

The First Order

- Chapter 1171 – 1180

Chapter 1171: Impending reunion

Although the Battle of Sun City shocked the Kingdom of Sorcerers, only Ren Xiaosu seemed unsurprised by it.

The next morning, he led Melgor out to have fun together as though nothing had happened.

Qian Weining said the Battle of Sun City was due to Archmage Kayle ordering a hit on Winston City, so the House of Winston sought to kill Kayle as revenge.

When Ren Xiaosu heard this, he knew it was fake news, because he was the one behind the chaos in Winston City. He knew full well no one had instigated him to do so.

If there were really something that prompted Ren Xiaosu to cause that ruckus in Winston City, it would have to be the Eyes of True Sight owned by the House of Winston.

“Archmage Kayle died such a wrongful death.” On their way out, Ren Xiaosu chuckled and said to Melgor, “I’ll take a guess. That archmage was probably here to kill you, but he got attacked by the Winston family in the end. Don’t you think his death was really unjust?”

Melgor said anxiously, “Can you keep your voice down?!”

A tense atmosphere was hanging over Winston City. Sorcerers could frequently be seen heading in and out of the Winston Cathedral’s entrance, and it seemed like there was an important discussion going on inside.

Some of the residents had been temporarily conscripted and made to escort provisions, horses, and fodder gathered from the south, while others were sent to repair the city walls.

It looked like the House of Winston wanted to reinforce the walls before the enemy arrived.

While Ren Xiaosu was wandering around in the city, he was nearly recruited to join the troops as well. Fortunately, Melgor’s special status as a sorcerer helped spare the walls of Winston City from any further damage.

That was right. The fact Ren Xiaosu didn't end up joining the troops was actually beneficial to the city walls. Although the House of Winston did not realize this, the logic was still sound.

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"What's your intention for suddenly wanting to come out and shop? You planning something again?" Melgor asked in a low voice.

"It's just to shop, of course." Ren Xiaosu said, "Qian Weining probably won't be leading the caravan north anymore. Just look at how happy he is today. That's why we have to buy blankets, food, and other stuff. We can start preparing for a long-term stay at the relay station."

After rumors of the Knights of Tudor heading south started spreading in Winston City today, Qian Weining became the happiest person.

Without this incident, he would still have to continue leading the trade caravan north and risk his life with the Berkeley army to cause chaos in Ghent City. The oak barrels the trade caravan was transporting were all filled with combustible fuel.

Sending him on a mission with a lone army like that was as good as a death sentence. The Houses of Tudor and Norman would not let him off for sure.

But now that the battlefield had shifted southwards, it meant the trade caravan would not get to Ghent City!

Although Ren Xiaosu did not understand the military affairs and terrain of the Kingdom of Sorcerers, it would only be a matter of time before the Houses of Tudor and Norman fought their way to Winston City judging by the tension floating around.

"I'm really curious. What gives the Berkeley family the confidence to make a move against the Norman and the Tudor families?" Ren Xiaosu wondered. "You said the Berkeley family's patriarch is also considered a genius among the Magi and made a name for himself in childhood. Moreover, the Berkeley family is also relatively powerful and can stand on equal footing with the top sorcerer clans. But to face two top sorcerer clans at once, does he think he can defeat them two against one?"

Melgor thought for a moment and said, "Maybe he has some kind of ace up his sleeve? Like something that can deal a fatal blow to the enemy directly?"

"Are you referring to me?" Ren Xiaosu answered, "But I'm not on the Berkeleys' side."

Melgor wanted to tell Ren Xiaosu how shameless he was, but when he thought about how Ren Xiaosu had killed a few dozen of the Winston family's sorcerers in one night, he held back his sarcasm.

Ren Xiaosu sighed and said, "If only P5092 and Wang Yun were here. A simple analysis by them would be equivalent to half a month of my considerations."

"Who are P5092 and Wang Yun?" Melgor asked curiously.

Ren Xiaosu smiled. "They're two people who can turn something rotten into something magical. You'll get to know them in the future. We're all on the same side!"

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Melgor felt extremely awkward when he heard the words "on the same side." It was like he had already defected to Fortress 178.

However, after much thought, he could only admit it helplessly.

Melgor asked in a low voice, "What exactly are your plans? A war is about to break out here...."

Ren Xiaosu looked at Melgor. "Do you think they'll panic if we wait until they start fighting here before heading straight to Ghent City?"

"I... guess so," Melgor answered after considering Ren Xiaosu's destructive power.

"Don't worry, I'll help you find your childhood sweetheart first. You don't have to be afraid of the Tudor family. Things are about to change in the Kingdom of Sorcerers," Ren Xiaosu said seriously.

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At the same time, further south of York County, a burly figure emerged from a military tent. As he stretched, he shouted, "Zhou Qi! Wang Yun! P5092! Great Hoodwinker! Ji Zi'ang! Wake up, wake up!"

The Great Hoodwinker snapped at him inside his tent, "Fatty, why have you become so energetic after your training?"

"Since you've already received info about Ren Xiaosu's whereabouts, aren't you anxious to join up with him?" Luo Lan retorted.

Luo Lan and Zhou Qi had set off from the Qing Consortium. However, they met the Great Hoodwinker and company in the Gobi and joined up with them.

Although they were from different organizations, their current goal was the same: Find Ren Xiaosu, then follow him to destroy the Magi's base!

In the past, Luo Lan's figure was a bloated one. Therefore, when the Great Hoodwinker and the others encountered him this time, they nearly couldn't recognize him.

The Great Hoodwinker got out of his tent and started packing. "Future Commander hasn't arrived at the capital of the nation of sorcerers yet. Don't worry, we'll get there in time to meet him."

"Don't sound so confident." Nearby, Zhou Qi curled his lips and said, "Don't you know your future commander well enough? Wherever he goes, there'll be bodies strewn everywhere and trouble all around. You received intel yesterday he had appeared in Winston City. I wouldn't be surprised if he suddenly wiped out the entire House of Winston today!"

"Uh, it wouldn't be that ridiculous." The Great Hoodwinker said, "Our future commander still knows his limits."

Zhou Qi glanced at the Great Hoodwinker. "Ask those poor souls of the Zhou Consortium in the Central Plains and see what they think."

At this moment, P5092 came out of his tent and said calmly, "Actually, I agree with Luo Lan's suggestion. We should hasten our journey."

"What's the matter?" Ji Zi'ang looked at P5092. "Will anything happen to the future commander?"

"It's not that." P5092 shook his head and said, "The Great Hoodwinker has already infiltrated the sorcerer clans with his people. Based on the information relayed by the intelligence agents, Future Commander's combat strength still puts him at the top of the pyramid in the Kingdom of Sorcerers. Additionally, based on Future Commander's character, he probably won't die even if everyone in the Kingdom of Sorcerers has perished. But we still can't be careless. What Future Commander did to the Winston family is very likely to trigger a chain reaction. If we don't hurry, we might not be able to join in the fun.... I mean, we might not be able to give Future Commander support in time."

The Great Hoodwinker looked at P5092 in surprise. "An emotionless military commander such as yourself enjoys something like that too?"

P5092 thought for a moment and answered calmly, "Sometimes."

Chapter 1172: New incantation: Prosperous Northwest!

When Ren Xiaosu and Melgor returned from their shopping, Qian Weining was sitting in the lobby of the relay station, humming about how it was a great day today and having a little drink.

This time, Ren Xiaosu was even more sure the trade caravan would not continue heading north anymore. Otherwise, Qian Weining would definitely not be drinking.

He had observed that no matter how cheerful the atmosphere was whenever they stopped to set up camp, Qian Weining would not touch a single drop of alcohol. After all, how could a soldier drink while they were on a mission?

Now that he no longer had to lead his comrades to their deaths, he was in high spirits.

Moreover, when Qian Weining saw Melgor, he no longer thought about trying to get rid of that jinx. Instead, he greeted him enthusiastically and even invited Ren Xiaosu to join him for a drink.

Qian Weining did not dare to invite Melgor due to the difference in their statuses. As a knight, he was not qualified to dine at the same table as a sorcerer.

If he did that and got discovered, he would get reported to the higher-ups and be punished. This was where it could be seen that a strict hierarchy existed in the Kingdom of Sorcerers.

Of course, Ren Xiaosu would not drink with Qian Weining for no reason. He knew he had to keep a clear head at all times. If there came a day where he could drink freely, it would be when Yang Xiaojin and the others were protecting him by his side.

“Eh, Ren Xiaosu, you went shopping for so many things?” Qian Weining asked curiously, “You even bought blankets?”

“We’ll be staying here for quite a while, y’know. The blankets at the relay station have a few holes in them. They’re way too shabby,” Ren Xiaosu replied happily.

