

# The First Order

## - Chapter 1127 – 1130

### The First Order - Chapter 1127 - Stress training -

#### Chapter 1127 Stress training

In the city of Vaduz, Ren Xiaosu was walking in front of Chen Cheng and An'an with a swagger while they followed behind like subordinates. This made the two bounty hunters extremely peeved.

Occasionally, Ren Xiaosu would even order Chen Cheng and An'an to buy some snacks without paying them.

Chen Cheng wondered, "I can understand you asking us to help you buy things, but why aren't you paying for them? It's not like we want to eat this glutinous rice cake anyway."

Ren Xiaosu threw his hands up and said matter-of-factly, "I don't have money."

He really did not have any money. Ever since he arrived in the Kingdom of Sorcerers, he did not have to spend any money since the sheeple took care of all his basic necessities. There was no need for him to cough up any money. Ren Xiaosu still had quite a bit of gold on him, but he did not want to use it.

On one hand, it was because the circulating currency here was issued by Sorcerer Bank. If he used his gold directly, it would arouse suspicions.

On the other hand, using other people's money to buy his stuff made him much happier.

Chen Cheng suddenly understood why Li Chengguo and Liu Ting were so annoyed with Ren Xiaosu. This fellow was way too skilled at provoking others. He could leave them exasperated just by doing anything. Ren Xiaosu suddenly asked, "By the way, have you two received any forms of stress training before?"

"Stress training?" Chen Cheng was stunned. "Of course we did."

"In which aspects were y'all trained in?" Ren Xiaosu wondered. He wanted to understand what kind of training the sorcerers were put through so he could formulate a battle plan for the future.

Chen Cheng and An'an looked at each other. This didn't seem like a secret, so Chen Cheng answered, "Before our coming-of-age ceremony, we're required to sleep in the

cemetery for a week. No matter how scared we get at night, we cannot run away or make a sound. If we violate the rules, the duration resets.”

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. “And what else?” “We also have to eat the raw internal organs of animals without spitting them out.” Chen Cheng said, “And we have to survive in the wilderness alone for a month too.”

“Are you allowed to bring your Eye of True Sight with you?” Ren Xiaosu asked.

“Of course. The Eye of True Sight is the weapon of a sorcerer, so how can sorcerers survive in the wilderness without bringing their weapons?” Chen Cheng said.

Ren Xiaosu curled his lips. “That’s not the kind of stress training I’m referring to.”

Seeing that Ren Xiaosu wore a look of contempt, Chen Cheng was a little unhappy. “The training we bounty hunters have to go through is not something other sorcerers are capable of handling. We’re the only ones who’re up to it in the entire Kingdom of Sorcerers.”

“Then I’m relieved.” Ren Xiaosu sighed emotionally.

First of all, it might be possible to train one’s courage by sleeping in a cemetery for a week. But in Ren Xiaosu’s opinion, that was not very useful.

Second, surviving in the wilderness alone for a month was pretty good training, but these people were still allowed to bring their Eyes of True Sight with them, so it could not be considered as being trained in an “extreme environment.”

Honestly, the sorcerers were so highly regarded they were used to living a pampered life. Even the bounty hunter organization, which had to fight for its own survival, had a training curriculum for children.

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Many soldiers in the Central Plains had to go through the kind of stress training Ren Xiaosu was referring to. The most basic example was requiring soldiers to score eight or above with every shot on a target in marksmanship while someone fired a firearm next to their ears. Another example required soldiers to quickly navigate a map with someone cursing loudly next to them. Yet another example called for soldiers to memorize all the marching routes in five seconds while someone removed a grenade’s safety pin next to them.

Stress training was not about making someone go through extreme hardship, but rather, to train someone to maintain their focus under extreme pressure.

Chen Cheng looked at Ren Xiaosu and said, “Are you looking down on us sorcerers?”

“You can say that.” Ren Xiaosu nodded casually. “Despite having such a powerful ability, y’all neglected your combat training.”

