

The Pathway Of Wisdom

#Chapter 11: The First Step. - Read The Pathway Of Wisdom Chapter 11: The First Step.

Chapter 11: The First Step.

Although it was difficult to find a clean set of clothes in this poor and dying town, they still managed to get decent ones for Alex.

Alex's own luxurious clothes had become dirty and they had become smeared in his own blood.

It was uncomfortable to wear them even if they were luxurious and embedded with gold and diamonds.

Alex cleaned his body with a wet towel and wore the simple clothes given to him.

The clothes even had patches showing that they were sewn to fix the rip and tear damage.

'Phew~ although they are only a thin shirt and a loose pants, the brownish travelling robe is nice...'

After wearing his 'new' clothes, Alex grabbed the bread and the glass of milk from the table as he walked out of the house.

The old guard had already talked with a few younger people of the town, and they had arranged chairs and tables for Alex and Ethan outside the town head's house.

Alex walked up to a chair and sat down as he chewed the hard bread and gulped down the milk.

He didn't have the audacity to complain, as he already knew that even this bread and glass of milk was already the best these poor people could do for him.

Their livestock barely had anything to eat as their farms were not really producing anything, and the forest was very dangerous as powerful monsters were crawling inside it.

Ethan, who had already had his share of the meal, stood beside Alex as his guard while the old guard brought a young man with him.

When Alex came to this village, it was early in the morning, and now it was noon; he had already rested enough while waiting for food and clothes.

"Lord Saint, this young man is the most intelligent in our town; everyone praises him for his quick-thinking mind..."

"He's even able to read and write!"

The young man nodded his head at the words of the old guard and spoke.

"I am Aru. Your Holiness, there was a traveller who settled in our town once and before he died of old age he taught me how to read and write, as I was his adopted son..."

Alex nodded his head at Aru's words and asked,

"Good, how many friends do you have and how many people in the town are your acquaintances?..."

Aru was confused by Alex's question but answered truthfully.

"I am friends with almost all young people in the town... also, I know roughly, everyone in the town... there might be a few I don't know too well, though..."

The old guard also nodded his head at Aru's words.

"Lord Saint, Aru is a very kind young man; he's helping everyone in need!"

Alex finished his bread and gulped down the rest of the milk in one gulp as he got up from his seat.

"That will do; you are good enough. get on your knees..."

Aru looked at the old guard with confusion, as he didn't know why Alex was asking him to kneel, but the old guard also didn't have much of an idea.

"I don't have time to dilly-dally; hurry up..."

Aru could not keep hesitating after being pressured and knelt down in front of Alex.

Alex nodded his head and looked at Ethan before speaking.

"Gimme that medal you had..."

Ethan handed over the medal that symbolized his status as a member of the god of wisdom church to Alex without hesitation.

Alex was pleased that Ethan followed his orders without questioning, and he placed the medal in between his hands as he made a gesture to pray.

"I, Alexander Augustus, the Saint of the Church of Wisdom, hereby declare that Aru is a member of the 'LeonBrave' family from now on!"

"From now on, you are Aru LeonBrave; you will be the mayor of this town and will be responsible for the future of this town!"

"May the god of wisdom bless you with a bright future!"

While giving a simple prayer, Alex made Aru, who was loved by everyone in the town, the town head on the spot!

Ignoring the shocked looks on the faces of Aru and the old guard, Alex handed the medal back to Ethan.

'I don't have enough time to educate all these people and make them understand that they don't need to cling to a single-family line for choosing their town heads...'

'The family inheritance system is deeply engraved in this world's people; it will take decades or even centuries to deal with this kind of thing...'

'So, I can only do what is better for now...'

Aru is liked by many in the town and is the most knowledgeable in their town; he would receive less criticism if he became the town head.

And since it was a direct blessing from the 'saint' of a church, no one can question Aru afterwards whether he's worthy or not to be the town head.

"Good! Now that you are the town head, let's figure out a simpler and easy-to-implement solution to your town's problems..."

Alex didn't even give Aru and the old guard time to question him about anything and walked towards the nearby farms with Ethan tagging behind him.

"But won't this cause unrest in the town, your holiness?"

Alex grinned at Ethan's words as he spoke.

"It normally would cause quite a bit of unrest but if he manages to improve the situation of their people... everything will settle down..."

"In fact, he can even use this to become the ruler of this town if he wants..."

In a dog-eat-dog world where only benefits and profits matter the most, feelings and interpersonal relationships change accordingly in very short time spans!

In Alex's previous world, people would value you more if you earned a lot and your presence was beneficial to them.

Even your own parents sometimes start hating and criticizing you if you don't earn enough or are not good enough to be a proper people pleaser.

If Aru manages to implement what Alex is going to teach him, he will not have to face criticism, but he might become loved even more.

'You just need to know how to manipulate people's minds by using benefits and strategies...'

While thinking this, a wide evil grin appeared on Alex's face, which caused Ethan to feel a chill run down his spine.

"Err... your holiness, uh... you are quite devious... no but you are a saint and a saint can't be devious... uh..."

Alex just shrugged his shoulders at Ethan's words.

"Devious? Nah, I am just a little bit smarter than the average people..."

While whispering quietly to each other, they walked towards the farm.

The entire farm was barren and dry; it seemed like it was not even suitable for farming anymore, and there were even cracks in the ground.

Alex bent and pointed at an earthworm crawling on the ground before saying with a smile on his face.

"This here is the little hero who can make your land nice and awesome once again!"

And with that simple grin on that young face, Alex unknowingly took his first step towards the 'Pathway of Wisdom'!

Chapter 12: A New Legend Begins.

First of all, Alex taught Aru about the earthworms.

In medieval times, farmers didn't use earthworms, as they didn't have the scientific knowledge to know that earthworms are, in fact, very good for the soil.

He told Aru to gather his fellow young friends and look for earthworm-rich areas, find a lot of these little fellows, and spread them in various locations.

Aside from that, use the three-crop rotation system.

He demonstrated the system by dividing the farm into three different areas using sticks, twigs, and stones available nearby.

Although this method is quite primitive and might not be able to work as well as the modern-day fertilizers and genetically modified crops that naturally give higher productivity.

It will at least save their lands from going barren.

Aru was still just an uneducated person, so Alex could not have taught him too much; he just taught Aru enough stuff to fix the problems of their town.

These people gave Alex and Ethan food and a place to rest, so Alex didn't mind giving them a bit of help.

"These methods that I taught you will work in a longer time period; be patient and your town's productivity will improve..."

"Aside from farming, you all should start connecting with other towns... hmm, but that would need better roads so perhaps it will take time to create a proper trade route..."

