

Magic Era 261

Chapter 261: Return

The Planar Path suddenly shook and broke away from the binding of the Heaven Enlightening Plane. The surrounding space started continuously changing, countless scenes flashed before Lin Yun's eyes. Lin Yun could faintly see the four elements being set up, life starting to sprout, mountains and seas, grasslands and lakes, everything was filled with flourishing life aura, only the center of the world was covered in death and silence.

That was the remains of the vast cemetery, the corpses of Ancient Gods, Chromatic Dragons, and pure-blooded Elves were buried there. It wasn't just Noscent's lifeforms being buried there, there might also be the secret which would decide Noscent's fate.

Unfortunately, this secret could only be left for next time...

Lin Yun took one final look at this new Heaven Enlightening Plane.

But as the Planar Path gradually travelled further and further through the darkness, they finally reached some light.

A group of people standing in the treasury appeared in their sight.

"Eh, Merlin..." Sasu approached and welcomed them. The leader of the Silver Moon Mercenaries was doubtfully looking at Lin Yun's group, "How... How could you be so fast?"

"Fast?" Before Lin Yun could even open his mouth, Solomon rudely interjected, "We floated for a few months in that damned place, how is that fast?"

"Months?" Sasu was suddenly startled before frowning, "But..."

"Sasu, how long has it been since you returned?" Lin Yun waved his hand to stop Solomon.

He wasn't surprised by Sasu's reaction.

Because Lin Yun knew that it wouldn't be strange for some time distortion to happen after entering the Heaven Enlightening Plane with the Planar Path Fragment. After all, the Heaven Enlightening Plane wasn't an ordinary place, it was simply a dead world, the Laws had already stopped operating, including the law of Time and the law of Space. Lin Yun only wanted to know how serious that distortion in time was.

"One hour..."

"Okay, I understand." Lin Yun nodded but didn't say anything else.

At this time, most of the other people from the joint exploration team gathered over and greeted the few of them one by one. They also reported the situation in the treasury. A few days had passed before Sasu's group returned. The magic materials had already been arranged and they were only waiting for Lin Yun to allocate them.

“Merlin, we had an agreement, you have the loot priority, so now pick the ones you want.”

“Hold on a moment, I have something to deal with first...” Lin Yun didn’t look at the magic materials, he instead poured mana into the ring on his finger, “Lord Shawn, do me a favor...”

“What favor?” Shawn was alarmed when he heard the word favor, “Don’t expect me to help if it’s too difficult!”

“...” Lin Yun didn’t know how to feel about this cowardly True Spirit Magic Tool. He took a deep breath before calmly continuing, “My cousin’s soul inheritance is almost complete, I need you to help him with the last step...”

“Eh?” Hearing Lin Yun, Shawn raised his head and looked at William who was next to them.

William was in a strange state, he had yet to wake up after over a month of meditation. The average mage would have been considered dead by then. But William seemed completely fine, whether it was his mana fluctuations or his life aura, they were both completely normal.

The only difference was William’s soul power being active.

This discovery amazed Shawn, “I didn’t expect that you would understand how soul inheritances worked...”

“Haha...” Lin Yun laughed with an incomprehensible smile, making Shawn lose some self-confidence.

How could Lin Yun know how soul inheritances worked...

Lin Yun only knew that the soul inheritance the Merlin Family’s ancestor left behind had been set aside for an offspring of the Merlin Family. If William couldn’t obtain the inheritance, then who could?

Of course, he couldn’t tell Shawn...

“Indeed, that guy’s soul inheritance is almost over...” Shawn then rolled his eyes, “It is also not impossible for me to help him finalize the inheritance, but...”

“But?”

“But you do know that I’m only an Incarnation, I would use up a lot of mana every time I activate the Soul Walker. You should understand what I mean, right?”

Lin Yun almost spat to Shawn’s face.

‘Even if you are looking for an excuse, can’t you settle for a decent one?’

‘Even a Magic Apprentice knows that it doesn’t take any effort for a Magic Tool Incarnation to rouse its Magic Tool, it simply doesn’t use the least bit of strength. Telling me that it would use up a large amount of mana, do you take me for someone inferior to a Magic Apprentice?’

‘Forget it...’

Lin Yun didn’t bother to argue with Shawn after reigning in his anger and directly took out a level 25 mana crystal from his pocket, “That should be more than enough mana...”

“Enough, enough, more than enough...” Shawn blissfully took the level 25 mana crystal and felt a surge of mana revolving within his body before guaranteeing, “Rest assured, I’ll take care of the final step, I can guarantee that this youth will complete his soul inheritance.”

“Less talking...”

William’s soul fluctuations had already reached their peak, so Shawn didn’t dare to delay and with a howl, his faintly discernible body immediately transformed into a ray of light and fell onto that damaged crest.

Just as Shawn disappeared, the meditating William suddenly paled and started crazily sweating. His originally calm expression twisted with pain.

Seconds slowly passed.

After who knew how long, Shawn’s howl reverberated once again as he flew out from the damaged crest and re-transformed into his Ghost Wolf shape, his appearance accompanied by whining with some dread mixed in it, “Shit, what kind of inheritance was that, I had to bet my life. I lost out, I lost out, that’s no good, you have to make it up with another level 25 mana crystal.”

“You are dreaming.” Lin Yun used this time to pour mana in the Soul Walker, and before Shawn could say anything, he absorbed him back inside.

“Despicable...”

William opened his eyes just as Shawn’s silhouette disappeared.

That pair of eyes seemed no different than usual, but Lin Yun could see the burning flames within the irises.

Lin Yun knew that just like him, William stepped in the High Mage realm after going through that inheritance.

And this was only the beginning.

The soul inheritance from the Merlin Family actually made Shawn suffer some loss, just from that it could be estimated how powerful that inheritance was. It might be even better than he thought. William entering the High Mage realm was only the beginning, as long as he had some time to digest that powerful soul inheritance, he would sooner or later reach a shocking height.

“How was the harvest?” Lin Yun didn’t ask about the details of the soul inheritance, he only said a few words as if they were just idly gossiping.

“Huge, huge...” But Lin Yun not asking about the details didn’t mean that William wouldn’t say anything, “This is not a good place to share, I can make a copy after we return, help me take a look at it then Cousin.”

There was no unnatural expression when William said that.

He truly felt that it was normal for him to make a copy for his cousin.

Because William knew that what his cousin gave him had far surpassed what he had earned from the soul inheritance.

Everyone was likely to covet his inheritance, family, brothers, no one could remain calm in front of that soul inheritance, except this younger cousin.

Because he simply didn't need it.

Would a rich man care about the bread in a beggar's hand?

"Sure, no problem." Lin Yun straightforwardly nodded and searched for something in his pocket, "This is for you."

"This is?"

"This is an Alchemic Mana Whirlpool left behind by Vaughn, if you are fortunate enough, it can raise your mana one fold. You should take some time in the next few days and fuse with it. In a few days, we will go to Okland, at that time, you can't be defeated by the rest of the Merlin Family's younger generation."

"..." Although Merlin had said it casually, it didn't stop William from being scared silly and almost dropping the Alchemic Mana Whirlpool.

Being able to raise his mana one fold if he was lucky.

As someone that had studied magic since childhood, how could William not understand the meaning of those words.

It could be said that once such an Alchemic Mana Whirlpool was taken out, even Archmages would crazily fight over it. This was no laughing matter, which mage would be able to resist the temptation of having their mana rised one fold?

"Thank you..."

"Alright, Solomon will instruct you how to fuse with it, I'm going to check on Xiuban." After waving to William, Lin Yun walked to the Draconic Beastman.

Chapter 262: Rebellion

But...

The Draconic Beastman suddenly roared before Lin Yun could approach.

During the fusion process with the Three-Headed Golden Dragon blood, Xiuban's originally green skin was already turning red. Now when the Draconic Beastman roared, that red skin already turned dark red, making him look as if he had been dyed by blood. The aura emitted felt like that of an ancient creature. When his eyes swept over everyone, even Suyass, the highest ranked in the group, felt as if he was stared down by a ferocious creature.

“How unexpected!” After fusing with the blood of the Three-Headed Golden Dragon, Xiuban was filled with power. He felt as if his every move would shatter the earth and split the sky. That unprecedented powerful feeling as well as the fear in everyone’s eyes made him forget his previous painful tortures, “Mafa Merlin, you can no longer order this great Xiuban as you wish, hurry up and remove this great Xiuban’s contract!”

“You want me to remove the contract?” Lin Yun looked at the Draconic Beastman and found the scene quite funny.

“Of course!”

“Well, ‘Great Xiuban’, didn’t you know that unless a soul dissipated, a soul contract could never be removed...?”

“I...” A Soul Contract was clearly above that Draconic Beastman’s knowledge level, but since he already started, he couldn’t easily give up. Thinking of this, the Draconic Beastman became unreasonable, “How could I know so much. I don’t care, remove the soul contract, otherwise...”

“Otherwise what?” Lin Yun slightly frowned.

The ones who weren’t that familiar with Lin Yun might not know, but William who was the most familiar with him couldn’t help wiping the sweat from his forehead.

‘That idiot Xiuban, he ran out of luck...’

Unfortunately...

The Draconic Beastman hadn’t realized that he had already started walking an unfortunate path and kept digging a proverbial hole for himself...

The Draconic Beastman had already sank in his own world, the surge of power overshadowing any reason, leaving only boosted confidence.

“Otherwise I’ll let you know how frightening the great Xiuban is!”

After saying this, the Draconic Beastman punched the floor.

That punch was followed by a loud bang.

Countless rock fragments instantly scattered. Xiuban’s punch had broken the slabs of Moonstone covering the floor, and Moonstone was as solid as steel...

But just as everyone was shocked by the Draconic Beastman, a thunderous roar echoed in the treasury.

Then...

The leaders of the major forces looked on as a several dozen meters long block of Moonstone weighting at least 500 kg was forcibly pulled out of the ground by the Draconic Beastman.

This scene made everyone dumbstruck.

What kind of strength was that...

'Is... Is he truly a Beastman? Isn't he a Dragon disguised as a Beastman through illusion?'

"Now that you can see the great Xiuban's power, hurry, hurry up and remove my soul contract..."

"You are talking too much." Lin Yun's voice echoed.

Then...

The roar of the Draconic Beastman was abruptly stopped and everyone watched as a huge palm fell down, followed by an intense pressure filling the treasury. At that instant, Solomon and Lys as 9th Rank High Mages paled visibly, and even Suyass as an Archmage felt an unbearable pressure.

The pitiful Draconic Beastman didn't have the time to finish his words before he was almost crushed by that palm falling down like a huge boulder.

