an auxiliary characteristic of his magical form?' Newton pondered. 'No. It can't be. In Professor Reid's words, Cesar's magical form has nothing to do with physical characteristics.

It might even be possible that one day Cesar will be able to change his physical characteristics depending on his luck with pentagrams. Still, at the moment, that shouldn't be possible.

Newton had heard all the accounts of the teachers who had arrived at Ironcrest hours before Vicente and his men. He knew how Vice's powers worked, and earlier, he had only asked the young man to show his pentagram to verify the truth of the teachers' words.

Now that he knew they hadn't made anything up, Newton felt he could trust their words and knew that Cesar shouldn't be able to change his physical features with his special powers.

Having come to this conclusion, he was faced with a problem.

"I don't believe." He said, referring to Vicente's talent. "If everything about you, except for that yellow pentagram, is 'ordinary,' how are you alive?"

To do this without anything else special, you'd have to have two or three bodies inside you to withstand the physical and mental demands of a pentagram of such a level.

You'd have to have at least twice the mana of an ordinary level 1 Acolyte. But that's impossible. Even if more talented magicians have denser and more voluminous mana than those of the same level, someone with your characteristics shouldn't be like that."

Vicente's eyes sparkled under his mask when those sweet words came out of Newton's mouth.

He said, trying to contain his excitement. "Two or three bodies? That sounds strange, Professor Newton. It would be easier to consider that I have two or three Magic Gems."

Hearing it, Vicente's three men laughed along with their boss, knowing how impossible these words were, which indicated that their boss was making fun of this genius' words.

Newton looked at Vicente strangely, but he didn't suspect anything. It really was impossible, and after a moment's thought, he couldn't help but laugh as well.

"Yeah, I guess I let my thoughts go further than they should have." He sighed, seeing such a difficult case for the first time. 'Maybe I still have a lot to learn. I'm only a Mage, after all.' He clenched his fists. 'I must become a Sovereign as soon as possible!'

While Newton was thinking, Vicente asked a question. "But Professor, your hypothesis is fascinating, even if it's difficult to explain or to realize. But if that were the case, wouldn't the magic base of someone like that be unstable? After all, if someone like that had the characteristics of two or three people, wouldn't they need double or triple the number of pentagrams to stay stable?"

Newton put his thoughts aside and looked at Cesar, seeing that this young man was also interested in absurd hypotheses, a good trait in scholars.

He thought for a moment and answered with the best he could think of. "I don't think so."

"No?" Vicente wondered.

"If it were possible for a body to have double or triple the normal characteristics of a magician at their level, as in the case of having two Magic Gems, then someone like that would have two pentagrams instead of one. Or rather, their first pentagram would be twice as strong as the others.

So, in that case, even if you had characteristics beyond normal that would make your magical base unstable, it wouldn't happen because you would have more essences than normal.

Vicente narrowed his eyes. "I don't understand."

"Sigh... Consider the case of a person with two Magic Gems. They would have two pentagrams in the 1st stage, right?" Newton used this impossible example to help Cesar understand his words.

"Yes."

"So when they reached the 2nd stage, they would have the same two pentagrams before they tried to hunt down more of those essences. But two pentagrams are enough to keep the magical foundation stable even for someone who is up to ten times stronger than a level 1 Acolyte, equivalent to the mana power of a mid-level Mage.

That means that even if they had double or triple the characteristics of an ordinary person, they could not absorb their third pentagram until they were 3.3 to 5 times stronger than a level 1 Acolyte, i.e., a level 5 Acolyte.

In other words, this person could go up to level 5 without absorbing the third pentagram of one of their Magic Gems!" Newton said this with a twinkle in his eye, imagining a magician with these characteristics.

"In other words, even if this magician didn't absorb double or triple pentagrams as you thought, they would still have a stable magical foundation.

If they only focused on completing the pentagrams of one of the Magic Gems, they shouldn't have any problems with instability."

Vice secretly clenched his fists in excitement at hearing all this from a genius like Newton!

"Really?" He asked, still using his mana to distort his voice.

"That should be the case, according to what magic theory teaches us." Newton sighed. "But there are no guarantees. It could change if someone like this gets stronger. Besides, I could be wrong since there are no cases like this described in the literature.

I was just guessing what the situation would be like for such a person based on what happens to ordinary magicians."

"I see..." Vicente wasn't unhappy about it.

If Newton's theory were correct, then he wouldn't have to worry about his second gem in the short term.

'I won't go hunting for pentagrams in the short term. I'll wait until I reach the 4th stage before I reconsider the situation.' Vicente made up his mind, confident in following Newton's words in the short term.

Newton knew much more than he did and was a genius who was respected even by the royal family, a high-level power who influenced even the Sovereigns.

With that, Vice felt a weight lifted from his shoulders, one less worry for the short term.

Newton looked at him again and said. "As for your case, Cesar, you should..."

Chapter 243 Important Agreement?

"In your case, Cesar, you should be worried about your situation," Newton said, making Vicente's three soldiers look at him with concern.

"I don't want to scare you, but since it's impossible for you to have a third pentagram in your body generated by a second Magic Gem, we must consider that you need an extra essence to maintain your foundation." Newton speculated. "Perhaps you have something else within you that maintains

the stability of your magical foundation. But since we don't know that for sure, we have to assume you don't have anything like that."

"So what am I supposed to do, Professor?" Vicente asked curiously, but not as worried as the white-haired man thought he was.

"Since you absorbed a yellow pentagram instead of the second space for it, I advise you to make an effort to absorb a green pentagram when you become a Mage." He said while Vicente's men looked at their boss, fearing what this might mean for their leader.

What was wrong with absorbing a green pentagram upon reaching the 3rd stage? There were many problems!

First, the difference between an orange pentagram and a yellow pentagram was much smaller than the difference between a yellow pentagram and a green pentagram.

Second, while 3rd and 4th-stage beings could form yellow pentagrams, green essences could be formed by 4th and 5th-stage beings.