Alex spread his knowledge, and more and more people from the town gathered around him to hear his words one after another.

First it was only Aru and the old guard, but then some passersby stopped to hear his words, and then, one after another, more people gathered.

Alex was short in height, and thus he found a boulder to stand on and spoke with a confident look on his face.

"As a saint of the 'God of Wisdom,' my words carry the 'truth' bestowed by my god!"

"I am trying to spread knowledge on his behalf; if you follow my words faithfully, you will also be blessed by the god of wisdom!"

Since this new world seemed to have powerful religions everywhere, Alex utilized his official title as a method to manipulate the psychology of these people.

It might be difficult to make them change their old habits in a day or two, but Alex had already found a better option.

He decided to take advantage of his title as a saint and said that whatever knowledge he was teaching was a direct oracle of the god of wisdom himself!

The god of wisdom was very knowledgeable, and his saint was also qualified to teach people about various things!

Such an approach was more believable and a better way to help these people.

'In the future, when their next generations get educated they might stop believing in God, but for now, this is the best method to make them change their old methods...'

Humans are very good at adapting when they are forced into a corner and have no other choice left.

Alex did exactly that; he took advantage of the fact that these people were thinking that their fields were cursed by the heavens.

"The God of Wisdom wants you all to work hard; that's why I am telling you the method to destroy the so-called 'curse of heavens' with your own hands!"

"Think about your children! Think about your children's future!"

"Work today so that your children don't have to die from starvation! Work with wisdom so that you don't have to suffer from the curse of heavens!"

Alex was young; his face did not have the ability to intimidate people, as he looked handsome.

But his words were enough to motivate all who listened to him.

A newfound ray of 'hope' appeared in the eyes of everyone after being bestowed the 'oracle' of the 'god' of 'wisdom' by the 'saint' himself!

Alex's 'sermon' about 'knowledge' and 'wisdom' lasted for an entire hour, and by the end of it everyone was very motivated.

In fact, Alex even manipulated and convinced everyone to accept Aru as their new town head.

They all happily gifted various things to Alex as they went home with a newfound hope in their eyes.

'Hmm... it does seem that I have found a good way of deceiving people; I can use it later in other places...'

'But this is not enough; just deceit and trickery won't be enough. I still need some other types of skills...'

While walking with Ethan towards the town head's house, Alex munched on the fruits gifted to him by his newly converted believers in the god of wisdom church.

'I can create loyal subordinates that can work for me without needing to spend a single penny; aside from that, I need to recruit some elite and talented subordinates like Ethan...'

'Finally, I need a firm foothold in this world... for that I need to take over the city of Ilma and I can start spreading my roots to the outside world from there on...'

After thinking this much, a sudden thought came to Alex's mind.

'Err... why does it seem like I am planning for world domination or something... am I a villain?... No no, I am not that evil...'

'I am just spreading my knowledge in the world and am trying to gather the knowledge of this world...'

Alex glanced towards the baffled young man following him with a shocked look on his face.

"I can't stay here for too long, but when I get the chance, I will send someone to establish a proper church here from the city of ilma..."

"Aru, I have already laid the foundation for you. If you still can't help your town get out of its dying situation, then you might as well just jump off a cliff or something..."

For Alex, the events of today were insignificant, yet Aru experienced a drastic shift in his perspective within minutes!

He was a random farmer just a few hours ago, and now he was carrying the hopes and dreams of the entire town on his shoulders.

He was given the responsibility of bringing 'hope' to his people! He felt that everything was a dream, and he found it difficult to adapt to this sudden change.

"L-lord saint... i-I... can someone like me even do all this?"

As if noticing the nervousness and hesitation in his eyes, Alex smiled at Aru and replied in a confident tone,

"You are no longer just 'Aru'; you are 'Aru LeonBrave'! Take pride in your name; take pride in yourself! Lead your people towards a better future!"

"Whenever a problem arises, fear not; the god of wisdom will support you..."

Seeing the confident smile on Alex's face made Aru feel less nervous, and he nodded his head.

"Okay, I will work hard and believe in the god of wisdom just like you believe in me, your holiness!"

That day, Aru went home and carved a stone mural with his hammer and chisel.

It was a mural depicting an all-knowing young saint descending from the heavens and spreading the knowledge and wisdom of the gods directly to the common people.

That day, Alex had no idea that his random act of spreading his knowledge would go on to become the first Chapter of his legend.

Chapter 13: The Past and The future.

Town LeonBrave, Night.

Townhead's house.

"So you will be standing guard outside the entire night?... aren't you tired too? You should take some rest too, you know..."

At Alex's words, Ethan shook his head and replied with a confident voice,

"I rested plenty in the day to make sure that I can stand guard for you, your holiness! Don't worry about me and take plenty of rest..."

"We will head towards the city of Ilma tomorrow morning so you need to rest properly..."

Alex nodded his head and stopped arguing.

He had lost a lot of blood yesterday and needed plenty of rest to return to his peak condition.

Although he got to eat plenty today, he still hasn't taken a proper sleep until now.

After Ethan left the house to stand guard outside, Alex put away his traveler robe and sat down on the crudely made bed that was brought for him by the people of the town.

There was no such thing as a comfortable mattress or anything like that; it was just a hard wooden bed with a pile of old sheets on it.

But Alex didn't care about it.

He was already too tired and didn't have the energy to worry about comfort; he just lay down as he covered himself with an old blanket and laid his head on a hard pillow made of stuffed clothes.

As Alex knew that even the old town head was sleeping on the floor with just a few sheets, him getting this bed was already quite a luxurious treatment.

"Yawnnn~... the sky here is nice... it's clearly visible as there is no pollution..."

There was a window nearby, and Alex could see the sky outside while lying down.

'This world is fascinating... but just as cruel too...'

He has the memories of the original Alex, and he knew that this world is definitely not as simple as his previous one.

In his previous world, everyone was equal; at least in terms of physical power, all individuals were just normal human beings at the end of the day.

But here things are different; there are superhumans in this world capable of flying, lifting boulders, and doing inhumane feats!

'The original Alex was also quite lacking in talent and mental fortitude...'

According to the memories in his head, the original Alex is a child born from the third concubine of the Emperor of the Kriemhild nation.

The emperor has one empress and four concubines; in total he has five women.

Including Alex, the Emperor has seven children in total, and Alex is the second youngest among them all.

'So, this time I have got siblings heh...'

In his previous life he was from an ordinary family and was the only child of his parents.

His parents died by the time he became an adult, and he was left alone in the world for most of the time.

He went on to become a top-level scientist, but he had no family or anything of his own.

