

The Pathway Of Wisdom #Chapter 22: The Challenger Appears. Part-1. - Read The Pathway Of Wisdom Chapter 22: The Challenger Appears. Part-1.

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Alex followed Ethan's lead and walked towards the main hall, which he had visited yesterday in the evening.

But this time there were many people gathered in the giant hall.

Some were praying to the half-broken statue of the god of wisdom silently, while others were busy chit-chatting with each other.

The moment Alex entered the hall, everyone's eyes fell on him as they all curiously looked and scanned him up and down.

Alex, on the other hand, completely ignored the presence of most of the people; the person he noticed first was an old man wearing the robes of a 'pope' and holding a book in his hand.

There was a gentle smile on his face, and he seemed quite ordinary, old, and weak.

The second person that stood out among everyone the most was a fully armored young paladin who was standing straight like a spear along with the girl paladin that Alex met yesterday.

'Only two young paladins? Are these two Ethan's subordinates?... Don't tell me Ethan is the only paladin under the church...'

Aside from them, there were five sisters, including the one that Alex met yesterday near the main door of the church.

The rest were either some believers of the god of wisdom who specifically came to look at the newly arrived saint, or cooks and gardeners.

'Very few people... barely 40 people... the state of the god of wisdom's faith and church is very bad, it seems...'

'There aren't even hundred people...'

There were so few people that the giant hall was still pretty much empty even when everyone was standing quite randomly and in a scattered manner.

Ethan led Alex near the pope, who was standing right beside the statue of the god of wisdom and looked at the people before announcing in a loud voice,

"Good morning, everyone! Today is a very joyous occasion! Our chosen 'saint' has joined us in our mission to spread the name of our benevolent god!"

"From today onwards, Saint Alexander Augustus Von Kreimhild will be the 'Saint' who we all shall follow and look up to!"

Everyone smiled happily and bowed slightly to show their respect towards Alex while the pope smiled at him and patted his shoulder before speaking.

"Welcome, Chosen Saint. I am the current pope of the church of wisdom, Dolion Abditus and it was me who received the oracle of our benevolent god to bring you to us..."

The pope brought out a medallion from his robe and spoke in a gentle voice.

"This is the medallion that symbolizes the church's acknowledgment of your holiness as the chosen 'Saint' of the god of wisdom."

"I am happy that this medallion has finally found its worthy owner... From today onwards, you shall hold utmost authority in the church of wisdom-"

Just when the pope was about to finish his words and hand the medallion over to Alex a loud voice rang out in the hall, attracting everyone's attention.

"I object!"

Alex and everyone else looked in the direction of the voice, and it was none other than the young paladin who had raised the objection.

Ethan, who was always calm and gentle, frowned deeply as he immediately questioned the young man.

"Jake!? What are you doing!? How can you be so rude as to interject when His Holiness the Pope is speaking!?"

Ethan was not only frowning; he seemed angry at the young man, and he immediately bowed his head to Alex and the pope to apologize.

"My apologies for son's rudeness; I will make sure such a thing does not happen again-"

Before Ethan could even finish apologizing, the young man named Jake looked Alex straight in the eyes and spoke loudly,

"I refuse to acknowledge him as the 'Saint' of the god of wisdom! And I think he's not worthy enough for such a position!"

Ethan's face went red from anger due to his son's continuous blasphemous words.

But Alex, on the other hand, was completely calm.

'Here it is... the 'Final Test'... the pervious two 'tests' failed horribly and so they have decided to use some other more obvious methods...'

'But this is still quite unprofessional; the person who created these traps is really bad at making such intricate plans...'

While Alex was thinking about the situation in his head, the young man with dark brownish hair and pupils took out his paladin glove and threw it towards Alex.

"I Jake Schild! Challenge you to a duel!"

"I refuse to acknowledge that you are worthy of commanding me!"

The entire hall went silent at those words, and everyone seemed to be too shocked to comprehend what was going on at that moment.

Ethan almost lost control at that moment and spoke.

"What are you doing, Jake!? How can you do such a careless thing!? Did you forget what it means to challenge someone in a duel!?"

"I never taught you to be rude to others! Take your glove back and apologize to his holiness the saint this instant!"

Jake didn't flinch even when scolded by his father but kept staring straight into Alex's golden eyes with a calm look on his face.

Alex noticed determination in his eyes; he was not going to take a single step back.

"Father, it was you who taught me that once a challenge for a duel is sent out, it can't be taken back again..."

"I have already made my decision; if this person wants me to acknowledge him as the saint of the god of wisdom, he needs to accept my challenge."

"If he doesn't accept it, I will not let him become the saint!"

Veins appeared on Ethan's forehead due to sheer anger as his hand reached for his sword.

"You dare to-"

Before Ethan could take any step forward, Alex stopped him with a hand gesture and stepped forward with the usual arrogant look on his face.

"I can accept your challenge, but what's in it for me? I am the saint whether you acknowledge it or not, but I don't mind entertaining the worries of my benevolent god's loyal paladin's..."

"So, tell me... Little Jake, what will you do if you lose to me in this duel?"

A villainous smirk appeared on Alex's face as he looked down on Jake while standing on the stage near the statue of the god of wisdom.

His smile makes Jake flinch for the first time, but he didn't back down at all!

"In the name of the god of wisdom, I swear that if you win the duel against me, I will pledge my loyalty to you as a knight!"

"And will acknowledge you as my master!"

A paladin of a god cannot remain a paladin if they acknowledge their loyalty to someone; they will end up becoming someone's personal knight and lose their status as a paladin.

Pledging loyalty to someone was almost equivalent to abandoning their god and choosing a human as their master for a paladin.

It was a very severe and unforgivable crime; if Jake loses, he will have to leave the church and will be completely abandoned by the god of wisdom too. He might not even be able to use divine power ever again in the future.

"Oho! So, you are willing to bet your everything on this gamble? How interesting..."

"Fine then, Little Jake... I swear that I will leave the church of the god of wisdom if I lost to you... and if I win, it would be up to me to decide your future..."

A wide grin appeared on Alex's face as if he was already sure he was going to win.