How would their leader deal with Sovereigns or Paragons if he would be only a Mage?

Vicente was powerful and could fight those of a higher level than himself. But the higher one was the greater the differences. In other words, his chances of defeating stronger opponents would decrease the stronger he became!

That was a big problem!

'Damn it, do we have to rely on naturally formed pentagrams?' One of the three level 1 Acolytes thought to himself, sensing how problematic this would be.

'I hope the boss can keep upgrading our weapons. Maybe then we'll have a chance to help him.' Another one of them pondered, aware that this wasn't just about Vice getting stronger. Not only was it a problem for him to get stronger, but it was also something that could determine his life and death.

If he couldn't fulfill such a requirement, his mana could become unstable and lead to his own demise!

"I see..." Vicente replied to Newton's words in a pessimistic tone, trying to hide the truth of his situation.

Newton shook his head regretfully. "Unfortunately, that's the case. But let's not get too discouraged. Maybe there's something in you that can explain your situation, Cesar. So you shouldn't worry for now."

"Yes, I've just absorbed my second pentagram, so I should be fine until I reach the 3rd stage..."

"Yes, it's not a short journey. Take your time now to realize your goals and live your life. When the time comes, we'll deal with this problem."

"Will we?" One of Vicente's men opened his mouth.

Newton answered. "If Cesar doesn't mind, I'd like to follow his progress. It is, of course, in my scientific interest.

In exchange for regular meetings to analyze you and discuss your progress, I will focus part of my time on trying to find answers for you, including gathering information on compatible pentagrams.

That's all I can do."

Newton wanted to see how far someone like Cesar would go to develop theories and even new tools.

To do this, he wanted to not only accompany Vicente on his journey but also help him find essences that were compatible with him.

That could make Vicente stronger, but that was all Newton wanted!

'The further you go, the better the data I collect.' Newton thought, not caring how it might affect the kingdom or even his superiors.

He was committed only to the pursuit of knowledge. He didn't care about the chaos his actions might cause, even for his supporters!

He added. "Of course, I guarantee you the secrecy of your information. I'll keep it secret as long as you decide to."

Vicente looked at Newton and understood this person.

He had seen scientists and professionals on Earth who were willing to accompany people like him into special situations for free just to collect data and use it to their advantage.

Newton didn't offer to help him for Vice's benefit. Vicente knew that. He was doing it for himself, for his own selfish reasons.

But was that a problem for him?

No! People were selfish by nature!

Vicente would rather deal with someone like Newton than with a hypocrite who pretended to help him while hiding his real interests.

Vicente knew he would gain a lot if he made a deal with Newton.

'Newton will be someone great, that's for sure. As someone able to learn everything, he'll increase the number of professions he masters and develop a lot in his magic.' Vicente stared at the white-haired man in silence.

With the kingdom's support, he has practically no chance of dying prematurely. Besides, he should have great resources at his disposal.

'He'll definitely grow a lot and could really help me find better pentagrams for myself... Even though I'm not worried about my situation right now, there are no guarantees for the future.

His help could even save my life and allow me to take revenge.'

Vicente responded to Newton's suggestion. "All right. But how would we do that? I can't be with you all the time. I have my own business and problems."

"How about we meet twice a year? Once I come to you, and once you come to me." Newton replied. "That should be enough for me to follow your growth and understand your characteristics well enough for you to reach the 3rd stage."

"Okay. Twice a year will work for me."

With that, the two shook hands, a tradition this place had in common with Earth.

Vicente's three soldiers rejoiced at yet another positive agreement for their leader, imagining that it could take him further in the future and even improve his chances of concluding the ridiculous deal made earlier.

"If you can't fulfill the agreement you made earlier, I'll see how I can help you... For now, just do what you have to do. We'll meet in Millfall in a few months. Is that good enough for you?" Newton asked after signing the agreement between him and Vicente.

Vicente agreed. "Thank you for your understanding, Professor Newton. I hope I can pick up some tips from the senior in the future."

"Hmmm, how long do you plan to stay in Ironcrest?" Newton asked.

"A day or two. I have some business to take care of, and then I'll head back to Millfall."

"Is that so? Then I'll be out of your way. But I hope to test you for real in six to seven months. Today's meeting was only an introduction. The next time we see each other, we'll be doing serious things. So prepare at least a week for our meeting in a few months."

"I will do that," Vicente spoke before saying goodbye to Newton.

Chapter 244 Trouble Approaching?

While Vicente went to Ironcrest to boost the strength of his less talented men, as well as himself and Rory, the men of Rexnelts Academy were not the only ones to learn of his presence in the city that day!

At the local Awakening Temple, the members of this Congregation of Revelations post were already preparing the place for the next? Awakenings.

It was night now, but at dawn, more young people would arrive with their families and friends for another day of awakening, so everything had to be ready.

But while the weakest and lowest-ranking people in the temple were busy cleaning and organizing the place, on the top level of the temple, the local organization's leaders were talking about the topic of the moment.

"Senior, it seems that the first magician to receive a yellow pentagram while only at the 2nd stage was at Rexnelts Academy a few hours ago." A man dressed in the uniform commonly seen on members of this force around temples like this all over the kingdom said to the strongest of the three men in the room he had just entered.

"Oh? What happened? Do we have confirmation that the teacher's words were true?" One of the three Mages asked.

Earlier, they had heard from an informant that a magician had absorbed a yellow pentagram while only at level 1 of the 2nd stage.

No one there had believed such a man, even though they had issued a warning about the Rexnelts Academy.

The level 5 Acolyte, standing near these men, seated on various couches around a small table, said. "Yes, we believe the words of that Rexnelts Academy teacher to be true.

Earlier, a group of four people had been escorted by soldiers to the head of the academy, where envoys from the kingdom's magic college were present.

The envoys from the magic college then left the academy building with satisfied expressions, and the group of four masked people spent some time talking to Professor Newton behind closed doors.