In fact, he couldn't even date a girl because he was always too busy or was never at the stage of life that he wanted to be.

Until he died, he barely had only one or two friends, and he was just busy with his work most of the time.

'Sigh... in the end, I couldn't even complete my work and didn't even manage to achieve my dreams...'

His dream was to be the best scientist in the world; his dream was to be the most knowledgeable man in the entire world!

For that he had studied every single day and had tried many different fields of knowledge, but he was still far away from his goal.

'There was a person with 71 Phd's... I was still quite far away from him...' (*Indeed! There is in fact a person in the world with 71 Phd's! He's called Dr. Sagi Satyanarayana! And in total he has 111 degrees!*)

Aside from knowledge and research, he only managed to get quite a lot of money, but there was not much fun or enjoyment in his dull life.

'Sigh, I might not be able to have fun in this life either...'

He was now in the body of a prince, and he knew that he was bound to get involved in many political clashes and situations eventually.

All of his siblings are either talented or have tremendous support backing them; he alone is the lacking one!

The oldest among his siblings is his brother, who's already been chosen as the crown prince of the empire and is next in line to inherit the throne!

Not only is he the son of the empress herself, but he's even got all the ministers and army generals supporting him.

The rest of the siblings either have the support of their mother's noble families or are very talented from the start.

Only Alex is an oddball.

His mother was actually a knight and the direct subordinate of the king who once went with him on a secret mission.

The two ended up having a relationship when they were alone on that covert mission, and thus, she became the third concubine of the king.

She was just a commoner; she became a knight for the king due to her extraordinary talent and strength!

'Mariel the 'Crimson Moon'... You had such a strong woman as your mother; how did you end up as an immature brat, little Alex... sigh...'

The biggest problem was that Mariel was also the commander of the royal knights; she had to go on missions even though she was weakened after giving birth to Alex.

She was one of the strongest knights in the kingdom, and she left for an urgent mission when Alex was only ten days old.

Mariel died in the battle of the 'Purple Seas,' and thus she was eternally separated from her newborn child.

Alex had grown up alone; he wasn't talented in anything and wasn't motivated to improve either.

He was given the title of saint, and his daily needs were taken care of by the maids and butlers; he obviously grew up to be a spoiled brat.

Immature and weak, arrogant and impatient.

Thus, his father didn't favor him at all and didn't even hear his request of not kicking him out from the palace.

'I am given the title of the 'saint,' and I am an illegitimate child, so there's no way I can ever dream of inheriting the throne...'

'I should shift my focus towards the 'church of wisdom,' then...'

Although Alex had no power, authority, or subordinates, he still had the option to be a 'saint' and rule the church of wisdom the way he wanted.

'As they say, every person has a reason to be born and a place in the world, and if you don't have it, then you must make your own 'place' in the 'world' yourself!'

There will likely be many troubles waiting for him in the church too, but he didn't have the option to retreat now.

He has received the chance to live once again by some kind of miracle, and he can't let it go to waste.

'I need to become so strong and influential that I don't need to depend on this title of a 'prince' to live... that is the type of future I should aim for...'

Chapter 14: The City of Knowledge, Ilma. Part-1.

Alex woke up early the next morning, and his entire body was feeling quite sore from doing all those shenanigans yesterday.

'Oh, my back... ugh... I feel like a 30-year-old dude already at the age of 16... sigh...'

After getting ready, he walked out and found Ethan talking with Aru.

"Oh! Lord Saint! You are awake! I brought you breakfast!"

Aru had a smile on his face as he handed Alex a plate with two pieces of bread, a few fruit slices, and a glass of milk.

Alex didn't have toothpaste or a toothbrush, so he just used water to wash his face and mouth and then ate the food.

"It's quite sad that you will be leaving so soon Lord Saint... If you want, you can stay in the town as long as you want..."

Aru was quite sad when Ethan told him that they were about to leave today and wanted to ask Alex to stay for a while longer.

But Alex shook his head and denied his request.

"I have already completed the task that I came for in this village; I have already given the sermon and the guidance of my benevolent god to you all..."

"Now it's up to you and your fellow people to work hard and grow... you all have already been enlightened, now I need to go other places that need my presence more..."

Alex cleverly made an excuse and deceived the poor guy without hesitation!

After eating, Alex watched the farmers working on the fields with smiles on their faces one last time before he got on his horse.

Several people came to see him off as Ethan led the horse by walking forward with the reins in his hand.

"Lord Saint! Please visit again!"

"Lord Saint! I will become a great knight one day!"

"Lord Saint! I will pray to the god of wisdom for your wellbeing!"

There were adults and even kids who cheered for Alex as he passed through the town.

Alex smiled and raised his hand and waved it in the air to acknowledge their words and say farewell at the same time.

The empty saddlebag of the horse was filled with fruits and other gifts by the time Alex and Ethan managed to walk out of the town.

"Make sure to be a good town head, Aru LeonBrave!"

After motivating Aru one last time, Alex and Ethan left for the journey ahead.

While walking on the dirt road, Ethan smiled as he spoke in a gentle tone.

"You really have an amazing presence your holiness! You won the trust and hearts of so many people in the town in just a single day!"

"I am impressed by your farsightedness!"

Alex smirked at Ethan's words and replied in his usual arrogant tone,

"Heh, this is just the beginning; we still have a long way to go!"

'Yes, little Ethan, you are still too naïve! This is just one town! I need more supporters and people on my side if I want to make a stable foundation for myself in this world!'

'Aside from just normal people I need some talented people who can work as an intelligence-gathering agency for me...'

Alex put the things he needed to do in the future aside and relaxed a bit on the horseback before asking,

"Now that we have left the town, we can talk without other's hearing our words..."

"Tell me everything about the city of Ilma that you know, Little Ethan..."

Hearing Alex's words, Ethan almost tripped and fell on the ground.

"COUGH! COUGH! L-little Ethan!? Ahem! L-lord saint, ahem... cough..."

"I am actually a married man with a son around the same age as you, you know... calling a grown man with such a nickname is kind of... ahem..."

Alex was surprised by Ethan's words and asked in a shocked tone,

"You are married, Ethan!? You even have a son my age!? You certainly don't look that old though!"

"Damn! You are living the life many people can only dream off!... Well, you are a patient and calm person, and also you are super strong; you must be popular with ladies..."

Hearing Alex's teasing voice, Ethan felt a bit embarrassed as he replied in a stuttering voice,

"Err... uh... I am married to a lovely woman. Well... I do think I am quite lucky, to tell you the truth. I rescued her when I was on a mission during my early days as a paladin..."

"The church allows even its priests and saints to get married, so I proposed to her right away!"