Chen Cheng was still somewhat unhappy. “You...”

Before he could finish speaking, Ren Xiaosu turned to him and said with a smile, “Why don’t you take out your Eye of True Sight and try to recite an incantation now?”

Chen Cheng was taken aback for a moment. Then he recited, “The-“

Midway through the incantation, Ren Xiaosu stomped on his foot and Chen Cheng abruptly stopped reciting “Ouch, ouch!” Chen Cheng shouted while holding his foot.

“See, you can’t even finish reciting your incantation.” Ren Xiaosu said, “When you can persist and finish reciting your incantations in any circumstances, that’ll be when you’re qualified to fight me. Of course, that’s only the prerequisite. Earlier at the blacksmith’s workshop, I merely grabbed your necks and your Eyes of True Sight immediately fell to the ground. Think about it. If I really wanted to kill you both, would the two of you have any chance of resisting?”

Chen Cheng and An’an looked at each other and wanted to say something, but they felt that what Ren Xiaosu said made sense.

If someone could interrupt their incantations by stepping on their foot, what was the use of having the ability to cast spells?

A lot of people thought they could focus as long as they kept their minds on it, but that was not the case. If they wanted to remain unaffected by external interference, they would have to be put through a great deal of harsh training.

Chen Cheng asked, “Even you might not be able to remain focused in any circumstances, right?”

Ren Xiaosu laughed and said, “You can try stepping on my foot and see if I get distracted.”

While Ren Xiaosu was speaking, Chen Cheng raised his leg and stepped on Ren Xiaosu’s foot. However, Ren Xiaosu did not get cut off mid-sentence, and even his tone was totally unaffected.

Ren Xiaosu continued walking forward. “See my point? Your incantations will only be useful if you can maintain your focus.”

An’an caught up to him and said in seriousness, “How do I train myself to take the pressure? Teach me! I can pay you in gold coins.”

A smile appeared on Ren Xiaosu's face. "I can teach both of you, but I don't require any payment in gold coins. I only need to see how you two perform."

"How we perform?" An'an asked.

"The pancakes over there look quite delicious. Why don't the two of you get me some?" Ren Xiaosu said.

All of a sudden, An'an and Chen Cheng felt they might really end up becoming Ren Xiaosu's servants on this journey!

In truth, Ren Xiaosu could tell them all this because he was already certain the organization they were from was the same organization Ren He had left behind in the Kingdom of Sorcerers.

That was because the moment he stepped into the blacksmith's workshop, the palace informed him he had found the second clue related to Ren He. As for how much information he could find out from this clue, that would depend on how Ren Xiaosu looked into it.

When they passed by the cathedral in the city center, Ren Xiaosu saw a lot of residents moving things around. He asked curiously, "What are they doing?"

An'an thought for a moment before replying, "It's the tradition of the Berkeley family. It's the last day of May today. Every first day of the month, there's sorcerers conducting a worship service at 6 AM together with the residents." "Is there any special significance to it?" Ren Xiaosu did not understand.

"They probably hope the residents will forever remember the grace of the Berkeley family," Chen Cheng answered.

## Chapter 1128 The importance of stress training

The cathedral in Vaduz was the most typical representation of Gothic architecture. The complex structure exuded a mysterious and solemn look.

From pointed arches, pilaster columns, and ornate window lattices, multiple elements came together to form the final appearance of the cathedral. 61 spires pointed into the sky like a dense forest of towers with humanoid statues perched atop each of them.

"Who are those statues on top of the towers?" Ren Xiaosu looked up at them.

"They're the archmages from every generation of the Berkeley family," An'an answered. "Actually, the cathedrals in other counties place the statues of the most outstanding magus order archmages up on their towers. Only the cathedrals in the Berkeley family's territory use the sculptures of their own archmages. Not only that, but the 601 statues

that adorn the Vaduz Cathedral are also all the Berkeley family's own sorcerers." "When was this cathedral built?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"It was built more than a 100 years ago, but it only became what it is now after a renovation 60 years ago." An'an stared at the sculptures on top of the towers and said, "It was at that time that they demolished Russell's statue."

