

## **Magic Era 291**

### **Chapter 291: New Magic Array**

Lin Yun, who had already left, definitely wouldn't know that his bloodline ceremony would give rise to a heated discussion within a Guardian Tower.

He had already returned to the Merlin Family Manor and locked himself in his room for a few days to adapt to the new form of the Magic Array.

The Magic Array had taken on a new shape after the ten Magic Arrays fused into one. The ten previous Magic Arrays were like ten roulette wheels that would slowly rotate when provided with mana. Although in the past they could carry out their tasks almost perfectly under Lin Yun's control, their independent operations had to be connected by Lin Yun himself, so there would always be a minute gap between each of them.

But it was different now...

The ten Magic Arrays had fused together without any gaps remaining. Although there was no change in how they worked, the efficiency had been raised at least ten times, and there was no longer any need for Lin Yun to split his attention to control it. As long as he kept mana pouring through it, it would automatically revolve within Lin Yun's body.

In the past two days, Lin Yun used his new Magic Array to analyze the mysterious characters within the Book of Death and pleasantly found that the efficiency was now completely different compared to before. The work of ten days was done in one, while the consumption was greatly lowered. He only needed to meditate to recover his mana now, while in the past, he'd had to replenish mana via mana crystals to be able to cope with the consumption.

As for the merging of spells and metamagics, it reached next step. Lin Yun already started merging 3rd Tier Spells with metamagics, and perhaps by the time Lin Yun broke through to become a 5th Rank High Mage, he would try merging a core spell such as Elemental Incarnation with core metamagics such as Instant Cast and Empower Spell.

Lin Yun remained in his room focused on the Magic Array for a few days, and during that time, even William didn't dare to disturb him.

Ross actually came several times, but was stopped at the door by William's cold face.

It was the same today...

"Ross, I already told you that Cousin Mafa is doing something very important, yet you are coming here to nag. Don't blame me for being rude to you." William was truly angry. 'We are both High Mages and you also lost to me, if I say you aren't welcomed here, it means you aren't welcomed here!'

William couldn't help thanking his younger cousin in his heart every time he recalled that battle.

How could he have a chance to frown and tell Ross to piss off if he hadn't gone to Thousand Sails City?

He had only been a member of the younger generation with second-tier strength. A 5th Rank Great Mage who was also a Great Alchemist sounded very formidable, but he wasn't particularly eye-catching among the numerous geniuses of the Merlin Family. He'd ranked between 5th and 8th in the younger generation, which was a whole different level compared to Leon, Aube, and Ross, those top three.

At the time, William truly thought that he could only look up at them in the future.

But he hadn't expected that the mission that he had viewed as a sort of exile would send him to see a cousin he had never met who would completely change his life. This felt like coming into contact with a whole new world.

That cousin he had never met before was simply a monster, one that had reached a level that could only be described as unbelievable whether it was in alchemy or in the path of magic. There were quite many times where he only needed to point out something to give William a flash of insight. In contrast, those teachers that he had studied under in the past could only be described as unworthy. Sometimes, William even thought of making those teachers come to Thousand Sails City to learn under his younger cousin for a few years so that they would stop hampering the progress of their students.

From 5th Rank Great Mage to High Mage, William only needed half a year. Others might take dozens of years to do the same thing, and after returning to Okland, William suddenly discovered that Ross, whose back he had been chasing, wasn't that far ahead anymore. He even beat him with Mafa's pointers.

"I really have something important to discuss..." Ross looked at William with an extremely complicated expression. William had been someone worthless to him not that long ago. Who would have thought that such a worthless person could now talk to him as an equal and even defeat him?

"Forget it, Ross, let me tell you the truth. Cousin Mafa is doing something extremely important and cannot be disturbed by anyone. If you have something that important, you can tell me first. Once Cousin Mafa is done with his matter, I'll convey your message."

"This..." Ross watched William for a while before admitting that William didn't seem to be lying.

He seemed somewhat embarrassed...