Not only did he buy blankets, but he also bought some rat poison. Otherwise, he would constantly hear the sound of rats crawling around in the ceiling during the night.

Melgor followed Ren Xiaosu into his room. He hesitated for a moment before saying, “Are you in possession of the third black Eye of True Sight?”

Ren Xiaosu looked at Melgor and said, “Since you’ve already guessed it, I don’t really have to hide it anymore. On the day White Mask appeared and you and the servants were trapped by the Liquefy Ground spell, that was not a sneak attack. I just fired off a spell accidentally. Besides, White Mask has never sought to harm you. I purely used it to get the attention off me.”

Ren Xiaosu felt that there was a need to explain this so that Melgor would not have to worry every time he saw White Mask.

Melgor asked, "Even if Liquefy Ground is only an elementary spell, you still hadn't mastered the language of the Magi at that time, right? So how did you cast it?"

"I randomly blurted out an incantation." Ren Xiaosu said, "Maybe it just sounded correct."

Melgor did not believe Ren Xiaosu's answer at all, but he did not know how to refute it.

"Can you let me have a look at the black Eye of True Sight?" Melgor asked.

"Here." Ren Xiaosu casually took out the black Eye of True Sight from his storage space and handed it to Melgor. "I've looked into it. The black Eye of True Sight can indeed increase the power of spells greatly. For example, using it directly saves you from having to practice casting a spell a 1,000 times."

Melgor held the black Eye of True Sight in his hand and remained speechless for a while. After a long time, he said in surprise, "Do you know how precious this thing is?"

"I do," Ren Xiaosu said matter-of-factly.

"Then by handing it directly to me, aren't you afraid I'll steal it from you?" Melgor said in shock.

"You're speaking like you can steal it from me." Ren Xiaosu did not know whether to laugh or cry. "Alright, don't overthink things."

Melgor pushed the Eye of True Sight back into Ren Xiaosu's hands. "You'd better keep it safe yourself. Anyway, since you already have an Eye of True Sight, you should work hard and learn the language of the Magi from me. That way, you'll be able to become a true sorcerer sooner."

These words reminded Ren Xiaosu it was time to continue exploring the Chinese incantations for casting spells.

Although he now had another spell called "I Wish You Happiness," he couldn't possibly spend all 90,000 Proficiency Stones on it, right?

What effect would 90,000 Proficiency Stones have on "I Wish You Happiness"? Maybe it could make tens of thousands of people cry together at once, or it could make them cry to death? It was very exciting to think about it, but that would be really strange.

The spell Ren Xiaosu was looking for had to be stronger than this. At the very least, it would have to be a spell worthy of the Northwest's future commander. It should be a more proper spell.

Ren Xiaosu said to Melgor, "You must be tired. Why don't you go back to your room and get some rest first? I won't be learning the language of the Magi for now. We'll talk about that when I have free time."

After that, he pushed Melgor out.

Melgor stood outside the room in a daze and looked at the shut door. "If you don't want to learn the language of the Magi, so be it. Why did you have to chase me away?!"

This left Melgor a little puzzled. Ren Xiaosu clearly had an Eye of True Sight already, so why was he unwilling to learn the language of the Magi? Could it be that he did not want to become a sorcerer?

While he was pondering, the two sheeple came over holding their notebooks to ask him questions about the language of the Magi. Melgor could not help but sigh. Those who had an Eye of True Sight were not in a hurry to learn, but these two who did not have an Eye of True Sight were especially enthusiastic about learning.

Inside the room, Ren Xiaosu held the black Eye of True Sight in his hand and thought silently, *'What incantation should I try this time?'*

The incantations he wanted to try for this round would have to carry some special significance. This was so that, when he recited them in front of his subordinates, he could still sound very imposing!

Suddenly, Ren Xiaosu probed, "Prosperous Northwest?"

In an instant, the violet sigil on the black Eye of True Sight suddenly pulsed. Ren Xiaosu felt like he was linked to it, and even his breathing was at the same frequency.

A hint of starlight appeared in front of Ren Xiaosu, spinning rapidly in the shape of a ring like a doorway that stood in front of him.

The circular ring was growing larger, and the starlight around it spun faster and faster. Ren Xiaosu looked over in surprise and saw that there really seemed to be a dimensional portal behind it. Through the "door," he saw that the other side no longer resembled his room at the relay station. Instead, it looked like a desolate place.

A second later, a thunderous roar abruptly came through the doorway. Immediately after, a heatwave burst out, and the damp room in the relay station suddenly became extremely arid.

In the blink of an eye, the entire room was filled with a freshness that reminded him of damp linens line-dried in the sun.

Due to Ren Xiaosu's seeming lack of practice of this spell, the "stellar gate" stopped expanding when it reached about half a meter in diameter. Then it poofed back into starlight and dissipated.

The stellar gate collapsed.

Ren Xiaosu examined himself. The heatwave did not hurt him at all, and his clothes did not look like they had been burnt either.

For some reason, there was no tinge of fear in him. Ren Xiaosu even felt he had heard a hint of joy in the roar of the strange creature behind the stellar gate.

There was no reason for him to feel this way, but Ren Xiaosu was very sure of it.

"What kind of sorcery is this? It's so bizarre." Ren Xiaosu muttered, "Why haven't I come across this spell in the *Introduction to Sorcery* before?"

Chapter 1173: Hamstrung

First of all, no matter what was behind that stellar gate, Ren Xiaosu was extremely intrigued by the Prosperous Northwest spell.

After all, the words "Prosperous Northwest" themselves already carried extraordinary significance!

The roar from earlier had alarmed the entire relay station. Qian Weining, who was drunk, was suddenly jolted awake. "What was that sound just now?"

The guards were also puzzled. "I think it came from Lord Melgor's room. But we could only determine the direction of the sound, not which room it came from."

"Hurry up and go see what's going on." Qian Weining urged, "Bring your swords and be careful!"

More than a dozen guards quietly placed their hands on the hilts of their broadswords and quietly went deeper inside the relay station. All of a sudden, Melgor's door swung open. He said to the guards, "I was performing an alchemy experiment just now. Return to your rooms and don't disturb me."

Upon hearing that, the guards said, "Oh, Lord Melgor, please carry on then. We'll take our leave now."

Things like alchemy were extremely mysterious to ordinary folk, so no one could tell whether it was true or not when alchemy was used as an excuse to cover up a secret.

Melgor looked at the departing guards and heaved a sigh of relief. Although he looked very calm on the surface, he was actually extremely flustered!

He hurriedly went over and knocked on Ren Xiaosu's door. Then he lowered his voice and said, "What on earth are you doing?!"

As Qian Weining and his men's rooms were farther away, they were not sure which room the roar came from. But Melgor was right next door, so how could he not know?

Ren Xiaosu opened the door and let Melgor in. He bluntly said, "Let me ask you something. Are there any spells that aren't recorded in the *Introduction to Sorcery*?"

"There's a lot." Melgor said, "The *Introduction to Sorcery* had been edited many times, so a lot of the spells that were clan-exclusive were removed. I heard that before they were edited out, the *Introduction to Sorcery* was twice as thick as it is now. For example, there used to be dozens of bloodline spells listed in the *Introduction to Sorcery*. There was the Bloodline Summoning spell, and even spells that could allow a son to inherit their father's inner world of meditation. But later, all the bloodline spells were edited out by the sixth edition. It seems that the top sorcerer clans don't want others to know their secrets too well."

"Something like that happened?" Ren Xiaosu nodded. "No wonder y'all said that the *Introduction to Sorcery* has no reference value."

"Mhm, if it were the complete and unedited *Introduction to Sorcery*, someone could probably sell it for a million gold coins, and there would still be sorcerers willing to buy it." Melgor said, "It would be priceless."

"It's a pity that the *Introduction to Sorcery* that Russell spent so much effort writing in his later years has gone to waste like that." Ren Xiaosu said, "Then let me ask you something else. Have you ever heard of a spell that can open a dimensional portal?"

Melgor was stunned. He looked at Ren Xiaosu. "You opened a dimensional portal just now? You don't even know the language of the Magi. How did you cast the spell? A word of advice: You had better not test out spells by randomly pronouncing incantations. What if it turns out to be a spell that sacrifices yourself to cast?"

"There's even self-sacrifice spells?" Ren Xiaosu was shocked.

"Of course there are." Melgor said, "It's mentioned in *The Sorcerer Chronicles* that there was a sorcerer from a small clan who tried discovering spells for himself because he couldn't obtain the high-level spells. In the end, he immolated himself."

Ren Xiaosu thought to himself that this was similar to the legend of Shennong tasting a hundred herbs. It was just that Shennong¹ did not die but the sorcerer did.