Ren Xiaosu glanced at An'an. "How is Russell related to your organization?" An'an shot Ren Xiaosu a look. "What has that got to do with you?"

Ren Xiaosu smiled and did not say anything else. If the organization that remained behind in the Kingdom of Sorcerers did help Russell through The Cataclysm as Ren He had instructed, the two sides should have a very close working relationship.

Based on Melgor's guesses, Russell was assassinated by the aristocrats of the old guard. This reason also seemed to be why An'an and her companions hated the magus order.

But all of this was just speculation for now. Ren Xiaosu would have to find out the truth himself.

However, Ren Xiaosu was sure the Berkeley family's ambitions had started brewing 60 years ago. By removing all monuments of the other sorcerer clans' archmages, they were signaling a revolt against the existing order.

As for the internal strife that would come, Ren Xiaosu was looking forward to it quite a bit.

"What will the archmage do in front of the cathedral at 6 AM?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"They'll perform miracles." Chen Cheng answered calmly, "They'll put on a display of powers that don't belong to the secular world to enhance the citizens' faith." "So they'll just be casting some dazzling spells?" Ren Xiaosu said disdainfully, "If they have the energy to do all that, wouldn't it be better to think about how to make themselves stronger? No wonder they're afraid to reintroduce scientific knowledge to the masses. They're worried that their low-level deception will get exposed by the citizens. C'mon, we'll come back at 6 in the morning."

Divine authority was the foundation of the Kingdom of Sorcerers. To protect this foundation, sorcerers would not allow the appearance of anything that could challenge their authority.

As a native of the Central Plains, Ren Xiaosu felt that all of this was extremely abnormal. However, the citizens here took it for granted ever since a cultural gap appeared in their history.

When Ren Xiaosu returned with Chen Cheng and An'an to the relay station on the north side of the city, Melgor and the sheeple were already asleep.

Melgor, that sweet idiot, even left a note in the room which he had assigned to Ren Xiaosu: "Wake up at 5:30 AM to attend service at Vaduz Cathedral. Don't sleep in late."

Ren Xiaosu muttered, "What a sweet guy."

In summer, dawn broke very early. At 5:30 AM, the sky had already turned from dark to light.

Melgor came to Ren Xiaosu's room and knocked on the door. "It's time to get up, I'll take you to witness a miracle."

Ren Xiaosu opened the door. "You're a sorcerer too, so why do you also believe in those miracles?"

"I'm just kidding." Melgor smiled. "We junior sorcerers also tend not to want to miss out on these worship services at the beginning of the month, because it's the best opportunity for us to observe how an archmage casts their spells." "Oh." Ren Xiaosu nodded. "So it's just observing and learning."

Initially, Ren Xiaosu thought Melgor and he would be the only ones going to watch the ceremony. But to his surprise, almost half of the trade caravan's members got up early and rushed off to the cathedral.

Not only that, countless residents of Vaduz City also came out of their homes and converged on the cathedral like a stream.

Everyone was dressed in red robes with their faces hidden underneath hoods. The entirety of Vaduz City resembled a red sea from above.

Melgor had Li Chengguo take out a few pieces of loose-fitting red fabric from his luggage. "We didn't bring any red robes with us, so I told Li Chengguo to buy some red fabric to use as temporary outfits. Quick, put it on, and make sure to cover the top of your head."

Ren Xiaosu had a look at it. The red fabric was so big it looked like a bedsheet. "Why do we have to dress in red?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"If you don't put on a red outfit, that's disrespecting the gods." Melgor said, "If your family is well-off, you also have to carry a lamp to attend service. The lamp oil used is also something that has to be observed. It needs to be oil extracted from goat milk fat."