Ross had been looking into Stan Watson's death since the previous day.

Because of this, he even paid a visit to the Red Dragon Mercenary Group and personally looked for Anna Achilles to ask for some details.

The Red Dragon Mercenary Group had been awfully busy because of the chaos caused by Stan Watson's death. In order to appease the Watson Family, the leader had no choice but to personally apologize and severely punish the commander of that mission, Anna, demoting her from being 1st vice leader to the position of captain. She went from being highly ranked, only under one person, to only being able to lead ten weak mercenaries.

As for that fight in the Aurij Mountains, all information about it was sealed off. Even within the Red Dragon Mercenary Group, only a few high ranked mercenaries knew about it.

Fortunately for Ross, he had had some dealings with them in the past and even helped them accidentally once. This time, he personally went to look for the Red Dragon Mercenary Group's leader.

Although the other side was unwilling, he couldn't refuse. And when Ross suggested using the Merlin Family to put some pressure on the Watson Family to stop them from going too far when looking into the death of Stan Watson, the leader sighed in relief.

In the end, the leader of the Red Dragon Mercenaries summoned Anna before leaving the room.

Anna's expression wasn't very good. This famous Expert Swordswoman seemed to be experiencing nightmares, and she looked frightened. She was more or less okay when confronting Ross, but when he started to inquire about the battle, Anna became deathly pale.

Her memories were even more chaotic. Ross spent a lot of time asking before he managed to get some of the murderer's characteristics from Anna.

A young mage in his early twenties, rather thin and pale, wearing a lazy smile. He looked as if he would hate to step on an ant, but once he made a move, he was like a vicious predator hunting his prey.

The murderer wore a black robe with silver lines on the cuffs, the sign of a Great Mage. But the strength he displayed was far higher than what a Great Mage could imagine. The magic staff he held had a fist-sized Elemental Amber embedded at the top, which should have been the only valuable weapon of the murderer.

That description puzzled Ross Merlin.

First was the age...

As a famous figure of the younger generation, how could Ross not know about the twenty-year-old geniuses? Ross dared to bet that Okland didn't have a genius Great Mage in his early twenties that could pull off the feat of killing Stan Watson under the protection of the Red Dragon Mercenaries. That would have required the strength of an Archmage.

An Archmage in his twenties, how crazy was that?

And even if there were such a person...

Ross couldn't find him...

Twenty years old, pale and thin, wearing a black robe. That was too vague, there were many such people in Okland. The only clue was the magic staff with an Elemental Amber.

After inquiring, Ross left the Red Dragon Mercenary Group feeling disappointed.

But he received a surprising bit of news after returning to the Merlin Family, that Mafa who came from Thousand Sails City had already gained permission from the patriarch to enter the Ancestral Land.

This information made Ross suspicious.

After all, the Elder Council had been arguing over this for quite a while. As a member of the Elder Council, how could Ross not know about this? How could that Mafa suddenly obtain the authorization to enter the Ancestral Land?

Ross clearly knew Patriarch Ofran's character, he was steadfast and wouldn't just push his own agenda. He had been bound by the Elder Council for many years, but he wasn't the type to fall out with them for a mere Great Mage like Mafa Merlin.

Unless...

Unless that Mafa Merlin made a huge contribution that would make Ofran have no other choice but to allow him to enter the Ancestral Land.

But what would that huge contribution be?

Ross spent an entire night in his room considering it.

He only had a flash of insight later... 'Isn't weakening a hostile family a huge contribution? If killing the most outstanding genius a hostile family has nurtured after hundreds of years isn't a huge contribution, then what is?'

### **Chapter 292: Transaction**

Thus, Ross personally went to visit Ofran at dawn.

At that time, Ofran finally confirmed his conjecture.

The person that killed Stan Watson was sent by Mafa.

In other words, the thing he wanted was most likely in Mafa's hands.

Ross didn't tarry after getting his answer and rushed over, but he was stopped by William outside the door, and for a few days, too. Ross couldn't do anything, because William wasn't the same William anymore. Although he couldn't completely pressure him, Ross still didn't have confidence.