While dealing with the bizarre monstrosity, Ethan was steady and calm; he didn't even flinch in front of that horrible creature.

But when talking about his wife and kids, his face became as red as a tomato, and he lost all his calmness as a powerful paladin.

Looking at him from this perspective, Alex could see that even if he was a superhuman capable of tanking boulders thrown at him, at heart he was still an ordinary man who cared a lot about his family.

'Man, this guy is a walking green flag... no, a green garden itself! I feel ashamed manipulating him to do my bidding...'

Alex shook his head and sighed.

"So, your son is also training to be a paladin?"

Hearing that question, the calmness returned to Ethan's face immediately as he replied in a calm and rational tone,

"My son is currently in training, but I believe he's very talented, several times more talented than me. He still has a long way to go but I believe he will be a fine paladin one day..."

"Last time I personally taught him the skill of cleaving giant boulders with a single strike, I am quite sure he can go much farther than me in the future..."

Ethan's tone implied that he was proud of his son's progress and ability but was also calm and rational enough to patiently guide him towards a better future.

"Oh, you are quite thoughtful... wait, did you say cleaving boulders in one strike!?"

"Your son must be quite strong if he can already cleave boulders with a single strike..."

'Warriors in this world are crazy strong!... I doubt if bullets will even work on them!'

'I am quite sure that Ethan can likely parry a sniper rifle's bullet fired at him if he goes all out... I will need to observe more to confirm it though...'

At that moment Alex decided to use his mind cautiously in case he ended up involved in some trouble and would try to prevent the situation from escalating to a physical brawl.

With his weak body, he might not even be able to win against a girl at this rate!

"My son is just a trainee as of yet... ah! You asked me about the city of Ilma, and I started talking about other things!"

"My apologies! The City of Ilma is the sacred ground of knowledge and wisdom!"

"Nearly all inventions and discoveries in the world happened or still happen in this city!"

Ethan seemed quite proud talking about this topic.

"The city of Ilma has the biggest library in the world, located right in the heart of the Church of wisdom!"

"People from all across the world come here in search of knowledge and enlightenment!"

Chapter 15: The City of Knowledge, Ilma. Part-2.

Ethan was very excited to tell Alex about the city of Ilma, as he wanted Alex to have a favorable impression of it.

He knew that Alex didn't want to leave the royal palace and didn't want to leave that comforting life behind.

So, he wanted to let Alex know that the city of Ilma wasn't that bad of a place to stay either.

"Uh... the church is currently not in the best condition, but everyone there is kind and gentle!"

"The city of Ilma is the domain of the count of Ilma, and the current head of the count family is the kind Lord Foley Von Ilma!"

"The Ilma nobles are mostly from one family, and they have been protecting the city for centuries now!"

Alex narrowed his eyes at the mention of the nobles of the city of Ilma.

'I see, so I have to deal with this Lord Foley first to get control of the entire city...'

It's not that Alex has any personal grudges with the other party or anything; his main motive was just control and power.

In this dog-eat-dog world, if Alex wanted to spread his knowledge and wisdom, and if he wanted to collect the entire world's wisdom, he needed resources, power, and control.

'I need to assess the situation of the entire city and either I have to make this 'Foley' guy my subordinate or I have to make someone else sit on the seat of power as my puppet...'

Alex grinned evilly as several dozen plans started to appear in his mind automatically.

"Aside from the nobles, the population of the city is around 200 thousand people!"

"There are all kinds of food and unique cultural things that you will never get bored of them!"

While leading the horse, Ethan smiled as he continued speaking.

"The city is massive! It has thousands of soldiers and several dozen knights protecting it day and night!"

"There are hundreds of believers of the god of wisdom in the city, and there is always something new and interesting happening in the city!"

Alex nodded his head and replied in a calm tone,

"I see... it sounds like quite an interesting place to live..."

Ethan nodded his head at Alex's words.

"The cooking made by Sister Melissa is truly unique and delicious; I am sure you will like it too!"

Alex, who was used to eating protein bars and surviving on energy drinks, didn't have too high demands in terms of food and taste.

As a scientist, he was often very busy and barely even had time to have a proper meal.

Unlike other colleagues who had friends, family, or a lovely wife who cooked meals for them, Alex didn't have that luxury.

He was either eating snacks or processed food most of the time and was drinking copious amounts of energy drinks throughout the day, which affected his health tremendously.

'Sigh, even after having quite a bit of money, I lived my life like so carelessly... thankfully I got a second chance, otherwise I would have really been miserable...'

Alex shook his head and looked forward to the delicious cooking.

As they say, even villains need food and money so that they can have the energy to behave like villains and do villainous things. (*Source: Trust me bro...*)

'Sigh... it's all good and nice from Ethan's perspective... but I am not sure how much of what he's saying is true though...'

'He's an airhead; he might not be able to see things in detail...'

Alex didn't want to interject when Ethan was explaining things so happily, so he just stayed silent and listened to him quietly while thinking of various future plans in his head.

'According to what he's describing, the armies here are still using swords and spears etch as main weapons...'

'It seems the era of guns hasn't arrived in this nation as of yet...'

Alex knew that there's no way that every one of those soldiers and knights was a powerful superhuman.

There's no way there can be so many talented and powerful beings; most of those soldiers and knights must be ordinary humans.

'Perhaps those with the title of 'Knight' might be a bit above ordinary humans but there's no way that everyone of them is as strong as this airhead, right?'

Alex couldn't sit still, so he asked Ethan that question.

"You think I am very strong? Well, perhaps I might be one of the few strongest among all the warriors in the city of Ilma but when it comes to the entire nation..."

"I am still too far away from the actual powerhouses... compared to the royal knights and the generals, I might just be a slightly larger ant!"

Alex didn't expect such an answer and was quite surprised by Ethan's words.

'Does that mean Alex's mother... who was the commander of the royal knights, was a top-level powerhouse of the empire, many times stronger than Ethan!?'

Thinking about this matter, Alex sighed.

If the original Alex's mother was still alive, he might not have been kicked out of the royal palace and might have been able to live a long life of luxury and wealth!

Then he would have a lot of power and influence as a prince, and he wouldn't need to make sinister plans to rule cities just to make his wishes come true.

'Err... I guess things don't always go your way; I will have to force them to go my way somehow...'

"So, do you stay in the city all year long, or do you go on missions every month?"

At Alex's question, Ethan shook his head and replied in usual calm voice,

"No, usually I stay in the church and train the next generation of paladins for the church; only when some important missions come do I need to leave..."

"You don't have to worry, your holiness! I will always be at your service! No matter the situation, I will always protect you!"