Ren Xiaosu looked around and saw a few red-robed worshipers holding butter lamps<sup>[1]</sup> walking slowly.

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Religion was definitely not just about providing a god for people to believe in. Strict rituals needed to be observed, and the more rituals there were, the more mysterious the religion could seem.

But what Ren Xiaosu thought when he saw this sight was that since everyone was wearing red, it made it very easy for assassins to carry out an assassination. After killing someone, they could just put on a red robe and leave with the crowd.

For example, if he wanted to kill the archmage conducting the service, he would only need to fire a shot at him with a gun from within range and throw it away before blending in with the crowd.

If the sorcerer could use sorcery to shield himself from bullets, Ren Xiaosu could also use his black sniper rifle. And if that didn't work too, he still had the black bullet as backup, which was quite a cruel method of assassination.

When Melgor saw Ren Xiaosu not saying anything, he asked curiously, "What are you thinking about?"

"Oh, nothing." Ren Xiaosu smiled innocuously back.

A sea of people dressed in red had already gathered at the cathedral's entrance. Five sorcerers in baggy red robes were already standing on a red carpet laid at the door with their hands dangling by their sides.

The difference between the sorcerers' outfits and the residents' was that the sleeves of their red robes were embellished with white mink fur.

At 6 AM, a loud and clear bell pealed in the belfry behind the huge clock at the top of the cathedral.

The five sorcerers standing on the red carpet opened their arms at the same time as though they were embracing the gods in Heaven.

"Is the person standing at the front the head of the Berkeley family?" Ren Xiaosu asked in a low voice.

"No, the patriarch stopped participating in these ceremonies." Melgor said, "Stop talking. The service is about to begin."

When the bell stopped ringing, the archmage standing at the very front on the red carpet took out a red Eye of True Sight from his sleeve. All of the residents held their breaths.



The archmage chanted in plainchant, “There is no such thing—”

Slap!

In the early morning light, a black Shadow Door suddenly opened in front of the archmage. Then a slender but powerful hand reached through the door and slapped him hard in the face, interrupting his incantation.

Ren Xiaosu muttered under his breath, “So do you think stress training is important now?”

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butter\\_lamp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butter_lamp)

Chapter 1129 An embarrassing screw-up

The Shadow Door appeared and disappeared quickly.

Everything transpired so quickly most people did not even know what had happened! In any case, they knew a black hole had suddenly appeared, and a hand slapped the archmage like lightning before disappearing.

The slap rang loud and clear in the silence that was being observed. Everyone was stunned, including the archmage himself.

However, nothing else happened after the slap. All of what had occurred in front of the solemn Vaduz Cathedral felt like it was an illusion.

Indeed, more than 10,000 people had experienced the same hallucination.

Due to limited space at the front of Vaduz Cathedral and the high number of worshippers that had turned up for service, the worshippers’ line snaked all the way to the other streets. Thus, the believers at the periphery did not know what had happened. However, they felt that the ceremony today... seemed a little different.

Gradually, the crowd at the back started checking with those in front of them. Everyone wanted to know what was going on.

The atmosphere in front of the cathedral started getting noisy. Meanwhile, Ren Xiaosu kept both his hands under the red “bedsheet” he was wearing, acting as though nothing had happened.

It was Ren Xiaosu who slapped the archmage, of course. It was not that Ren Xiaosu had anything against him, but he wanted to see if a so-called archmage could continue reciting incantations under his interference.



As it turned out, the archmages had never received any form of stress training before. With just a slight disturbance, their incantations would get interrupted.

This was not to say that archmages were weak, but that any normal person who hadn't undergone any training would react like that.

In the past, everyone could only see how carefree the sorcerers were when they cast their spells. It was only Ren Xiaosu who paid any attention to the flaws in how spells were cast.

Then, after a long hard night of thinking, Ren Xiaosu suddenly realized his relatively insignificant Shadow Door power might just be the true nemesis of the sorcerers.

