

First Order 1081

## Chapter 1081 - Naïve Son Of The Landlord

Melgor's father had wasted his entire life buying numerous stones, yet he was still unable to obtain an Eye of True Sight. However, his son, who did not wish to become a sorcerer, managed to pick an Eye of True Sight randomly on his first try.

That was why Melgor said that this Eye of True Sight and the title of the sorcerer was actually his father's. To him, he felt that it should actually belong to his father, but it just wasn't meant to be.

Melgor said that he did not even know whether his father felt remorseful or gratified before passing away.

However, Ren Xiaosu thought that Melgor's father... was very likely to have been driven to the grave by Melgor.

Of course, he had to keep such disparaging comments to himself. He could not speak callously since that would be a little rude.

Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and looked at the sheeple. "So do you two also intend to get yourselves an Eye of True Sight using this method?"

Li Chengguo hesitated for a moment before saying, "Yes..."

"Then just go buy it." Ren Xiaosu said, "Aren't your families quite wealthy? Since you've already decided to do it this way, wouldn't you naturally become sorcerers after you successfully purchased an Eye of True Sight? Why would you still want to be a sorcerer's servant?"

"It's still quite useful to systematically learn about sorcery," Li Chengguo answered. "But more importantly, our families hope that Lord Melgor can give us some advice when we're buying the Eye of True Sight...."

Ren Xiaosu was shocked right then and there. When he saw Melgor's helpless expression, he immediately understood that while these two guys might truly want to systematically learn sorcery from Melgor, their main aim was to make use of his luck!

Melgor explained in annoyance, "I'm known as the luckiest sorcerer in the Kingdom of Sorcerers."

As such, the story of Melgor's father who did not get to fulfill his dream of becoming a sorcerer while Melgor randomly picked an Eye of True Sight had become a new legend in the nation. This was enough to tempt Li Chengguo's and Liu Ting's families as they joined in on the gold rush to buy an Eye of True Sight.

"Based on our contract, their families will pay me 10,000 gold coins each, and they'll be my servants for two years followed by another two years of apprenticeship. After that, I'll bring them to Ghent City and choose ten stones for each of them." Melgor said, "If they manage to obtain an Eye of True Sight from my picks, I'll receive a further 10,000 gold coins as a reward."

"That's quite a good deal." Ren Xiaosu chuckled.

So it turned out these two servants' families were hoping to ride on Melgor's luck.

It seemed like the nation of sorcerers' people were also very superstitious.

Ren Xiaosu scrutinized Melgor and thought to himself, 'If he's really that lucky, maybe I should bring him back to the Northwest to be our lucky charm.'

But based on the agreement between Melgor and the servants, it would be another two years before they headed to Ghent City. Ren Xiaosu could not wait that long, so he had to find a way to make Melgor move the schedule up.

But before Ren Xiaosu could say anything, Melgor said, "I intended for you two sheeple to work for me for another two years. But since I'm now planning to make a trip to Ghent City, I might as well fulfill our agreement early. I also know full well that it's impossible to dissuade the two of you from chasing after this sorcerer dream."

Li Chengguo and Liu Ting looked at each other. They could no longer hide the joy in their eyes.

Ren Xiaosu asked, "What are you heading to Ghent City for?"

"At the border of Fortress 178, I sensed the aura of an extremely high-level Eye of True Sight. So I have to report this to the magus order." Melgor said, "This is a very important piece of news, and it should be able to help improve my situation."

"If the magus order finds out about this news, what would they do?" Ren Xiaosu asked again.

"They'll send more powerful sorcerers to the Central Plains to search for the whereabouts of that Eye of True Sight." Melgor explained, "For them, they'll do all they can to recover every lost Eye of True Sight out there, let alone an Eye of True Sight of such high level. I wonder how that Eye of True Sight ended up in the Central Plains. It even gained a new owner."

"How did you sense that Eye of True Sight?" Ren Xiaosu was puzzled.

"When an Eye of True Sight of high level changes owners, it causes a strange phenomenon in the sky. Within a radius of a 1,000 kilometers, sorcerers can sense it with their own Eye of True Sight. It's almost like the Eye of True Sight that's gone through an ownership change is making a declaration of sovereignty." Melgor said, "This fact was recorded in a book."

"Do you think they'll travel thousands of kilometers to the Central Plains just to look for such a stone?" Ren Xiaosu wondered.

"Of course. The Eye of True Sight represents the intensity of a spell that sorcerers can cast. Sometimes, different grades of Eyes of True Sight are used to signify the different ranks of sorcerers within the Magi." Melgor said, "Currently, rumor has it that there's only two black Eyes of True Sight in the entire magus order. As they're in the hands of the two highest-ranked sorcerers, others who live under their rule long enough will definitely start getting jealous."

Ren Xiaosu pondered this. Surely the Eye of True Sight in his possession would not lead the nation of sorcerers and Fortress 178 straight into a war, right?

That wouldn't do.

But upon further thought, since the Eye of True Sight was used to determine one's rank within the magus order, those who did not want to remain lowly would have to search for the third black Eye of True Sight.

Then if Ren Xiaosu just stole the black Eyes of True Sight from the other two sorcerers, everyone would be of equal standing. In that case, no one would have to be jealous of each other!

That way, they would not have to make such a long journey to the Central Plains to search for the black Eye of True Sight!

It sounded very logical, right? Consider that!

Melgor suddenly said to Ren Xiaosu and the two servants, "Since I've decided to bring you guys to Ghent City, I'll be seriously teaching everyone sorcery starting today. Who knows, you might find an Eye of True Sight when we get there."

The atmosphere within the group immediately warmed up.

Li Chengguo even boasted that if he obtained two Eyes of True Sight from the ten stones, he would give one of them to Ren Xiaosu.

His reckless bragging really made him look like a naïve son of the landlord.

Saying that, Melgor looked at Ren Xiaosu again. "I'm sorry, I was only trying to brush you off when I handed you the Introduction to Sorcery to read. Although you seem to enjoy it, it's probably not of much help in your attempt to become a sorcerer. I'll recommend you another book called A Comprehensive Guide to Sorcery."

Ren Xiaosu smiled. "No need. I think the Introduction to Sorcery is quite interesting. I'll finish reading it first."

Ren Xiaosu had been busy trying to learn about Melgor's background today, so he did not have the chance to follow up on the allusion he came across in the Introduction to Sorcery. Central Plains rider—Ren Xiaosu was inexplicably fascinated by these words. He somehow felt that this book, which mentioned the Central Plains Rider, was definitely not what it seemed.

With that, Ren Xiaosu sat down off to the side and continued reading it.

Li Chengguo and Liu Ting muttered, "He's still so stubborn at this time. He must think we'll laugh at him for reading that useless book for so long, so he insists on finishing it."

"I've read that book before. It really doesn't cover anything about spell incantations or meditative visualizations."

At this moment, Ren Xiaosu had just flipped to a new page. The author wrote: "Continuing on the topic of discussion between me and the Central Plains rider in the previous chapter, should sorcerers abandon the practice of reciting incantations and the use of meditative visualizations?"

Most people would probably regard this book as a gem if they saw there was research done on nonverbal spells and quickly study it in detail.

But Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and felt that something did not feel right. If there were really research findings on nonverbal spells and casting published in this book, it would probably have become the holy book for everyone in the magus order.

However, it seemed like Melgor and the servants did not take the book seriously.

Even if most people had not read the Introduction to Sorcery, there should still be a few people who had studied it thoroughly.

Since the magus order was able to establish such a large kingdom, Ren Xiaosu would definitely not assume that all of their members were stupid.

Therefore, if there were some shocking secrets hidden within this book, they would have already been discovered. Would he be the one to find it?

Ren Xiaosu continued reading to see what the author wrote. It would be good if it could provide him with some ideas.

"The Magi have long been accustomed to reciting incantations and using meditative visualizations as the key to their spell casting. But now, very few sorcerers bother to consider what changes there might be if they did not have to recite incantations and practice meditative visualization to cast spells, including me.

"Ever since I was young, I learned incantations and meditative visualizations. Father had wholeheartedly taught me everything he knew, but I never once questioned the principles behind the incantations.

"It wasn't until I met the Central Plains rider that he ridiculed that the time needed for me to recite an incantation could allow an enemy to find a 100 ways to take my life. In a real battle between experts, hesitation would mean defeat.