Only a rumble could be heard as the whole treasury shook. Dust and pieces of rocks scattered as the earth shook for a while.

This time, the onlookers' eyes were lifeless.

It took no less than a minute for the dust to disperse.

Everyone could clearly see a hole several meters deep and ten meters wide in the sturdy Moonstone, and laying at the bottom of that hole was the bloody Xiuban, still holding that heavy block of Moonstone from his power demonstration. But there was no more arrogance on his face, only blank fear and loss.

"Want me to remove your soul contract? Sure, wait until you can kill a dragon empty-handed." After saying this, Lin Yun gently waved his hand and a thumb-sized flame suddenly appeared within his hand.

That flame seemed dark and faint, as if it would be snuffed out with the smallest bit of wind.

"Sir, Sir, I was wrong, I was wrong, please let me off..." But the Draconic Beastman let out a heart-wrenching cry the moment he saw that flame.

"Haha, aren't you eager to show me how powerful you became?" Lin Yun was unmoved, he let go and allowed the flame to join Xiuban in the hole, "Or do you prefer seeing how powerful I am first?"

"No, no, please no! Sir, let me off, let me off..." The Draconic Beastman sounded even more miserable as snot and tears flowed down. He did his utmost to struggle free and beg for forgiveness, in order to stay out of the path of that flame.

Unfortunately, he couldn't dodge.

An explosion echoed as the flame fell into the hole, before dazzling red flames could be seen soaring...

"Good, everyone, I finished dealing with my personal matters, we can now discuss how to allocate those magic materials." After dealing with Xiuban, Lin Yun patted the dust off of his robe and rejoined with the exploration team to start the allocation of the magic materials they obtained in the treasury.

"..." The Draconic Beastman's mournful cries could be heard from time to time, and they all couldn't help feeling their blood run cold whenever they looked at that young High Mage.

A few courageous ones dared to take a look into the hole...

They saw several dozens of Flame Shackles criss-crossing and firmly trapping the Draconic Beastman, just like a prey in a spider web, he simply couldn't move. The raging flames burned on the Draconic Beastman's body, and even if they were far apart, they could still smell the burned stench.

Even scarier was that besides binding the Draconic Beastman, the flames also turned into Flame Whips and were whipping the Draconic Beastman, periodically forcing out his screams.

"Cousin, isn't that a bit too heavy..." Among everyone here, William knew Lin Yun the best.

As one of Lin Yun's most trusted subordinates, how could William not know that his cousin had high expectations of the Draconic Beastman. That was a future Sword Saint, he was only teaching him a lesson, nothing more.

In fact, others might not know, but William clearly understood that his cousin was powerful enough to make others despair.

Killing a Draconic Beastman was something very easy.

"It's fine..." Lin Yun shook his head with a smile and no longer paid attention to the mournful cries.

William guessed right.

Lin Yun was only punishing the Draconic Beastman.

Because Lin Yun clearly understood that although the soul contract was the strongest contract, it was the one with the weakest binding power. It wasn't enough against a crafty and cowardly Draconic Beastman. Lin Yun was using this lesson to teach the Draconic Beastman that he could rebel if he wanted, but he would have to be prepared to pay the price.

As for killing the Draconic Beastman...

Lin Yun truly didn't want to think about it.

Others might have felt that the power behind that huge hand was shocking, but only Lin Yun knew how shocking it actually was.

It wasn't exaggerated to say that it had the power of a 6th Tier spell.

It belonged to the peak of the High Mage realm.

But such a powerful spell only made the Draconic Beastman bleed a bit.

If this spread, who knew how many mages would despair. What did it mean? A peak High Mage spell only superficially wounded the Draconic Beastman. This was a power comparable to Dragons, a Draconic Beastman able to resist High Mages' spells. If he was fully equipped, wouldn't he become a nightmare to every mage?

Not to mention...

Draconic Beastmen also have the innate ability to cast spells from their bloodline.

Why would Lin Yun kill this kind of subordinate with boundless future?

It didn't matter if he wasn't obedient, he could let Syudos have a chat with him. If the first time didn't work, then there would be the second time, the third time, and so on. How could he become obedient if he wasn't whipped?

Lin Yun kept thinking as he sorted the magic materials.

The harvest this time could be described as amazing. The magic materials in the treasury were dazzling. Even Lin Yun with all his knowledge couldn't help being awed.

Lin Yun was very straightforward and picked about 8 magic materials, all of which were rare magic materials he had heard of before, but never personally saw them.

His eyes went from chest to chest, searching for materials.

Unfortunately, Lin Yun looked for half a day, but didn't find that blue radiance he had been looking for.

Chapter 263: Ten Thousand Spell Wheel

'Looks like luck isn't on my side...' Lin Yun sighed in disappointment after searching for a while.

But thinking about it...

There was no guarantee to find a magic material like Latour Gold Essence in the hands of an Artisan to begin with.

In the past, the Dark Sage acquired a piece and used it in the forging process of the three Heaven Rank puppets.

But if there was no Latour Gold Essence, his plans to refine the Magic Array one more time would have to be postponed.

Lin Yun originally thought that after fusing with the Silver Dragon Blood, his Magic Array would reach near perfection and might overturn Noscent's magic system to become the most powerful Magic Array in history.

But when Lin Yun opened his eyes, he found out that he was only half right...

Indeed, his Magic Array was the most powerful in Noscent history, but it was still far from being perfect.

Lin Yun was the only one who knew about the strange state he found himself in.

Whether it was Suyass, Fran, Lys or Solomon, they all unanimously believed that Lin Yun had already fused his nine Magic Arrays while travelling on the Planar Path and stepped into the High Mage realm.

But Lin Yun knew...

They only guessed half of it.

Lin Yun had indeed entered the High Mage realm, but the nine Magic Arrays had yet to fuse!

No...

It wasn't as simple as not having merged yet.

In fact, even Lin Yun couldn't figure out how this happened, but he ended up with ten Magic Arrays!

This was too strange.

In Noscent's long history, there had never been a mage who formed ten Magic Conducting Runes. It had always been either remaining at nine Magic Conducting Runes or fusing the nine Magic Conducting Runes into one, there was no other way.

But Lin Yun formed a 10th Magic Array.

Naturally, this didn't mean that the 10th Magic Array was superfluous.

It was the opposite, the appearance of the 10th Magic Array pushed Lin Yun to the High Mage realm. And although Lin Yun had yet to fuse his Magic Arrays into one, the qualitative change brought up by the 10th Magic Array was enough to push him to the next realm.

Moreover, the power brought by the 10th Magic Array was shockingly frightening.

It could be seen from the previous scuffle with the Draconic Beastman.

The power Xiuban had just displayed was almost on par with Sasu. Even though previously Lin Yun would also be able to defeat Xiuban, it would have taken much more effort, he most certainly wouldn't have the spare mana to casually form a huge hand to instantly suppress Xiuban.

This was the power brought by the 10th Magic Array.

But...

Its appearance also caused some problems.

All his plans had been destroyed by the appearance of an extra Magic Array.

Lin Yun had originally planned out his magic path, but with the appearance of the 10th Magic Array, Lin Yun had no other choice but to alter it.

The first step of the alteration would be obtaining a very specific Magic Tool.

A Magic Tool Lin Yun had never seen.

In the peak of the magic era, there had been one True Spirit Magic Weapon that shocked the entire Noscent, named the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel. Myriads of spells and runes revolved within that Ten Thousand Spell Wheel. At that time, the master of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel was Great Astrologian Agalon. That unconventional powerhouse from the Starry Sky College was using that Magic Tool to control the power of a Demiplane.

He was almost unequalled at the time. He kept challenging powerhouses stronger than him and stepping on them with ease. The Ten Thousand Spell Wheel's name quickly spread through Noscent alongside the name of the Great Astrologian.

The greatest feature of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel was its boundlessly inclusive nature.

This aspect was very similar to the Magic Array.

If Lin Yun wanted to correct his plan, he had to get the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel. It would be able to maximize the power of the Magic Arrays and only then would the Magic Array be considered perfect.

Naturally, there was no need to think about the True Spirit Rank Ten Thousand Spell Wheel for the time being.

Even if Lin Yun found Latour Gold Essence, he would only be able to use it to make a copy of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel, and the copy would only be Spiritual Rank. Who knew how much time and effort would be needed to raise it to True Spirit Rank.

But Lin Yun wasn't in a hurry...

Displaying the power of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel would have to wait until he completely controlled the Demiplane. Only after gaining control over the Demiplane could he use the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel to control the plane's power. At that time, with the Magic Arrays as the core and the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel as the control hub, he would be able to surpass Great Astrologian Agalon.

Unfortunately, he couldn't find Latour Gold Essence.

This was a big blow to Lin Yun.

Not being able to find it within Vaughn's collection proved how hard it would be to find some.

It looked like he would have to wait until he reached Okland, the kingdom's most prosperous area, to search for some traces of Latour Gold Essence.

As he thought about it, Lin Yun picked up a few of the more precious magic materials.

"Merlin, there is a puppet here!" Lin Yun was still looking through the magic materials when he got interrupted by Solomon.

"Ah?"

"Come and check it?" Solomon had searched that discarded warehouse with Lin Yun before, so he knew that this newly advanced young High Mage had some knowledge of puppeteering. This was the reason he instantly called Lin Yun when he found that puppet.

"Okay..." Lin Yun slightly hesitated before stopping what he was doing, patting the dust off his robe and walking towards Solomon.

"Look..." Once Lin Yun reached him, Solomon pointed to a puppet on the ground, "This is something Sauss discovered when they were organizing the magic materials."

"This..." Lin Yun bent down and carefully checked the puppet before bitterly smiling.

What Solomon made a fuss about was merely a guarding puppet.

From the control hub's array, it should have been a Lurker model. That model had been mass produced during the 3rd Dynasty and was specialized in assassination and traps. Because of their fast movement speed, they would often ambush from the darkness and were then dubbed as Shadow Assassins.

But as the array skills kept developing, that kind of specialized puppet was gradually replaced by puppets with complex functions, such as the Mage Breaker model which was a very outstanding alternative.

To be honest, the rank of that Shadow Assassin wasn't low.

Lin Yun estimated that it was equivalent to a 5th Rank Expert Swordsman.

But to Lin Yun who had just returned from the Heaven Enlightening Plane and had seen Chromatic Dragons' and Ancient Gods' corpses, this about 5th Rank Expert Swordsman Shadow Assassin was truly nothing worth paying attention to.