Alex smiled at Ethan's words.

"Hehe, no wonder you managed to get yourself a loving wife and succeeded in life!"

"Despite being an airhead, you have quite a way with your words! If I were a girl, I would have fallen for you by now! Quite clever!"

Hearing Alex's teasing tone, Ethan was embarrassed and couldn't find words to retaliate.

While laughing and talking, the two of them made their way forward, and by the time it was noon, they had already reached the city gates!

Looking at the massive city walls, Alex was quite impressed.

'Oh, so they do have concrete here! Nice!'

The entire wall was made up of giant stones stacked one upon another and fixed in place with concrete.

Alex could even see hundreds of soldiers walking and patrolling on top of the walls.

There were dozens of soldiers standing guard near the massive city gates, and they were inspecting all the caravans and people wanting to enter the city.

"The security here is quite good; I was expecting them to only have just two random guards standing and taking bribes from everyone to let them pass..."

Ethan smiled at Alex's words and replied in a calm tone,

"Well, the monster activity in the nearby area has increased recently so the security has been improved a lot..."

Chapter 16: The City of Knowledge, Ilma. Part-3.

As the soldiers on guard duty were doing thorough inspections, it took quite a bit of time for Alex and Ethan's turn.

Alex didn't know anything about the place, so he didn't want to stand out and didn't want to cause a ruckus.

He asked Ethan if they could cut the line and go straight in with their privilege of being members of the church, but it turned out that they didn't have such a privilege.

"Err... as I said your holiness, the church is not really in good condition nowadays; we can't create a commotion here or we might get into trouble..."

Alex was not the type to fuss over such small details, so he didn't mind standing in line.

He sat on horseback comfortably as he watched everything around him with curiosity.

'It seems that the city of Ilma has a lot of traders and caravans coming in and out regularly; otherwise there won't be this much crowd here...'

Thankfully the weather was good.

It was neither too warm nor too cold; it was just perfect, and thus Alex didn't need to worry about standing in the line under intense sunlight.

'Ah~ this reminds me of my school days when we used to stand in the ground for prayer under intense sunlight...'

'I remember I even fainted once due to dehydration...' *(Friendly advice: No particular schools were targeted in the making of this Chapter.)*

By the time Alex and Ethan's turn came, the sun was already starting to set, and it was already evening.

Throughout the day, Alex kept asking questions, but Ethan never grew impatient and answered his questions with his calm and gentle tone.

Alex was truly impressed by Ethan's amazing patience and calm attitude.

The soldier guards seemed to know Ethan, and they immediately saluted him the moment they saw him.

"Oh! Sir Ethan! You are back from your mission? Welcome back!"

Ethan nodded his head at the guards and introduced Alex to them.

"This is His Holiness Alexander, the chosen saint of the Church of the god of wisdom!"

Ethan didn't mention Alex's full name or his identity as a prince, as he didn't want to create a commotion in the area by saying that out loud in public.

The royal family is admired by many, and it will create chaos in the city if everyone finds out about Alex.

It would be better to reveal the information after Alex is safe and secure inside the church so no harm comes his way.

'Hoh, although he's an airhead, he's still quite good at times when he needs to be... if he wasn't a paladin, I would have taken him as my direct subordinate and my personal knight...'

Alex shook his head at the thought.

Paladins are bound to the church with an oath, and their loyalty is to their god, and no one else can order them around.

Even Ethan only went on the mission to bring Alex to the church because it was an oracle of their god!

'Talking about the oracle of god... is the god of wisdom the one who's responsible for transmigrating me into this world?'

'I have read my fair share of novels and most of the time this kind of situation turns out to be a work of some powerful entity...'

Alex smiled at the guard as a greeting while thinking in his head,

'If it is true that the god of wisdom brought me here, then what could be his motive?'

'Don't tell me he wants me to spread his faith and help him out as a real saint because his faith is collapsing?'

Ethan chatted with the guardsmen for a while before leading the horse inside.

'Sigh... I just don't want to be a pawn used by someone... I would rather be the player of this chessboard...'

'I need to investigate things further in details in the future...'

Alex was not the type of person who would be controlled by someone; he even died defying the major companies in his previous world. There's no way his rebellious spirit will be broken so easily!

After they easily passed through the city gates, Alex asked Ethan in a doubtful tone,

"You already knew them, so why not go straight in and cut the line?"

Hearing that question, Ethan replied,

"I do know them... in fact, quite a few of those soldiers were trained by me personally..."

"I taught them the meaning of discipline and the honour of a warrior; if I myself break it and try to demand higher treatment than others, I will leave a bad impression on my students..."

"Forgive me for my selfishness your holiness, but I want to show that the paladins of the church of wisdom are wise and knowledgeable warriors who treat everyone equally..."

Alex nodded his head at those words.

"Hoh, you are surprisingly thoughtful... I took you for a complete airhead before; my bad..."

'Hoh, little Ethan, you are quite bold... you told me your biggest weakness without hesitating... you are really quite naïve...'

In Alex's opinion, manipulating a person using their ideologies and emotions is the easiest way to defeat them.

By revealing his deeper thoughts to Alex, Ethan has exposed his major weakness to him.

'He's very concerned about his image, concerned about his students and follows the moral code of a warrior strictly...'

'Little Ethan, you better not betray me in the future... or hehehe...'

Alex smiled at Ethan and spoke.

"Well, your thoughts are quite commendable; I wonder what the place like where someone like you grew up..."

Ethan was happy hearing Alex's words of praise.

"Yes! The church of wisdom is really a wonderful place; I am sure you will like it a lot, your holiness!"

Ethan led the horse with a happy smile on his face, and Alex looked at the surroundings with curiosity.

Right after passing the main city gates, there was a massive open area and training ground where hundreds of young men were training continuously.

Some were training with swords, some were practicing archery, and some were sparring with each other with solemn looks on their faces.

Most of them were young men around the age of 20; the rest were older men who seemed like instructors, and they were training the young soldiers.

Alex's eyes shined watching so many good-looking swords and various kinds of weapons.

Every man around the world has at least once dreamed of having a sword and going to battle like a hero.

Seeing such fine swords made Alex feel excited, but he kept his facial expressions calm and didn't let his excitement show on his face.

'If have a chance, I will try to learn swordsmanship or some other weapon in the future!'

'But I prefer guns more though... well, until I find a gun, I will have to make do with a sword...'

Chapter 17: The City of Knowledge, Ilma. Part-4.

"Your holiness, this is the training grounds where all the soldiers and knights of the city train together..."

"I have also worked here as an instructor before; most of the young men of the city who aim to be warriors and knights come to this place for training..."