The sorcerers knew full well their greatest fear was suddenly being approached by an enemy. If they could not react in time, they could very well end up dying. Therefore, most sorcerers would pick gladiators with outstanding close combat ability when choosing their stewards.

In that case, was there a more suitable power in this world than the Shadow Door for getting close to a target? There might be, but there were definitely not many.

It could be said that once Ren Xiaosu figured out a unique way to use the Shadow Door, it would become impossible for any sorcerer to recite high-level incantations against him.

Even if Ren Xiaosu were to label himself now as the archnemesis of sorcerers, it would not be an exaggeration.

Next to him, Melgor, Li Chengguo, Liu Ting, and everyone's jaws slowly dropped in shock.

Ren Xiaosu felt he needed to blend in as well, so he slowly opened his mouth wide.

The archmage stood on the red carpet and swept his gaze across his surroundings. However, he did not discover anyone unusual.

In front of him, the tens of thousands of people dressed in red were like multiple sets of twins.

The archmage looked at the other four sorcerers next to him who were also confused.

Was it an attack by another sorcerer? No, this was not sorcery. At the very least, the archmage had never seen a spell that allowed someone to travel through space at will.

This was not sorcery!

The archmage turned around and looked at the dense crowd of worshippers in front of him. He knew he could not waste any more time wondering what had happened. No matter who the culprit might be, they could only investigate the incident later. Right now, the most important thing for him to do was to continue with the service. Otherwise, the worshippers would start doubting the Berkeley family!

The archmage held his Eye of True Sight in one hand while he received a scepter from the sorcerer next to him with the other. Then he plunged one end of it heavily onto the ground.

When the scepter landed, the worshippers went silent again.

The archmage said in a clear voice, "God has revealed that everyone here is a sinner. As his loyal successor, I will bear the punishment on everyone's behalf. After I strike my palms together, all of your sins will be washed away. That is the grace of God."

Ren Xiaosu asked in a whisper, "Aren't sorcerers supposed to be the gods? Why does he call himself a successor of God now?"

"The predecessors who died are the true gods, while he who is still living is their successor." Melgor said, "When he dies, his descendants will also worship him as the true god and sculpt a statue of him to be placed in Vaduz Cathedral."

"Then what if the cathedral gets filled with statues one day and can't fit any more of them? Are they going to throw out a few?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

Melgor did not answer for a long time. He thought to himself that his steward's train of thought was way too random. The four sorcerers next to the archmage protected him, with him firmly in the center. They were afraid something would happen during the rest of this worship service.

The sorcerers were prepared to attack if something similar happened again. The archmage nodded slightly while looking at them. He plunged the scepter in his hand towards the ground again. "The sins of sinners have been washed away. And now, we offer our faith to the gods."

After that, he started chanting again, "There is \_\_11

Pah!

"Sinners, you will be baptized—"

Pah!

"We're almost done with the baptism!"

Pah!

“Are you fucking done yet?!” The archmage’s head was buzzing. He had been slapped silly and lost his ability to think straight.

With Ren Xiaosu’s strength, a slap was more than just a slap.

The four sorcerers next to the archmage were on full alert throughout. However, the opening of the Shadow Door was too random and happened too quickly, so they could not react at all.

How could the sorcerers who had been reveling in their high positions for such a long time possibly react faster than Ren Xiaosu?

The archmage was slapped four times in a row and could not even complete a single incantation. What the hell was fucking going on!

The archmage had fallen into a half-conscious state. A junior sorcerer hurriedly got someone to help him back into the cathedral. Then he shouted to the spear-wielding guards next to the cathedral’s entrance, “There’s a great sinner here who has turned to the Devil. That person has aroused the anger of God, which we’re now being blamed for. Quick, find him!”

When Ren Xiaosu heard this from within the crowd, he sighed emotionally. Quacks were indeed just quacks. Regardless of whether the situation was fully figured out yet, all they needed to do was make up some lies to hoodwink others.