"High Mage Solomon, this puppet is known by the name Shadow Assassin. If you like it, I can help you restore it. Its fighting strength should be around that of a 5th Rank Expert Swordsman."

"Good, good, then you should immediately restore it." Solomon didn't reject the offer. A 5th Rank Expert Swordsman was pretty decent, it could be put in the Sage Tower to add to its prestige.

"..." Lin Yun had said those words purely out of politeness, but he hadn't expected Solomon to take him up on the offer and felt trapped for a second.

There was nothing he could do, so he started the restoration...

Fortunately, this Shadow Assassin wasn't too harmed, only the mechanical system suffered some damage. After inspecting it a bit, Lin Yun found out the problem and fished out a quill and Moonlight Ink while proficiently dismantling the Shadow Assassin, preparing to rebuild the mechanical system.

But, halfway through his dismantling, Lin Yun suddenly froze.

"Eh?" After opening the outer shell of the Shadow Assassin, Lin Yun saw a blue light.

'Latour Gold Essence!'

Lin Yun hadn't expected that the Latour Gold Essence he couldn't find in Vaughn's collection would actually appear on the body of a Shadow Assassin puppet with only the strength of a 5th Rank Expert Swordsman!

What kind of circumstances was that...

Lin Yun froze on the spot, unable to say anything for the moment.

This was impossible...

Latour Gold Essence was one of the most important materials needed to create Heaven Rank puppets, how could it be used for a mere Shadow Assassin?

Even an Apprentice Alchemist knew that the value of a hundred Shadow Assassins couldn't compare to a piece of Latour Gold Essence!

'How could Vaughn have made such a critical mistake?'

"Stupid!" As Lin Yun was puzzled, a voice suddenly echoed inside his mind.

“Who is it!” Lin Yun was suddenly startled.

The brain was a true restricted area to a mage, no mage was willing to let others’ invade their consciousness, it was more terrifying than death to every mage.

But Lin Yun just found out a strange and unfamiliar voice in his mind.

This discovery made him sweat bullets.

“Fuck, you destroyed my body, yet you still dare to ask who I am?”

Chapter 264: Settling In

“Who are you?” Lin Yun asked with a heavy voice while secretly casting a Spirit Defense.

All ten Lin Yun’s Magic Arrays were working at all times, ensuring that no foreign mana could enter Lin Yun’s mind undetected, thus Lin Yun deduced that the voice he heard in the back of his mind had to be some type of spiritual power, or some type of ghostly power. And Spirit Defense was the bane of these two powers.

But...

“Don’t waste your strength, Spirit Defenses are useless against me.” That voice once again resonated in Lin Yun’s mind after he activated the Spirit Defense.

“...” Lin Yun couldn’t help cursing.

This was really a ghost...

How could he encounter such a thing?

This was fatal to a mage, a voice that could talk in one’s mind anytime, anywhere... In other words, even if one was to meditate or cast, they might be disturbed by that voice. This was no laughing matter, it meant that a mage would risk suffering from a magical backlash anytime.

“Tell me! Who are you in the end...”

“Did you already forget? You destroyed my body not long ago...” The voice in the back of his mind remained unperturbed, not speaking fast yet not slowly and seemed to be mocking him.

“Destroyed your body...” Lin Yun frowned and thought for a long time. Whose body did he destroy, could it be a ghost from one of those powerful corpses in the Heaven Enlightening Plane?

‘No way...’

‘If it really was a ghost, the Magic Array would have already alarmed me, so why didn’t it react?’

‘Hold on...’

‘Destroyed body...’

‘The Crystal Scales!’

That's right, it was the Crystal Scales, only such a strange existence like a Magic Tool Incarnation could pass through the Magic Arrays and Spirit Defenses undetected, and the Crystal Scales were the only ones who held a grudge against him.

"You are the Crystal Scales!"

"Hahahaha, you are half right..."

"Half?" Lin Yun became perplexed. Identity was something you either guessed right, or wrong. What did half right mean?

"I am indeed the Crystal Scales' Incarnation, but I am not just the Incarnation of the Crystal Scales. In reality, the Crystal Scales are the weakest of my numerous bodies. Do you think you would have been able to suppress me if that hadn't been the case?"

"Doesn't that still mean that you were suppressed by me...?"

"That's why I'm saying that you are stupid!" It seemed that the voice flew into a rage after Lin Yun brought up the past, "You Humans are like that, arrogant and conceited yet ignorant and narrow-minded. You really think you truly suppressed Lord Enderfa? Ridiculous, you think that a mere Magic Array can suppress Lord Enderfa... You had better listen and do what Lord Enderfa wants you to do, otherwise, don't even think of meditating and casting in this life. Magical backlash will be waiting for you...."

"Despicable!" Lin Yun gnashed his teeth. This was too despicable, that guy was threatening him to interfere with his magic path.

Lin Yun couldn't help feeling regretful. If he had known that the Crystal Scales' Incarnation was that weird, he wouldn't have relied on the Magic Array and would have directly looked for a Superior Magic Tool to seal him, what kind of trick could he use then?

'Hold on, Magic Array...?'

Thinking about it, Lin Yun realized something wrong. Why didn't that so called Enderfa Magic Tool Incarnation not say anything in the Heaven Enlightening Plane? After all, that was when he was walking on a tightrope and would have fallen in the abyss with a single misstep. Lin Yun would have most likely agreed to anything if he had been threatened then.

On the contrary, he got threatened now, when he was back to safety...

This wasn't very logical...

Moreover, he had already been feeling very strange when absorbing the Silver Blood in the Planar Path. Over 100,000 runes appeared and he should at most have been able to refine the Magic Array, he shouldn't have been able to undergo such a transformation. After all, he had gained an extra Magic Array out of nowhere, this was completely changing the shape of the Magic Array and toppling Noscent's magic system.

Lin Yun had felt before that his luck was too great.

But now it looked like it wasn't as simple as getting kissed by lady luck.

It was most likely linked to that Magic Tool Incarnation, Enderfa...

Lin Yun frowned as he thought of that, but then suddenly smiled while calmly saying, "I was wondering why there was an extra Magic Array, turns out it was Lord Enderfa's help, thanks a lot..."

"What are you saying? I don't understand." Those simple words made Enderfa's voice shake.

"Haha..." Hearing this, Lin Yun knew that he had guessed right, "But I am very sorry, Lord Enderfa, I'm not the type of person that likes receiving uncalled favors. Thus, I decided to part with the gift and give up on that 10th Magic Array!"

"You... What do you mean!"

"Lord Enderfa, how could you not make a name for yourself for being an altruist. You helped me yet don't allow me to thank you..."

"Why are you saying that I helped you complete that 10th Magic Array? What proof do you have!" Enderfa quickly turned crazy and tried his best to deny this.

"Haha..." Lin Yun sneered.

They were in a deadlock for about ten minutes before the Incarnation called Enderfa finally yielded.

"Okay, okay, so what if I helped you complete your 10th Magic Array, can't I gain pleasure from helping others?"

"Naturally you can gain pleasure from helping others..." Lin Yun kept a smile on his face, "But isn't it too much to linger around even after helping?"

"You... What do you want?"

"I'm not asking much from you, just don't bother me excessively, and don't even think of disturbing me during meditations and spellcasting training. If I truly met a magic backlash, Lord Enderfa might be more nervous than me."

The Incarnation suddenly turned quiet.

Enderfa remained silent, and Lin Yun didn't force him to talk, thus calm reigned in his mind.

Ten minutes later, Enderfa's voice echoed in his mind once again, "Okay, Human, I have to admit that you are right. I am indeed dwelling in this 10th Magic Array, but don't try to threaten me with this, I know you very well, you have an abnormal thirst for power. Haha, rest assured, I wasn't serious earlier, and just as you said, if you encounter a magical backlash, I'll be more nervous than you. This means that on the short term, our interests align. So let's chat about the conditions..."

"Alright." Lin Yun was waiting for this. Now that Enderfa raised the issue, Lin Yun straightforwardly raised his conditions, "I can let you live in the 10th Magic Array, but you must understand that you are only lodging there. I believe you know that the Magic Arrays are the foundation of my magic path, thus, I won't put up with anything targeting my Magic Arrays. I can assure you that otherwise I would rather give up some power and destroy the 10th Magic Array."

"I can pledge not to do anything that would threaten your Magic Arrays..." Enderfa straightforwardly agreed before muttering, disheartened, "In fact, I can't do anything against that damn Magic Array, I have never seen such a complicated Magic Conducting Rune, I truly don't know how you completed it..."

"This is something you don't need to know. The first condition has been settled, now, the second..."

"Hey, don't go too far!"

"The first condition is only an advice to you, now, this condition is a true condition. Did you plan to eat and live for free? Did you think I don't know that apart from inhabiting the 10th Magic Array, you are also taking advantage of the mana I absorb? If you had only been lodging and didn't affect my meditation efficiency, I wouldn't have bothered with you. How is it, do you agree to a condition or not?"

"Okay okay, say it..."

"The second condition is actually very simple..." As he spoke, Lin Yun pointed to the Shadow Assassin before him, "The mechanical system of that Shadow Assassin is using Latour Gold Essence. I'll later use this Latour Gold Essence to make a Magic Tool. At that time, I'll transfer you into that Magic Tool and let you become the new Magic Tool Incarnation. That way you'll have a new body. But in exchange, you need to serve me for a hundred years..."

"One hundred years?" Hearing this time frame, Enderfa clearly sighed in relief, "That's fine, a hundred years it is!"

Lin Yun wasn't surprised.

Magic Tool Incarnations had almost endless lifespans, one hundred years would be a short moment to them. Using such a short time to get new body was very advantageous to Enderfa.

Naturally, Lin Yun wouldn't suffer either.

One hundred years later, he would most likely already have the Book of Death under control as well as having collected the 13 Augments. As long as he had the Book of Death, would he need other Magic Tools?

Chapter 265: War

Lin Yun didn't further provoke Enderfa after the latter agreed to the two conditions.

Because Lin Yun felt that this Enderfa was the most evil Incarnation among Incarnations. It was for the best if they could peacefully coexist, which would be the best conclusion. It didn't feel as if he was gaining much, but if he pushed Enderfa too far, they would end up in a life and death struggle, and that wouldn't benefit anyone...

"Oh, right, Lord Enderfa, you just said that I was stupid?"

"That... That was just a joke, hahahaha..."

Enderfa's laughter dragged on for a while, but after a few moments he found out that the other side remained silent, and thus his laugh slowly petered out.

Lin Yun also did not press him and waited for Enderfa to be done laughing. "Explain..."

"Fuck..." Enderfa cursed before talking unwillingly. "I said you were stupid because you think that the creator of this puppet was Vaughn..."