He described to Melgor, "I tried casting a spell just now. After I was done reciting the incantation, starlight immediately appeared, and a small doorway of about half a meter in diameter opened up in front of me. Behind it was a wasteland, and the ground was covered in black scorch marks. That roar also came from behind the door."

"Wait a minute." Melgor said, "In fact, I've heard of the spell you've just described..."

Ren Xiaosu's eyes lit up. "What spell is it?"

"It's a summoning spell." Melgor said firmly, "It's not important what's behind the door, but it's easy to determine based on the characteristics of a stellar gate appearing. It's a summoning spell!"

"A summoning spell? The kind that can summon extremely powerful creatures from another realm?" Ren Xiaosu's eyes lit up.

But Melgor laughed and said, "Don't let your imagination run wild. This is a spell widely recognized as useless among the Magi."

"It looks very powerful, though, so why call it useless?" Ren Xiaosu could not understand.

"Summoning spells might sound very powerful, but it can't summon monsters from other worlds." Melgor explained, "In fact, since the development of sorcery, no one has ever opened any dimensional portal to other realms. At most, there's portals to travel from one place to another within this world. There's no such thing as other realms."

Melgor continued, "At the beginning, when the magus order discovered the summoning spell, a lot of people reacted as ecstatically as you. But later, they realized the things they summoned were basically just sheep, cows, and rabbits. A more powerful archmage might be able to summon more ferocious beasts like lions, tigers, warhorses, brown bears, and so on. But think about it. What are these ordinary beasts in the face of powerful spells?"

Ren Xiaosu thought about it carefully and realized it did seem to make sense. For a sorcerer who could freeze an entire city, why would he feel threatened by tigers or lions? He only needed to raise an arm and kill them with a spell.

From the look of things, the summoning spell was indeed a little hamstrung.

Ren Xiaosu was rather indignant. "Then if I practice the spell more times, can I summon stronger creatures?"

“Of course not.” Melgor said, “It can only summon larger creatures. What’s awkward is that the larger creatures are mostly ocean dwelling. An archmage once practiced the spell for more than a decade and summoned a killer whale, but the creature died not long after it was dropped onto the ground. That was before The Cataclysm, and the incident was recorded in some books about anecdotes of the Magi. Later, summoning spells became ranked as one of the top ten most useless spells. When everyone heard about it, they just treated it as amusing chatter. No one would want to practice it.”

Melgor said, “Think about it. For a sorcerer to spend over a decade specializing in such a spell just to summon a killer whale, how useless is that? So who would want to spend all those years taking a path that leads nowhere?”

If all it took was spending money to improve the level of their sorcery, many sorcerers would probably still be willing to try learning the spell. But if it meant spending their youth to perfect it, no one would be willing to take such a risk.

The summoning spell had been abandoned by all sorcerers. In fact, no one could even find the corresponding incantations and meditative visualization diagrams for it anymore.

Ren Xiaosu fell silent. He could not accept the fact that the corresponding spell of “Prosperous Northwest” was so useless. Clearly, these words had unparalleled significance to them.

And most importantly, there might be no point in summoning creatures before The Cataclysm. But what about after The Cataclysm? He had seen gigantic six-meter-tall bears with his own eyes!

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When he recalled the roar he heard through the stellar gate, it sounded so strong and alluring. Ren Xiaosu suddenly had the urge to use all of his Proficiency Stones on the “Prosperous Northwest” spell.

Chapter 1174: Simple, practical spell

Translator: Legge

Sorcerers regarded the summoning spell as a hamstrung spell because they were unable to summon creatures that complemented their strength.

After The Cataclysm, as the Kingdom of Sorcerers was situated in a “low contamination” area, the flora and fauna did not go through too much of a change.

Unlike the Central Plains and the barbarians’ region where the expeditionary army resided, the mutations in the Kingdom of Sorcerers were much less frequent.

Ren Xiaosu and Melgor grew up in completely different environments. Melgor had never come across any terrifying creatures, but Ren Xiaosu had.

There was no need for the discovery of another realm. Ren Xiaosu believed that terrifying creatures already existed in the world.

However, this was not a good time to summon them.

Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and suddenly turned his gaze to Melgor. "Come, I'll teach you an incantation. Give this spell a try."

"Wait!" Melgor wondered, "You want to teach me an incantation? You don't even know the language of the Magi, so how are you going to teach me?"

"Alright, there's no need to hide it from you anymore." Ren Xiaosu patiently explained, "Look, in sorcery, the Magi's tongue is just a code to activate one's inner spiritual world. The world is fair, so there's no reason why the Magi's tongue can be used as code, but not Chinese...."

Melgor was shocked right there and then. "Are you saying we can cast spells in Chinese too?"

The Eye of True Sight was always in the Magi's possession, so there were hardly any Central Plains people who had the opportunity to try casting spells in Chinese.

On the other hand, the sorcerers themselves had decreed the Magi's tongue as the language of the gods and stated that spells were to be cast using it. In that case, all the more they wouldn't try out such blasphemous methods for no reason.

However, Melgor knew full well there used to be an archmage who hailed from the Central Plains. Although it was only one person, the other party should have tried casting spells in Chinese, right?

Then why had he never heard of anyone using Chinese incantations before?

Melgor looked at Ren Xiaosu and said, "Don't try to bluff me. Can you really use Chinese to cast spells?"

"Of course." Ren Xiaosu replied casually, "Don't worry, I've already tried it. 'Haiya' is the incantation for opening up a deep pit, 'May You Be Prosperous' is the incantation for the Liquefy Ground spell, and 'I Wish You Happiness' is the incantation for making people cry."

Melgor remained surprised for quite a while. "Why do these incantations all sound so polite?"

Melgor roughly understood why other people had not managed to discover Chinese incantations. What normal person would be bored enough to use these polite phrases to cast spells?!

He turned his gaze to Ren Xiaosu. By the same logic, anyone who could discover such incantations would not be a normal person either, right?

“Perhaps we Central Plains people are more hospitable,” Ren Xiaosu remarked. “Hurry up and cast the summoning spell with the incantation.”

Melgor immediately said in panic, “Why? I don’t want to practice summoning spells!”

“I’m not asking you to practice it.” Ren Xiaosu snapped, “You only need to recite the incantation.”

“But I’ve never practiced summoning spells before. I have to practice a spell a thousand times before I can successfully cast it,” Melgor said.

“Here, you can cast the spell with the black Eye of True Sight.” Ren Xiaosu stuffed the stone into Melgor’s hands. “Stop looking for excuses, or I’m gonna beat you up.”

When Melgor heard that, he hurriedly asked, “What’s the incantation?”

“Prosperous Northwest!” Ren Xiaosu said in seriousness.

Melgor also knew Chinese, so he did not have to be taught a second time. He held the black Eye of True Sight in his hand and chanted softly, “Prosperous Northwest!”

However, Melgor was a little curious. What did “Prosperous Northwest” mean?

Next to him, Ren Xiaosu chuckled, “You pronounced these words very fluently. It’s obvious that you’re a suitable candidate for the Prosperous Northwest.”

With that, Melgor more or less figured out the meaning of “Prosperous Northwest.”

A stellar gate opened slightly in front of the two of them. Behind the revolving circle of astral particles was an apparently green grassland.

Melgor could feel the appeal of the black Eye of True Sight. So it turned out he could really cast spells just by holding this stone!

He looked at the dazzling stellar gate. Actually, he was quite looking forward to it. He wondered what kind of powerful creature he could summon.

“Baa!”

A goat suddenly jumped out through the compact stellar gate and charged towards Melgor. If not for Ren Xiaosu's quick reaction, the goat would have rammed his balls with its horns!

Melgor grimaced in pain as he fell backwards and sat heavily on the ground. "Why did I end up summoning a goat?"

As soon as he finished speaking, Melgor saw Ren Xiaosu breaking the goat's neck by wringing it. He was shocked. "What are you doing? I summoned that goat."

Ren Xiaosu gave him a strange look and said, "Yeah, I wanted you to summon lunch."

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"Summon... lunch?" Melgor said with difficulty.

"Yeah. If not, what else can you summon?" Ren Xiaosu said matter-of-factly. "At your level, you can only summon pheasants, goats, rabbits, and so on. It's not like they can be used for battle, so of course it'll be used for lunch."

Melgor looked at his summoned animal helplessly. No matter what, he had spent his mental strength to summon it, so there were some expectations and feelings for it. How could they kill it so easily?

Meanwhile, Ren Xiaosu said bluntly, "Speaking of which, you people from the Kingdom of Sorcerers actually allowed this spell to be lost? Isn't eating other people's food good?"

"Who would use sorcery as a way to summon food like you?" Melgor scoffed. "Sorcery is an esteemed art, alright?"