"For this reason, I had a brief exchange with this Central Plains rider and was surprised to discover that sorcerers would indeed be disadvantaged due to the time needed to recite incantations.

"In the past, the opponents of sorcerers were only normal people. So even if there was a delay in casting spells due to the recitation of incantations, it would not affect the battle much. But what if the opponent they encountered was stronger physically? What if they don't give you time to cast a spell?"

When Ren Xiaosu read this, he gasped. Only now did he realize why this sorcerer became so interested in exploring nonverbal spells. It was entirely because he had been defeated by a Rider!

What brief exchange? It was clearly just a fight.

He even concluded that a sorcerer would indeed be disadvantaged due to the duration it took them to recite their incantations if their opponent did not give them time to cast their spells. Ren Xiaosu could imagine the Rider had probably used his extreme physical fitness to quickly rush up to the sorcerer and beat him up before he could even cast any spells.

These glorified edits were just so he could leave some dignity for himself. After all, he was the author, so he wouldn't cast himself in a bad light, right?!

Sorcerers cared about their reputation too!

As such, this sorcerer, who had an "exchange" with the Central Plains Rider, became determined to research the subject of nonverbal spells.

Ren Xiaosu continued reading.

The sorcerer wrote in his book: "Not needing to recite any incantations or use meditative visualizations to cast spells is something that no sorcerer would even dare think about.

"But with this thought in mind, I found it difficult to restrain my curiosity any further. So I went back to the origins of incantations and meditative visualizations and discovered that sorcerers used a

combination of incantations and meditative visualizations to stabilize their spell casting as well as gain better control over the alchemical elements.

"If you don't use incantations and only apply meditative visualization in your spell casting, your restless willpower will fly out of control. A spellcaster might want to cast a Lesser Fireball, but they might end up overdrawing from their willpower and cast a Greater Fireball instead.

"It might be more powerful this way, but if the fireball doesn't hit the enemy, the caster can only wait for death. So it's very necessary to maintain accurate control in casting. My final conclusion is that it's not feasible to cast a spell without reciting incantations."

Ren Xiaosu was confused when he read this. So it turned out the author was just trying to say it was not feasible to cast a spell without reciting incantations? Then why did you waste so much effort to even write it down?

Thinking of this, Ren Xiaosu nearly threw the Introduction to Sorcery into the fire.

However, he fell into deep thought again. This sorcerer believed it was impossible to cast a spell without reciting its incantation due to the limits of people's willpower. However, it did not seem like Ren Xiaosu had that problem.

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The progression of the Central Plains' war had already exceeded everyone's expectations. The Zhou Consortium had been pushed back in defeat too quickly.

The Wang Consortium's troops had launched a blitzkrieg on the Zhou Consortium's northern defensive line. On the same day, Zhou Qingyang started preparing to relocate to the South. This was equivalent to announcing to the entire military that as the highest-ranking officer of the Zhou Consortium, he did not have any confidence in winning this battle.

After the Zhou Consortium led by Zhou Qingyang left Stronghold 73 and retreated southwards, the Zhou Consortium's troops in the North gradually lost their will to fight.



It only took two weeks for the Wang Consortium to completely occupy all of the Zhou Consortium's territory north of Stronghold 73, including Stronghold 73 itself.

With this, everyone understood it was only a matter of time before the Wang Consortium annexed the Zhou Consortium.

Meanwhile, no one knew that on the same night the Wang Consortium's troops occupied Stronghold 73, a team of special forces consisting of 180 people set off from the rear. They carried with them the Wang Consortium's highest level of clearance documents and arrived at East Lake in Stronghold 73.

However, this group of special forces were not only carrying their own combat equipment but also a lot of diving equipment.

Among the diving equipment were OPS military man-portable underwater propulsion thrusters, compact pure oxygen respirators known as MODE, RDP rapid diving systems, FLEX diving suits, and RK-3 swim fins.

This was probably the best diving equipment available for military use.

Ever since the cave-in at East Lake, the area was no longer as lively as it used to be. No one attended plaza dancing activities here anymore, and there were no joggers to be seen either. Everyone said they were terrified that hundreds of people had lost their lives and were buried at the bottom of the lake.

Furthermore, the residents in the vicinity of East Lake reported terrifying news. Some people witnessed a whirlpool forming in the center of the lake during the middle of the night, while others reported seeing huge bubbles emerging from the surface of the lake.

What was even more horrifying was that someone said they had seen a gigantic shadow sweeping past under the lake's surface.

Gradually, a lot of people started saying East Lake must be haunted by the indignant souls of those who had lost their lives in the cave-in.

The Wang Consortium's special forces had already assembled by the lake. Dozens of soldiers put on their full diving gear and waited quietly.

Meanwhile, the remaining troops set up some strange equipment and connected all of their data lines to a tactical military laptop.

The computer screen was already lit up, and it displayed a pulsating pattern that resembled an electrocardiogram.

When all the equipment was completely set up, someone in the special forces started pointing a conical detector at the lake.

As the special forces executed their mission, they did so quietly without anyone giving them orders. However, the division of labor was extremely clear.

Suddenly, the pattern on the computer screen started fluctuating violently.. Then the commander of the special forces said calmly, "Found you."

Chapter 1083 - Apex Predator

No one knew why the Wang Consortium's special forces had suddenly appeared in the occupied territory. The surface of the lake was pristine as a mirror.

The pattern on the computer screen fluctuated between intense and calm.

Silently, the dozens of Wang Consortium soldiers in their diving gear put on their diving goggles and prepared to jump into the water from the side of the lake.

But at this moment, a patrol car suddenly approached them quickly. The spotlight on the vehicle lit up.

At almost the same time, the special forces all stopped in their tracks and turned around to look at the oncoming vehicle. Their reactions were so orderly it was terrifying.

It was like they were all wired together like machines.

But they were real people.

When the patrol car came to a stop next to the lake, two Wang Consortium soldiers jumped out of the vehicle and shone their flashlights at the special forces. "Tell us who you are!"

As he spoke, the other patrol soldier at the back cocked his automatic rifle.

Stronghold 73 had become occupied territory of the Wang Consortium. While it was occupied, wartime regulations were implemented. These patrol guards were the new garrison troops of this stronghold.

The commander of the special forces raised his hands and walked over slowly. "Military ID 1471, don't shoot. We're friendlies carrying out a mission."

The commander of the special forces spoke to the point and revealed his identity.

A soldier from the patrol squad was surprised. "I know you all. You were included in the list of the troops that entered Stronghold 73 to carry out the reorganization work, but there was no mention you would be conducting a mission here."

"Since you know which unit we belong to, you should know the confidentiality level of our mission," the special forces' commander calmly replied. "Please put down your guns and don't point at your comrades."

However, this explanation did not convince the patrolling guards. The two of them looked at each other before one guard suddenly said, "Show me your clearance documents again. I'll report this matter to the higher-ups. Please calm down and wait for confirmation from the command center at the front line."

"OK." The special forces' commander nodded and said, "I'll get someone to hand you the documents."

He waved to the rear and a hardy-looking soldier trotted over. His sturdy combat boots rattled the ground as he moved.

The special forces operator handed a folder to his superior. The commander untied the string around it and walked towards the patrolling guards. "Here, these are our documents."

But when he was just a step away from them, he quickly took out a short and sharp black combat knife from inside the folder.

Blood started gushing through the special forces' commander's face as silvery patterns appeared on it. Some kind of power was quickly gathering before being unleashed.

In the blink of an eye, the commander of the special forces slashed his dagger across the patrolling soldiers' necks and severed their tracheas and arteries. The patrolling guards did not even have a chance to fire a warning shot.

As the patrolling guards fell to the ground, a few special forces operators nearby split off to handle the scene. Meanwhile, their commander returned right to the lakeside.

A soldier took out a brand new set of diving gear and put it on for him. Then he tied a sealed, black steel bottle around the commander's outer thigh.

All of this was still being carried out without a sound as though someone had silently given them the order. In an instant, 40 soldiers in diving gear jumped into the water with spearguns slung over their backs.

Spearguns were pneumatic weapons, and such lethal weapons were extremely effective even when hunting large sea creatures underwater.