"Ah?" Lin Yun's eyes shone when he heard that. "So you mean to say that someone else created this puppet?"

"Well, there is no harm in telling you, you would learn of this sooner or later..." After sighing, Enderfa helplessly said, "I believe you should know the reason for Vaughn's rapid rise. It was because he obtained the inheritance of a formidable alchemist..."

"You are talking about the Dark Sage?"

"Indeed, the Dark Sage. But Vaughn only obtained a small part of the Dark Sage's legacy. To be more precise, it was three Heaven Rank puppets..."

"Sure enough..." Hearing this, Lin Yun nodded in understanding.

In fact, many people during the 3rd Dynasty had conjectured that Vaughn had obtained the Dark Sage's three Heaven Rank puppets, but the conjectures on the subject were only baseless theories. There had been no evidence, even after Vaughn's death. Those three Heaven Rank puppets never appeared during his life.

Up until now, when Enderfa affirmed that conjecture.

"Later, Vaughn discovered some secret in the Four Seasons Canyon, and don't even ask what that secret was, because even I am not too sure about it. I only know that after Vaughn found that secret, he set up a large array around the Four Seasons Canyon and built an alchemy laboratory here. Once he was done, Vaughn left the Four Seasons Canyon and only returned once, years later..."

"When exactly?"

"Around ten years before his self-exile..."

"Eh..."

Lin Yun worked out the time frame. Vaughn's self-exile to Crystal Island was twenty years before his death. In other words, he had returned to this laboratory thirty years before he died. At that time, Vaughn already stood at the peak of Noscent as the Imperial Chief Alchemist, the glorious last Artisan.

"When Vaughn came back, he brought back the three Heaven Rank Puppets and handed over the control of the laboratory to them, and ten years later he left again. He went to Crystal Island and spent the last twenty years of his life there."

"What then?"

"And then... Haha, then these three puppets followed Vaughn's will and took charge of the laboratory, keeping it operating. Up until one night, five hundred years ago, when one Heaven Rank puppet suddenly lost control and started crazily destroying everything in the laboratory..."

"It went crazy?"

“Yes, it did, you would never imagine how frightening an uncontrolled puppet could be. The entire laboratory was almost destroyed by that puppet, and what you see now are only the ruins left behind after the disaster. The laboratory during its peak far surpassed what you could imagine...”

“How could the puppet go out of control like that...” Lin Yun pondered over it but couldn’t understand. Puppets strictly followed the orders from their control runes, so how could that one go crazy out of the blue?

“How could I know? My body at the time was only a Spiritual Magic Tool Set, I couldn’t even run when faced with that Heaven Rank disaster, so how could I still have the courage to search for the truth? In any case, when that Heaven Rank puppet went crazy and destroyed everything, it also climbed to the highest floor of the stone tower. It met the other two Heaven Rank Puppets and a battle ensued, leaving the top floor of the stone tower in ruins. You simply can’t imagine how scary that battle was...”

“Eh?”

“You went to the top floor, you should remember that very long path with empty cages on the sides, right? Well the truth is that those cages held magic beasts from various planes. The weakest was around level 28, while some of the stronger ones reached level 38, and they were far more numerous than you could have ever guessed. I can still remember the dark tide when the two Heaven Rank Puppets released them. At that time, they almost all died in that world-shaking fight, and less than one in a thousand might have managed to escape.”

“I see...” Lin Yun understood when he heard this.

Those empty cages had been left behind after those magic beasts...

Everything actually made sense. The magic beasts that the joint exploration team encountered were most likely part of the survivors or the descendants they left behind.

Lin Yun couldn’t help sweating profusely.

Just that fragment of the initial number of magic beasts released back then nearly wiped out the exploration team. Their group wouldn’t even have had the chance to put up a fight if they’d been there when all the magic beasts had just been released.

“In the end, that crazy Heaven Rank puppet lost. All its systems were dismantled by its companions before being thrown to the discarded storehouse down there.”

“But what does it have to do with me being stupid?”

“After the two puppets dismantled the crazed one, they also sank into madness and started attacking each other. They each controlled one part of the laboratory and frantically made their own armies to engage the other in a fierce melee. The Shadow Assassin in front of you was made by one of them...”

“No way..” Lin Yun couldn’t help feeling stunned when he heard this. The two Heaven Rank Puppets had a large amount of Vaughn’s resources at their disposal and produced a steady flow of puppets as they kept fighting each other and sending their armies into the fray.

This solved some of the questions on Lin Yun’s mind...

Such as why there were so many things in this laboratory that didn't seem to have been made by Vaughn, or the Void Python Maze, or those few Mage Breakers patrolling the botanical garden, or those flying puppets guarding the stone tower. It turned out that these had all been created by the two crazy puppets.

As he thought of this, Lin Yun curiously asked, "What happened afterwards?"

"They fought for two or three centuries before the resources were exhausted. They both entered the top floor and have never been seen since..."

"Never been seen since..." Hearing this, Lin Yun's expression changed. "Don't tell me... In that mountain range..."

"I'm not too sure about this..." After saying this, Enderfa's voice filled with impatience. "Okay, okay, I already explained, now you should hurry up and dismantle that Shadow Assassin and take the Latour Gold Essence. Let me know when you make that Magic Tool..."

This was followed by silence. No matter how much Lin Yun called out to him, no voice echoed in his mind.

'Okay, let's pack everything and return...' After getting no response, Lin Yun could only scratch his head before dismantling the Shadow Assassin and taking the essence from within.

To Lin Yun's surprise, the piece of Latour Gold Essence was the size of a fist...

"Such a waste..." Lin Yun was dumbstruck. A fist-sized piece of Latour Gold Essence had been used for the mechanical system of a mere Shadow Assassin... Few people could be more wasteful than these two Heaven Rank Puppets.

Let alone a fist-sized piece...

Just a thumb-sized piece of Latour Gold Essence would have its price measured in spirit mana crystals... Yet these two Heaven Rank Puppets used it for creating Shadow Assassins...

But it could be explained. The war between the two Heaven Rank Puppets was fierce, and it reached a point where the resources within the laboratory were nearly exhausted, forcing them to use materials like Latour Gold Essence on Shadow Assassins. It must have reached a desperate level then.

If the joint exploration team had entered the laboratory a few hundred years ago, their harvest would have been a hundred times better.

Naturally, that was with the premise that they weren't drawn into the fight with the Heaven Rank Puppets.

The allocation of magic materials was already finishing when Lin Yun was done extracting the Latour Gold Essence. This time, every force that took part in the joint exploration team had had a satisfying harvest, including Suyass and Fran.

Naturally, the Gilded Rose was the one with the greatest harvest.

Loot priority was truly too great.

Besides the Latour Gold Essence and the numerous rare magic materials, the rest of the magic materials allocated to the Gilded Rose could be used to support their business for a few years.

Moreover, Lin Yun still had something planned.

The major forces had gotten their hands on so many magic materials, but no more than three of them could actually use these.

Discussing a good deal with them would be for the best.

Chapter 266: Cooperation

Lin Yun did just that.

Half a month later, the joint exploration team returned to Thousand Sails City. Waiting for them were three days and three nights of celebration. This time, the joint exploration team could be said to have had an unprecedented success. The harvest they earned from Vaughn's laboratory far surpassed what they had imagined, and for a while, Thousand Sails City soaked in happiness.

After their celebration was over, Lin Yun went from house to house to negotiate.

But Lin Yun hadn't foreseen that the negotiation would be extraordinarily smooth. All eight major forces participating in the joint exploration were willing to trade their magic materials.

This included even the Alchemist Guild and the Monchi Family.

After all, the Alchemist Guild was the greatest alchemy force of Thousand Sails City. Without the abnormal Lin Yun, the Alchemist Guild's talents and techniques were higher than the Gilded Rose by a bit. It normally would be unthinkable for them to trade away that batch of magic materials.

There was also the Twin Moons Splendor of the Monchi Family, that was the alchemy store second only to Lin Yun's Gilded Rose. Even if they had already been crushed by the Gilded Rose, there was still some business. Besides, the relationship between the Monchi Family and the Flashing Gold chamber of commerce wasn't particularly good. The shipwreck of Locke Merlin couldn't avoid being linked to the Monchi Family.

Because of this, Lin Yun didn't even think of negotiating with them.

He had planned to go to the few forces he had a good relationship with, such as the Silver Moon Mercenary Group, the Black Horn Auction House, the Sage Tower, the Viper Nest, and even the Flash Arrow Mercenary Group. He hadn't planned on looking for the Monchi Family or the Alchemist Guild.

As a result...

Lin Yun didn't have to look for them as they directly came to him.

On the afternoon of the same day Lin Yun conducted his trade negotiations, Lys ran to the Gilded Rose.

He slammed a table and asked what the Gilded Rose was doing and if they were looking down on the Alchemist Guild. It took Lin Yun coming out and personally apologizing before Lys was finally appeased.

They discussed for a while and the materials of the Alchemist Guild were also given to the Gilded Rose, and they didn't obtain golds or items in exchange, but rather, they deepened their partnership.

And just as Lys left, Monchi came over with his son.

Naturally, Monchi brought his eldest son, Ryan. He had already locked Mason in and had someone escorting him even to the bathroom.

Nothing could be done about it, Monchi was afraid.

Monchi seemed to have aged ten years after his trip to the Four Seasons Canyon. His meticulous hair had already started turning white. Monchi was in the prime of his life, yet he could already pass off as someone with one foot in the grave. Monchi had been getting nightmares every night ever since they returned from the Four Seasons Canyon, he kept dreaming of the young High Mage coming to deal with him, dreams of the Monchi Family collapsing overnight, of his sons dying violently.

It wasn't that Monchi was a coward...

The trip to the Four Seasons Canyon had left too big an impact on Monchi.

Fran, a 5th Rank High Mage, looked like a child when facing the then 9th Rank Great Mage Lin Yun, he couldn't even retaliate and ended up with his head in the dirt, being stomped on. That scene alone made Monchi feel cold feet.

And then, something even more shocking happened. Two people of the Mercury Tower came one after the other, one of them was Archmage Suyass, the other was the future master of the Mercury Tower, Karon.

At the time, Monchi thought Mafa Merlin would greatly suffer.

And to be fair, the situation was going in that direction at first as Suyass had a serious conflict with Mafa Merlin and even burnt Solomon. It looked as if a battle was about to start, before Karon appeared.

Monchi didn't know what Karon told Suyass, he only witnessed Suyass taking the initiative to admit defeat and harm his own arm.

Monchi had been stunned.