"You've read historical records too. In the early days of The Cataclysm, everyone could barely get anything to eat. Some people even had to eat soil, grass, and tree roots too. If only a sorcerer had mastered the summoning spell! Everyone would not have had to go through such a difficult time!" Ren Xiaosu scorned.

When Melgor heard that, he thought it was quite true. Although a majority of animals had died back then, a portion of them would still have managed to escape death.

And now, Ren Xiaosu had turned esteemed sorcery into a life hack. Melgor thought that he should reprimand him, but he somehow felt that Ren Xiaosu was in the right.

Melgor suddenly felt that the longer he spent with Ren Xiaosu, the more "down to earth" he might become.

Ren Xiaosu waved him over. "C'mon, try to cast the spell again."

“OK.” Melgor got up from the ground. Holding the black Eye of True Sight, he recited the incantation, “Summon lunch!”

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Ren Xiaosu was surprised. “Bro, the incantation’s ‘Prosperous Northwest!’”

“Sorry, I fumbled it. Alright, here it goes again!” Melgor recited, “Prosperous Northwest!”

The stellar gate appeared again. This time, a colorful pheasant flew out and headed straight for Melgor’s head!

Ren Xiaosu quickly caught the pheasant with his hand. He asked Melgor, “How much mental strength did you have to expend to cast this spell once?”

“About 25%.” Melgor said.

“That’ll be enough for three meals a day.... C’mon, cast it again,” Ren Xiaosu said.

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Melgor wondered, “Why do I get the feeling that you’re using me as an experiment?”

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“Quit complaining!”

Chapter 1175: Experimentation with the summoning spell

Translator: Legge

“Prosperous Northwest!”

This time, Ren Xiaosu saw the stellar gate appear next to him before a suction force tried to suck the pheasant away.

This suction force was not physics-based but an inexplicable kind of power.

However, Ren Xiaosu’s strength was much greater. As a result, the suction from the stellar gate could not pull anything in even after a long time. All that got sucked in were some feathers.

The events left Melgor dumbfounded. He had not expected something like that. But he was very sure now that Ren Xiaosu was using him as an experiment.

Ren Xiaosu said analytically, "There are a few traits to this summoning spell. Let me explain them to you. First of all, the size of the stellar gate should be directly related to the number of times the spell is practiced. Otherwise, the stellar gates that we opened wouldn't be of the same size. If it's related to mental strength and you're able to open a stellar gate half a meter in diameter, I should be able to open one that's a hundred meters wide."

Melgor felt helpless for a long time. "Is there really such a huge difference between us? Can you please just state the conclusion directly? You don't have to tell me your analysis...."

Ren Xiaosu nodded and continued analyzing, "If the summoned creature does not die, it will get summoned again each time the spell is cast. I killed the goat, so you summoned a pheasant the second time you activated the stellar gate. But if I don't kill the pheasant, you'll still summon this same pheasant on your third spell."

"Mhm, that makes sense." Melgor nodded. Honestly, he really admired Ren Xiaosu for being able to comprehend several of the new spell's traits so quickly.

Ren Xiaosu said, "There's also a third and most important point, which is that the summoned creature and the caster do not have a master-servant relationship. This is also the most useless trait of the summoning spell. Since the goat and the pheasant attacked you, we can pretty much conclude that. By the way, did you feel any connection between yourself and the summoned creature?"

"No." Melgor shook his head.

"That's right then." Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and said, "But it felt a little different for me."

When he activated the dimensional portal, Ren Xiaosu somehow felt a sense of closeness with the monster on the opposite side even though it was roaring. Moreover, there was an inexplicable familiarity exuding from it.

On this point, it was a different feeling from Melgor's.

However, Ren Xiaosu was afraid to practice the summoning spell casually, because he still couldn't confirm what was on the opposite end of the stellar gate.

He also did not know what kinds of consequences there would be if he actually summoned the creature.

At this moment, Qian Weining and his men were quietly hiding in the corridor of the relay station and eavesdropping. They did not dare to stand too close and kept a distance of about ten meters away from the door.

Earlier, Qian Weining was quite sure he heard the roar of a monster. Perhaps the guards could be fooled by Melgor, but he was much more knowledgeable and knew what alchemy was.

“Sir, are you saying there’s a monster in Ren Xiaosu’s room?” a guard asked.

“Mhm.” Qian Weining answered seriously, “How could I have heard wrong if the roar could even wake me up from my drunken stupor? I’m just not sure what’s inside his room. I’ve investigated Lord Melgor before and found out he’s terrible at alchemy, so what alchemy experiments could he be doing in his room? Look, he went straight to Ren Xiaosu’s room after coming out of his own room, so I guess he lied to you all just now. Actually, that sound had come from Ren Xiaosu’s room.”

“But it’s a monster.” A guard said nervously, “What should we do?”

“Grab your weapons and be careful. If anything rushes out, kill it without mercy,” Qian Weining said.

The door to Ren Xiaosu’s room swung open. Qian Weining and his men saw him running straight for the relay station’s kitchen with a goat in his left hand and a pheasant in his right hand.

After some time, the aroma of pheasant soup wafted over.

A guard hesitated for a moment. “Sir, was that the monster you mentioned?”

Qian Weining loosened his grip on his broadsword. “Haha, I was just joking with you guys. I didn’t expect to be taken seriously!”

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“But when Lord Melgor and Ren Xiaosu came back just now, they didn’t have the goat or pheasant with them,” a guard wondered.

Qian Weining stared intently at Ren Xiaosu and Melgor’s rooms, thinking about something.

...

On the afternoon of the seventh day since the Battle of Sun City, Winston City’s gate suddenly opened. Guards were carrying rolls of red carpet and laying them at the entrance, extending all the way to the Winston Cathedral.

A large formation of knights were standing at attention outside the city. Hundreds of soldiers in the foremost row were holding scarlet flags that were fluttering in the wind. The flags were embroidered with the lion emblem of the House of Berkeley.

At the front of the formation, a middle-aged man rode forward slowly on a white horse while knights in heavy silver armor followed him.

The middle-aged man said calmly, "Guards Brigade, follow me into the city. The rest of you, remain outside and wait for further instructions."

"Yes, My Lord!" The uniform echoing at the rear was so resounding it rattled many of the Winston City residents.

This was the kind of excellence elite knights should exude in the Kingdom of Sorcerers. Over the past 100 years or so, the reputation of the Knights of the Inferno had always been among the top three.

As the middle-aged man rode his horse down the red carpet, the Winston family's patriarch got down on one knee at the entrance. "Welcome, Patriarch."

The middle-aged man turned out to be the current head of the House of Berkeley. Meanwhile, the Winston family's patriarch no longer pretended as he became totally subservient to the Berkeley family's patriarch. From this, it could be seen that the rumors of the House of Winston joining the Berkeley family was not just baseless speculation.

This Berkeley family's patriarch was different from the sorcerers Ren Xiaosu had previously encountered. He was wearing armor and had a broadsword slung from his waist. He was clearly dressed as a warrior and looked extremely chivalrous.

"Rise." The middle-aged man said slowly, "Have the walls been repaired?"

"Yes," the Winston family's patriarch said in embarrassment after he got up.

"How disgraceful," the middle-aged man sneered. "But your boldness in surrounding and killing Kayle has truly made me see you in a different light. Get on your horse and follow me for a meeting."

The Winston family's patriarch was delighted. He knew he had made the right decision by taking the risk to kill Archmage Kayle.

With a great war imminent, the House of Berkeley would no longer condone spineless people. The Winston family's patriarch had to decisively pledge his allegiance to the Berkeley family. Otherwise, he would end up offending both sides.

Now that Archmage Kayle's head had been taken as a sacrifice to their flag, the House of Winston was tied to the House of Berkeley as they executed their war plans.

The middle-aged man riding on the horse suddenly chuckled as though he had thought of something funny.

The Winston family's patriarch asked cautiously, "Patriarch, why are you laughing?"

"That Kayle was really unlucky." The Berkeley family's patriarch shook his head and said, "Actually, he came to the south to kill a sorcerer named Melgor and had nothing to do with the chaos in Winston City. But you did the right thing by killing him. Since the northern expedition has already started, he would have to be killed either way."

The Winston family's patriarch was stunned. "Patriarch, are you saying that Kayle..."

"That sorcerer named Melgor is in your city and should be with Qian Weining now." The Berkeley family's patriarch said, "Summon him for an audience with me."

Chapter 1176: Danger approaching

Translator: Legge

"Patriarch, do you suspect that Melgor is linked to the chaos in Winston City?" the Winston family's patriarch asked.