That leads us to believe that the professor's words are true."

The leader of this temple was interested, even though he wasn't sure what his man had concluded.

His network of informants was outstanding. But there was no way they could know what Newton, the envoys from the magic college, and Director Scott had said to those four men.

The best they could do was to analyze the information from their informants and draw their own conclusions.

The leader of this group then said. "All right, there's a good chance that one of these four has indeed absorbed the yellow pentagram."

"What should we do then?" The third Mage there, a man dressed all in white, asked.

The leader, a man with black hair and a large mustache, looked at the man in white and said. "Killian, go to Rexnelts Academy and meet old Scott. See what you can find out from him."

"Okay."

"What about me?" A blond man, dressed in armor even though he was in his headquarters, asked with a smile, already imagining what his old friend would say.

"Keep an eye on these four. Depending on what Killian finds out, I want you to go to Millfall and investigate his life." Levi Logan said, narrowing his eyes as he held a drink cup in one hand.

"If we can't find out anything useful from Scott, we'll find out everything there is to know about him in Millfall.

If he doesn't want to join us for good, then it will be in the hard way."

"I'll do my best." The blond man stood up and soon left to look for Vice and his men.

Meanwhile, Levi sat alone in his office and thought about what to do with Cesar.

'You must become valuable to us. I hope you're smart and don't need to be 'encouraged,' Cesar.' He thought in silence, sipping his drink, amazed at the possibility of getting someone like Vice.

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Hours later, the night passed, and the busy streets of Ironcrest were deserted in the early hours of a new day.

The sky was still dark, and the morning chill was present, keeping the few on the streets well-dressed as they gathered in small groups near the whale oil lamps on some of the poles or even small fires here and there.

Only a small fraction of the local workforce roamed the central streets of Ironcrest, dealing with the arrival and departure of resources through the local port.

As one might imagine, in a world where the roads were as dangerous as they were there, the most common means of transportation for large families or organizations was by ship.

A coastal city like this had a lot of traffic in its harbor at all times of the day.

The movement of the ports created a movement of workers around the city, although not enough to cause disturbances at the beginning of the day when most of the citizens were at home sleeping.

In addition to these workers, most people in the streets were soldiers on guard duty, doing surveillance work, the main job of people in such a position.

But in the midst of all this, three people on horseback arrived in the city, one man and two women, all wearing hoods with the symbol of the Congregation of Revelation.

"He's here." A light pink-haired woman, level 5, commented in a low voice to her companions. "I can see his mana mark is still in the city. He definitely hasn't left Ironcrest yet."

"This is good. We can finally go after him." The only man there clenched his fists before adding. "But we have to be careful. He'll probably leave Ironcrest soon. We'd better watch him and see what he does. If he leaves the city, we'd better attack him afterward."

"Yes, dealing with someone here in Ironcrest will be more dangerous. There are many powerful Mages here who could interfere with our actions." Jasmine's friend said, agreeing with Mark.

Mark looked at her with a strange smile and nodded his head. 'It will be easier for me to get rid of you that way!'

Since her two companions agreed on that, Jasmine didn't try to contradict them. "Very well. Let's find out where he is and start watching the bastard. We'll do what you want as soon as we know what he's up to."

They walked until they reached the center of Ironcrest, where the inn where Vice and his men were staying was located.

Chapter 245 Shopping in Ironcrest?

Early in the morning, Vicente awoke with a smile, waking up after a comfortable night's sleep for the first time in days.

Since his party's passage through the village where Rory had made his breakthrough, Vicente had not had a single day to sleep peacefully in a comfortable bed with a roof over his head.

But after taking care of his business at the Rexnetls Academy the previous afternoon and then doing some local business, he had finally rested better and slept like he hadn't for days.

The previous evening, he had managed to do some local business, spending more than 500 gold coins on useful resources for his men.

In just one night, he had spent more than his party had spent in their entire time in Millfall!

But even after spending the equivalent of 500,000 bronze coins, Vicente had only managed to purchase 20 useful items for his Acolytes.

Pills, potions, and magical artifacts in general that were useful to Acolytes, i.e., 2nd-grade items, were much more expensive than those for Apprentices.

Since he had been concentrating on getting things for his less talented but higher-ranking men in his group, Vicente had only bought 2nd-grade items the night before, which was why he had spent so much for so little.

However, since he arrived in Ironcrest with over 7,000 gold coins, the previous night's spending was far from bankrupting him!

When he woke up this morning, fully recovered from his hunting days, he was ready to spend another 2,000 coins today!

Now that he had made a deal with Newton, Vicente's plan in this city was simple. It was to get as many items as he could to take back to his people in Millfall without attracting unnecessary attention.

Could he do that by spending so many coins in such a short time?

In Millfall, that would be impossible, given the small number of shops capable of selling what he had in mind. But Ironcrest was different!

As the second-largest city in the province, one of the largest producers of metal items in the kingdom, and home to more than 50 Mages, Ironcrest had plenty of options.

Knowing it, Vicente didn't even bother to eat breakfast when he got dressed, and soon, he was walking with his men to a local engineering shop.

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"Boss, aren't we going to attract attention with the amount of shopping we're doing?" One of the masked men walking alongside Vice along the central sidewalks of Ironcrest asked his leader in a low voice.

Vicente replied. "No. I mean, there are no guarantees, but the chances of anyone noticing our movements are not great. The local powers won't know anything unless someone is chasing us."

"Is that so?"

"Yeah. The deals we've made and are about to make are secret. As much as we can't hide them from someone chasing us, we can keep any news of these businesses from reaching the ears of important people locally," Vicente said. "If we buy small quantities in different stores, even the vendors won't pay attention to us."

He wasn't wrong. There were hundreds of Acolytes in Ironcrest, and purchases of hundreds of gold coins went through the city's stores every day.

Unless he did all his shopping in one store, Vice wouldn't really attract the attention of the local powers with his purchases.