Ethan smiled as he led the way forward and acted as Alex's tour guide.

He was very good at explaining things and had a lot of patience to reply with a calm voice to every question.

"I see, seems like there are quite a lot of young men here. The future of the city seems promising..."

Hearing Alex's words, Ethan took a deep sigh and shook his head.

"If only that was the case... your holiness, the number of young men we can recruit nowadays has become much lower compared to before..."

"Ever since they started distributing those things called 'newspapers' in the city, everyone is more inclined to have their kids go and study in 'schools!'"

Ethan seemed very sad and regretful about this matter, but Alex was surprised.

'Oh! So, newspapers do exist in this world! I see! That's good news!'"

From Ethan's words, Alex figured out that 'newspapers' must have come to exist in the past few years, as the nation is still in the middle of the industrial revolution.

'It's a good thing that printing technology has already advanced in this world and they are already printing newspapers!'

'Newspapers are the sources where early scientists used to print their inventions and let the world know about it!'

'I can do something like that too! I can just open my own newspaper company in the future!'

Alex wasn't knowledgeable about company management and stuff, but in this era, it was likely impossible to find anyone more knowledgeable than him, so he had to do many preparations beforehand.

"I think that agreeing with creating schools in every city was a good decision made by the nation's ministers, but this has made the nation's children lose a lot of time for training..."

"Those kids who could be training their proficiency in weapons are now stuck in schools and have no time to train at all..."

"If this continues... the nation's army would be crippled..."

Alex shook his head at Ethan's words.

"That's not how school works; in fact, studying will create better soldiers. They will be able to know more and will be able to do more complex operations..."

"Besides, you can just recruit people who have already completed their school education instead of trying to recruit children who are still in school..."

Alex knew that this was just the beginning of the industrial revolution; the era was still not mature enough compared to his previous world.

So, he knew it would be hard for people to understand his words.

It might take decades for people to understand the importance of knowledge and studying, but that age will also come to exist some day in the future.

'They are making newspapers and other stuff, which means private companies and groups are just starting to rise and are still in their primitive forms as of yet...'

'Things will change eventually... I am actually in a very good time period; if I do things the right way, I can become the richest man in this world while also being called the greatest scientist of all time too...'

After passing the training grounds, the two of them reached the main street that was extremely wide and was directly leading to the mansion of the count located right in the center of the city.

"This is the road of pilgrims, your holiness; all pilgrims, all seekers of knowledge who come from all over the world in search of knowledge and wisdom, take the same route as us..."

"Whenever the city's armies go on any expedition and return victorious, they take this road and do a victory parade until the count's mansion to show their honor and loyalty to the people.

Alex noticed that there were many carriages and people on the main street.

Some were walking on foot, while some were on horses; the road was made of solid concrete, and it was very clean.

Alex even saw dozens of people cleaning up the road with brooms and sweeping away the dust on it.

Horses, carriages, and people on foot all had separate lanes as a way of managing traffic; everything was in order.

'Things are better than I expected...'

After walking for a while on the main street, they took a left turn and entered a street with less traffic and very few people.

"Your holiness, this is Blacksmith Street; most of the blacksmiths and weapon masters have shops on this street..."

"All soldiers in the city get their weapons built from here. You see that shop? That's the one that made my armor and sword... all the swords and armor that belong to the church are made there!"

The shop that Ethan pointed his finger towards was more dilapidated compared to the others on the street.

Their shop was located around the end of the street and in such a position that it was hard to notice.

Its location was likely the reason for its bad business and it being so shabby.

Alex even saw a man lying near the entrance of the shop and drinking in broad daylight; it was clearly not the ideal place to have your weapons built.

'Err... little Ethan are you so lacking in funds that you are entrusting your equipment to such shady places?'

For a warrior, their armor, weapons, and equipment are their lifeline; they might skip a meal or two, but they can't survive without decent equipment, especially in this monster-filled world.

Even those mercenaries who got slaughtered by that horrific monster were wearing good equipment.

'Forget it... he did say that the church was not in its prime anymore... I don't care about money as long as they have enough food to have three meals a day; that would be enough for me...'

After crossing the blacksmith street, the two of them turned at the end and reached another wide street, but this one was almost completely empty.

There were barely any people, and there were mostly shabby houses in the entire street.

But there was a food vendor who was grilling meat, and Ethan greeted the man with a nod, and the other party smiled in return.

"Oh! Sir Paladin! You are back! May the god of wisdom bless you!"

Ethan also replied to the greeting happily.

"May the god of wisdom bless you too!"

After they passed by the vendor, Ethan explained,

"Your holiness, most of the people that live in this street are devout believers of our church including this vendor..."

"His cooking is also quite famous in the street; most of the people like his cooking. My children are especially fond of it!"

Ethan shook his head as he sighed.

"I have warned my son many times that this kind of street food can cause health problems for him, but he never listens, sigh.... His day doesn't start without eating this unhealthy food..."

Ethan sounded like a concerned parent of the modern age worried about his kids getting sick due to junk food, which brought a smile to Alex's face.

"He's working hard to train every day; cut him some slack!"

Chapter 18: The Church of the God of Wisdom. Part-1.

By the time the two of them managed to reach the church, it was already getting dark, and the sun was about to set.

Looking at the church of the god of wisdom, Alex wasn't too disappointed.

He had already heard Ethan mention that it wasn't in a good state and they were not doing well financially, so he wasn't surprised that it looked old and worn out.

The church was located in a massive area and secured by a tall wall surrounding it, but most of it was damaged due to wear and tear likely caused by age, rain, and weather.

There wasn't anyone standing guard at the front door; they were wide open for everyone.

After passing through the front gate, there was a massive garden and an open grass field likely built for people to stay when holding some big rituals where hundreds of believers come.

'I can start doing daily running here to improve my physical fitness; this body needs to become stronger after all...'

Aside from the grass field, there was a main path in the middle leading to the main church building in the center of the entire area.

The main church building looked much cleaner and well taken care of, but even that was quite old-looking and needed renovation.

"This is the grand church of the god of wisdom, your holiness! It's a magnificent place!"

Alex got down from the horse with Ethan's help and stretched his body to relax his tense muscles.

"Yeah, the architecture is amazing; it must have taken quite an effort to build this..."

Just when Ethan and Alex were talking, the door of the church opened and a lady walked out.

She was wearing the clothes of a sister of the church, and the design of the clothes was completely different from what Alex had seen in his past life.

Her clothes were bluish in color, and there were the symbols of books and scrolls engraved on them, clearly showing that she was a sister of the church of wisdom and believed in the god of wisdom.