"No, he's just a junior sorcerer. The House of Tudor is after him over a trivial matter of jealousy." The Berkeley family's patriarch said slowly on his horse, "Someone has investigated the matter thoroughly. It was just that some unexpected things happened along the way. What I underestimated was the Tudor family's determination to kill him."

To be honest, the Berkeley family's patriarch was a little puzzled initially. In his opinion, Melgor was only a junior sorcerer. Back when that guy claimed the fiefdom of York County, he was even the one who personally signed off on the documents.

At that time, he had personally seen Melgor casting spells and tested him on his proficiency in them. The Berkeley family's patriarch was quite sure Melgor was just a weakling, so he did not link him to the incident in Winston City.

It could be said that Melgor had cleared himself of any suspicion with his strength.

As such, the Berkeley family's patriarch always wondered why the House of Tudor was so insistent on having Melgor killed. What was their motivation?

No matter how many spies the House of Berkeley had, they could not possibly know that the Tudor family's patriarch had his nostrils poked.

After all, the Tudor family's patriarch had not even mentioned that incident to his own clan. Unless Ren Xiaosu went out to publicize it, no one would know how such a deep feud had formed between Melgor and a behemoth like the House of Tudor.

A lot of things were destined after Ren Xiaosu poked the Tudor family's patriarch in the nose with a tree branch...

However, the Berkeley family's patriarch did not know all that. It was only when he suddenly found out that Melgor had mastered the Boiling Airburst spell that he gradually figured out some things.

Or rather, it did not matter whether he had figured it out or not. It was enough as long as this person was useful.

The Winston family's patriarch called over a son and ordered in a low voice, "Go and summon Melgor. The patriarch wants to meet him. Remember, you must bring him here!"

What he meant was that even if Melgor had to be killed, they'd have to bring him here no matter what.

When the Berkeley family's patriarch heard this, he laughed. "There's no need for violence. I just wanted to invite him over for a quick chat."

The Winston family's patriarch was stunned. He seemed to be missing some details. Why else would the House of Berkeley treat a junior sorcerer so nicely?

Then, the Berkeley family's patriarch said to the Winston family's patriarch, "Tell everyone to attend the memorial service in front of the cathedral tomorrow morning to pay their respects to the Winstons' deceased. After that, we'll take the oath of allegiance."

Upon hearing this, the Winston family's patriarch felt a chill run through him. It looked like the real war was about to begin.

He said cautiously, "Patriarch, the House of Norman's determination to support the House of Tudor this time is greater than we thought.... I heard the Knights of Radiance have already assembled outside Ghent City."

"It's fine." The Berkeley family's patriarch said confidently, "This time, our new friend from afar will be sending us some gifts. We won't be fighting alone. He'll be arriving at Winston City in a few days. At that time, you can get to know him better. Besides that, I also want your House of Winston to hold back the Vosses in the west once the war starts. Are you confident?"

"Yes." The Winston family's patriarch said passionately, "I'm willing to sacrifice myself to your cause, Patriarch!"

The Berkeley family's patriarch smiled and tapped his horse whip lightly on the shoulder of the Winston family's patriarch. "Our cause."

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That afternoon, the Knights of the Hymn galloped through the streets and informed all the residents of the memorial service to be held at the cathedral the next day.

By the time Ren Xiaosu heard their announcement at the relay station, the knights' voices had gone hoarse.

He wondered if there were other, more advanced ways of informing people in the Kingdom of Sorcerers. Did they have to rely on shouting for their communications?

At this moment, he was thinking about the principles behind the summoning spell. His main direction of thought was: Why did the words "Prosperous Northwest" correspond to the summoning spell?

Did it mean that everything could be linked to the Prosperous Northwest?

While thinking, he suddenly saw through the window a group of the Knights of the Hymn arriving at the relay station's entrance. A knight commander said loudly, "Is Lord Sorcerer Melgor here at this relay station?"

Qian Weining walked out of the relay station. "Yes, he's here. Please come with me."

"Thank you for leading the way," the knight commander said.

Ren Xiaosu observed the expressions of the knight commander and Qian Weining and realized they clearly knew each other. Moreover, the knight commander was well aware of Qian Weining's rank in the Knights of the Inferno, which explained his politeness.

Otherwise, with the strict hierarchy in the Kingdom of Sorcerers, not even a common knight would give a second glance to a so-called vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, let alone a Chamber of Commerce located in the remote York County.

Before the Knights of the Hymn could enter, Melgor seemed to have heard the commotion. He hurriedly went over to Ren Xiaosu and inquired, "What should I do? Could they be looking for me because of the collapse of Winston City's wall?"

"I don't think so." Ren Xiaosu said, "Don't worry, you have me around. At most, I'll just break out of here with you."

At this moment, the knight commander's voice rang out outside the door, "Lord Melgor, the Berkeley family's patriarch has summoned you for an audience."

Melgor was stunned. "The Berkeley family's patriarch?"

Ren Xiaosu quickly took out a micro-earpiece from his storage space and pushed it into Melgor's ear. "I'll guide you from afar."

"Aren't you coming with me?" Melgor was a little flustered.

"If I go with you, what if you instinctively look at me every time you're asked a question?" Ren Xiaosu snapped. "Just be yourself. and they won't be able to sense anything wrong."

Melgor asked in a low voice, "Be myself? How?"

"Just act cowardly as usual."

Melgor was speechless.

Ren Xiaosu instructed, "You can only behave naturally without me by your side, understand?"

"... OK."

Ren Xiaosu said, "When the time comes, I'll be able to hear your conversation. At the critical moments, I'll prompt you on how to answer. Just repeat whatever I say."

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"Mhm, got it." Melgor nodded frantically.

The Berkeley family's patriarch would never expect Melgor to be equipped with such a high-tech system.

"Lord Melgor?" the knight commander urged.

Melgor pushed open the door and stepped out. When he saw the armored Knights of the Hymn, he was so flustered he did not know what to say.

When the knight commander saw Melgor's nervous expression, he assured him, "Patriarch Berkeley is only inviting you for a chat. There's nothing to be worried about."

Ren Xiaosu said into the earpiece: "Why should I be worried about sewage like y'all?"

Melgor said, "Why should I be worried about sewage like y'all?"

The Knights of the Hymn was stunned.

The corners of the knight's eyes twitched several times. *'You were even trembling a little when you said that. What's with the sudden threatening words?'*

Qian Weining thought to himself that Melgor was indeed planted here by the House of Norman to entrap the House of Tudor upon hearing him speak so confidently.

Ren Xiaosu, who was in the room, did not know whether to laugh or cry. He whispered, "I'll try my best to speak less from now on. You should handle it by yourself for now...."

Fortunately, Melgor did not repeat those words.

After Melgor was taken away, Ren Xiaosu quietly followed them. He had thought it through. This Berkeley family's patriarch had better speak nicely. But the moment he revealed any killing intent towards Melgor, Ren Xiaosu would have to strike first.

After all, Melgor was the person he had chosen to head the Prosperous Northwest's branch office.

Taking advantage of the encroaching twilight, Ren Xiaosu climbed to the top of a building across the Winston Cathedral. Then he took out his black sniper rifle and loaded it with the black bullet he usually could not bear to use.

Although Ren Xiaosu had told Melgor not to be afraid, with his cautious character, it was better to be safe than sorry when it came to someone like the Berkeley family's patriarch. Right from the beginning, he brought out his most lethal ranged weapon.

It was also the most unstoppable weapon in the Kingdom of Sorcerers.

Ren Xiaosu lay prone on the roof and blended in with the darkness of the night. He placed his face close to the scope so he could observe the Berkeley family's patriarch, who was inside the cathedral.

He glanced at the flag with a lion emblem fluttering at the entrance of the cathedral. Distance: 671 meters; wind speed: 15 meters per second.

At this moment, the Berkeley family's patriarch was unaware of the danger approaching him.

Chapter 1177: You've got the wrong idea

Translator: Legge

"Don't speak.

"Don't look all over the place.

"Don't be scared."

Faint static buzzed in Melgor's ears.

As he listened to the voice, Melgor felt as though he were walking inside a quiet alley as he proceeded down the red carpet in Winston Cathedral.

Rows of dark red benches stood in the cathedral, and the red carpet that ran between them seemingly represented a long, bloody pathway.

There were no statues of the Winston family's sorcerers in the Winston Cathedral, only those of the Berkeley family's archmages.

Those gray statues stood on both sides of the cathedral's interior, and Melgor felt as if they were watching him as he walked down the carpet.

The Knights of the Inferno's elites stood on both sides of the red carpet armed with their lances. They looked straight ahead and did not bat an eyelid when Melgor walked past them.

There were no members of the Winston family present, and it seemed like the House of Berkeley had deliberately cleared the place before Melgor's arrival.