Since there were several options for each of the most popular professions in the city, he was confident that he wouldn't attract any trouble because of his purchases today.

"Besides, we will leave the next morning. So even if someone notices something, we'll be long gone before any trouble catches up with us."

"But what if someone is following us? Maybe the academy staff is watching us, boss." Another man pointed out the possibility.

"Then we can't do anything," Vicente sighed. "Anyone watching us knows we're not exactly ordinary people. A few purchases shouldn't be enough to shock high-level powers that even have Mages on their side."

For Vicente, if someone were going after his group locally, they would have to be connected to the most relevant forces in Ironcrest.

But powers at that level wouldn't find it strange for someone like him to spend that many coins. Mages could spend thousands of gold coins in the blink of an eye!

"But everything we do has implicit risks. Let's not stop ourselves from growing just because we're not 100% sure of something." He said, not noticing anyone nearby watching his people.

If someone was chasing them right now, these people were so much stronger than him that he didn't think it was worth worrying about.

Continuing with his plans was what he could do!

With that in mind, they entered the first engineering shop they passed in Ironcrest.

Entering such a shop, which had several display cases and items with gears decorating the sides of the shop, Vice and his men soon encountered one of the shop's employees.

"Welcome to The Cheating Ring. How can I help you this morning, dear customers?" A well-dressed young man, with various metallic objects on his clothes and a strange kind of skate on his feet, stopped in front of Vicente's group.

Vicente continued to look at the many magical devices there and said. "I'm looking for..." He quickly summed up everything he wanted in this shop.

Engineers were professionals who could create complex items. These items could be anything from a safe to a clock or even a flying boat. Between the simplest and the most complex, there were a multitude of possibilities, things that could be useful for everyday life, training, meditation, security, or even battles.

Vicente planned to buy some artifacts from this store for his two properties in Millfall to increase the level of their security and also to improve the quality of his men's training.

After stopping by the shop, he planned to go to the estate of a local enchanter, where he intended to hire the services of a 2nd stage enchanter to add extra features to these engineered devices.

With the combination of these two professions, he could get training dummies, mana attractors, and vaults capable of storing and protecting medicines, pills, potions, etc.

Besides forging and alchemy, these were the two most important areas for magicians.

The items produced by the combination of these two professions were the ones that could most help people like Vicente to protect themselves, increase their quality of life, their quality of training, and their influence in this society!

Therefore, between The Cheating Ring and the enchanter's estate he would go to right after leaving the engineer's shop, he would spend his entire morning on this, and almost half of what he had planned to spend today!

Chapter 246 Time to Leave Ironcrest!

After spending the entire morning between the engineer's shop and the estate of a local enchanter, Vicente and his three companions continued their shopping in the afternoon.

With over a thousand gold coins spent that morning, the group purchased new spatial rings for their men, training items to meet the Mazzanti family's current needs and various defensive items for Vice's properties.

All of these items were already properly stored in the 5 spatial rings Vicente had purchased in Ironcrest. As such, they didn't have any bulky luggage that might attract unnecessary attention from prying eyes as they continued their afternoon shopping spree.

When the group entered a blacksmith's shop shortly after lunch, they returned to their shopping, showing no signs of what they had been doing since the previous evening.

Vicente purchased some artifacts, armor, shields, and weapons for his 2nd-stage men at the blacksmith's shop they had passed earlier in the afternoon.

Why would a blacksmith like him do that? Simply because he was a 1st stage blacksmith, and it would be a while before he would be able to produce that kind of artifact for his men.

As good as his weapons were for Acolytes, he needed armed men who could act on behalf of the Fuller family, i.e., those who accompanied Nina or him in public.

These people could not be seen with the Mazzanti family's guns!

Hence, Vicente had bought weapons for some of his men. But he had concentrated his purchases on defensive items. These things would be useful even for the people who only acted as members of the Mazzanti family.

Items made by blacksmiths were among the most expensive in the world because of their durability and importance in combat or self-defense. In a single hour, Vice's party dropped off several hundred more gold coins at another local shop.

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Towards the end of the afternoon, Vicente had just left an alchemy shop, where this time, he had bought a lot of resources for 1st stage magicians, the stage of most of his men in Millfall.

To maintain his expansion in Millfall, Vicente needed quantity more than quality.

Instead of focusing on creating high-level Acolytes, he was interested in increasing the strength of his 2nd-stage and 1st-stage men at the same time, thus increasing the power of the group with their growing numbers.

He purchased more than 40 resources, pills, and potions for his 1st-stage men, enough to increase the power of his people with relative ease.

With that done, the group headed to the last shop in the city where Vice would be looking for items for himself and Rory!

Arriving at a small house with a strong medicinal smell, one of Vice's men asked. "Boss, how are we going to deal with the Scarlet Syndicate? They'll surely notice our improvements if our men absorb these resources."

"We won't do anything for a while. But they won't notice." Vicente smiled under his mask. "We will use those resources on some of our men who will stay hidden or go out to hunt pentagrams and 'die.' Just part of us will become stronger in public so that people outside our family will notice."

"Where will these people go?"

"Some will strengthen the merchant groups in my society, while others will go to Martell Village," Vice replied.

"But won't that take away our strength to complete our expansions in Millfall?"

"Not necessarily. On the one hand, if some of our strongest men distance themselves from us, it will free up our weakest men in the village and with these merchants. With them, we'll be able to suppress the demand for men to make our expansions."

Hearing it, the smartest of the three soldiers realized Vicente's move. "So that's it! The boss and the deputy will guarantee our actions with their deterrent power. At the same time, the weaker but more numerous men will occupy the positions we lack."

"That's right." Vice nodded at the man.

With his weapons, he doesn't need many Acolytes or high-ranking Acolytes. Right now, a larger number of Senior Apprentices was what could help him achieve his goals!

The other two men were encouraged when they realized they could quickly gain an additional 40 men with the shift changes Vice planned for these resources.