In the dark, the spotlights on their propulsion thrusters were switched on. 40 white fluorescent lights glowed in the water like large silvery fish as they swam quickly towards the center of the lake.

Everyone had a calm expression on their face, and some bubbles would only occasionally appear from their oxygen masks.

A second later, the special forces' commander turned off the power of his thruster and started to slowly sink to the bottom of the lake. With aid from the lights, he could even see the ruins of the East Lake Tunnel.

Suddenly, he drew a dagger from his belt and slashed himself on the forearm.

The blood started blending into the lake water. If this were a river, the blood would have attracted schools of omnivorous fish.

But not here in the waters of East Lake. The special forces' commander quietly used the propulsion thruster's light to scan the vicinity. All of East Lake was like a pool of standing water, and not a single fish could be seen swimming around.

The East Lake was not a stagnant body of water but a lake formed by overflowing rivers congested with silt.

Moreover, before the cave-in at East Lake, this was a hot spot for anglers. It was only after the cave-in that this place gradually became strange.

A moment later, the commander of the special forces spun around and looked to his left. At the same time, he swept his propulsion thruster's light over.

The water in the lake was oppressive, and a huge shadow was rapidly approaching. This was the true apex predator of the freshwater ecosystem in this era of the wastelands.

The special forces' commander did not panic. As danger approached, he just stood on the bottom of the lake quietly and waited for it to arrive.

In the instant before the predator was about to reach him, the soldiers hiding in the lake pulled the triggers of their spearguns simultaneously on both sides.

Sharp spears shot out from the barrels with a rope attached to their tails that acted like an anchor.

The 40 spearguns hit their target at the same time, and the predator in the water suddenly started struggling violently.

The special forces commander who was standing in the water kicked his feet forward. His skin lit up with silvery patterns as he flew towards the predator like a spear.

While gliding, he removed the black steel bottle tied to the outer part of his right thigh with his right hand and pressed down on the side of the bottle with his thumb. Immediately, a needle appeared at the top of the bottle.

At the same time, the special forces' commander arrived at the creature's stomach and stabbed the needle into it.

A silvery liquid metal quickly entered the predator's body and rapidly made its way to the creature's brain through its bloodstream.

These were the nanomachines, while the special forces responsible for transporting them were all nanosoldiers.

Gradually, the predator stopped struggling and calmed down. In fact, if the nanosoldiers were even a little late in their execution, they would probably have gotten buried at the bottom of the lake. That was because this predator was even more terrifying than expected.

The special forces' commander propelled himself forward with his swim fins and came to the head of the creature to observe it carefully.

It was a catfish with six barbels that had mutated for unknown reasons. It was a carnivorous and ferocious freshwater fish.

After getting enough intel, all of the nanosoldiers in the water started swimming towards the surface of the lake.. Meanwhile, a silvery glow suddenly appeared in the eyes of the six-barbeled catfish.

#### Chapter 1084 - Secret Business In The Jing Mountains

After the Wang Consortium's special forces came ashore, they were in no hurry to leave yet. In the dark of the night, they calmly loaded the corpses of the patrolling guards into their equipment boxes.

Then they sank them to the bottom of East Lake along with all their diving gear.

If nothing unexpected happened, it would probably be a long time before anyone realized what had happened at East Lake tonight.

Actually, even the Zhou Consortium had been caught up in the chaos and was unaware that a huge monster had been raised at the bottom of East Lake in Stronghold 73 due to the events of the cave-in.

The superhumans' bodies and blood that were buried at the bottom of the lake were the cause of it all, and the effects were far-reaching.

The special forces got back into their vehicles and set off again. However, they did not continue heading south to the front line as planned. Instead, they returned north with the highest level of clearance documents. No one stopped them, nor did anyone notice anything unusual about them.

"Nanosoldier" was a very strange term in the Central Plains. In many people's minds, nanomachines had become the exclusive technology of the Qing Consortium.

However, only a few people knew that ever since the secret research base in the Southwest was destroyed, the Qing Consortium's authority over access to nanotech had been seized.

Now that the Qing Consortium had completely stopped producing nanomachines, Qing Zhen started mysteriously concealing his movements.

At the same time, a group of elite troops suddenly set off from the Central Plains. They crossed the southwestern forest and arrived near the Jing Mountains in the Southwest.

Along the way, they passed through Mt. Meihua, the Jigong Range, and Mt. Xuanhan. Throughout the journey, they never took the main roads and traveled only along the mountain paths.

Just like the special forces that had appeared at East Lake, they were carrying the best weapons, gear, and detection equipment with them in metallic boxes.

Unlike the special forces, this group of soldiers were carrying even more man-portable heavy weapons.

If normal troops were transporting such heavy equipment manually, they would probably have died from exhaustion in the wilderness. But when these elite troops arrived at the Jing Mountains, they did not look particularly tired at all. It was as though they were all supernatural beings.

There used to be roads in the Jing Mountains, or at the very least, when Ren Xiaosu led Yang Xiaojin and the others into these mountains, there were still traces of vehicular tracks on the mountain paths.

Even earlier than that, there used to be trade caravans passing through the Jing Mountains.



But the Jing Mountains had long been abandoned. There were only dense weeds and vegetation left on the ground, and all traces of human activity had been mercilessly overrun by nature.

Even now, a huge crack could still be seen in the Jing Mountains. A canyon had formed.

During the earthquake that struck the Jing Mountains, the tectonic plates were compressed and pushed up within an hour. The huge crack and gully had cut through Stronghold 113 and Stronghold 112 like a hot knife through butter.

Now that the elite troops had arrived, they could easily imagine the devastating effects on the surrounding areas during the Jing Mountains earthquake.

When regular troops marched, they would always make small talk with each other. It was only when the commander ordered them to observe noise discipline would everyone shut their mouths.

It was not that normal troops were undisciplined, but that this was human nature. Before carrying out high-intensity missions, the soldiers would need to talk to ease their tension.

However, it was different for this group of soldiers. No one said a word throughout, as though there was no need to communicate at all.

When they were about to reach the entrance of the Jing Mountains, the slot canyon<sup>1</sup> there was still the same as before. However, there was more gravel piled up on the narrow path.

The elite troops stood there quietly. Everyone looked at the words carved into the stone wall and did not move for a long time: "Stop here, ye who live."

Ten minutes later, two soldiers put down the boxes they were carrying and took out ten black steel bottles. They unscrewed the seal on them and poured the silvery liquid metal onto the ground.

The silvery liquid metal started flowing like a river before quickly splitting into dozens of streams and spreading up along the smooth stone walls.

A dense squeaking sound could be heard as the silvery liquid metal seemingly alarmed the face bugs that lived in the cliff walls.

Back then, the face bugs had left the Jing Mountains due to the earthquake and started hunting indiscriminately in Stronghold 113. But by the time the Qing Consortium's troops returned to the stronghold to investigate, the bugs had disappeared. No one knew where they had gone.

Surprisingly, the face bugs actually went back to the Jing Mountains and returned to their lair.

The face bugs were extremely ferocious. However, they instinctively started avoiding the silvery liquid metal that was rapidly approaching them.

But before they could figure out what it was, the silvery liquid metal started scattering outwards and seeping into the bodies of the face bugs.

In just half an hour, all of the face bugs in the entire slot canyon stilled.

At this moment, the elite troops carried their equipment and continued heading deeper into the Jing Mountains.

Ren Xiaosu and the others nearly died when they made their way across this canyon entrance, with more than half of the private troops perishing.

This time, the face bugs did not attack the humans at all. They almost seemed as docile as pets.

When the elite troops passed through the slot canyon, they could still see the skeletal remains of humans who had died here. However, they did not stop and continued advancing expressionlessly.

In the recesses of the Jing Mountains, the ruins of the city the Qing Consortium had searched through had completely collapsed in the earthquake. The signs of some shops from before The Cataclysm that could originally be seen here were utterly torn up now.

The ruins of the city became a huge tomb that buried the former human civilization.

The commander of the elite troops retrieved his military binoculars and looked toward the huge volcanic crater in the distance. The soldiers around him who were carrying dozens of boxes started marching quickly towards the volcano.

When they were about a kilometer away from the crater, they started setting up the detection equipment and connected it to a tactical military laptop. Every soldier's movements were conducted with machine precision as they systematically carried out their duties.