The Berkeley family's patriarch stood quietly in the apse of the cathedral where a white statue was, with his back facing the main entrance.

Hundreds of candles had been lit on the chandelier hanging from the cathedral's dome. As such, even though the sky had already turned dark, the interior of the cathedral was still bright as day.

The light shone down from above and illuminated the back of the Berkeley family's patriarch. His imposing figure in his knight's armor cast a large shadow on the ground while his red cloak drooped silently off his back.

Melgor recognized the white statue in front of him. It was a sculpture of the Berkeley family's patriarch's ancestor, and also the first person to discover the spell Song of Flames. His name was Grantham Berkeley.

"I'm already in position for an attack.

"Act natural. Just be yourself.

"Speak factually.

"Don't worry, you might die if the other party really makes a move on you, but I'll make sure he dies together with you."

When Ren Xiaosu's voice came through the earpiece, Melgor became even more flustered.

At some point, Melgor even wondered if Ren Xiaosu was deliberately trying to make him look more flustered by saying he might die.

He could not be sure.

What made Melgor feel even worse was that Ren Xiaosu was clearly nowhere to be seen in the vicinity, so where did he get the confidence to say he could take down the Berkeley family's patriarch?

'If you're gonna go with tough talk, you should at least stand close. Moreover, those recent incidents were all started by you....'

Melgor muttered as he walked forward. Actually, he was not really blaming Ren Xiaosu, but he had to think of something to distract himself and suppress his anxiety.

At the next moment, the Berkeley family's patriarch turned around and looked at Melgor. "We met two years ago."

The man was wearing a red cloak. When he moved around, his armor clanked, and his long, flowy cloak resembled the mane of an angry lion.

An air of authority—this was Ren Xiaosu's evaluation of the Berkeley family's patriarch. Even through the scope of his black sniper rifle, he could sense the other party's conceit.

In the Kingdom of Sorcerers, a patriarch's authority was even greater than one could imagine. After being in this position for a long enough time, one would naturally develop the aura of a leader.

Such an aura was rarely seen even in the leaders of the Central Plains organizations.

Melgor placed his right hand over his chest and bowed. "Yes, Lord Berkeley."

The full name of the Berkeley family's head was Michel Grantham Berkeley. Between sorcerers, there was no need to kneel to pay respects.

"It's a blessing that you and I reunited today." The Berkeley family's patriarch walked towards Melgor with a smile. "How was your training at the frontier the past two years?"

"Although it was a little tough, it has honed my will."

The Berkeley family's patriarch praised, "Men should train themselves more. Only then can they pierce the enemy's throat like a longsword. Don't learn from those sorcerers who sink into an easy life. That sort of behavior is undesirable."

Unlike the other sorcerer clans, the Berkeleys had always advocated the martial arts. All members with the potential to become sorcerers were required to join the Knights of the Inferno to gain experience. Only those who had no talent were left to enjoy themselves all they wanted.

But when it came to choosing an heir, the hedonists would not be able to participate in the selection.

A dauntless atmosphere was prevalent in the House of Berkeley, which was probably the reason why they were the first to step forward to challenge the status quo in this chaotic world.

At this moment, the Berkeley family's patriarch looked at Melgor in surprise and said with a smile, "Oh? You aren't afraid anymore? Your legs have stopped trembling."

When Melgor first came face to face with the Berkeley family's patriarch and the Knights of the Inferno, his legs were shaking nonstop. But as time passed, Melgor got better and no longer trembled.

Melgor hesitated for a moment before saying, "My legs have gone numb..."

The Berkeley family's patriarch burst out laughing. "Don't be afraid. I don't have any other intentions for finding you today. I won't do anything to you. I just wanted to have a casual chat."

Ren Xiaosu muttered, "You don't have anything better to do?"

Melgor muttered, "You don't have anything better to do?"

The Berkeley family's patriarch was speechless.

Ren Xiaosu was speechless.

The moment those words were uttered, the Berkeley family's patriarch started sizing Melgor up seriously. "You're quite brave. Not bad."

When Ren Xiaosu heard this, he was stunned. "This head of the Berkeley family is really quite the odd one. Does he like it when others act tough in front of him? And don't fucking repeat this line I said!"

Before Melgor could say anything, the Berkeley family's patriarch continued, "I heard you know the Boiling Airburst spell?"

Melgor hurriedly said in honesty, "No, you've got the wrong idea."

Before he came here, Ren Xiaosu had instructed him to be honest about the recent incidents. Melgor was not good at lying. The moment he lied, he would definitely get found out by the other party.

However, the Berkeley family's patriarch did not believe this answer. He smiled at Melgor and said, "There's no need to deny it so quickly. So what if you know the Boiling Airburst spell? Why? Are you afraid that I'll find out you're related to the House of Norman?"

Ren Xiaosu sighed in his head. Jumping to conclusions was really a scary thing.

Some people were just a little too smart for themselves. A sweet idiot like Melgor was actually not that scheming to begin with, but the other party felt that he was definitely more than met the eye. That was because he had never encountered such a simple person in his environment before.

Therefore, when such people faced Melgor, they would always furnish their understanding with details that even Melgor himself had not thought of. It could purely be considered as reading too much into it.

The Berkeley family's patriarch said, "I know you're backed by the House of Norman, and I also know you all are seeking to damage the House of Tudor's strength. I can overlook whatever you all have done in my key city in the south, but you need to help me pass a message to the House of Norman."

Ren Xiaosu immediately understood. Actually, the Berkeley family's patriarch had called Melgor over today for no other reason than to establish a secret alliance with the House of Norman to deal with the House of Tudor together.

Melgor said awkwardly, "Lord Berkeley, I don't know anyone from the House of Norman..."

The Berkeley family's patriarch smiled and said, "It's fine if you don't want to admit it. I'll get Qian Weining's trade caravan to continue heading north. He's a capable right-hand man of mine. I'll have him escort you back to the House of Norman. I guess that should reassure you, right?"

Melgor nearly cried at this moment. What the heck was there to be reassured about?

He really did not know the House of Norman. Why did the patriarch have to insist on sending him to the House of Norman? So that they could offer him as a sacrifice?!

Chapter 1178: The unfortunate Vice President Qian

Translator: Legge

Melgor was panicking, but Ren Xiaosu was much calmer. "Ask him what message he wants you to pass to the Norman family?"

Ren Xiaosu had planned to immediately shoot and kill the Berkeley family's patriarch after Melgor left the cathedral. At that time, he would have "Old Xu" pick Mel up secretly before driving away in the steam locomotive.

But now, Ren Xiaosu felt that keeping the Berkeley family's patriarch alive might prove more harmful to the entire Kingdom of Sorcerers.

As long as such an ambitious person remained alive, the war would mercilessly wear down the strength of all the sorcerer clans.

Since he could make them fight among themselves, why should he help the Norman and the Tudor families get rid of their enemy? If he got rid of the Berkeley family's patriarch, he would still have to go and take care of the Norman and the Tudor families separately. How troublesome was that!

Therefore, Ren Xiaosu planned to go along with the Berkeley family's patriarch's wishes and travel north with the trade caravan. It was better to stay away from the main battlefield at Winston City for now.

As for the next destination, he might want to go to Ghent City or take a tour of the Norman family's territory. In any case, the war here would probably be over by the time they returned.

Melgor asked the Berkeley family's patriarch, "What message do you want me to pass to the House of Norman?"

The Berkeley family's patriarch laughed and said, "That's the right way! You just need to tell them that Donnelly was killed by the House of Tudor. Donnelly's remains are buried under the parasol tree outside the gladiator arena in Ghent City, and his gold Eye of True Sight is in the hands of the Tudors. It's the one that Kayle used."

The Berkeley family's patriarch actually had one of his knights bring over a gold Eye of True Sight and give it to Melgor. "Hand this over to the House of Norman and they'll understand."

Melgor seemed to be very surprised at the revelation, but Ren Xiaosu was even more surprised. Melgor was given a gold Eye of True Sight just like that?

After all, he still had not managed to get his hands on a gold Eye of True Sight after creating all that trouble. The Berkeley family's patriarch was really bold to directly use a

gold Eye of True Sight to stir up a feud between the House of Norman and the House of Tudor.

But who was this Donnelly? It seemed like he was someone very important to the House of Norman.

However, Ren Xiaosu would have to reevaluate his opinion of the Berkeley family's patriarch now. It looked like the other party was very well-prepared for the upcoming war.

The Berkeley family's patriarch looked at Melgor and said with a smile, "What? Did this secret shock you?"

"Yes, I'm indeed very shocked," Melgor admitted honestly.