As they looked forward to returning to Millfall and watching the rise of the Mazzanti family, Vicente encountered another guard and quickly asked for items that would be useful to him and Rory.

Considering what he had learned at the Academy of Stars, he and Rory had an extremely solid foundation and could absorb magical resources without much risk now.

Acolytes could absorb up to two pills a year without damaging their foundation or their future, something everyone knew, given the thousands of years of magical research by scholars similar to Newton.

Thinking ahead to next year and how difficult it would be for him to justify buying some resources in Millfall before he dealt with the Scarlet Syndicate, Vicente wanted to buy the four useful items to help him and Rory progress more quickly.

"Hello, I'd like to..." He quickly indicated the resources he needed, ones with a strong affinity to the elements of Fire, Wind, Earth, and Lightning.

Considering the small number of items he was looking for and the low purity he and Rory needed these items to have, Vice got the four pills from this shop without much trouble, paying 230 gold coins for them.

After receiving his resources, Vicente left the alchemy shop with a smile, completing his objectives there.

'Now I'll absorb one of these pills, and we'll leave the city in the morning!' He smiled contentedly from under his mask, satisfied with his journey in Ironcrest.

When he returned to the inn where he had stayed with his men, Vicente had no idea of the groups watching him!

"It looks like they've done their shopping locally and are leaving... What should I do?" A blond man asked while holding a device and standing on a roof more than 200 meters away from Vice and his men.

Then, a male voice came from the device in the Mage's hand. "Do your investigation at Millfall. Killian didn't get anything out of the damned Scott. It seems Professor Newton made some kind of deal with Cesar."

"Oh? That's strange."

"I know. So go to Millfall. I don't want to take any chances with that brat before we know compromising things of him."

"All right. I'll talk to you in a few weeks." The blond man turned off his communicator, didn't stay where he was for long, and then disappeared.

Meanwhile, another group continued to monitor Vicente's movements on the ground!

Chapter 247 Leaving Ironcrest?

"Those bastards haven't tried to sell a single jewel since they arrived in Ironcrest..." Mark commented to his companions as he sat in an inn room with the two women from the Congregation of Revelations.

In the middle of the room, the pink-haired woman watched Vicente's movements in real-time, reporting back to her companions what their target had done until now. She had seen everything he had done so far, not listening to Vice's conversations but seeing that he had made a lot of purchases.

Based on her comments from time to time, the two in the room with her knew Vicente had never tried to sell the Irwin family jewels.

That was good because they could still get what they wanted on this trip. But it was also bad because Vicente had spent the coins he had stolen, something tough to trace and which could be very useful to those people who were interested in stealing him.

"That man... What is he trying to do?" The other woman commented to Mark, already aware of Cesar's identity, which could put him in a bad position very quickly if it came to the attention of the noble families in Millfall!

"The sums they got for stealing the Irwin estate seem much higher than I thought." Jasmine finally got up from her position, having stopped using her ability after hours of following Vicente from a distance.

"What are you doing?" Mark asked when he saw her leave her position.

Jasmine explained. "Cesar just started absorbing the essence of a pill. He'll be meditating for the next few hours. His group will probably make a decision at dawn."

"Oh?"

"Very well. I'll watch them in the meantime. Get some rest, Jasmine." The other woman commented to her friend and went to the observation position of the enemy group.

Standing alone with Jasmine, Mark asked her. "What should we do? If Cesar is taking a pill, this might be the best time for us to act."

Jasmine reached for a bottle of water as her eyes narrowed. "No. Someone powerful is watching him. If we act, we risk forcing that person to move. But I don't know if that would be good for us."

"Is someone else watching him? Why? I thought Cesar was a stranger outside of Millfall." Mark frowned in surprise.

They didn't know what Vice had done in the Alpine Woodpecker Forest!

"I thought so, too," Jasmine said. "But my skills are second to none. Until a few moments ago, someone much stronger than me was watching him. So we'd better wait until dawn. I don't think he'll be in Ironcrest much longer, or he'll draw the attention of the locals to his level of purchase power."

"Do you think he'll leave tomorrow?"

"I can't say for sure. But he won't stay here for more than two days. Besides, after absorbing that pill, he'll need about 6 months of meditation to absorb another artificial resource without jeopardizing his progress. So he won't get any stronger before he leaves Ironcrest." She analyzed the situation coldly, considering what her organization knew about resource absorption by low-level magicians.

The higher a magician's level, the more mana they would have in their body. But this means that, in order to get stronger quickly, the level of mana needed would be higher. Consequently, there would be higher levels of impurities in the resources they would need to absorb.

What did that mean in practice? The number of resources one could safely absorb per year would decrease as one progressed through the magical levels.

Only with time could one deal with the impurities in their bodies and eventually progress safely.

An Apprentice could consume more resources in less time than an Acolyte, while an Acolyte could do so more often and in less time than a Mage. That was true even at the highest levels of magic.

Of course, this considered that one would try not to damage one's magical base. But if you didn't care about that, you could advance faster. Evidently, this would have problematic consequences for such a magician's future.

Considering Cesar's enormous talent, Jasmine was sure he wouldn't try anything crazy, so he couldn't advance much after taking that pill.

"Perfect. Let's take action against them when they leave Ironcrest!" Mark let Jasmine go to rest right after he said that.

...

At dawn, Vicente had finished resting from the training he had just done after absorbing the 2nd-grade pill he had bought for himself the day before.

When Vicente came out of his room in the morning and saw his men, they were immediately surprised to see their boss at a new level!

"Boss, you reached level 2? That easy?" One of the three asked, not having felt Vicente's advancement because of one of the items they had bought the day before, which Vicente had used to disguise his advancement that night.

Even though two of the three had stood guard outside Vice's quarters while the other rested, none of them had noticed their Don's advance!

Vicente had reached 29% of progression at level 2 that evening and was very pleased, looking forward to studying his forge in Millfall and returning to Benson's house for new tips.