At that time, Monchi felt that troubles would soon appear for the Monchi Family.

However...

Monchi never imagined that this was just the beginning.

Monchi couldn't follow the joint exploration team in the underground laboratory himself, but that didn't mean that Monchi wouldn't learn of what had happened.

Elder Hansen saw everything with his own eyes and conveyed everything to Monchi after returning, drenching Monchi's shirt in cold sweat.

At the top floor of the stone tower, Mafa Merlin instantly killed an Alpha Thunderbird close to level 40 while they were besieged by a flock of Thunderbirds. Then, in the treasure trove filled with magic

materials, he defeated Fran who had reached Archmage realm, and even Suyass, an Archmage who had been famous for a long time, had no other choice but to lower himself in front of Mafa Merlin.

Everything felt like a nightmare to Monchi.

He would have a stomach ache whenever Mafa Merlin's name was mentioned.

If he had realized Mafa Merlin's potential earlier and killed him while he was still a Magic Apprentice, would the Monchi Family be in such a crisis?

If he hadn't followed Solan's instructions and didn't participate in Locke Merlin's shipwreck as well as having Fario try to take the house left behind by Locke Merlin, if he hadn't forged enmity with Merlin in the Black Horn Auction, if he hadn't ignored Mason provoking Merlin time and time again...

If only...

Unfortunately, it was too late.

Mafa Merlin was too influential. He sat on the extremely wealthy Gilded Rose and his strength was already unfathomable. Elder Hansen didn't even dare to guess what realm Mafa Merlin had reached, he only sighed and said that the most powerful mage of Thousand Sails City was no longer Solomon...

And that was without mentioning the fact that all the major forces of Thousand Sails City were currying favor with the Gilded Rose. If Mafa Merlin said a word, those forces that were usually polite with the Monchi Family might immediately bare their fangs towards them without hesitation.

Monchi didn't know what to think now...

He remained scared and on edge ever since he returned from the Four Seasons Canyon, afraid of making a mistake that would attract the attention of that young High Mage on himself.

This kind of life was a torture.

Up until Monchi heard that the Gilded Rose's Mafa Merlin personally went from house to house to negotiate with every major force, hoping they could let the Gilded Rose work on that batch of materials while giving generous conditions in exchange.

Monchi couldn't sit still anymore.

Because Mafa Merlin hadn't looked for the Monchi Family.

Monchi wouldn't have cared before and would have even preferred Mafa Merlin not looking for them.

But Monchi couldn't help being afraid at such a sensitive time.

What was the Gilded Rose's goal?

Looking for all the forces that participated in the joint exploration team, but not for the Monchi Family. Did this mean that Mafa Merlin determined he gained enough influence and could start retaliating against the Monchi Family?

Monchi became alarmed when he thought of such a possibility. He no longer cared about his reputation and immediately called Ryan. The father and son pair hurried to Victorious Return Street.

Only a week after returning from the Four Seasons Canyon, a pale and exhausted Monchi entered the Gilded Rose. Even Lin Yun took some time to recognize him when he saw him.

“Hello, Leader Monchi.” Seeing Monchi going in, Lin Yun froze before plastering a smile on his face.

‘Perfect timing.’

Lin Yun originally wanted to pay a visit to the Monchi Family before leaving Thousand Sails City to have a discussion with Monchi himself.

He needed to discuss the Twin Moons Splendor’s future development and Locke Merlin’s shipwreck. Lin Yun already decided that if Monchi was unwilling to cooperate, he would have no other choice but to eliminate the Monchi Family before leaving Thousand Sails City.

Lin Yun wouldn’t have to spend a lot of effort eliminating a Monchi Family or two.

Lin Yun didn’t even need to do the job himself. As long as he asks, quite a few major forces of Thousand Sails City would be willing to make the effort in his stead.

The only thing he needed to be concerned about was that Solan from the Black Tower.

But before Lin Yun could carry out his plan, Monchi came to his door on his own.

“High Mage Merlin...” Monchi’s body seemed a lot worse. He was clearly stooping as he walked, his grizzled hair and anxious gaze clearly displaying that Monchi wasn’t in a good state mentally.

“Leader Monchi, is there a problem?”

“I heard that a few of the major forces that explored the Four Seasons Canyon let the Gilded Rose process their magic materials. I wonder if our Monchi Family could have this honor? Being able to cooperate with the Gilded Rose is our Monchi Family’s wish. With such a good opportunity, how could our Monchi Family miss it...”

“Eh?” Lin Yun wasn’t very surprised by Monchi’s strange wording, six other major forces had given their magic materials to the Gilded Rose, how could the Monchi Family not feel that they have been isolated. They only had one path left, but Lin Yun never expected Monchi to lower himself like that.

‘It looks like this trip left an impact on Monchi.’

“Haha, so it was like this, I thought too much. I originally thought that with your Twin Moons Splendor, the Monchi Family required a lot of magic materials. I didn’t expect the Monchi Family to have so much magic materials stored that even with the Twin Moon Splendor’s consumption, you can still take some out to cooperate with the Gilded Rose. Worthy of a millennial family, your foundations are so deep that they can’t even compare to ordinary forces...”

“Haha...” Monchi’s mouth twitched as he squeezed a stiff smile while feeling dead inside.

That’s right, Twin Moons Splendor wasn’t short on magic materials.

But due to what?

This wasn't because of the Monchi Family's stored magic materials, nor was it because the Monchi Family was a Millennial clan with deep heritage, it was purely because the Gilded Rose monopolized the market.

'You are talking shit, who doesn't know that the Gilded Rose is a big tumor among the alchemy stores in Thousand Sails City. The monthly alchemy exhibition is already forcing the other alchemy stores to kneel.'

'Every exhibition would have newer and better items. The market would be squeezed once again. The Gilded Rose's alchemy items already stretched across all alchemy domains, from potions to equipments, from puppets to arrays, which domain doesn't bear the shadow of your Gilded Rose? You even offer after sale maintenance and technical support. This undisguised monopoly is a hundred times worse than Locke Merlin!'

'The current Twin Moons Splendor can only get the scraps the Gilded Rose doesn't want. It would be a wonder if their magic materials didn't accumulate after half a year.'

Naturally, Monchi wouldn't say those words aloud.

He was inwardly cursing the Merlins while displaying a smile, "High Mage Merlin, the Monchi Family truly want to cooperate with the Gilded Rose in good faith, but I don't know if we will get this opportunity..."

"Leader Monchi, you speak like an outsider. Whether it's the Monchi Family or the Gilded Rose, they are both forces native to Thousand Sails City. Helping each other is an obvious action, there is naturally no problem in cooperating..."

Lin Yun said that with a smile, which made Monchi's eyes regain their luster, eased up his brows and straightened his back. He was about to say a few kind words, when he was thrown off guard by Lin Yun's smile disappearing, "But it is very unfortunate..."

"Eh?" This sudden change almost gave Monchi a heart attack. At this time, Monchi couldn't even keep his smile as his filled with impatience, "What is it, High Mage Merlin?"

"I can't do anything about it, Leader Monchi. You are also a member of the joint exploration team, so you should know how great was the harvest of the Four Seasons Canyon, the eight major forces gained quite a bit of magic materials, and they are all piled up here. I already used all of the Gilded Rose's funds, and I am still owing a large sum. I'm not going to hide it from you, I had to borrow from Sauss with high-interest."

"..." Monchi thought before inwardly spitting, 'You took a high-interest loan from Sauss? He would run as if his life depended on it to give you golds as long as you stood in front of the Poison Fog Canyon.'

But Monchi also understood the young High Mage's words. It wasn't that cooperating was impossible, it just meant that some conditions were needed.

Monchi felt as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders.

Chapter 267: Patriarch Position

How could a harsh condition compare to the ruin of the Monchi Family? Monchi came with the intention of giving all their magic materials to the Gilded Rose. As long as Mafa Merlin took them, he wouldn't bother the Monchi Family.

This was an unspoken rule between the major powers. It was the same for everyone, even if Mafa Merlin overtook Solomon as the strongest mage of Thousand Sails City.

Otherwise, which force would dare to have dealings with the Gilded Rose?

"High Mage Merlin, the Monchi Family is very sincere about this cooperation. We can take our time to discuss the payment if you are in a bind. It is just as High Mage Merlin said, we are forces from Thousand Sails City, we should help each other. I think that after this collaboration, the Monchi Family and the Gilded Rose will have many opportunities to cooperate..."

"This is actually..." Lin Yun nodded. "Since Leader Monchi said so, it would be disrespectful to decline. When are the magic materials going to be delivered?"

"Tomorrow morning." To be honest, the young High Mage's question was quite rude, as this wasn't how a cooperative partner would communicate. If it had been someone else, Monchi would have simply turned and left without saying a word at that point.

Unfortunately, this wasn't just anyone...

Monchi couldn't just leave, and on the contrary, he had to plaster a smile on his face while saying "I wish us happy cooperation" and such platitudes while instructing Ryan to hurriedly gather the magic materials.

"Now that our business is over, I need to consult Leader Monchi about a personal matter, do you have time to talk privately?"

"Of... Of course." Monchi nearly staggered when he heard Lin Yun.

'Personal matter...'

Monchi knew that the upcoming discussion was the most crucial. If he did badly, he wouldn't be the only one ruined... The entire Monchi Family might be buried with him.

"Let's go to the reception room, it's quieter there..."

The two of them casually grabbed some chairs and sat in the reception room, not sitting in the manner of a host facing a guest, because they both knew that this wasn't a discussion which required such etiquette.

"Tell me how much you participated in causing the shipwreck."

When Lin Yun talked this time, he no longer acted polite. He looked sharply at Monchi, his mana remaining stable. Often, keeping one's mana perfectly stable like this was most oppressive.

"I..." Monchi, who had been accustomed to pressure, felt nervous for some reason. He opened his mouth, but his throat felt abnormally dry, and thus, he had to force himself to swallow before he could say, "I didn't participate..."

“Haha...”

“Really, I truly didn’t participate...” When Lin Yun’s sneer fell into his ear, Monchi got flustered, yet he didn’t consider changing his words as he eagerly explained, “I truly have nothing to do with your father’s shipwreck...”

“Eh?” Lin Yun frowned. Monchi’s eager expression didn’t seem to lie. ‘Did I guess wrong?’

“High Mage Merlin, I really didn’t participate. Think about it, your father perished in the middle of the vast sea. Archmages might not necessarily come back from that place, it is a forbidden region. Besides your father’s fleet, no fleet can sail to that place in the eastern part of the kingdom. Even if the Monchi Family wanted to harm your father, they didn’t have the ability to do so then...”