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"After you hand over the gold Eye of True Sight to them, the House of Norman will definitely ask you about my demands." The Berkeley family's patriarch said, "When that happens, tell them I want all of the territories currently controlled by the House of Tudor. They won't find this request difficult to accept. Go and get ready. The trade caravan will set off tomorrow."

After that, the Berkeley family's patriarch gave a wave of his hand, and the Knights of the Inferno on both sides of the red carpet held out their hands at the same time, signaling for Melgor to leave. Their precise movements nearly startled Melgor again.

He hurriedly left the cathedral and rushed back to the relay station. Ren Xiaosu also put away his black sniper rifle and pulled up his hood before disappearing into the night.

After the two of them returned to the relay station, Melgor shut the door to his room and gulped down four cups of warm water before gradually calming down.

He sat in his chair with a cup of warm water in hand and glanced out the window from time to time as though he were checking to see if anyone was peeking into the room.

Ren Xiaosu did not know whether to laugh or cry. "Don't be so nervous. Didn't everything work out just fine?"

Melgor said dejectedly, "I'm just a minor individual, so how did I suddenly get involved in a matter like this? I could have just stayed in York County and led a peaceful life. Why did I insist on going to Ghent City?"

"Because your childhood sweetheart is in Ghent City," Ren Xiaosu answered offhandedly. "Think about it. After the Tudor family's gone, wouldn't your childhood sweetheart no longer be engaged?"

When Melgor thought of his girlfriend, he gradually gained some courage.

Ren Xiaosu asked, "What's the matter about Donnelly?"

"That man was the favorite son of the Norman family's sitting patriarch. It was rumored that he was a once-in-a-generation genius." Melgor said, "A lot of people said that the Norman family's elderly patriarch wanted him to take over as patriarch of the clan, but he suddenly disappeared one day. This happened in Ghent City about a decade ago."

"They couldn't find the culprit who did it at that time?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"No." Melgor shook his head and said, "The search went on for an entire month, and it was a citywide search they conducted. The House of Norman's knights even entered the House of Tudor's territories on this extremely rare occasion. Even our house was searched thoroughly, including the cellar as well. At that time, other than the areas directly controlled by the House of Tudor, the House of Norman left no stone unturned."

Ren Xiaosu gasped. For the Norman family's knights to enter the Tudor family's territories, it showed they had no hesitation to spark a war in their search for clues related to Donnelly.

It seemed that Donnelly was indeed very important to the Norman family's patriarch.

Melgor said, "You didn't experience it personally, so you don't have a proper understanding of the seriousness of that incident. There's actually a very large underground empire below Ghent City. Although there aren't any powerful sorcerers down there, the terrain inside is complicated, and many outlaws who can't see the light of day linger in there. Some outlaws said that even if a sorcerer were to go in, they would ensure that the sorcerer would not get out alive. However, the Norman family's knights still forcefully plowed through that place in their search. It was said that the underground was filled with corpses and rats...."

Melgor continued, "It was only in recent years that the number of people living in the sewers gradually increased again. Speaking of which, aren't those people afraid it's haunted? Why would they choose to live in such a gloomy place?"

Ren Xiaosu thought to himself, *'As always, the weak can't outdo the strong. In the Magi's own territory, the outlaws shouldn't have acted so arrogantly.'*

But it was no wonder the Berkeley family's patriarch was so sure the Norman family's patriarch would carry out his revenge plan after finding out the truth. So it turned out there was some history that laid the foundation for it.

The House of Berkeley was also quite patient. They had kept the secret for over a decade just so they could use it against the House of Tudor when it mattered most.

“The Berkeley family’s patriarch said that he wants to take over the territories currently controlled by the Tudor family, but things are definitely not that simple.” Ren Xiaosu said, “After we set off tomorrow, we should take note of the situation first. If anything goes wrong, we can just escape with the gold Eye of True Sight.”

Melgor’s eyes lit up. “Escape? That sounds great!”

At this moment, the person in the worst mood was definitely not Melgor, but Qian Weining.

Vice President Qian had thought he did not have to send himself to his death anymore and started drinking to celebrate. However, bad news suddenly came to him tonight that the Berkeley family’s patriarch wanted him to head directly for the Norman family’s territory.

As the saying goes, extreme joy begets sorrow. Qian Weining even felt like he wanted to die now!

Chapter 1179: Late night visitors

Translator: Legge

If Qian Weining knew that the Berkeley family’s patriarch would make use of Melgor’s backing from the House of Norman, he would never have reported it no matter what. He was willing to fight for the Knights of the Inferno’s glory, but that did not mean that he was willing to get sent to his death.

As soon as Melgor returned, Qian Weining was informed that the civilian members of the caravan could return to York County by themselves. However, the Knights of the Inferno led by Qian Weining were to escort Melgor to the Norman family.

Along the way, they would have to avoid the Tudor family’s cataphract scouts before cautiously moving northwards.

When Qian Weining thought of the danger involved, his scalp went numb.

In the middle of the night, a slender but agile figure sneaked out of a room and moved steadily like a lizard, sticking close to the wall with ease.

At this moment, the Knights of the Inferno led by Qian Weining were stationed at every corner of the relay station. However, these soldiers did not notice the figure that had blended in with the darkness. It was as though the night attire worn by that person was tailor-made, even having a light-absorbing property in its material.

The infiltrator seemed to know the shadows on the walls like the back of their hand, as well as the patrol rotation schedule of the garrison troops.

Whenever a soldier's gaze swept over, the infiltrator would immediately hide in the shadows. After the soldier turned his gaze away, the infiltrator would immediately dart ahead five to six meters.

The infiltrator quietly arrived at a window and took out a thin rope to hook open the latch on the inside of the window.

But the moment the infiltrator leaped into the room, she suddenly felt a cold sharpness pressing against her neck.

Ren Xiaosu chuckled, "Don't move, or you'll die."

"Can you bear to kill me?" Chen Jingshu started chuckling as well.

"I'm not falling for that." Ren Xiaosu said in seriousness, "The Riders in the Central Plains are all upright people. Why do you Sanctuary members resort to tricks like seduction?"

Chen Jingshu's expression turned cold. "An assassin's glory is to kill the target at all costs. Anything else can be used as tools for us."

Ren Xiaosu slowly withdrew the black saber and stepped back. He only stopped when he was three meters away from Chen Jingshu. He said slowly, "What are you looking for me for? It's no longer peaceful at the relay station now. You're really quite bold."

Chen Jingshu stood by the window. As the moonlight shone from behind her, her graceful figure was accentuated by the night attire she was wearing.

Previously, Ren Xiaosu thought she was a slightly plump middle-aged woman. However, he did not expect that it was just a disguise for her.

After all, who would worry that a slightly plump middle-aged woman was an assassin?

"Do I look good?" Chen Jingshu asked with a smile.

"Not too bad." Ren Xiaosu said calmly, "But I won't stare long."

"Why not? What's there to be scared of?" Chen Jingshu asked.

"It's not that I'm scared, but I need to uphold my principles." Ren Xiaosu put the black saber away into the palace. "Don't tell me that you came here in the middle of the night just so that you could show me your figure?"

1

"Why are you standing so far away?" Chen Jingshu raised an eyebrow.

“Don’t you know that it’s improper for men and women to be in close proximity of each other?” Ren Xiaosu said calmly, “I already have someone that I like, and I might be getting married when I return to the Central Plains after my work is done here.”

1

Chen Jingshu wondered, “Aren’t all men fickle-minded? Impulsiveness is in your instincts.”

Ren Xiaosu replied seriously, “It’s precisely because men are instinctively impulsive and seek desires that make loyalty an even more valuable trait. It might take a one in ten million chance in life for someone to meet the right person. My life is actually not that good, so I have to cherish it when I meet the right person.”

“Alright, I’ll stop teasing you.” Chen Jingshu said a little disinterestedly, “I know Melgor was summoned to Winston Cathedral by the Berkeley family’s patriarch today. What did Michel Berkeley want with him?”

“He wants Melgor to pass a message to the Norman family. As for what it is, I won’t tell you that yet.” Ren Xiaosu said, “The caravan will tell y’all to return to York County by yourselves tomorrow. Let’s meet again when we’re in Ghent City.”

Chen Jingshu frowned. “No, we’ll head north together with you and Melgor. We received new instructions from our organization that we must ensure your safety.”

Ren Xiaosu was taken aback for a moment. When Chen Jingshu said they had to ensure his safety, there was no mention of Melgor at all.

Therefore, Zhang Haoyun should have relayed the conversation they had that night, and the Sanctuary believed he was someone they had to protect.

This was good news to him. Although Ren Xiaosu did not need anyone to protect him, the Sanctuary had given him a very clear message.

Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and said, “Y’all better not come along to protect me. First, there’s no reason for you to continue following the trade caravan northwards. Second, you’re not strong enough to protect me, so you should protect yourselves first.”