But he would never get what he wanted if he didn't ask.

That thing was too important to Ross. No matter the price, Ross had to get it.

All Ross could do now was to come here every morning at dawn, hoping to meet Mafa.

He was sure that it would be a lot simpler if William wouldn't block his way, as he would be able to raise his conditions and try to negotiate.

Even if Mafa was the owner of the Gilded Rose and had vast wealth in Thousand Sails City, that city was only a small place in the east of the kingdom. There were many things that couldn't be bought in Thousand Sails City even if one had money...

Such as all kinds of rare magic materials, or formidable magic items, or even advanced alchemy techniques and profound knowledge.

Ross had a lot of techniques and knowledge in his hands, which had been accumulated through many years of going on expeditions to various planes. Those things wouldn't be easy to get, even with Mafa's wealth.

Using those, he could happily deal with Mafa.

The issue was how to circumvent William.

“Oh, Cousin, you are finally out!” As Ross was secretly planning, William suddenly turned and said this with a pleasantly surprised expression and a polite smile.

‘It looks like this Mafa’s wealth is more shocking than I thought...’ Ross saw this and couldn’t help sighing. ‘William’s strength already reached mine, that of a peak existence in the younger generation, yet, when facing the boss of the Gilded Rose, he still remains so polite and curries favor. He must have gotten many benefits from him.’

“Yes.” Lin Yun nodded. After spending a few days, he finally adapted to his new Magic Array. He was about to test it in order to get some data, but he suddenly remembered that it was the day of the Black Horn Auction, so he cleaned himself up and left the room.

“How is it? Did you make any progress in the past few days?” William was naturally asking about his younger cousin’s Magic Conducting Rune.

After all, William had personally seen his younger cousin’s circumstances when he reached the High Mage realm, he’d seen the process of Mafa fusing his Magic Conducting Runes. William was extremely curious. He wanted to know what level his terrifying cousin had reached.

“Made some improvements.” Lin Yun didn’t want to talk about this now and only nodded. “Isn’t today the day of the Black Horn Auction?”

“Eh? The Black Horn Auction...” Those simple words suddenly made William smile bitterly. “I’m afraid there isn’t enough time. The Black Horn Auction starts at ten and it’s already nine, even if we rush from here, I’m not sure we can make it fast enough to gain entry on time...”

“It’s fine, let’s rush over first.” Before leaving for Okland, Cadgar had gone to the Gilded Rose to look for him and had told him to visit him at the Black Horn chamber of commerce at all cost. He gave Lin Yun a ring and told him that as long as he had that ring, he would be able to enter any Black Horn Auctions without anyone blocking his path.

“Alright then, let’s hurry...”

The two were about to depart when Ross interjected, “Mafa, Cousin Mafa, please wait a moment...”

“You are?” Lin Yun was originally in a hurry when that person suddenly called out to him, leaving him in a bad mood. He looked at Ross with some annoyance.

“He is Ross Merlin, you met him a few days ago,” William promptly explained when he saw this situation. He also glanced at Ross while thinking, ‘I’ve been too good to you, saving your life every day...’

“Oh.” Lin Yun nodded to acknowledge him. “I am now in a hurry to go to the Black Horn Auction, can your matter wait until I return?”

“No, hold on!” Ross had been waiting for quite a few days before finally meeting Mafa Merlin himself, so how could he let him leave like that? Seeing the other begin turning to the side to leave, Ross raised his magic staff in a moment of desperation to forcibly stop them.

There was nothing wrong with Ross' action.

After all, Lin Yun had already gained some distance, and his hand wouldn't be able to block his path, but his long staff could!

But that movement terrified William. "Ross Merlin! What do you think you are doing!"

This was no joke...

William clearly knew what taboo had to be avoided at all costs in front of this younger cousin.

Pointing a magic staff at him!

'Are you looking to die? You actually took out a weapon in front of him...'