“You mean, my father’s shipwreck is truly unrelated to you?”

“In fact, it’s not strange for High Mage Merlin to be suspicious. The Monchi Family was indeed the rival of the Flashing Gold chamber of commerce, and I did think of assassinating your father many times, but I was scared of making too much noise. Also, there was someone at your father’s side that even Solan himself had no confidence in beating...”

“Ah?” Lin Yun frowned as he heard this. Lin Yun knew of Solan. He was Monchi’s younger brother and the youngest 9th Rank High Mage of the Black Tower. He entered the Dark Azure Plane the previous year in order to push towards the Archmage realm. Lin Yun was pretty sure that he should be coming out soon.

It was said that Monchi’s younger brother was the most outstanding genius in the past few hundred years. He accomplished the feat of defeating an Archmage as a 9th Rank High Mage and managed to enter the Black Tower Council at such a young age. It was also said that he was a strong contender for the seat of the next Chairman.

Lin Yun always felt that purely in terms of power, Solan had been unequalled in the former Thousand Sails City. Both Solomon and Lys weren’t Solan’s opponents.

But from what Monchi said...

Locke had someone at his side that could compete with Solan.

This news was a bit surprising.

‘To be able to contend with Solan... Was it an Archmage?’

“Are you sure?” Lin Yun looked suspiciously at Monchi.

“Yes, I heard it from Solan himself.”

Lin Yun nodded, but didn’t say anything.

But his mind was filled with questions. When he took over Mafa Merlin’s body, he had thought that Locke Merlin had been an ordinary merchant and that money was the only thing he had going for himself.

But then, one matter after the other made Lin Yun feel that Locke Merlin wasn't as simple as he seemed on the surface.

First was the Planar Path leading to the Bone Plane...

The array to open the Planar Path had clearly been set up by a Master Alchemist. Inviting a Master Alchemist wasn't that easy as a rich businessman...

There was also his identity as a member of the Merlin Family, as well as this newly mentioned powerhouse protecting Locke that was strong enough to contend with Solan.

As he mulled it over, Lin Yun was suddenly full of curiosity towards Locke Merlin.

But after carefully searching Mafa Merlin's memory, Lin Yun found out that Mafa Merlin didn't know much about his father.

In Mafa Merlin's childhood memories, there were very few things related to Locke Merlin. He might spend ten days to half a month without seeing him. When Mafa became older, Locke directly left him at Seth's place and only dropped by once a year, not staying long every time. It felt as if Locke Merlin thought that Mafa only needed the best learning conditions and the best living conditions... and nothing else.

Mafa Merlin didn't even know who was at his father's side...

He only faintly remembered that six or seven people would follow Locke Merlin whenever he wanted to go out, but he simply didn't know who they were.

'Is the powerhouse Monchi mentioned one of them?'

"Thus, High Mage Merlin, with such a person at Locke Merlin's side, I wouldn't be able to harm him even if I wanted to, wouldn't you agree?"

"Yes..." Lin Yun nodded, no longer focusing on that question. "Then what about the matter with Fario?"

"Fario..." Monchi hesitated a bit before answering, "Fario was indeed sent by me. I believe High Mage Merlin already knows that it was for the house left behind by Locke Merlin."

"How much do you know about the secret of that house?"

"I don't know anything. Solan only told me to not spare any efforts to get it so I sent Fario..."

"Solan again?"

"Yes, a year ago, Solan secretly returned to Thousand Sails City and told me that Locke Merlin would soon have an accident and that the house would become ownerless. I was tasked to get the house at all costs, and in exchange, the Black Tower would help me take over the business of the Flashing Gold chamber of commerce and would spend a lot of effort to nurture Ryan..."

"Hold on..." There was certainly something wrong about that. "You are saying that Solan already knew that my father would have an accident?"

"Yes, Solan indeed said so, but I'm not too sure as to how Solan learnt about it..."

“Good, Solan...” Lin Yun nodded. He didn’t ask anything else and only kept Solan in mind. In any case, he would soon leave for Okland. He would have plenty of time to see Solan there.

While the two were discussing, Ryan already finished gathering the magic materials and silently entered the reception room before whispering a few sentences in Monchi’s ear.

“Okay, I understand.” Monchi nodded and slowly stood up. “High Mage Merlin, the magic materials are ready, you can get someone to receive them tomorrow morning. As for your father’s shipwreck, I told you all I knew... I hope that High Mage Merlin can be magnanimous...”

“Maybe, but I have a condition.”

“Go ahead, High Mage Merlin.”

“The Patriarch position of the Monchi Family has to be inherited by Mason.”

“...” Monchi’s expression suddenly became quite unpleasant.

Monchi had two sons. Who didn’t know of Mason’s behavior? Monchi sometimes even wondered if Mason was really his own child. Why else would he be so different from his brother, Ryan?

Mason inheriting the Monchi Family...

Monchi didn’t even think this was possible.

He was almost certain that if this happened, the Monchi Family would fall within ten years.

Monchi had already made arrangements for Mason’s future. Once his health deteriorated, Monchi would have Mason leave Thousand Sails City for a small, remote town. By then, even if Mason hadn’t changed at all, he would still be able to spend the rest of his life by relying on his identity as a Mage and the wealth left for him.

But this plan had been disrupted...

Monchi felt himself aging. He glanced at the smiling young High Mage before his eyes and felt that he was a lot more terrifying than his father.

Although Locke Merlin was very smart and capable, he would never come up with such a devious plan.

Making sure that the Monchi Family fell into Mason’s hands...

‘What do I do...’

“Mafa Merlin, the succession of the Monchi Family isn’t something you can interfere with!” While Monchi was hesitating, the silent Ryan suddenly voiced his objection.

“Ryan...” Monchi was suddenly frightened, but he was too late to stop him. A loud sound echoed beside his ear before he could call his name.

Lin Yun hadn’t even looked at him. He had only raised his hand, sending a Flame Burst over.

Only an explosion was heard, and Ryan didn’t even have the time to scream before being sent flying out of the reception room by the blazing flames.

“Do you want to try extracting my Flame Burst this time?” Lin Yun didn’t even look at Ryan as he was blasted out like a rag doll. His eyes were fixed onto the pale Monchi’s. “How about it, Leader Monchi, do you like my offer?”

“I...” This was the first time Monchi had seen the young High Mage act aggressively ever since he came back from the Four Seasons Canyon. Even Monchi, with his limited experience with magic, could see how powerful that spell had been. Even Ryan, who he was extremely proud of, was no more than an ant when facing that young High Mage.

But...

Monchi was even more scared of Lin Yun’s words.

Spell Extraction...

Monchi clearly remembered... When Mason ended up in a bad state after looking for trouble at the Gilded Rose, Ryan had people carry Mason back before he asked Lin Yun to extract his Blood Vine Spell.

This was something that had happened about a year ago.

But that young High Mage clearly still remembered it and got back at him with a Flame Burst.

This kind of vengeful attitude really drew out one’s fear.

Monchi thought that if he didn’t agree with the other side’s conditions, even if he hadn’t participated in Locke Merlin’s shipwreck, just knowing about it and not telling would be enough for the young High Mage to keep the Monchi Family in his mind...

Moreover...

Only Monchi himself knew that he wasn’t as innocent as he let Lin Yun believe when it came to Locke Merlin’s shipwreck.

“Okay, High Mage Merlin, I can give the patriarch position to Mason within three years.” Although the other side didn’t stipulate a time period, Monchi was very tactful and didn’t try to say that it would be after his death.

Monchi believed that he would end up dying strangely if he said so.

Chapter 268: Successor

After sending off Monchi and Ryan, Lin Yun returned to his alchemy laboratory. The harvest from the Four Seasons Canyon was too amazing. He had gotten eight kinds of rare magic materials, each of them being a rare treasure that couldn’t be found not just in Thousand Sails City, but even in the core of the kingdom, Okland. They might only show up during large auctions.

Especially the Appeasing Soulsong Gem. This was a treasure that would only appear once in a hundred years. This Appeasing Soulsong Gem was dark red, the size of a thumb, and would sparkle with a dazzling light when put under the sun. More importantly, the gem would start singing hymns once activated with mana!

The Appeasing Soulsong Gem's songs had the power to put souls to rest, making it the nemesis of all ghostly lifeforms. If Lin Yun had been in possession of the Appeasing Soulsong Gem when he crossed the River of Ten Thousand Ghosts, over 30% of the Ghosts would have evaporated from the sound of the hymns.

But handling the Appeasing Soulsong Gem was very difficult. It was different from other gems, as it couldn't be cut or carved. Every Appeasing Soulsong Gem was a whole, and if damaged, the gem's hymn would no longer be complete.

In fact, it would still be fine if that were all.

The problem was that even if the Appeasing Soulsong Gem's hymn could put souls to rest, it didn't inherently have the power to suppress evil. It had to be enchanted so that an array to enhance power could be added. Only with this could the Appeasing Soulsong Gem become a true Magic Tool.

This meant that the alchemists had to be very careful with the enchantment. They couldn't get any scratches on the gem, which was very difficult. Gems were most vulnerable during enchanting.

Lin Yun spent a week crafting that Appeasing Soulsong Gem into a pendant, replacing the Lava Dominator's spot.

Lin Yun spent a week in his laboratory just taking care of the Appeasing Soulsong Gem... Over twenty days had passed since his return from the Four Seasons Canyon, yet Lin Yun only did a third of the work. Apart from the Appeasing Soulsong Gem, the other rare magic materials only underwent a simple processing. It would take him a lot more time if he wanted to make the best use of them.

And there was also the Latour Gold Essence.

Latour Gold Essence's boundless inclusive nature was a characteristic people usually yearned for, but it was too disgusting when it came to enchanting. Lin Yun used a spirit mana crystal to pour mana into it, but the effects were minimal. After twenty days, the enchanting of the Latour Gold Essence was only halfway done.

And on top of that, Lin Yun still had to deal with the Parasitic Tree and the Obsidian Flower, and also prepare the compound to cure Solomon's collapsed Mana Whirlpool. He also had to find ways to repair the Heaven Rank Puppet, and also...

He had too many things to take care of.

He hadn't had much free time during these twenty days.

But nothing could be done about it, as there were too many things waiting for Lin Yun.

And all of them were very important.

In contrast, what did the Monchi Family even count as?

At first, Lin Yun wanted to retaliate against the Monchi Family on behalf of Mafa Merlin. He felt that since he was occupying this body, he should do some things for him, such as finding the truth about Locke Merlin's shipwreck.

At first, Lin Yun truly thought that the Monchi Family had plotted against Locke Merlin in order to get a monopoly over the market.