How impressive!

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However, Ren Xiaosu had shown mercy this time. If he were really ruthless, he could have turned the archmage’s head into paste with those slaps. But if that happened, Vaduz City would definitely get locked down quickly and everyone would get trapped here. Ren Xiaosu’s target was Ghent City, so he did not intend to waste too much time at this place. Moreover, the Berkeley family was already on the verge of revolting. So having an additional archmage fighting against the magus order was an added strength for the internal strife.

All of a sudden, all the worshippers in red started fleeing in all directions. Ren Xiaosu and Melgor also retreated back to the relay station.

Vaduz City was plunged into chaos.

As soon as Ren Xiaosu and the others got back to the relay station, they saw that Qian Weining was already calling for the guards to get the horses out of the stable. When he

saw Melgor, he hurriedly said, "Your Excellency Lord Melgor, something big has happened in Vaduz. We have to leave this place quickly. Otherwise, the trade caravan will get trapped here. If we get delayed for a day, the costs of the expedition will increase. It takes money to feed the horses and the people."

Ren Xiaosu asked, "Can we leave at a time like this?"

Qian Weining thought for a moment and said, "Don't worry, sir, I have my ways."

Chapter 1130 Too strong a slap!

Almost half of the people in the trade caravan had gone to attend the worship service at Vaduz Cathedral. Gradually, they all returned to the relay station with Qian Weining waiting at the entrance and urging everyone to quickly pack their belongings. Ren Xiaosu could tell that Qian Weining was getting really anxious. The unexpected incident at Vaduz Cathedral might actually affect the plan the trade caravan was carrying out in secret.

Ren Xiaosu did not have anything to pack, so he swaggered over to the entrance of the relay station and sat there.

In just an hour, four or five squads of guards passed by the entrance of the relay station, with one of them carrying out a detailed inspection of the trade caravan within the rest stop. But to Ren Xiaosu's surprise, the guards left after Qian Weining showed them some documents.

At first, Ren Xiaosu thought Qian Weining was on hostile terms with the Berkeley family. Otherwise, why would he behave so cautiously and nervously in their territory?

But now he realized it did not seem to be as he had guessed. Since Qian Weining was able to handle the guards with just a few words, he probably carried very high-level access documents of the Berkeley family on him. In that case, it was probably the Berkeley family's plan that Qian Weining was overseeing. However, Ren Xiaosu did not publicize it, nor did he tell Melgor, that sweet idiot. As long as he could get to Ghent City as planned, it did not matter to him what plans Qian Weining was carrying out.

After a while, Chen Cheng and An'an also returned. They did not join up with their aunt but expressed their stance immediately when they saw Ren Xiaosu. "Please put us through the stress training you mentioned!" Ren Xiaosu said with a smile, "So you understand how important stress training is now?"

"Yes," Chen Cheng and An'an answered in seriousness.

The two of them were also dressed in red outfits, so it was obvious they had also attended the worship service at Vaduz Cathedral. Therefore, they must have witnessed for themselves how the archmage's spells were interrupted.

At that moment, their only thought was, 'Stress training is very necessary!'

The archmage possessed a red Eye of True Sight and had been studying sorcery for many years. In the end, all his toiling years of cultivation, research, and meditation could not even stand up to a slap in the face.

Chen Cheng and An'an understood there was no need for the slap to be too hard. All that was needed was for it to disrupt one's thoughts so an incantation could not be completely recited, leading to the spellcaster losing naturally.

Sorcerers who could not recite incantations were even worse than the average person!

As such, the two of them immediately remembered the stress training Ren Xiaosu had mentioned. They knew they needed such training!

At some point, they even suspected Ren Xiaosu might have been the one who slapped the archmage. But they felt it was not him after much pondering.

In their impression, Ren Xiaosu had always been a pure gladiator type right from the beginning. In other words, he was someone who did not know any sorcery and relied entirely on his physical strength to fight.