"Ross Merlin! I'll say this once. Leave this place immediately, this is your last warning. Otherwise, I won't mind teaching you another lesson. But this time, I won't stop at just cutting your robe with a Wind Blade!" William's expression was extremely severe, and the mana fluctuations emitted from his body indicated that he was ready for a fight.

He didn't really have any choice... William could only do this.

If he didn't, he wouldn't be able to guarantee that Ross would leave this place alive if Mafa didn't react well.

Unfortunately, Ross didn't know about William's good intentions. After extending his magic staff to block Lin Yun's path, he said, "Cousin Mafa, I am sincere and I only want to discuss a transaction with you. I dare to guarantee that you'll be interested in my conditions. I can give you magic knowledge on the level of High Mages and Archmages, and even some Great Alchemist level alchemy techniques. I can even act for your Gilded Rose three times. All I want is the map left behind by Stan Watson."

After saying that, Ross motionlessly looked at Lin Yun, waiting for him to nod in agreement.

Ross was certain that he would do so.

The conditions he offered were perfect. Ross believed that Mafa would never refuse as long as he was smart enough.

The magic knowledge, alchemy techniques, and even his own favors, just for a map left behind by Stan Watson. Who would refuse?

But...

Lin Yun refused.

"Not interested."

After saying that, Lin Yun pushed the magic staff to the side and led William to leave.

"Mafa... Cousin Mafa, wait..." Ross hadn't considered that the generous conditions he'd raised might actually be refused. He was stunned there for a dozen seconds before managing to react.

But Lin Yun and William were already too far away... Ross didn't have the opportunity to persuade him.

'Right, the Black Horn Auction...' After being annoyed for a while, Ross' attention turned to the Black Horn Auction that they had discussed. 'Alright then, I can only follow them to the Black Horn Auction and see. I can only keep trying to persuade him to come to an agreement then...

'But what if it doesn't work?'

Ross was no longer as confident as before about this transaction.

'If it really doesn't work...' Ross ground his teeth. 'If it really doesn't work, the only option left is to fight for it. That's the only way. I have to take advantage of the absence of that young Archmage to snatch the map from Mafa. As for what happens afterward...

'I would have to find a way to compensate him.'

That map was too important to Ross, but it was a wasted piece of paper to others. At worst, he would have to give many things to Mafa Merlin, such as using his own force to suppress Aube. Everyone knew that Aube was eyeing the wealth of the Gilded Rose. Him doing that would be considered a great help to his cousin from Thousand Sails City, right?

Ross no longer hesitated and followed the two out of the Merlin Manor.

Lin Yun and William were already on the road.

"Oh, Cousin William, the map Ross was talking about, do you know of its circumstances?" Lin Yun had been thinking about it on the way.

After killing Stan Watson in the Aurij Mountains, he did obtain a map, but at the time, Lin Yun had only glanced at it superficially and noticed that it led to Gaugass. To be more precise, it led to mountains that Lin Yun didn't dare to set foot in.

### **Chapter 293: Auction**

How could Lin Yun not know that this was one of the most dangerous areas of Noscent? Even Heaven Mages couldn't escape unscathed. So why were High Mages like Ross Merlin and Stan Watson thinking of going there?

'Are they tired of living? Or is there another reason?'

Lin Yun couldn't help becoming a bit interested as he thought of that, because he recalled that in that future disaster, the famous Flame Ruler managed to come out unscathed. 'Is this related to that?'

As Lin Yun thought about these issues, the carriage they were riding reached the bustling Dragon Street.

This was the core of Okland, the most populated and crowded area. The Black Horn chamber of commerce, the Mercenary Guild, and many other forces converged there. This street was so huge that it could hold a few dozen carriages side by side. The street was filled with people and carriages, and in the middle stood a building that was ten floors tall. The Black Horn chamber of commerce was situated there, and right now, several dozen carriages were parked outside of it. Most of the carriages were

emblazoned with crests, only a few of which Lin Yun actually recognized, but William gave out some introductions that made even Lin Yun gasp. A few of these forces were extremely famous.