He smiled at the congratulations from his men but then changed the subject. "Don't think too much about it. Now it's time to get back. With everything done here, there's nothing left to hold us back in Ironcrest."

"Hehe, that's what I wanted to hear!"

"Sigh... Time to hit the road again. But I'm looking forward to seeing how the rest of the group is doing in Millfall."

"Yes. The family will be shocked to see how the boss is doing."

Vice ignored his men's comments, and they soon left the inn where they had spent the last two nights and headed to where their carriage was waiting.

As they entered their carriage and began to head for one of the city's exits, Mark and Jasmine's companion soon noticed their movement.

"They're heading out of the city. Let's move!" She warned them, rousing Mark from his rest, while Jasmine plastered a beautiful smile on her face, sensing that it was time for some action.

"Get ready. Your group certainly has those pesky weapons to counterattack with. Cesar is very dangerous. We have to be very careful with him. In The Rocky Gorge incident, he was able to escape from a 3rd stage beast and many peak 2nd stage beasts and humans. Don't think he won't be able to do the same to us."

"Okay!" They both said at the same time, aware of how slippery Cesar could be but much more confident in their formation than the Millfall incompetents who had fallen in front of him.

So they would move quickly behind Vicente's group. As soon as they left Ironcrest, they would make it clear to all four Mazzanti family travelers that they were in trouble!

Chapter 248 Battle of the Thieves

Three minutes after leaving the last street of Ironcrest and heading towards the mountains of the area, the only way out of the city besides the sea, Vicente realized something was wrong.

When he and his men could no longer see the city from where they were, given the trees and terrain in the area, he realized they were not alone.

Sensing three mana oscillations near where his group was traveling on an ordinary dirt road, Vicente frowned under his mask and shouted.

"Stop!"

Immediately, the men in front of the carriage controlling the horses stopped the vehicle, startled because they hadn't noticed anything to justify their leader's order.

"Boss..."

As one of them turned to ask what the problem was, three people appeared around their carriage, already activating their skills and spells!

"Shit!" One of the other two men at the front of the carriage saw the movement of these people, also wearing masks, and shivered as he moved a hand to the revolver at his waist.

Vicente clenched his fists at the sight of the enemies taking action. He didn't hesitate to activate his powers as well, seeing he had somehow made a mistake by not noticing that group before.

'Who are these people? Have they been waiting for me here?' Vice wondered as he appeared in front of his carriage, already breaking into a cold sweat.

As strong as he was, he had been taken by surprise, and all the enemies attacking in his direction were level 5 Acolytes!

From what he could sense from the mana in their bodies, their talents were not normal!

Not only that, these enemies clearly knew him, as none had any metallic items on their bodies, something rare for magicians in this world.

They were there on purpose, ready to deal with him!

As he realized it, Vicente saw the initial attack of the enemies forming against him.

One of the two masked women, a pink-haired woman, didn't have any extreme power when it came to fighting. But while her two companions were attacking Vicente with 'normal' warrior powers, she took her time to deal a mental blow to Vicente.

As a red and orange pentagram appeared, a glowing crystal appeared in front of her, shining brighter and brighter as it seemed to concentrate all its power to bring down Vicente in one blow.

On the other hand, the man who was the companion of these two women cast a spell in Vicente's direction, something based on the wind element, which had already created a powerful vortex over his target's body.

As for the last woman, she was circling the area at high speed, her extraordinary power, waiting for the moment to strike the target of her group.

Their plan was simple. While Mark would "hold" Vicente's body, Jasmine would strike him with a powerful mental blow before her last companion delivered the final physical blow to their target.

Mentally and physically wounded, Cesar would meet his end on his way out of Ironcrest!

But not everything went as planned!

As the three acted, they saw Vicente hovering over his carriage with two pentagrams appearing around him.

The first was normal, red. But the second was extraordinary: yellow, a color only seen in such essences in Mages or more powerful magicians!

"What?" The woman running around opened her mouth in shock at the sight, not believing what her eyes were telling her.

It could even happen that a Mage couldn't absorb a yellow pentagram after their breakthrough and were left with a weaker set of pentagrams, with the third space having an orange-level essence.

But achieving something better was unimaginable for almost any magician on the continent!

Seeing that, even the confident Mark hesitated a bit, feeling uncomfortable in front of an existence as strange as Cesar's.

"Damn it! How is this possible?" He felt sweat forming on his body, but he held his position as the cyclone around Vicente grew stronger and stronger, to the point where even small stones lying on the ground began to float upwards.

Jasmine gritted her teeth at the sight of Cesar's pentagrams, shocked but determined to eliminate him and steal the items stolen from the Irwin family.

"Cesar Mazzanti, hand over what you stole from the Irwin family, or we'll kill you!" She screamed from under her mask.

"You're going to kill me? Don't think amateurs like you are going to beat me here!" He said as he manipulated the electromagnetic field lines in the area and the metals nearby.

After reaching level 2, his abilities had become more powerful, and he could now easily control 40% more metal objects in his vicinity.

As invisible electromagnetic barriers formed around him and his men, several metal objects on the ground nearby suddenly appeared as the ground shook.

The woman running through the area almost stumbled over the shaking caused by Vicente's ability. At the same time, Jasmine and Mark felt the instability of the ground they were standing on.

"Die!" Unwilling to wait any longer, Jasmine fired her mental attack, causing a semi-transparent red laser to burst from the crystal in front of her body.

As this shot traveled at high speed toward Vice's body, several extremely sharp blades suddenly appeared from the ground around the area where Mark and Jasmine were standing.

Even under the attack of the two, Vicente skillfully manipulated the metals in the ground nearby, causing more than 30 blades to emerge from different points in the ground, heading towards the vital points of the two.

"Fuck!" Mark felt a shiver run down his spine as these many blades aimed at his legs and abdomen came at him so fast that he couldn't dodge them.

'I have to let him go!' He stopped focusing on the spell around Cesar and the three men trying to move in the carriage, aware that he could die right there if he didn't defend himself!