Moreover, Chen Cheng had also confirmed with the sheeple many times that Ren Xiaosu was not a sorcerer. All he had was the great strength he was blessed with. More importantly, Ren Xiaosu was from the Central Plains and did not know the language of the Magi, so he could not possibly cast any spells at all.

The Shadow Door conjured up in front of the archmage was determined as a new type of spell in the end. Over the years, new spells had been discovered. Strictly speaking, sorcerers were not the creators of spells but discoverers of them.

Although some spells were recorded in the Introduction to Sorcery, only a few people managed to master their meditative visualization diagrams. One such example would be the Meteor Shower spell. Currently, no one other than those from the House of Tudor knew how to cast it.

It was not only the Tudor family that had access to such secret spells. The House of Berkeley had them too. This was the reason why Russell strongly objected to the aristocracy's rule over the magus order. He wanted to establish a magus school where all the magus arts would be taught systematically through a planned curriculum.

In this way, the barrier that was the proprietary spells of each clan would get torn down. However, this violated the fundamental interests of the aristocracy. Who would be willing to share something so precious with others? If it weren't for the fact that Russell was such a genius at sorcery and had gathered a large group of young followers around him, he probably would not have even survived until The Cataclysm times.

Now that Russell was dead, no one could tear down the spell barriers of the sorcerer clans.

Therefore, it was also very likely someone had mastered a new spell but kept it a secret. Otherwise, who could explain what that Shadow Door was about!

This speculation provided Ren Xiaosu with some convenience. While the archmage of the Berkeley family was searching for the culprit, he speculated that this might be an act committed by an enemy clan to discredit their Berkeley family. He never once considered it might be linked to a junior sorcerer like Melgor.

After all, who would be so bored as to provoke the archmage of a large clan like theirs?! Was there nothing better to do?!

The simple experiment Ren Xiaosu had started was about to get elevated into a political battle by the Berkeley family.

Before the trade caravan could leave, another piece of news was spreading through the streets. Ren Xiaosu heard a nearby pedestrian saying, "A sorcerer at the cathedral told the public that someone in power in the kingdom has committed heinous crimes and betrayed the gods. The gods punished that archmage who got beaten up because they blamed the Berkeley family, as the successor of the gods, for allowing a betrayer of the faith to continue running amok. "The gods see the Berkeley family as their most loyal followers, so they hope that they can eliminate the traitors in the north."

Another pedestrian was taken aback. "Who's the traitor?"

"Haven't I made it clear enough?" The first pedestrian lowered his voice and said, "The House of Winston in the north has always been loyal to the Berkeley family, so that only leaves the Houses of Norman and Tudor!"

"Huh? The Normans and Tudors? Is a war going to break out in the kingdom?" someone exclaimed softly.

"So what if there's a war? They've betrayed the gods, so of course we have to declare war against them! By betraying the gods, they've also betrayed us!" someone said.

Ren Xiaosu was dumbfounded when he heard that. Wasn't the crisis communication[1] ability of the Berkeley family a little too strong? They actually managed to shift the public sentiment in their own territory and point the blame at the Norman and the Tudor families after that incident?

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These extremely politically motivated rumors were obviously spread by the Berkeley family themselves!

“Wow,” Ren Xiaosu lamented.

At this moment, he did not know his four slaps had instantly brought the Berkeley family’s plan forward by several months!

As the trade caravan set off, Melgor lamented in the carriage, “We were so close when the incident happened. I could feel the pain when I heard those four slaps. I wonder who created a new spell. It’s way too sinister.”

Ren Xiaosu glanced at Melgor. “It’s not like you got slapped.”

Melgor looked at Ren Xiaosu. “The problem is, that culprit was way too strong. I even saw the archmage’s teeth get knocked out.” [1] Crisis communication is a sub-specialty of the public relations profession that is designed to protect and defend an individual, company, or organization facing a public challenge to its reputation. | [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis\\_communication](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_communication)