But as time passed, Lin Yun gradually adapted to the era and gained greater understanding of Thousand Sails City's major forces, as well as Locke Merlin. Lin Yun came to the conclusion that the Monchi Family most likely didn't have the ability to do so.

Locke Merlin was a lot more powerful than everyone else.

The Bone Plane's Planar Path, the identity as a descendant of the Merlin Family, as well as the powerhouse that could contend with Solan...

In others' eyes, Solomon was the number one High Mage, Lys was the number one Alchemist, and the Monchi Family was the number one in terms of wealth. But few people knew that Locke Merlin, who started from nothing, already had enough power to shake Thousand Sails City's very foundations, and the original Mafa Merlin was completely unaware.

Using a shipwreck to engulf Locke Merlin wasn't something the Monchin Family could pull off, at least on their own. Not to mention the Monchi Family, even Solan didn't have that ability.

Naturally, how could Lin Yun not know that the Monchi Family had played a part in that shipwreck? He was obviously far from being as innocent as he claimed.

He needed someone to feed him information.

In any case, he couldn't get any more information from Monchi. It would have to wait until he reached Okland and met with the rare genius Solan if he wanted to find the truth about the shipwreck.

As for the Monchi Family...

He would make Monchi give the Patriarch position to Mason.

This way of handling things was very sinister.

Everyone in Thousand Sails City knew what kind of person Mason was. With him in power, this millennial Family would decline in a decade, and it would take them decades or even centuries to recover from it...

Of course, Lin Yun didn't take this sinister approach just to retaliate against the Monchi Family. He did this because he was taking the Gilded Rose into consideration.

The Gilded Rose could be said to be the sun in Thousand Sails City, but it lacked the time to stock up, and with only himself doing this stocking, he couldn't compare with the other peak forces. The Gilded Rose was only relying on his amazing personal performance to keep up with the crazy momentum of its expansion, but the lack of time to build up stock was a huge weakness, and it was bound to burst at some point.

At that time, the Gilded Rose would have no choice but to cease its expansion and slowly build proper foundations.

Lin Yun didn't want to see the Monchi Family suddenly rise up while the Gilded Rose stopped expanding.

Thus, Lin Yun took advantage of the Monchi Family yielding to put Mason at the head of the Monchi Family.

He also gave a Flame Burst as a warning to Ryan on the side.

That Flame Burst was to tell Ryan that he had better not go against his arrangements. Otherwise, he might not just stop at a Flame Burst next time.

Whenever Lin Yun worked in the laboratory, he only let Faleau come in as a helper. And it was the same today. Lin Yun waited until Faleau finished adjusting the mana radiating device before putting the Latour Gold Essence on the refining table and continuing the enchanting he had been working on.

“Oh right, Faleau, I arranged a few formulas for you last time, how did the practice go?”

Lin Yun had been very satisfied with Faleau

When Cadgar sent Faleau, Lin Yun had already planned to let him be in charge of the technical work of the Gilded Rose, and eventually become the true Chief Alchemist of the Gilded Rose. After all, Lin Yun had always considered himself a mage, not an alchemist. With the current expansion of the Gilded Rose, Lin Yun could still rely on his outstanding abilities to take care of the technical work, but in the future...

The Gilded Rose would continuously expand while he would keep going further and further on the path of magic. Would he still have the time and energy to take care of the Gilded Rose then?

Thus, he had to find someone to replace him.

In Lin Yun’s eyes, that person was Faleau.

To be honest, Faleau wasn’t considered a genius in the field of alchemy. Compared to the geniuses Lin Yun had seen, his talent was far from being outstanding, only moderate.

But Faleau had two strong points: he was hardworking and eager.

Among the numerous alchemists Lin Yun had seen, Faleau was the most hardworking one. He would often see Faleau spending nights in the laboratory. Although Faleau would be solving difficult problems when staying overnight, these difficult problems were nowhere near difficult in Lin Yun’s eyes. However, that diligence was one of the most important qualities for alchemists.

It could be said that Lin Yun was watching Faleau walk from the Alchemist realm to the Great Alchemist realm, before exploring that realm. He watched as Faleau fumbled his way through the Great Alchemist realm at a speed that couldn’t be considered fast, but which was extremely steady. If Faleau’s rate of advancement were analyzed, it would clearly be shown as a diagonal line.

It wouldn’t be considered sharp advancement, but it was stable.

This also meant that Faleau didn’t meet any bottlenecks and would rarely be stuck on his path forward.

This was no joke...

Who among Noscent’s countless alchemists didn’t get stuck at some point? Even Nolan, the master of the Mercury Tower, and Osul, the future Saint Alchemist, both became troubled over bottlenecks.

Of course, comparing them to Faleau was a bit unfair; they were in completely different realms, after all. But what if he was compared to those young “genius” alchemists?

The Mercury Tower gathered almost all the geniuses of the kingdom. There was several 20-year-old Master Alchemists, and Karon said that there was even an Artisan in his twenties. But even these geniuses were blocked by various bottlenecks and might spend a year or two on them, their alchemy progress stagnating for the duration.

Chapter 269: Merlin Family's Answer

Faleau's talent wasn't worth mentioning when compared to Master Alchemists in their early twenties and peak Master Alchemists in their late twenties, but Lin Yun believed that as long as Faleau had enough time, he would catch up to them sooner or later, and eventually leave them in the dust.

Because Faleau had qualities that they might not necessarily have, such as diligence and eagerness.

Perhaps it hadn't been obvious when Faleau followed Cadgar, but these two qualities gradually emerged when he entered the Gilded Rose and worked as Lin Yun's assistant.

The current Faleau had an unimaginable thirst for knowledge. He was like a sponge absorbing all the information presented to him. He would usually ask for every last detail when Lin Yun gave him a task until he clearly understood it.

Lin Yun even felt impatient sometimes, but he couldn't withstand Faleau's frightening desire to learn more.

Over time, Lin Yun got used to it and ended up explaining everything to Faleau as he worked, each and every detail, the purpose behind what he was doing and why it was done like that, as well as the advantages and the downsides.

Naturally, Lin Yun would be lazy sometimes...

When that happened, he would give Faleau exercises to practice on. They might be some troublesome experiments or some complicated tasks. In any case, he wasn't expecting Faleau to solve these in a short time, but he would learn from the experience.

Like today...

“Boss, it didn't go so well...” Hearing Lin Yun inquire, a hint of awkwardness appeared on Faleau's face. He also lowered his voice and spoke in a quieter tone. “I only completed one of the three formulas you gave me...”

“Haha, it's fine...” Lin Yun shook his head. The three formulas he had given him last time touched upon the Master Alchemist realm, so it was quite good for Faleau to have completed one. Lin Yun estimated that Faleau was currently at least at the level of a peak Great Alchemist.

‘It looks like I can help Faleau make his preparations to reach the Master Alchemist realm when I return from Okland...’

“Boss, I’ve been computing these two formulas for the past two days, but I can’t find any clues,” Faleau said while fishing a stack of paper out from his pocket. The papers were filled with numerous characters and formulas. It could be seen with one look that Faleau had spent a lot of time working on the two formulas.

“Let me see...” Lin Yun took the stack of paper and started sifting through it when he heard someone knocking on the door.

“...” Faleau sighed before helplessly walking towards the door.

Faleau knew that people would rarely disturb Lin Yun once he entered his laboratory.

“It doesn’t matter if the Gilded Rose is on fire, as long as the fire doesn’t reach the 2nd floor, you are not to disturb Young Master when he is there!”

These were Pave’s words...

This meant that people would knock on the door only when something very important happened... In other words, Faleau couldn’t delay.

And sure enough, William awaited Faleau on the other side of the door.

“Already back?” Faleau said dispiritedly. He was just about to get pointers from Lin Yun, yet that guy interrupted them. How could Faleau remain in a good mood?

“Hmm...” William nodded before eagerly walking up to Lin Yun.

Faleau ground his teeth at William’s rude attitude.

“Already back?” Lin Yun nodded at William from the refining table.

“Yes, yes, I just returned. I asked Pave and learnt that you were here so I rushed over with all due haste,” he said with a smile. It was the same question, but William’s answer was completely different this time.

‘Such a boot-licker...’

Faleau kept stewing in dissatisfaction behind him.

“How is it? Did the Merlin Family agree to my conditions?”

“The Merlin Family...” William started to reply before suddenly stopping and glancing at Faleau.

Lin Yun guessed that William was most likely going to talk about some important secrets.

“It’s fine, Faleau is one of us.” In this era, the ones Lin Yun trusted the most besides the old butler were William and Faleau. He wouldn’t hide those kinds of matters from them.

“Okay...”

William nodded unwillingly before looking at Faleau again, feeling vexed, only to see him smiling back at him.

Lin Yun knew of the rivalry between them. They had been competing with each other in private for a long time, but never in the open, so that they wouldn't affect Lin Yun's business. Thus, Lin Yun would mostly ignore it.

Even now.

He didn't say much more about it, he only nodded and signaled William that he could speak.

"The conditions that you raised are being widely disputed within the family. Many people feel that you shouldn't have the qualifications to enter the Ancestral Land when you return and that there is no need to even talk about it..."

"Oh?" Lin Yun frowned as he heard that.

When Lin Yun returned from the Four Seasons Canyon, he sent William to the Merlin Family and had him inform the Elder Council that there was no issue with him returning to the family, but the Merlin Family had to agree to a few of his conditions, the most important one being that he wanted the right to freely enter and exit the Ancestral Land.

In Lin Yun's eyes, the other conditions could be discussed, but that one definitely couldn't be negotiated.

Lin Yun had merged with the Silver Dragon Blood in the Heaven Enlightening Plane before receiving the help of the Crystal Scales' Incarnation, Enderfa, to create a 10th Magic Array, using this trick to enter the High Mage realm.

It could be said that Lin Yun was the most peculiar High Mage in Noscent's history.

When Great Mages advanced to the High Mage realm, their greatest hurdle was merging the nine Magic Conducting Runes together into one. From that point on, they would truly be able to control their Magic Conducting Rune as they pleased, and whether it was their power or abilities, they would show extraordinary progress.

But Lin Yun...

Even if he had stepped into the High Mage realm, his Magic Arrays had yet to merge.

This also meant that the power and ability of the Magic Arrays had yet to undergo that abnormal progress.

This might even influence Lin Yun's future magic path.

The Magic Arrays not being fused meant that Lin Yun couldn't yet progress in the High Mage realm. If becoming a 1st Rank High Mage was his natural limit, then even if he had extraordinary fortuitous encounters, he would at most be able to reach the level of a 4th Rank High Mage. The 5th Rank would forever be out of his sight.