Jasmine felt the same. She turned extremely pale as she felt those many blades coming closer and closer to her after using more than 50% of her powers in the shot against Cesar.

"Aaaaaaagh!"

At that moment, while Vicente suffered from Jasmine's mental attack, Mark and she felt Cesar's fantastic power.

Even though they used their power to strengthen their bodies and create layers of resistance over their main vital points, they couldn't cover every point of their bodies in time.

Cesar's blades were very fast, and since they were numerous, at least 5 blades penetrated each of those two bodies!

While the third of the group of thieves who were there for Vice's items was frightened and did not know what to do, his electromagnetic barrier could not protect him from Jasmine's attack!

Chapter 249 Double Mental Strength?

Seeing the transparent red light pass through his electromagnetic barrier, Vicente learned how useless his powers would be against some possibilities in the magical world.

Jasmine's attack was basically focused on mental power, something without an electromagnetic nature that could ignore Vice's powers!

Being hit by it, Vice felt as if he had been transported to another space, losing touch with reality as he found himself in a bright red place.

However, as he felt himself in that different world, the two gems on his forehead seemed to heat up a few degrees, making him feel like he was burning up.

No one around could see what was happening, but at that moment, a blue glow emerged from one of Vicente's gems, while the red place he saw himself in changed and became dark.

In the real world, Vicente's men saw their boss get hit and immediately moved as if to kneel down, probably wounded. But before they could think of helping him, they took advantage of the fact that they were finally not restricted by one of the enemy's spells to grab their weapons and fire at the approaching enemy.

"Fire!" One of them shouted as he squeezed the trigger in the direction of the moving dark blur he sensed was approaching them, probably to deal with Vicente.

Bang!

Bang! Bang!

The three of them fired toward the woman, ignoring the two agonized enemies, who were suffering from the blades exploding in their bodies.

"Shit! These weapons are really boring!" The level 5 woman running back and forth shouted, hating those three for making it difficult for her to hit Cesar.

But she was faster than their eyes. Even if the bullets from their guns were faster than her, they would have to aim well to hit her!

Unable to keep up with that woman, Vicente's men unloaded half of their ammunition without hitting the target with a single shot as the woman finally approached Vice.

Just as Vicente was about to fall to his knees on the ground, he suddenly opened his eyes and felt all the darkness in his consciousness crush Jasmine's mental blow.

Seeing his situation, he didn't hesitate to roll forward, dodging at the last second the woman who was about to deliver a fatal blow to his back.

Swooish!

"Shit!"

"Die!" Vicente fell backward to the ground, looking up at the woman who had missed her attack and fallen momentarily under his opponent's control.

Seeing the woman so close, Vicente used a spell based on the earth element to pin her to the ground, trying to crush the bones in her feet as he formed a spear in front of her.

Swooish!

Firing it with the help of the field lines to give his newly formed weapon speed, Vicente saw the woman tremble as she looked at him.

She was out of his sight in the next second, but she hadn't moved fast enough.

She ran a few dozen meters, tasted blood in her mouth, and when she moved her hands, she felt Vicente's weapon pierce her abdomen.

"Aaaaaagh!"

Another scream of agony erupted in that area, ruined by the spells and skills of those involved in this thieves' conflict, as Jasmine glared hatefully in Cesar's direction.

"Fuck you! How did you get this?" She asked him as she tried to stop the bleeding all over her body.

Vicente gave her an ugly look, aware he had just missed her.

'Psychic attacks are really terrible.' He clenched his fists, remembering that the moment he had been attacked, he had lost control of his body and become vulnerable to attack. Not only that, his mind had almost been destroyed by Jasmine's attack, which had tried to enter his mind and destroy his mental structures.

If she had succeeded, even if it hadn't killed Vicente, Jasmine's blow would still have been enough to turn him into an idiot!

Unfortunately, Vicente had a solid foundation, with two spaces in his being created by his two souls!

When the real Vicente Fuller died in his mother's womb, his soul wasn't completely gone until the soul of the transmigrator from Earth possessed such a body.

At that moment, the remnant of Kate and Andrew's real son's soul didn't dissipate as expected. It remained in the body as if it were a pure essence, something behind Vicente's first gem.

Because of such an incident, which happened while he was still in Kate's womb, Vicente had two magical spaces inside of him, with two layers of protection against mental attacks and the like.

When his first mental protection was breached, the second one immediately showed up, destroying the enemy's blow and quickly restoring normalcy to Vicente's body.

It had all happened quickly, but Vicente had suffered long enough to look at Jasmine and see her as the enemy to be eliminated there!

"You bastard! You have to die!" Ignoring the other two, he flew at the pink-haired woman, using everything he had to eliminate her.

The metals in the area, lying on the ground or on the bodies of Mark and Jasmine, moved again under Vicente's control as he directed them all in her direction.

"Shit!"

"No! Don't do it!" Mark and the other woman despaired at the sight of a shower of blades forming around Jasmine, fearing what Cesar intended to do.

Seeing the two enemies rise to help Jasmine, Vicente glared at them angrily, moving his hands to prevent them from helping her.

Electromagnetic Pulse!

Energy beams shot out from Vicente's position, hitting the ground, but mostly the enemies trying to move in the area.

"Fire!" One of Vicente's three men saw another chance to help their leader and ordered the men over there to fire their weapons in the direction of the two enemies.

This time, the quick woman could not dodge. Badly wounded by Vicente's spear and now struck by lightning, she had become a virtually immovable target for Vice's men.

Mark's situation wasn't much better, and he couldn't dodge the bullets of Vicente's men.

Bang! Bang!

A hail of bullets hit them both as Vice's numerous blades hit Jasmine's bruised and almost exhausted body, hitting her so fast that she couldn't defend herself against many of them.

"Aaaaaaagh!"

She screamed as her mask shattered and soon fell from her face, revealing her angelic face, which was extremely beautiful to men in general but terrifying to one of the men in Vice's group.