Of the 500-strong troops, 30 soldiers were in charge of overseeing the equipment. The rest of the soldiers, who were all armed, carried the remaining unopened boxes and quickly scattered outwards.

A soldier carried a conical-shaped detector and aimed it at the volcanic mountainside. This time, they did not have to wait long as the pattern on the computer screen quickly entered a state of intense turbulence.

"We've discovered it. The intel was wrong. There's more than one unknown lifeform in the crater."

"Probe it again."

"We have confirmation. The number of unknown lifeforms is two."

"Prepare for battle."

"Alpha One and Alpha Two, enter combat ready status and activate the nanomachines."

"Prepare the nanomachines in the tranquilizing device."

"Bravo One and Bravo Two, enter tight security status and prohibit outsiders from entering the battlefield."

"Standby."

"Ready the mortars. Lure them out."

## Chapter 1085 - It's Good Enough That I've Lived Once

While someone was trying to capture the unknown lifeforms in the Jing Mountains, Wang Shengzhi went to Stronghold 61's artificial intelligence research and development center situated 70 meters underground. He suddenly asked the black screen above his head, "Recently, I've received reports from the front line that a few of our fighting forces have been acting on their own. Do you know anything about that?"

The black screen quickly displayed an answer: "It's my responsibility to plan how the standby combat troops are deployed based on the real-time situation."

"Why haven't you mentioned it to me before?" Wang Shengzhi asked again.

Zero replied, "Because you were undergoing an emergency operation when the troops were deployed."

Wang Shengzhi started coughing so severely he felt like his lungs were tearing. He looked extremely pale. His complexion was no longer healthy like before.

He had immediately come back to work a day after being operated on.

Zero said, "You need to rest. The War for the Central Plains is coming to an end. Soon, there will be no enemies left who can challenge the Wang Consortium. The new surveillance equipment has already been shipped to the Zhou Consortium's Stronghold 71, and everything is progressing in good order. You can recuperate without worry."

After that, several documents rapidly appeared on screen, including a deployment order for multiple fighting forces.

Zero continued, "You should get some rest."

Wang Shengzhi slowly evened out his breathing and chuckled softly. "I don't have many months left to live anyway, so let me see a little more of this world for now. How long do you think I still have?"

"Actually, you can continue to live on in another way." Zero said, "The Qing Consortium's nanomachines can interface with neurons in a human's brain. This means I can use that process to upload all your thoughts. When all of the thoughts uploaded are yours alone, it means you're still alive, albeit your existence will be in a different form."

Wang Shengzhi was stunned. "You're already capable of doing that? But would that even be considered as living?"

"I don't think humans have a specific definition of life and death. Most people think that death comes when one's normal life functions have completely ceased. However, I think that as long as one's subjective consciousness remains, they can still be considered as truly living," Zero answered.

Wang Shengzhi chuckled and shook his head. "But you can only upload the memories that exist in my cerebral cortex by interfacing my brain with the nanomachines. It wouldn't be possible to upload my soul."

"I'm still skeptical about whether the soul really exists. I even think that memory is the true embodiment of the soul. If you enjoyed eating rice dumplings while you were human, you'll still like them even after you exist in the form of data." Zero said, "Everything that makes you you will continue to exist as before."

Wang Shengzhi cleared his throat a couple times and adjusted the blanket on his knees. Then he said with a smile, "But then I can't eat rice dumplings."

Zero suddenly said, "At that time, you'll discover a much bigger world than you've ever known. Moreover, you can personally take charge of the judicial system you've hoped for."

Wang Shengzhi gave a slight smile and shook his head. "The ideology I've devoted my life to is to prevent the inferiority of humans from affecting judicial decisions. The guilty should be punished and the innocent vindicated. However, I'm also human, and I have my weaknesses as well. Therefore, if I live in another form and am made to maintain order over human society, that would still be putting a human in charge of the judicial system. Thus, I might also end up becoming the one that perverted the course of justice one day."

"Zero, do you understand? This is at odds with my ideals." Wang Shengzhi pushed his wheelchair into the elevator by himself. "Life can be short or long, but it's good enough that I've lived once. There's no need to try to persuade me any further."

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"I want to learn sorcery!" Ren Xiaosu said firmly as he sat at the campfire. His eyes were shimmering as he looked at Melgor. "The type where I can immediately learn how to cast spells!"

Melgor felt a little panicky with Ren Xiaosu staring at him. "Didn't you say you wanted to finish reading the Introduction to Sorcery first? Why have you suddenly changed your mind?"

"That won't hold me up." Ren Xiaosu said nonchalantly, "I can both read the book and learn sorcery at the same time!"

Liu Ting whispered to Li Chengguo, "See, what did I tell you? He was just being stubborn when he insisted on continuing to read the book. He isn't enthusiastic about learning; he just didn't want to look stupid."

Next to him, Li Chengguo also muttered, "I had thought he was a rather patient person when he said he wanted to finish reading the book, but I didn't expect him to be even more straightforward than us."

Although Li Chengguo and Liu Ting were very eager to learn sorcery, they did not bluntly ask Melgor to teach them how to cast spells like Ren Xiaosu.

Melgor patiently advised, "You don't have an Eye of True Sight yet. Even if I teach you how to cast spells, you can't practice them!"

"That's not a big deal!" Ren Xiaosu said.

Melgor was shocked. What did he mean by it was not a big problem? 'The Eye of True Sight is key to casting spells. You don't even have one yet, but you're saying it's not a big deal?'

"Even if you want to learn sorcery, you still have to do it step by step." Melgor said helplessly, "Don't get so impatient. First of all, you have to learn the Magi's tongue if you want to recite incantations. And I'm not deliberately making things difficult for you; Li Chengguo and Liu Ting have also just started learning it."

All spell incantations were formed based on the language of the Magi. Originally, everyone in the nation of sorcerers spoke the language. But after the Central Plains people gradually made up 80% of the population, their language got popular and even became the unofficial language of the nation.

Later, the Magi thought about it and gradually elevated the language of the Magi into the language of the nobility, making it prestigious.

It meant that only those who could speak in the Magi's tongue would be regarded as true nobles. Their statuses skyrocketed, and the sorcerers also enjoyed this feeling very much.

Currently, only sorcerers and members of the secular world's royal family were allowed to learn the language of the Magi.

Actually, Ren Xiaosu felt that the Magi's decision was stupid. Making their own people abandon their own language was no different from giving up their own culture. If anyone were to try this in the Central Plains, they would surely become a laughingstock to others.

It was no wonder the nation of sorcerers was assimilated by the Central Plains culture so quickly. It was because the Magi did not value their own culture enough.

Ren Xiaosu looked at Li Chengguo and Liu Ting. "Why have you two only just started learning the language of the Magi?"

"Isn't it because we've been busy being sheep for the past two years?" Li Chengguo muttered.

Ren Xiaosu looked at Melgor and hesitated a little. He wanted to tell him he had no intention of learning the language of the Magi. After all, he was aiming to cast nonverbal spells right from the start.

But on second thought, that would be a little too abrupt. Moreover, if he wanted to infiltrate the magus order, he would surely have to learn some everyday phrases, right?

"Alright, let's start learning right away." Ren Xiaosu asked Melgor, "Tell me, how can I quickly learn the Magi's tongue?"

Melgor thought for a moment and said, "I do have some experience in this aspect.. All you need to do is to apply what you've learned in your everyday conversations."

## Chapter 1086 - Secret Of The Proficiency Stones

"My father pursued the dream of becoming a sorcerer his entire life, so he mastered the language very early on. As such, I've been learning it from him since I was a child." Melgor explained, "He started off by



teaching me the grammar, but it was too slow to learn that way. I only managed to grasp the pronunciations after a year of studying."

"But later, he started conversing with me in the Magi's tongue. In our daily life, he would give me a beating if I ever spoke in the Central Plains' tongue. In just three months, I was actually able to communicate with him in that language." Melgor said, "So it's not difficult to learn it, especially when it's just speaking it. As for the casting of spells, you'll only need to recite the incantations. There's no need to learn how to write it."

Ren Xiaosu nodded seriously. "It's just like a child learning how to speak. Clearly, they don't know how to write the words down, but that doesn't stop them from communicating. Let's do it this way then. Melgor, you'll handle the teaching while I'll help to supervise the two of them."