When Chen Jingshu heard this, she choked. “Don’t look down on us.”

“I’ll be frank with you. I was the one who caused the incident in Winston City a few days ago. I killed those 62 sorcerers of the Winston family. I’ll give you a chance now to rephrase your words and rethink your plans,” Ren Xiaosu said.

Chen Jingshu only took a second to think before answering crisply, “I’ll see you in Ghent City.”

Chen Jingshu finally understood how strong this young man was. To be honest, Chen Jingshu would not find it strange even if someone were to tell her in ten days that the Norman family's patriarch had suddenly died. She thought to herself that even the founder of the Sanctuary probably did not have this level of power! Just what kind of monster was Ren Xiaosu?

"How do I get in touch with y'all when I get to Ghent City?" Ren Xiaosu said.

Chen Jingshu replied, "When you get to the blacksmith's workshop on Baker Street, someone will contact you."

With that, the female assassin was about to sneak back to her room when someone suddenly knocked on the door. "Ren Xiaosu, open up. It's Melgor."

Chen Jingshu glanced out the window and saw a group of patrolling soldiers in the relay station passing by. There was no way she could leave now.

"Hide behind the curtains," Ren Xiaosu said helplessly.

After that, Ren Xiaosu went to open the door for Melgor. "What's the matter?"

"I'm still a little flustered." Melgor mumbled, "Think about it, we'll have more than 600 soldiers of the Knights of the Inferno watching us once we start our journey tomorrow. How can we escape at that time? So why don't we just run away tonight?"

Ren Xiaosu snapped at him, "Why are you always thinking about running away?"

As soon as he said that, someone knocked on the door again. Immediately after, Qian Weining said outside the room in a low voice, "Are you still awake? I would like to talk with you alone."

Ren Xiaosu was stunned. What the hell was going on in the middle of the night? Why were there visitors coming to his room one after another? *'Has everyone gone crazy?'*

Chapter 1180: Pledge of allegiance

Translator: Legge

Melgor, the sweet idiot, reacted like a bird startled by the twang of a bow. When he heard Qian Weining's voice, he panicked a little and paced around the room. "Why does he want to talk to you alone? Will he try to silence me if he sees me? He—"

Ren Xiaosu didn't know whether to laugh or cry while tugging Melgor back. Then he lowered his voice and said, "Why are you panicking? What can Qian Weining do to you? Don't worry, nothing will happen! Let's listen to what he has to say first!"

However, Melgor was unwilling. "I'd better hide. I really don't know what to say to him. What if he wants to say something unfavorable about me?"

With that, Melgor slipped behind the thick and heavy red flannel curtains.

The moment he got behind the curtains, Melgor was so startled he almost cried out in exclamation. However, Chen Jingshu reacted faster and instantly covered his mouth while signaling him not to speak.

At this moment, Ren Xiaosu opened the door for Qian Weining. "Vice President Qian, what brings you here in the middle of the night?"

Qian Weining said, "Can we go in and talk?"

"Yes, of course," Ren Xiaosu said with a smile.

When the door closed, Qian Weining whispered, "I'm sorry for disturbing you at night. The thing is, I have something to discuss with you. Sir, I hope you don't mind. I quietly came over because I didn't want a third party to know, so regardless of whether I'm right or not, please keep it a secret."

Ren Xiaosu's expression turned strange. *'There's currently quite a few people in this room. From the moment you said that, even a fourth party knows about it, much less just a third party.'*

"Vice President Qian, what are you trying to say exactly?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"I would like to ask you something. You're actually the expert behind Melgor, right?" Qian Weining said softly, "We've been traveling together for so long now. Although a lot of incidents can't be fully explained, I still noticed them. But, sir, don't worry. I've already withheld some of my observations and didn't report the info to the higher-ups."

Ren Xiaosu raised his eyebrows. He had wondered why Qian Weining would suddenly come and look for him in the middle of the night. So it turned out this was his last struggle before he got sent to his death.

"Like what kind of info?" Ren Xiaosu asked curiously.

"You were actually sent by the Norman family to protect Melgor, right?" Qian Weining said.

When Ren Xiaosu heard this, he nearly laughed out loud. But he still maintained his composure and said noncommittally, "How'd you tell?"

"You've been calmer than anyone else during the journey. Even when the people from the House of Tudor attacked us, I never saw you panicking." Qian Weining said, "We've

investigated the people around Lord Melgor and they have nothing to do with the House of Norman. You were the only one who appeared out of nowhere with no background to speak of. Moreover, Lord Melgor doesn't seem to treat you like a steward at all. When the two of you stand together, he's actually more like your subordinate."

Ren Xiaosu made a calm noise of acknowledgment. "Anything else?"

"You definitely still have companions shadowing the caravan, right?" Qian Weining said, "My perfect archery and Lord Melgor's Lesser Fireballs were all the doing of your companions, weren't they!"

Ren Xiaosu looked at Qian Weining in surprise and thought to himself, *'Has this guy finally woken up from his sharpshooter dream?'*

Qian Weining said rather embarrassedly, "Actually, I'm also aware of how good my archery is. It's just that I got a little big-headed at the beginning. But when Lord Melgor started casting his Lesser Fireballs with a 100% kill rate, I gradually came around..."

"Then what makes you think all of this has anything to do with me?" Ren Xiaosu still did not admit to it.

Actually, it did not matter even if he admitted to it now. Qian Weining was close enough for Ren Xiaosu to kill him in one hit. If Qian Weining really posed any threat, Ren Xiaosu could just twist his neck and throw him into his storage space before escaping with Melgor.

Qian Weining said in a low voice, "I've checked the wounds caused by the Lesser Fireballs, and I also know from experience how weak it is. Those wounds couldn't possibly be from the Lesser Fireballs. It's obvious that someone punched those bandits in their chests and killed them in one blow. Including the Boiling Airburst spells from later, Lord Melgor was just pretending to cast them while the caster was someone else."

Qian Weining suddenly felt the hairs on his back stand on end. He felt a sense of danger quickly approaching, so he braced himself and said with his eyes closed, "I didn't report all that to the higher-ups. I just hope that you can give us a chance for survival!"

Ren Xiaosu said with a smile, "And what chance are you referring to?"

Qian Weining suddenly felt the pressure on him lifting. He looked at Ren Xiaosu with lingering fear and became even more convinced of his judgment. Ren Xiaosu was definitely someone very capable sent by the House of Norman to plot against the House of Tudor. Furthermore, Ren Xiaosu must command some secret troops to enable his operations.

Ren Xiaosu had thought the two sheeple were Qian Weining's people, but it did not seem to be the case anymore. At the very least, Qian Weining did not know he was from the Central Plains.

This left Ren Xiaosu a little surprised. Even though the two sheeple were quite weak and had loose lips, they really were not the type to constantly scheme against others.

Anyone who was not constantly scheming against others would be a suitable candidate for the Prosperous Northwest!

2

Qian Weining said anxiously, "Sir, actually, you should've noticed as well that our cataphract regiment has offended a member of the House of Berkeley. They're now trying to force us down a path of no return."

Ren Xiaosu wondered, "This decision was made by the Berkeley family's patriarch. What does it have anything to do with the good-for-nothing clan member?"

"It has nothing to do with the Berkeley family's patriarch." Qian Weining said, "What you might not know is that someone issued a transfer order to the caravan guards tonight. Only 192 people will head to the Norman family's territory with Lord Melgor tomorrow. The rest will remain in Winston City and return to their respective cataphract regiments."

"Did these 192 people all offend that good-for-nothing clan member?" Ren Xiaosu was surprised.

"That's right." Qian Weining said, "I don't ask for anything else. Since you're a member of the House of Norman, I only beg that you give us a chance to live. The 192 of us are willing to be your slaves and risk our lives for you with no hesitation!"

Ren Xiaosu sighed. It looked like these people were really getting forced down the path of no return by the House of Berkeley.

Tonight, Qian Weining and these loyal Knights of the Inferno decided to seek out their own survival after they felt the betrayal of the House of Berkeley.

However, Ren Xiaosu could not possibly believe Qian Weining's side of the story just like that. He was never the sweet idiot Melgor was.

To put it simply, Ren Xiaosu needed Qian Weining to pledge his allegiance to him.

While Ren Xiaosu was thinking about how to handle this, Qian Weining suddenly got a surprised look on his face.

Immediately after, the curtains behind Ren Xiaosu suddenly fell down along with the hardware fittings embedded in the ceiling.

Melgor and Chen Jingshu smiled awkwardly at Qian Weining. When Qian Weining saw Chen Jingshu's night attire, he seemingly understood something. "This must be the secret unit led by you, sir, right??"