Chapter 250 Return to Millfall?

"Shit! Boss, that woman is from the Congregation of Revelation! She's one of the overseers of Millfall's Awakening Temple!" One of Vicente's men shouted to his Don when he realized the identity of that badly wounded but still-breathing woman.

With a green talent, an unusual magical form, and a level 5, there was no way that woman would die easily for Vicente, even considering all of her unusual qualities.

Seeing her beautiful, delicate face, now a bit pale with blood dripping from her nose and lips, Vicente narrowed his eyes when he heard the voice of one of his men.

"Congregation of Revelations, huh? I didn't expect the members of that powerful organization to be mere thieves now. I think maybe you're going downhill..."

"You bastard! Don't you dare speak ill of our holy faith!" Mark shouted, trying to ignore the pain in his body.

"What right have you to say that, Cesar Mazzanti?" Jasmine managed to look at him as she found herself surrounded by moving blades. She was fragile but still conscious.

"I have every right to say that. I'm a criminal. I don't act like a protector of good, nor do I try to control the lives of magicians worldwide by pretending to act for the greater good." He said in a sharp tone.

"Tsk!"

"Then what are you going to do? Now that you know who we are, you know that if you kill one of us, you'll be in a terrible condition. You don't have the strength to kill all of us. If you exhaust yourself, one of my companions will run away and turn the whole organization against you." Jasmine said although she was very weak and almost losing consciousness.

Vicente's men made fearful expressions, for that was indeed a fact. They were practically out of ammunition. At the same time, even if their leader could recover with a potion, the time he would need to do so would be enough for one of those three to do the same and escape.

He wouldn't be able to take care of all three if they decided to flee simultaneously!

Even if they were injured, one or two of them could escape from Vicente's group with relative ease!

If that happened, they would be screwed!

Vicente realized the problem and looked seriously into the pink-haired woman's eyes. 'I really won't be able to kill all three of them. In that case, I can't kill any of them, or I'll be in trouble. Their organization will come after me, and I'll be finished.'

He gritted his teeth, once again in that terrible position where one mistake would wipe out everything he had built.

"What am I going to do?" He said as he looked at Jasmine. "Since that's the case, I'm afraid I will have to take one of you for protection. I think it will be you."

"What?" Mark shouted, almost forgetting the many wounds on his body. "No! I won't allow it! If you touch a single strand of hair..."

"Quiet!" Vicente moved a hand, and a piece of metal covered Mark's mouth.

"You want what I have, right? Do you want my gold? I'll give you a chance to make a deal that benefits both sides. I have someone capable of erasing your memories who can help us. If you don't take this matter to your superiors, we'll meet in Millfall in a month. Then, we'll make a deal, and I'll pay you a sum that's good for both our groups, and I'll release your companion."

But if you've done anything like alerting your superiors or even the authorities about your suspicions of what I've done, forget about getting anything from me. I'll destroy everything I stole and kill your companion.

You will gain nothing in this situation, so carefully think before you betray me." Vicente said, thinking of a way to buy time with these people.

'I will kill them as soon as I reach level 3.' His eyes narrowed under his mask.

Meanwhile, Mark had his own thoughts. 'Do you think I'm going to make this stupid deal? I know plenty of others who are ready to act against you when they find out how much wealth you have, Cesar.'

But then he said. "All right. We can make the deal!"

One of Mark's greatest desires, aside from power, was to "possess" the woman under Vicente's threat. All he wanted was growth opportunities, resources, and that woman.

He was willing to risk everything for these two goals!

The other severely injured woman was Jasmine's best friend and agreed to do whatever she could to help her friend.

"I agree too. As long as you don't hurt Jasmine, I will go through with it." She said aloud.

'I hope he's not planning something else...'

Meanwhile, Jasmine stared at Vicente in silence.

'What is he planning? Is he really willing to go through with such a deal? Or is he trying to trick us?' She looked at Mark and sighed.

'I doubt Mark will leave it at that. I have to get ready! Even if Cesar is willing to do what he says, I have to assume that this exchange won't go well!' She sighed, aware her teammate wouldn't accept things like Cesar had said.

'I need Mages! If I can get some Mages, I can eliminate this bastard!' Mark thought, remembering how close he was to Ironcrest, a city with 3 Mages in the local Awakening Temple.

'Levi, Killian and Kohen... Killian is honest, so planning anything with him would be a problem. But Kohen and Levi... It could be... No. Not Levi. That bastard will undoubtedly try to take whatever Cesar has for himself.'

The downside of dealing with people who were much stronger than you was that the more powerful party could decide to betray the weaker ones!

This was a problem for Mark. Any Mage he brought to his side could betray him and give him none of what he would get from Cesar!

In the worst case, he could even be murdered!

'Shit! How can I do this without making the situation even more problematic?' He thought to himself.

Meanwhile, Vicente was fully aware of how difficult it would be for these people to get support without alerting their entire organization.

Vicente was a bandit. He wasn't a fool to think that these people would follow his plans. Surely, one of the two who would escape would try to involve more people in this exchange he planned.

However, it would not be easy to do so without alerting the organization. If they tried to attract stronger magicians, it might go against their interests and make their situation worse. If they didn't go after the Mages, then they would need numbers that might alert Vice, which might cause him to kill Jasmine or even increase the chances of their plans going wrong.

The greater the number of people in a group, the greater the chances of problems arising, leading to disunity, imbalance, and the eventual demise of the group.

Teamwork only worked when there was someone in a position of leadership, and that person was recognized as such by the majority.

That obviously wasn't the case with these people, who had come up with a new problem for Vicente.

"Very well. I hope to see you in Millfall in 30 days." Vicente brought Jasmine's body closer to his as he floated her in the air with several blades aimed at her vital points.

"Remember, if you betray me by talking to your superiors or the official forces of the kingdom, I will kill your companion!"

With that, they stood still, unable to do anything, as they watched Vicente leave with his group and Jasmine!