Melgor was pondering the fact that the kid did not even address him with the honorific "lord" anymore. He questioned Ren Xiaosu impatiently, "Supervise them? You? How?"

"Didn't you say that your father used to give you a beating when you were young? I can give them a beating them too," Ren Xiaosu said in seriousness.

Liu Ting was enraged. "Are you taking advantage of the situation?"

"Aren't I just making an analogy?" Ren Xiaosu said unhappily, "If there's no one to pressure you to learn, how long would it take before you two actually become sorcerers?"

"Then what about you? Who'll supervise you?" Liu Ting raised his voice and said, "Don't you also want to become a sorcerer? If you speak in the Central Plains' tongue, we'll beat you up too!"

Ren Xiaosu suddenly felt a sense of respect for him. "All things considered, at least you've got a backbone, sheep!"

Liu Ting felt offended. Was that supposed to be a compliment?

He wanted to retort, but when Li Chengguo tugged at him and pointed at the black eye on his face, Liu Ting was talked out of it.

Melgor spoke up. He said patiently to Ren Xiaosu, "You've got to correct your learning attitude too."

"Alright then." Ren Xiaosu said reluctantly, "I'll also stop speaking in the Central Plains' tongue. When do we start? Why not tomorrow?"

Melgor smiled and said, "Actually, the incantations are also plainly hidden within the phrases we use daily. Look at this campfire in front of us. In the Magi's tongue, it's known as a 'bonfire.' When the 'fire' part is used as an incantation, it becomes the spell for a Lesser Fireball."

"What about a Greater Fireball?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

When Melgor saw that Ren Xiaosu was so enthusiastic, he said with a smile, "The incantation for a Greater Fireball is 'the fire is raging.'"

"I see," Ren Xiaosu said with a nod. He thought to himself how it took more than a second to recite the incantation before a fireball could be conjured, so it was no wonder the Rider defeated the author of the Introduction to Sorcery.

Any sorcerer who gave Ren Xiaosu even a second to react would definitely get killed three or four times over. If Ren Xiaosu were given any more time than that, he would probably even be able to bring down an entire castle.

Ren Xiaosu suddenly asked, "Can you cast a Lesser Fireball for us to have a look?"

Ren Xiaosu was saying this because he wanted to see what a Lesser Fireball cast by Melgor looked like. Didn't the Introduction to Sorcery say that if a spell was cast nonverbally, it could cause the spellcaster to lose control and expend too much willpower?

Therefore, he had to first find out the magnitude of a Lesser Fireball before he could assess how out of control he was when casting his own fireball.

Melgor thought for a moment and demonstrated the spell to them. After he finished reciting the incantation with the Eye of True Sight, a fist-sized fireball floated out into the distance.

Li Chengguo and Liu Ting's eyes lit up as they looked in the direction the fireball flew off towards. They thought about how great it would be if they could also cast a similar spell someday.

However, something else went through Ren Xiaosu's mind. He had also felt the temperature of the fireball just now. To be honest, it would probably not be much of an issue if such a small fireball were to squarely hit him.

Moreover, the speed at which the fireball moved was a little too slow. It traveled at about the speed of a rock thrown by a normal person with all their might. Any decent superhuman in the Central Plains could dodge the spell. After all, everyone in the Central Plains measured the strength of a person by their ability to dodge bullets.

Of course, this was referring to avoiding the bullet's trajectory.

Wanting to see more, Ren Xiaosu asked, "How about a Greater Fireball?"

Sadly, Melgor shook his head and said, "I don't know how to cast that."

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. "Did you come in last in class? I saw in the Introduction to Sorcery that fireball spells are not particularly difficult to master. Why can't you do it?"

Melgor's face turned red, but he still explained earnestly, "Every sorcerer has to choose their own focus, so it's not necessary to learn all the spells."

Ren Xiaosu asked curiously, "What do you mean?"

"You have to know that I had to practice the Wind Bind and Earth Bind spells for an entire year before I could cast them." Melgor explained, "Do you know how many times I practiced casting those spells in the past year? Thousands of times! At first, I would get dizzy after practicing the casting twice a day. It

wasn't until I meditated long enough that my condition gradually improved. So how many years of their life would a sorcerer have to waste if they learned every spell out there? When a person becomes a sorcerer, they have to make a choice. Whichever type of sorcerer you choose to become, you will have to continue down that path. Only then will you have a chance to become an archmage in your lifetime."

"Then what's the Earth Bind spell like after decades of practice?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

"It's strong enough to restrain several dozen gladiators like you," Melgor said proudly.

Ren Xiaosu came to a realization. So it was not as simple as knowing the incantations and having the Eye of True Sight to be able to cast spells. He would still have to practice them.

It was no wonder he felt that Melgor's Earth Bind spell was a little weak. Ren Xiaosu had nearly fumbled his acting and broken free from the enchantment. So it turned out it was because Melgor had only become a sorcerer not long ago, so he had recently mastered this spell alone and did not have much practice with it yet.

Therefore, learning the art of sorcery required practicing spells more than a 1,000 times before they could be cast normally. Furthermore, the spells would get stronger the more one trained.

However, the willpower of a sorcerer was limited, so they would have to selectively practice the types of spells they wanted to specialize in. If you practiced ten different types of spells a 1,000 times, you would still be a weakling. But if you practiced a single spell 10,000 times, you would become an archmage.

Melgor explained patiently, "I chose to be a sorcerer of control. For similar types of enchantments, there's an interrelated effect that can help save time in training. For example, if I practice the Wind Bind spell a 1,000 times and successfully cast it, I can cast the Earth Bind spell after a 100 practice attempts. That's probably the best analogy I can give. If you all become sorcerers someday, you'll have to make a similar choice."

"There's a limit to one's lifetime. Many people in the magus order specialize in only one or two types of spells, but they are all extremely powerful sorcerers." Melgor continued, "In the words of you Central Plains people, it's called 'dominating the world with one skill!'"

Ren Xiaosu suddenly thought he roughly understood what the Proficiency Stones in the vending machine were for.

## Chapter 1087 - Genius Sorcerer

"Of course, I'm not asking you all to only specialize in one type of spell your entire lives. For example, I've trained in the fire element Lesser Fireball so that I can use it for self-defense and also deal effective damage to others." Melgor explained, "Although control spells are my main focus, normal sorcerers are usually just like me in that they practice one primary and one secondary type of spell. One is used for support and the other is for dealing damage."

"Then why didn't you focus on the fire spells instead? Isn't it worth more to train hard in the more lethal spells?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

Melgor said with a bitter smile, "Because many of the advanced fire spells are extremely unstable, I need to have the meditative visualizations to complement the training. As I'm only a fringe sorcerer, no one's willing to teach me the meditative visualizations for advanced fire spells."

Ren Xiaosu immediately understood. He had read about it in the Introduction to Sorcery. The combination of reciting incantations and meditative visualizations was to stabilize the alchemical elements.

In other words, the magus order actually controlled a lot of meditative visualization diagrams used for casting high-level spells to hinder the advancement of fringe sorcerers, and this was how the internal hierarchy of the order was divided.

"So only those families with ancient nobility within the order can continue to do well, right?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"That's right." Melgor nodded. "Normal sorcerers can only serve as a foil to the elite. However, there's also other ways to obtain high-level meditative visualization diagrams, such as marrying into an influential family."

Ren Xiaosu asked, "You mean you've considered that route before?"

Melgor shook his head. "I'm not even qualified to marry into such families."

"Then have you ever thought about how powerful you can be if you train your Lesser Fireball spell for the rest of your life?" Ren Xiaosu asked, "It's really exciting just thinking about it!"

Melgor did not know whether to laugh or cry as he explained, "Even if you spend an entire lifetime training the Lesser Fireball spell, it'll only be equivalent to someone else training their Meteor Shower spell a 1,000 times. I did say that some people only practiced one spell their entire lives, but they do so only for the highest level spells. Who would bother training their Lesser Fireball spell?"

"So that's how it works." Ren Xiaosu nodded. "Then how strong is the most powerful sorcerer?"

"Apparently, the Meteor Shower spell can destroy an entire township. However, that was practiced by an elder who led the magus order in surviving the Cataclysm nearly 200 years ago. His life was briefly chronicled in a book." Melgor said, "However, it seems that he was not born a noble, so the magus order deliberately reduced his influence later on."