What was more frightening was that because of the might and complexity of the Magic Array, this Magic Conducting Rune was one of the hardest to fuse. Lin Yun's only clue was that member of the Merlin Family from a few hundred years in the future.

That person also had the Magic Array and managed to solve the difficult problem most people couldn't solve. He went to the Ancestral Land and came out with the Magic Arrays fused, instantly becoming a High Mage. Twenty years later, he reached the Archmage realm.

Lin Yun felt that the key was in the Ancestral Land.

Thus, it could be said that the Ancestral Land was a must to Lin Yun.

"Nothing can be done about it. Those old men from the Elder Council are like that, each of them greedier and more stubborn than the other. They insist that you haven't made any contributions to the family and aren't qualified to enter the Ancestral Land. Haha, they think I don't know that they are eyeing that Nether Iron Vein..."

"The Nether Iron Vein is impossible, but I can give them some benefits," Lin Yun said after thinking for a bit.

The Nether Iron vein was in the Bone Plane. Giving it to a force like the Merlin Family was akin to giving them the entire Bone Plane. Lin Yun wouldn't agree to such a condition.

But it was fine to give them some benefits to gain access to what he needed.

After all, the secrets within the Merlin Family's Ancestral Land were too crucial to Lin Yun, possibly even determining his future magic path. In comparison, what were a few concessions?

But William shook his head when he heard Lin Yun's words...

"It's useless, Cousin, I already told these old geezers that as long as they let you freely enter the Merlin Family's Ancestral Land, you can transfer some of the Gilded Rose's shares and give each of them a decent amount as thanks, but guess what they said?"

"What?"

"Haha, these old geezers were very interested in the money, but they said that they weren't very interested in the shares. In their eyes, an alchemy shop from Thousand Sails City isn't enough to tempt the Merlin Family. There were even a few hateful old fossils that contemptuously said that if you can't take out that Nether Iron Vein, then let alone entering the Ancestral Land, they will even stop you from returning to the Merlin Family..."

"Oh?" Lin Yun smiled and didn't show any hint of anger. "And what about my Great-Uncle?"

The Great-Uncle Lin Yun mentioned was this generation's Patriarch. He was the younger brother of Mafa Merlin's grandfather, Locke Merlin's uncle.

It was that Patriarch who told William to make it so that Lin Yun would return to the Merlin Family. To make Lin Yun agree, he even made a lot of promises.

To Lin Yun, these promises weren't very important, and the only crucial thing was actually running into issues.

This was something Lin Yun couldn't accept no matter what.

Chapter 270: Okland

“The Patriarch has been supporting you all along, but... The rules of the Merlin Family are like that. The Elder Council has a lot of power...” William suddenly paused, before adding, “I also got the feeling that someone was secretly influencing the Elder Council. How else could they be so united against you? These old geezers would fight each other for a few dozen golds...”

“Eh?” Lin Yun’s frown intensified. It would be troublesome if someone was truly influencing the Elder Council. He would have to have a chat with that person when he reached Okland.

“It couldn’t be helped, the Gilded Rose’s wealth made some people too greedy...”

“Haha...” Lin Yun smiled and changed topic. “Okay, let’s put this aside. How is the merging with your Alchemic Mana Whirlpool?”

“I finished merging with it two days after returning to Okland and I’ve spent my time adapting to having twice the mana on my back. It still feels a bit strange...”

“That’s good, I’ll give you three days to completely adjust to the Alchemic Mana Whirlpool. In three days, we are going to Okland.”

“Okay.”

Three days later, Lin Yun finished the processing of the Appeasing Soulsong Gem and named this Spiritual Magic Tool the Evil Punishing Pendant.

At the same time, the Heaven Rank Puppet had been renovated.

Naturally, the renovation wasn’t a true repair.

The Heaven Rank Puppet was an existence on par with a Heaven Mage, which meant that it was an outstanding alchemic achievement. It would be a miracle if an Artisan could easily repair it, let alone a Master Alchemist like Lin Yun. Even Nolan, who stood at the peak of the Artisan realm, or the future Saint Alchemist Osul, would sigh and shake their heads in front of that puppet.

That was a realm that very few could ever reach.

Moreover, Lin Yun couldn’t afford the materials needed to even attempt to fully repair the puppet. He would be ruined just for a fighting system set. Latour Gold was rare and expensive. Lin Yun calculated that if he wanted to rebuild the puppet’s fighting system, he would need enough Latour Gold Essence to build thirty Ten Thousand Spell Wheels.

Just hearing about this amount would make anyone feel numb.

Lin Yun’s so-called renovation was only based on ordinary puppets. All the materials and techniques used were far from meeting the requirements of the Heaven Rank Puppet. What Lin Yun did could be likened to wrapping the Heaven Rank Puppet in an ordinary puppet shell.

But even then, its strength was outstanding. After all, this mechanical system of an ordinary puppet was connected to the Heaven Rank Puppet. Just borrowing a bit of its strength was enough to make this puppet’s power reach a terrifying level.

Lin Yun estimated that the puppet's power was close to that of a Sword Saint...

And as he worked on the puppet, Lin Yun had learnt some things. Although he couldn't make it recover to its full strength, he wasn't completely unable to make it regain some of it. But the method was a bit stupid. He had to amass a large number of rare parts. The more powerful the parts, the more power this Heaven Rank Puppet would recover. In theory, he would be able to make its strength infinitely close to its original if he found enough rare parts.

Naturally, this was only theory.

As for the source of these rare parts... Lin Yun already had a place in mind.

It was rumored that in Gaugass' depths, there was a Planar Path that had never been unearthed. At the end of that Planar Path was an extremely strange world. There was no life on that world, only puppets, a world of puppets. Lin Yun believed that as long as he could find that Planar Path, he would be able to find enough rare parts.

Naturally, the condition was to quickly merge his ten Magic Arrays as soon as possible to remove the obstruction in his magic path. Otherwise, he would never be able to become a 5th Rank High Mage and wouldn't be able to survive in that puppet plane even if he found it.

Before leaving, Lin Yun went to the Sage Tower to give the potion he had spent a few nights refining to Solomon.

"Rest assured, I can help you keep an eye on the Monchi Family."

With Solomon's words still echoing in his mind, Lin Yun took Xiuban and William with him and passed through the Four Seasons Canyon before continuing north. They reached Okland after a few days.

Okland had been built during the early days of the 3rd Dynasty, when that great empire was just rising. It could be described as a mess both inside and outside, with the Nesser Dynasty's shadow shrouding the empire and assassination and war covering every corner of the empire. The Gaugass Battlemages guarded the northern frontier, with Okland behind them. At that time, Okland was one of the five strategic military towns, and even today, countless years later, the shadow of the war fortress could still be seen from the city wall.

But compared to that war fortress bathed in blood and fire, today's Okland was a lot more noisy and thriving. When Lin Yun took the Draconic Beastman and William in, he clearly felt the difference between this place and Thousand Sails City.

"This is Dragon Street, Okland's most thriving area. It has the most people, the most shops, and the most thieves. In front of us is Okland's Mercenary Guild. There are always mercenaries entering or leaving that place. The magic materials harvested every day could supply the Gilded Rose fifty times over. On the side is the Black Horn Auction House, which organize an auction every three months on a larger scale than Cadgar's. All the wealthy merchants and influential powerhouses of Andlusa would visit. I heard that there are always some high-ranked members of the Black Horn chamber of commerce visiting the place. Cousin, if you need something, you can try your luck there..."

William acted as a guide, and two hours later, their carriage crossed all of Okland before reaching the gate of a manor beside the Fallen Star Lake.

“This is the Merlin Family’s estate. Normally, only those directly related to the family can enter... Look on the other side,” William said as he pointed to dozens of towers on the far side of the Fallen Star Lake. Some were tall while some were short, and they were arranged in a strange order. “This is Okland Magic School...”

“We can check it another day.” Lin Yun had some interest in Okland Magic School, even if just to visit Raymond. If he didn’t, what was he supposed to tell Pave?

“This might not be possible in the next few days. I heard that Okland Magic School is making arrangements for their graduation trial. Their security is very tight right now.”

“Graduation trial?”

“Yes, the students of Okland Magic School who want their diploma have to undergo a graduation trial. As for the contents of the trial, it changes each year. Last year they had to go to the Cold Wind Mountains to kill magic beasts, and the year before that was hunting magic beasts on the Gaugass Frontier. The previous year was even worse, I heard that they put a Thunder Beast into the trial field. In the end, eight students ended up seriously injured...”

“...” Lin Yun thought for a bit and remembered that Raymond was supposed to graduate this year. He wondered what would the trial be this year...

“Let’s go inside first. The Patriarch told me that once you arrived, I should lead you to him first...”

“Sure.”

After the group of three entered the Merlin Family Manor, they found a place to rest, following William’s lead. Lin Yun and William then left Xiuban behind and went to meet the current patriarch, Mafa Merlin’s Great-Uncle and Judd Merlin’s younger brother, Ofran Merlin.

The Merlin estate was huge.

The house left behind by Locke Merlin couldn’t even compare. Even Monchi’s millennial manor was too embarrassing to compare.

This place was like a small city. Lin Yun and William walked for half an hour before they reached a courtyard on the southern part of the manor.

“This is the official reception room of the Merlin Family...” William pointed at a stone tower that was three floors high. “The Elder Council convenes there every month. The Patriarch usually receives guests on the 3rd floor and should be waiting for you there.”

“Let’s go.”

The two entered the courtyard and were just about to walk into the stone tower when someone came out of it.

“If it isn’t Cousin William!” The person they encountered was wearing a black robe with a silver line on the cuff. He looked no older than thirty and was already a Great Mage. He also looked somewhat similar to William, but he was a lot paler and his eyes were unfocused and bore dark, heavy circles. This should have been due to losing himself to wine and women. His body had already been completely ruined.

“Jason, you are blocking my path.” William couldn’t seem to stand that older cousin. Disgust flashed on his face when he saw that person.

“Haha, Cousin William, it’s been so many days since I last saw you. How could you be so busy, to not even have time to chat with your cousin? I heard that you did something big recently and the entire Elder Council is flaring up. What, William? After being in Thousand Sails City for so long you forgot that your name is Merlin? You think anyone can enter the Ancestral Land...” This Jason reeked of wine, forcing William and Lin Yun to cover their noses, yet he didn’t seem to notice or care as he kept talking. “Oh right, that kid at your side looks a bit young, is he your new follower? Servant? How could he be so rude as to not even say his greetings?”