She had a small basket in her hand full of vegetables.

"Oh! Sir Ethan! You are back!"

A smile appeared on her face after seeing Ethan, then she looked at Alex and did a slight bow as a greeting and a form of respect.

"You must be Saint Alexander. Welcome to the church of the god of wisdom, dear saint!"

"We have been awaiting your arrival since a long time ago! I am Maria, a sister of the church..."

Alex knew that this was likely a 'test'; first impressions mattered a lot, so he smiled lightly and nodded his head in return as a greeting before speaking in a calm voice.

"Thank you for welcoming me. I have heard a lot about the church of the god of wisdom. After seeing this place in person, I have to say I am impressed."

"I hope we will be able to work together in the future and spread the name of our benevolent and kind god to all places in the world!"

The sister named Maria was so taken aback by Alex's smiling face and his sweet words that she could not find words to answer, and her jaw hung wide open in shock.

"T-that... I have to go and deliver these vegetables to the house nearby; I shall pardon myself now..."

With that said, she left hurriedly as if she were running away.

"Err... Your holiness... I-I didn't know you could... uh..."

Even Ethan was taken aback after hearing Alex talk in such a calm and gentle tone.

Up until now, Alex had been either teasing him or talking with him in an arrogant tone; this was the first time he saw Alex talk so nicely!

"You thought I can't talk politely, heh... you are too young, little Ethan; you clearly don't know much about the world yet..."

Those words coming out of the mouth of a sixteen-year-old with a thin and small body seemed quite odd, but Alex didn't care about that.

He opened the door and entered inside without caring about Ethan's expression.

Ethan couldn't find the chance to argue, so he could only follow him inside hurriedly.

Alex entered inside, and there was a massive hall in front of him, and a gigantic statue was placed on the stage at the end of the hall, right opposite the main door.

It was a statue of a man wearing a robe with patterns of stars, moons, and various incomprehensible words engraved on it.

In one of his hands was a book, and in the other was a scroll.

But oddly enough, the entire statue was heavily damaged and broken in many places, almost as if it was hit by hammers in many places.

It was missing a leg and several major pieces in various places, but most importantly, its entire head was missing!

While walking up to it, Alex rubbed his eyes three times to confirm he hadn't seen wrong.

"Errr... what is... why are... uh... what..."

Seeing this situation, even Alex was confused, and he couldn't find words to question about the situation.

As if noticing Alex's confusion, Ethan sighed deeply, and a look of sadness appeared on his face as he spoke in a sad tone.

"Your holiness, what you are seeing is the statue of our benevolent god of wisdom... it's not that we didn't take good care of it or it got damaged due to some accident..."

"It is like that because it's representing the bad situation we are in..."

Ethan looked at the broken statue and spoke.

"In the records it's mentioned that the statues located in the grand temple of the church of a god represent the situation of the faith and the god themselves!"

"This damaged state represents our church's situation, our broken faith and the weakening of our benevolent god..."

"Some popes have tried to repair the statue before, but nothing works and it's been concluded that the statue can't be repaired by our mortal efforts..."

"It can only be repaired if we repair the broken faith of our god and improve the situation of the church while spreading his great name in the entire world..."

Ethan's words made Alex understand that the situation of the Church of Wisdom was even worse than he had originally expected.

Hearing Ethan's depressed words, Alex could only shake his head and sigh in helplessness.

'Err... I suddenly feel I might not be able to get three full meals anytime soon...'

Chapter 19: The Church of the God of Wisdom. Part-2.

If even the statue of the god of wisdom is in such a terrible state, then it's obvious how weak and powerless the church's influence is.

And in turn, the power of its higher-ranking members would obviously be weak, thus Alex himself won't get much 'VIP' treatment from the nobles either.

'Well, although the status of the church is very bad, I still have the title of 'prince' of the empire to keep my position stable...'

While Alex was thinking about the situation of the church in his mind, Ethan led him to a secluded room located near the core of the church.

Ethan opened the door for Alex and spoke in a calm voice.

"Lord Saint, this will be your room; we had it cleaned up before and it must have been regularly taken care of for your arrival so you can go and take some rest..."

"I will inform the others and ask someone to bring you dinner. If you need anything else, you can mention it to the person bringing the dinner..."

Alex nodded his head and went inside as Ethan closed the door of the room before walking away.

"Phew~ finally I can have a decent sleep..."

With excitement in his eyes, Alex inspected his entire room.

It was a big room, about the same size as his personal home back in his previous world. Not only was there a big bed placed in the middle, but it also had a soft woollen mattress and good sheets on it.

There was a window facing the backyard of the church, and Alex could see the moon shining in the darkening sky.

It was a magnificent sight.

There was even a personal bathroom and toilet, which made him relieved and happy.

'Thankfully toilets exist in this world by now...'

The empire of Kreimhild is around the early stages of the industrial revolution, but things have already started to change a lot.

According to the memories of the original Alex, it seemed that personal hygiene and having excellent health were very popular and important topics among the nobles and people who visited the royal palace.

Alex's room had a wardrobe, but it was mostly empty and didn't seem to have any clothes in it except for the official robes of a 'Saint' and one set of casual clothes that seemed to be of low-quality fabric.

As Alex didn't have the energy to bother with luxury and cloth styles, he took out the casual clothes, placed them on the bed, and then went to take a bath.

He had been through various difficulties in the past few days and hadn't even had a chance to clean himself, which was clearly a bad idea.

'Sigh... my little brother... no! I don't need to be depressed! I am just a kid! I will surely grow up in the future!'

There was a full-body mirror in the bathroom, and Alex even tried to flex his nonexistent muscles in front of it out of habit as he examined his entire body.

'Ugh... I have to start everything from scratch; this body is way too fragile...'

Not only was he lacking muscles, but he also seemed quite thin and weak.

The original Alex was an arrogant, immature guy who was very picky with food; he would rather gulp down dessert and not eat anything else most of the time.

He was very fond of vegetables and didn't seem to like meat, and he even hated milk!

So, due to a severe lack of protein and other important nutrients, he was very thin and weak, and due to a lack of exercise, his body was slow and easily fatigued.

'This won't do... superhumans capable of tanking missiles and flying like fighter jets exist in this world...'

'I can't stay like this or I will never succeed in my ambition of dominating the world as the greatest scientist of all time...'

Knowledge is power, and in this dog-eat-dog world, you need every kind of knowledge to be powerful.

If he can't have the power to contend with those superhumans, he might not be able to access the knowledge that he wants to, and his dreams will never come true.

'I will ask Ethan about the power structure of this world tomorrow...'