"Then how many times did he practice the Meteor Shower spell?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"It was recorded in that book that he practiced it 90,000 times," Melgor said.

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. "Then how many townships did he destroy..."

"We don't practice our spells in the real world." Melgor did not know whether to laugh or cry. "We train in our inner world!"

"Oh, I was gonna say," Ren Xiaosu muttered. How devastating would it be if he had trained in the real world instead?

But even so, the other party's act of destroying a township was still a little lacking in comparison to his status as a stronghold destroyer.

Wait a minute! Ren Xiaosu recalled the Meteor Shower spell and wondered why it sounded so familiar.

He suddenly flipped through the Introduction to Sorcery in his hand and closed the book again.

Melgor wondered, "What's the matter?"

"It's nothing." Ren Xiaosu shook his head nonchalantly.

However, Ren Xiaosu's heart was pounding. No wonder he thought the Meteor Shower spell sounded so familiar. It was because the author of the Introduction to Sorcery kept mentioning it when quoting examples in his book: "Take, for example, the Meteor Shower spell I specialize in..."

So it turned out the author of the Introduction to Sorcery was the great genius sorcerer Melgor was referring to?

And the Rider Ren He had easily defeated the greatest sorcerer in the history of the nation of sorcerers on his casual travels?

Of course, when Ren He defeated him, that sorcerer might still have been very young. But after he was defeated, he decided to work hard to become the most powerful archmage of his time?

The butterfly effect awed Ren Xiaosu a little just thinking about it.

If each Proficiency Stone represented him practicing a spell once, then Ren Xiaosu's 90,000 gratitude tokens meant he could exchange them for a sorcerer's lifetime of pursuit in just a short hour. That way, wouldn't he be comparable to that great sorcerer?

This time, even Ren Xiaosu was shocked, because he did not expect the gratitude tokens he had accumulated in his Prosperous Northwest 2.0 plan would turn out to be so useful!

According to what Melgor said, a sorcerer would only be considered as having mastered a spell after ten years of training and casting it 10,000 times. Only then would they become a notable archmage in the magus order.

In that case, Ren Xiaosu could most likely defeat 90% of the magus order's members in one night, right?

But when Ren Xiaosu thought about it again, he realized he already had enough tricks up his sleeve. With enough understanding of the magus order, would he need to learn so many archmage-level spells?

Perhaps he could also be like that most powerful sorcerer Melgor had mentioned, only learning one spell in his entire life to use as his ace?

In the past, he had actually been a little envious of Li Shentan and Zhou Yingxue. They had such powerful attacks against masses of enemies while he did not.

Now, he could finally make up for it in the nation of sorcerers, right? Of course, there was no need to hurry for now. He would have to choose a spell on the level of Meteor Shower before spamming the Proficiency Stones on it.

After he returned to the Northwest, he could finally hold his head high in front of his maidservant as her master.

Moreover, if he were to use all 90,000 Proficiency Stones on a single spell, couldn't he do whatever he wanted in the nation of sorcerers?

However, he was still unsure about that for now.



Ren Xiaosu sat at the campfire and suddenly asked Melgor, "Is there really no one in the magus order now who can match that genius sorcerer?"

"That's right," said Melgor.

"Oh." Ren Xiaosu was relieved. There was no need to fight anymore. He had already won!

Regardless of what the actual situation was, being able to mentally one-up them was half the battle won!

When everyone started feeling sleepy, Ren Xiaosu took the opportunity to return to his tent where he waited patiently.

Gradually, Melgor and the two sheeple's snores could be heard. Only then did Ren Xiaosu take out his Eye of True Sight from the palace.

"Maybe I should attempt Lesser Fireball first?" Ren Xiaosu's eyes lit up. This was a spell he had obtained without using any Perfect Skill Duplication Scrolls. How refreshing!

Ren Xiaosu had a great deal of combat experience, so he deeply understood how important it was to have another skill to rely on.

However, Melgor also said he had practiced the spell a 1,000 times before he could finally cast it. Ren Xiaosu thought he could probably practice it several dozen times in one night since it wasn't likely he would exhaust his willpower anyway.

Based on this, he could probably cast Lesser Fireball in just a few days, right?

But what was the incantation for the spell? Ren Xiaosu did not have Wang Yun's memory, and since Melgor had said it in a foreign language to him, he could not remember how to pronounce "fire."

Ren Xiaosu stayed silent for a long while. Then he picked up the Eye of True Sight and tried saying, "Haiya?"

In an instant, Ren Xiaosu felt a portion of his willpower quickly splitting off and concentrating in his Eye of True Sight.

Right after, a loud rumble came from the direction of the sheeple's tent next door.

Li Chengguo and Liu Ting shouted, "Fuck!"

#### Chapter 1088 - Gateway To A New World: Chinese Incantation

This night was really full of twists and turns for Melgor.

When he could not fall asleep in the middle of the night, Ren Xiaosu had pulled him aside and asked him questions regarding sorcery. He even imparted some knowledge of the magus order to Ren Xiaosu and the servants.

Now that he was finally able to fall asleep, he was awoken by two exclamations of "fuck" as soon as he dozed off. How annoying!

As such, Melgor hurriedly got out of his tent to see what was going on. He even had his Eye of True Sight ready in hand to brace himself for a battle with an enemy!

But when he came out of his tent, he was surprised to see a large pit in the ground where the two sheeple had set up their tent. The two sheeple had fallen inside together with the tent.

The cavity was about four meters in diameter and three meters deep. When Melgor walked up to the edge, he saw the two sheeple looking up at him with their heads covered in dirt.

"What's going on?" Melgor asked in surprise, "Were you two attacked?"

The two sheeple were dumbfounded. "We didn't see anyone. We were sleeping when we suddenly fell in here!"

As soon as they finished speaking, he saw Ren Xiaosu rushing over with a wooden stick he had found from somewhere. "What's the matter? What's going on here? Is it an enemy? Where are they?"

This series of questions stunned Li Chengguo, Melgor, and Liu Ting. They heard Ren Xiaosu add, "Don't worry, I'm here!"

The two sheeple were moved. Although the young man from the Central Plains was usually very arrogant, he still came to help them at such a critical moment!

"Thanks, we're alright." Li Chengguo said, "But we're not sure what happened either."

"Gratitude received from Li Chengguo, +1!"

Ren Xiaosu warmly reached out and pulled the two sheeple out of the hole. Meanwhile, Melgor walked around the pit twice and said, "This circular pit's shape is very uniform. It looks like it was caused by a spell someone cast. Don't tell me it was a sorcerer that attacked you two?"

Ren Xiaosu dismissed it. "How can there be a sorcerer out here in the wilderness? Surely it can't be another ostracized fringe sorcerer sent to the border like you, right?"

Melgor snapped, "You're my steward after all's said and done, so can't you speak with a little more respect to me? But what you said makes sense. There can't be other sorcerers out here. Besides, I've never come across such a spell before."

"What kind of earth spells are there?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

"Liquefy Ground, Sudden Stalagmite, Wall of Earth, etc." Melgor explained, "Although this pit might resemble something caused by the Liquefy Ground spell, that spell actually uses quicksand to trap people. This isn't how it looks at all."

Ren Xiaosu concluded, "The tent might've been set up on hollow ground. Although the surface looks flat, there's actually a void underneath. It could have suddenly collapsed because it could not bear both their weight. Moreover, if a sorcerer were trying to sneak up and attack them, the sheeple would probably be dead."

"That explanation makes more sense than using sorcery," Melgor said, sounding vexed. "Alright, hurry up and go back to sleep...."

"Mhm, to prevent anyone from ambushing us, I'll keep watch tonight." Ren Xiaosu said.

Melgor's heart warmed. "Much appreciated!"

Ren Xiaosu suddenly asked, "By the way, how do you recite the incantation for Lesser Fireball?"

Melgor repeated it clearly, "'Fire,' why?"

"Hahaha, it's nothing." Then Ren Xiaosu urged Melgor to go and sleep. He thought to himself, 'I really recited the incantation wrong. I shouldn't have said it as "haiya."'

But Ren Xiaosu thought to himself that the pit in the ground must have something to do with the spell he had cast earlier. But the problem was that he had not recited the incantation correctly, so how did he succeed in casting the spell!?

What fucking logic was that?

Furthermore, didn't Melgor say a sorcerer needed to practice a spell a 1,000 times before it could be fully cast and affect the physical world? How did he accidentally end up succeeding on his first try then?!

But other sorcerers cast a Lesser or Greater Fireball by reciting their corresponding incantations, so how did he end up creating a pit in the ground by saying "haiya"?!

Could he have accidentally opened up a new world again?

Ren Xiaosu thought about it carefully. Logically speaking, a sorcerer used the Eye of True Sight as a tool for concentrating their willpower.

In that case, there was no reason why a sorcerer could muster a spell when speaking in the language of the Magi but he couldn't if he spoke in Chinese.

The world was fair, and it was not like the Magi had something more than the Northwestern people!

Therefore, since willpower wasn't exclusive to any nationality, who was to say that the Central Plains people were inferior to the Magi. Moreover, with superhumans like Li Shentan and Zhou Yingxue who were capable of destroying cities and strongholds in the Central Plains, they would be considered once-in-a-lifetime geniuses if they were put in the magus order.

The key was that the Eye of True Sight could be used to cast spells as long as he held it in his hand.

Sorcerers used the language of the Magi to cast spells because their countless predecessors had gradually discovered some pattern in its usage. Actually, they could also use Chinese to cast spells, but it was just that no one had made a summary of which words were used for what spells.

Ren Xiaosu suddenly felt a sense of lofty contribution. As the future commander of the Northwest, shouldn't he bring back some Eyes of True Sight from the Kingdom of Sorcerers to the Northwest as souvenirs? Then couldn't he kickstart a grand era of sorcery in the Northwest and help many normal people attain superpowers?

This was one of the core elements of the Prosperous Northwest 3.0 plan. No matter how many detours he had to take, helping the Northwest prosper was the end goal.

But before that, maybe he should first help to compile which Chinese words corresponded with which spells.

Of course, he would have to keep his distance from the sheeple the next time he tested out the incantations. Although those two guys were always throwing sarcasm at him, it would not be good if he accidentally killed them with a spell.

When Melgor, Li Chengguo, and Liu Ting were all asleep, Ren Xiaosu pretended to go out and relieve himself. Then he took the opportunity to run several hundred meters away before carefully taking out his Eye of True Sight again.

What words in Chinese should he use to test out the incantations? The only clue he had was "haiya," but that was not enough for him to figure out any patterns, right?

Ren Xiaosu remained silent for a long time. Then he carefully tested, "Meteor Shower?"

No response.

"Summon the Divine Dragon!"

No response.

"Diamond Dust!"

No response.

"Repeated side shuffle!"

No response.

"Tempest in a teapot!"

No response.

"Send in the Trojan Horse!"

There was still no response.

Ren Xiaosu's expression darkened. He was thinking of teaching the Northwest's population to recite incantations in Chinese just a moment ago, but he could not even recite a proper incantation now.

"How am I supposed to cast a spell if all these powerful-sounding phrases won't even trigger a response? Should I say 'may you be prosperous' instead?" Ren Xiaosu muttered.

But just as his words trailed off, Ren Xiaosu heard exclamations coming from the direction of the campfire.

Liu Ting shouted, "Fuck!"

Li Chengguo shouted, "Fuck!"

Melgor shouted, "Fuck!!!"

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. "May you be prosperous?"

As a result, exclamations rang out once more a short distance away.

Ren Xiaosu was completely shocked. Could Chinese incantations be that treacherous? Openly wishing others well but actually expressing malice in secret?

Wait a minute, was it an issue with the incantation, or could the problem lie with him?!

## Chapter 1089 - Utmost Sincerity

Regardless of whether the problem was with his Chinese incantations, Ren Xiaosu was currently more worried about whether Melgor was alright.

After all, Melgor was a key figure in his infiltration plan into the magus order. If that guy were to accidentally get killed, Ren Xiaosu would probably have to rework his Prosperous Northwest 3.0 plan again.

And more importantly, Ren Xiaosu found Melgor to be quite a good person after a few days of interaction. Moreover, he had a "lucky charm" effect, so it would be very suitable to bring him back to the Prosperous Northwest.

Therefore, how could he let a potential comrade like him die?

Ren Xiaosu hurriedly ran back while holding up his pants to make it look like he was returning from relieving himself. "What's the matter? What happened?"

He saw that the tents next to the campfire were gone. Meanwhile, Melgor and the two servants were buried in the ground with only their heads exposed. They looked anxiously at Ren Xiaosu.



"What happened to y'all?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously. He was not pretending. He really did not know what kind of spell he had cast this time!

When Melgor saw him approaching, he suddenly shouted, "Don't get too close. There must be a sorcerer nearby sneak attacking us. Be careful!"

When Melgor said this, he scrutinized Ren Xiaosu's expression to see if there was anything unusual about him.

Ren Xiaosu suddenly turned around and roared, "Who is it? How dare you attack Lord Melgor!"

Melgor looked in the direction of where Ren Xiaosu was looking. He was surprised to see a figure in a white mask turning around and quickly running off into the shadows.

Ren Xiaosu wanted to give chase, but he heard Melgor shout, "Don't give chase! That's a sorcerer. You're no match for him!"

"Wait, you should hide. Be careful in case he ambushes you." Melgor shouted, "I wonder where that sorcerer came from? His methods are really quite despicable!"

When Ren Xiaosu heard this, his mouth twitched. Then he said very sincerely, "What would happen to y'all if I just hide myself? I've got to save y'all first!"

"What if he ambushes you from behind..."

Ren Xiaosu yelled, "No, I must save y'all first!"

Melgor was absolutely moved. "Ren Xiaosu, it's my greatest fortune to have you as my steward. Thank you!"

"Gratitude received from Melgor, +1!"

Next to him, Li Chengguo also said, "I won't speak ill of you behind your back again!"

Liu Ting looked ashamed as well.

"Alright, let's not dwell on that anymore. That sorcerer from just now is probably not that strong. That's why he ran away when he saw me." After that, Ren Xiaosu cautiously approached Melgor and the two servants before pulling them out of the ground one by one.

After that, the four of them did not even bother packing their stuff and fled frantically westwards.

Melgor was no longer suspicious of Ren Xiaosu. In fact, he even felt a little remorseful. 'Why did I doubt a good person like him? I'm such a jerk!'

Melgor kept muttering while fleeing, "Don't worry, Ren Xiaosu. From now on, I'll do everything to teach you about sorcery. It doesn't matter if you don't have enough money to buy an Eye of True Sight. I'll get one for you after I've collected several years of taxes from my fief!"

Off to the side, Li Chengguo also said, "You're our savior. Previously, I didn't mean it when I said I would give you an Eye of True Sight if I obtained an extra one from stone gambling. But I hereby promise you that if I get an extra Eye of True Sight and don't give it to you, I won't cast any spells for the rest of my life!"

Liu Ting panted, "Me too!"

"Alright, alright." Ren Xiaosu did not know whether to laugh or cry. He was starting to feel a little embarrassed.

Seeing that Ren Xiaosu did not believe him, the dumbass, Li Chengguo, turned anxious. "What? Don't you believe me?"

"I do, I believe you," Ren Xiaosu answered casually.

Sensing that Ren Xiaosu was still not taking him seriously, Li Chengguo said anxiously, "I'll give you the money so you can buy a stone for yourself!"

Ren Xiaosu was stunned for a moment, then said shamelessly, "That's a little sudden, but I don't mind."

At the beginning, Melgor, Li Chengguo, and Liu Ting were all actually a little suspicious of Ren Xiaosu. After all, it just so happened that Ren Xiaosu went to relieve himself when they got into trouble. Wasn't it a little too coincidental?

But after the appearance of White Mask, everyone dismissed their doubts. First, Ren Xiaosu was really from the Central Plains and had not learned sorcery before. Second, Ren Xiaosu did not have an Eye of True Sight, so he could not possibly cast any spells.

Moreover, the perpetrator had already shown himself. It was that White Mask!

Meanwhile, Ren Xiaosu was thinking about something. Did his spells have eyes? Why did it keep targeting the three of them?

He asked while running, "What happened to y'all just now?"