Ethan and Alex had talked about many things while on their way, but it was mostly about the common knowledge and stuff related to the empire.

Alex didn't get the chance to ask about the power system of this world until now, but he had to do that sooner or later.

After taking a bath, Alex took the clothes he had placed on the bed and wore them as he tossed the village boy clothes on the chair placed nearby.

He walked over to the dressing table, grabbed the comb, and made the hairstyle that he used to make in his previous life.

Alex grinned while looking at himself in the mirror and thought,

'If I had such a handsome face in my previous life, I might have been a popular guy in school back then!'

'Sigh... at least I wouldn't have died single...'

Just when Alex was admiring his handsome looks in the mirror, someone knocked on his room's door.

****Knock!* *Knock!****

Hearing the knock, Alex went over and unlocked the door, which he had locked before going to take a bath.

"Come in..."

The door opened as a paladin wearing heavy armor entered the room while pushing a serving cart.

"Gree-greetings! Lord Saint! It's a pleasure for you to meet me! Cough! I-I mean it's a pleasure for me to meet yourself!"

"L-lord saint... uh... I brought you foot!... ahem! I-I mean food!"

Alex was surprised that the paladin was actually a girl.

Her face was covered with her helmet, but her feminine voice was very gentle and pleasant to hear.

She stuttered several times while trying to greet Alex, making him wonder if she was one of Ethan's personal disciples or something.

'Well, it's quite possible for an airhead's disciple to be just as much of an airhead...'

Alex nodded his head with the usual arrogant look on his face as he said,

"Hoh... this is my first time seeing a paladin be the one to push around a serving cart... in the palace maids used to do that..."

"Well, it's fine I guess; at least you tried..."

Obviously, his mouth could not show much kindness, making the young paladin flinch as she nervously served him food.

"Uh, Sir Ethan told me to ask you if you wanted anything else... uh..."

Alex, shook his head and said,

"Tell, him to arrange some decent casual clothes for me tomorrow... there's none in my wardrobe..."

"Let the serving cart stay in the room; I will eat at my own discretion..."

Hearing Alex's words, the young paladin nodded her head, bowed awkwardly, and left in a hurry as if she was afraid of him or something.

Once the paladin left, Alex's eyes narrowed.

'Another test... there is someone who's instructed the members of the church to test me when they meet me... who could it be?...'

Chapter 20: The Church of the God of Wisdom. Part-3.

It's very likely that news of Alex being a brat has reached the church and someone is testing him and trying to find faults in him.

'But what would someone get out of exposing my faults?...'

Alex mind focused instantly, and he started making new guesses.

'Sister Maria tried to gauge my attitude towards others, and sending a young girl into my room was a test of my self-control...'

Spoiled brats of nobels often have one thing in common, they like to target women, maids, and any other female nearby.

Many brats of the noble families force themselves on the maids and peasants, and someone was likely trying to test if Alex would do the same.

Not only did they send a young girl in his room to deliver food, but they sent the one who's clearly weaker in terms of mental defense.

If Alex wanted, he could have used his title and name as a prince to be arrogant and order her around, but in that case, he would likely fall right into the trap of the person who set it all up in the first place.

'No, this seems like some even more sinister trap... if I hadn't locked the door before going to take a bath, it was possible that the young paladin girl might have rushed inside when I was changing clothes...'

'Then I could be framed for harassing her... Interesting. How interesting. Who's making these kinds of plans against me the moment I arrived... no, they likely set these plans in motions before I even arrived...'

Alex's eyes narrowed as he ate the tasty food while thinking various things in his mind.

'The person who's using these traps has a clear goal; they want to expose my bad nature and want to get me expelled or punished...'

'They are using such sneaky tactics likely because they don't have the power to get me punished or expelled by any other means...'

As a professional schemer, Alex knows the mentality and how such people do things very deeply.

'No, this person is clearly an amateur; they exposed themselves so easily. their traps are very easy to notice; the person is clearly not good at laying traps...'

If it was Alex, he would not have done such a test on the very first day; instead, he would have waited for an opportunity to come.

When people come to new places, they are the most vigilant due to a change in environment, and even in sleep they are usually on guard.

It would have been a better choice to let Alex put his guard down naturally, use slow poisons on him, slowly break his relations with other members of the church, and ruin his reputation using small but difficult-to-prove rumors.

'If the connections are sufficient, even complex plans can be created... but this person likely does not have much connections either...'

If the person had such connections, the first person they would have contacted would have been the local noble family in charge of the city.

With the Count family ruling this city and using their power, it would have been a hundred times easier to deal with Alex the moment he showed up at the city gates.

'Who could it be? Thankfully they can't poison my food; I am hungry and if they did poison it, I wouldn't have been able to do anything...'

The main reason why Alex dared to eat this food without hesitation was because he knew that the other party was using sneaky tactics and they wouldn't dare to use poison or any other toxin against him.

That would easily leave traces behind not only in the food but also in his body, and someone like Ethan who can use divine power can easily detect such toxins.

'Their first two tests have failed... the real test will appear tomorrow for sure...'

Today, Alex and Ethan arrived very late, and no one was sure about their arrival date and time; thus, there was no one to welcome them.

But it's certain that tomorrow everyone will gather to greet him, and he will get a chance to meet all members of the church.

'I will need to deal with the next test tomorrow with more patience and find the real culprit behind it all at the same time...'

As they say, one mountain cannot have two tigers, unless one is a male and the other one is a female. (*Source: Trust me bro.*)

'I can't have another person scheming against me while I am trying to gain control of the place myself...'

'I need to find and eliminate this person from this game of chess before they eliminate me...'

Food is usually not free; it always costs something, and if it is, the intentions behind it might bring a lot of trouble to you.

If Alex wants to create a safe location for himself, he must take control of the entire church himself and become the leader.

'I am quite sure that if I get expelled from this church, I might not be able to enter the royal palace again...'

The emperor allowed the church to take Alex away, which means he's technically been disowned by his father, and now he has no other choice but to carve out his place in the world.

If he gets expelled, his title as the prince might not be acknowledged by the royal palace anymore, and he might end up becoming homeless!

Or perhaps some political rival or conspiracist might make his life worse than death.

There are hundreds of dangers out there, and a single mistake is enough to create endless trouble for him.

'Sigh... this same feeling of being all alone in the world... it's so familiar...'

A grin appeared on his face as Alex remembered how his previous life also ended because he was fighting the battle all alone like this.

'I need to start cultivating some loyal thugs for myself soon... or I might not go far in this new world...'

While thinking about various things in his head, Alex finished eating, pushed the serving cart aside, and gazed at the night sky for a while before lying down and falling asleep peacefully.