"We were sleeping when we suddenly felt our tents sinking into the ground as it turned into quicksand." Melgor said, "However, the Liquefy Ground spell stopped immediately after that. During that time, we quickly went outside our tents. But before we could get far, we were hit by another Liquefy Ground."

"Liquefy Ground?" Ren Xiaosu silently noted that in his mind. So it turned out that "may you be prosperous" was the incantation for the Liquefy Ground spell.

"That sorcerer is extremely vicious. I wonder what he was planning by burying us in the ground with only our heads exposed." Li Chengguo grumbled, "How can there be such a vicious sorcerer!"

Ren Xiaosu's eyes twitched. It did not feel good that he could not retort after being scolded by someone. He immediately changed the subject and asked, "By the way, Mel, how's that sorcerer's spell proficiency?"

Melgor was no longer bothered about being called "Mel" at this point. After all, Ren Xiaosu had just saved his life. If he were to react with hostility now, that would make him really ungrateful. He thought for a moment before saying, "He's quite strong, even stronger than me!"

"Why do you say that? Ren Xiaosu asked.

"Although Liquefy Ground is a basic spell like Fireball, the area of effect of his spell is several times larger than that of standard Liquefy Ground spells that I know. It looks like he's been practicing it for many years, or at least much longer than the time I spent practicing my Earth Bind spell," Melgor explained. "But most importantly, he was able to cast the Liquefy Ground spell twice within a very short interval, so his level of elemental control is far superior to mine."

Ren Xiaosu was listening with gusto next to them. He even humbly said, "I don't feel like he's that powerful."

Melgor said in seriousness, "You're not a sorcerer yet, so you can't appreciate how powerful he is."

"Mhm, I'll try to understand it if I get a chance." Ren Xiaosu chuckled.

Melgor suddenly realized Ren Xiaosu did not seem nervous at all even in the face of danger. He could still laugh while they were fleeing.

Of course, this was definitely not a bad thing, because it showed he had found a capable steward who could remain calm in the face of danger. It was indeed worthwhile to risk crossing into the outposts' perimeter and abducting him!

The four of them continued running until daybreak before slowly stopping in their tracks. Ren Xiaosu said, "Y'all haven't slept well all night. I think y'all should get some sleep first while I keep a lookout nearby. If anyone unknown approaches us again, I'll wake y'all up."

Melgor smiled bitterly. "Sleep? Who can sleep at such a time?"

They had already lost their tents, and all their luggage had been swallowed by the quicksand, and even a highly revered sorcerer like Melgor ended up in such a pathetic state.

Liu Ting suddenly wondered, "Lord Melgor, have you thought about who might be plotting against us? They even employed a sorcerer to attack us. Do you have any enemies?"

"Why can't it be both of your enemies?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously, "Don't you two have any enemies?"

Liu Ting said, "We're just the children of rich families, so why would we have any enemies? At most, our siblings might be jealous that our fathers have spent so much money to groom us into sorcerers. But I doubt they'd try to harm us. Besides, there's strict control on finances in our clans, so my siblings can't afford to hire sorcerers at all. Someone did hire a hitman before, but since it was a sorcerer that appeared this time, our siblings are definitely not the culprits."

"Yes." Li Chengguo also nodded. "You can easily pay a sorcerer to become their apprentice or servant, but if you want to engage one to help you kill someone, you have to pay an astronomical sum. Ren Xiaosu, you haven't been to the Kingdom of Sorcerers before, so you don't understand how revered a sorcerer is in our kingdom. Even my father has to kneel and bow when he sees Lord Melgor, so how can a person of that status be willing to so easily be another person's tool?"

Liu Ting lamented, "I only dare to say this because we're already familiar with Lord Melgor. Our families only paid Lord Melgor to assist us in buying an Eye of True Sight because we wanted to bank on his luck. After all, those who manage to buy their Eye of True Sight are still a little different. But even if my father had such practical motives, he still has to be respectful towards Lord Melgor. Lord Melgor, you won't get angry if I say that, right?"

Ren Xiaosu thought to himself, 'Even though Liu Ting is from a rich family, power struggles still exist between his siblings?'

However, Melgor said with a wry smile, "No, I might've implicated you all this time."

When he heard that, Ren Xiaosu's interest was piqued. Oh? Could Melgor have some stories of love and revenge?

Melgor said in detail, "I've mentioned before that my family was rich when I was young, so we had a bigger network of family friends. When I was seven years old, I got engaged to someone. Some people can get engaged without knowing how their future partner looks, but it was different for me. I grew up together with my fiancée, and we were extremely close with each other.

"Although she isn't beautiful, she has a good personality. Once, when I fell down and injured myself, she personally bandaged the wound for me. When my father died and I didn't have any money for his burial, she was the one who secretly gave me the money to handle his matters.

"After becoming a sorcerer, I came to York County to construct a Sorcerer's Tower. However, I would only be allocated my portion of the collected taxes in my second year, so I didn't have any money to build one. If a sorcerer can't even afford to construct his own tower, they would only end up as a laughingstock. Just as I was worrying over what to do, she sent her servant to York County to hand me all the gold coins she had saved up over the years," Melgor said.

Ren Xiaosu was taken aback. "Isn't that good? Now that you've become a sorcerer, you're a worthy match for her. Even if you're just an insignificant one, you're still a sorcerer."

Melgor's expression became strange when he heard Ren Xiaosu say "insignificant sorcerer," but he did not refute him directly. He continued, "Even though I'm considered worthy of her now as a sorcerer, the problem is that her father called off our engagement before I became one."

"My father was still alive at that time, so I went to their manor to protest it, but I ended up getting thrown out by their servants." Melgor said gloomily, "Right now, her fiancé is also a sorcerer who hails from a powerful archmage's family in the secular world. I'm powerless to change our fate."

"So you think that sorcerer was sent by her fiancé?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"Yes." Melgor said melancholically, "She probably still has me in her heart."

"How long until their wedding?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"A year from now," Melgor said.

Ren Xiaosu felt that Melgor was just like the protagonist of a fictional story.

A declining clan!

A born loser!

An engagement called off!

However, his fate was reversed at the lowest point of his life. Not only did he manage to randomly pick an Eye of True Sight, but he also met the person who would become his biggest benefactor... Ren Xiaosu!

Starting from now, Melgor would be embarking on a comeback against the Heavens and fate to finally marry the woman he loved. After that, they would live happily ever after in the Northwest's Fortress 178.

When Ren Xiaosu thought of this, he nearly let out an audible chuckle...

Melgor looked at Ren Xiaosu and said bitterly, "Is it that funny..."

"A little." Ren Xiaosu said in seriousness, "They're all at Ghent City, right? I think we should head there as soon as possible."

"Are we in such a hurry?" Melgor said in surprise.

"Of course, I'm going to help you win back your childhood sweetheart!" Ren Xiaosu said matter-of-factly.

Melgor was stunned for a moment and then started laughing. "You? What makes you think you can snatch someone from a sorcerer's family when you're only my steward? I don't mean to belittle you, of course, but you still know nothing about the strength of sorcerers."

Ren Xiaosu curled his lips and thought to himself, 'You also know nothing about the strength of the Stronghold Destroyer.'

"By the way," Ren Xiaosu asked, "Have you ever heard of the name Ren He?"

Melgor was taken aback. "That sounds a little familiar, but I can't remember where I've seen it."

Ren Xiaosu asked, "Previously, you mentioned that there's a book that chronicled the life of that archmage who's really good at the Meteor Shower spell. Do you still have it with you?"

"I didn't bring it." Melgor shook his head. "The books I brought on this trip were the ones I've not read before. But I've finished reading that one already. The rest were swallowed up by the quicksand when we were hit by the Liquefy Ground spell."

"Alright then," Ren Xiaosu said helplessly.

But just as his words trailed off, Ren Xiaosu suddenly grabbed Melgor by his collar and leaped left. Then a pillar of flames shot up from where Melgor was originally standing!

"We're under attack!" Ren Xiaosu roared.



After being pulled aside by Ren Xiaosu, Melgor fell to the ground pathetically. When he heard Ren Xiaosu saying "we're under attack," he nearly even forgot to take out his Eye of True Sight hidden in his sleeve.

Ren Xiaosu whispered, "Be careful."

After that, he chased after the attacker in the southerly direction.