"It looks like it's too late..." William noticed the gates of the auction house being closed, with a dozen guards standing in front blocking the way. Okland's Black Horn Auction was like this; before the auction started, anyone could enter, provided they had a crystal card from the Black Horn chamber of commerce. But once the auction started, guests wouldn't be allowed in unless they had a high-status VIP card.

But only the upper echelons of Okland held such VIP cards. Let alone William, even the outstanding Ross or Aube, or going further, even the genius Stan Watson didn't hold such a VIP card.

Someone like Lin Yun, who came from Thousand Sails City, would definitely not have such a card.

"Forget it, let me talk to the guards and see if they can be flexible for us..." William thought for a while, but couldn't come up with any other solution, so he immediately strode off.

"You—" Lin Yun was about to tell William that he had a ring from Cadgar that should let them move through the Black Horn chamber of commerce unimpeded...

But William was too fast. Before Lin Yun could say anything, William had already approached them, so Lin Yun could only sigh.

After all, William wasn't one of the more famous members of the Merlin Family, and he had left for Thousand Sails City for six months. He was bound to have been forgotten by many.

Such as the auction's guards...

Lin Yun saw William wasting his time over there, smiling and talking for a while, only to be met with a poker face. Needless to say, he had been rejected.

Sure enough, not long after, William came back while cursing.

"Shit, these bastards are blind. He said that he could recognize all the Merlins, yet he doesn't recognize me. Am I blurry today?"

"..." Lin Yun felt amused by this. William's temper was very interesting... He could become so pissed because of a mere guard, no wonder he spent his days fighting with Faleau.

"Cousin, you should wait here. I'll go fetch my father and use his VIP card. It's unbelievable, I left Okland for half a year and I can't even enter an auction..."

Rage filled William's face. He said these words while climbing on the carriage, apparently planning to quickly fetch the VIP card.

"It's fine, there is no need to go that far." Lin Yun smiled as he beckoned. He was about to call out to the leader of the guards...

But he was interrupted by boisterous laughter coming from behind.

"Hahahaha, William Merlin, this is quite interesting. The auction has already started, yet you still stand outside. Do you like the scenery of Dragon Street?" A tall young man in his late twenties drew near. He

wore flashy silver knight armor and carried a longsword sheath decorated with jewelry at his waist. He looked to be the kind of guy that would deceive ignorant girls. As he spoke, only sharp words came out of his mouth. "Well, well, William, what do you plan to do from the street... Could it be? You were stopped at the door? Hahaha, I haven't seen you for years, but it looks like you still don't have enough connections to get a VIP card of the Black Horn chamber of commerce. You are truly a stain to your Merlin Family's reputation, hahaha..."

That person laughed at William while handing a crystal card to a guard.

Just as the guard took the crystal card, a respectful expression appeared on his face. He bowed to greet that young man before welcoming him in. When the angry William saw this, he almost burst out in anger. If not for Lin Yun pulling him back, William would have truly pounced on that man.

"Okay, calm down." Lin Yun appeased William before taking the ring Cadgar had given him from his pocket and handing it to the leader of the guards. "Can we go in with this?"

"Ah?" The guard leader took the ring and was surprised at first, before his face suddenly became filled with shock. He looked closely at Lin Yun for a long time before using a respectful tone to say, "Sir, can you wait a moment? I... I need to ask my superior..."

"Alright, go ahead."

"Thank you Sir, I'll return immediately." After saying that, the guard leader rushed inside under the suspicious gazes of his subordinates.

After walking a hundred meters, the guard paled. His heart was beating crazily fast because the ring in his hand was too important... It was too important for a mere guard leader like him. In fact, let alone a guard leader in charge of security, even those big shots of the Black Horn chamber of commerce wouldn't have the qualifications to touch this ring.

He only knew a bit about because he had coincidentally heard some people talking about it before.

Now, he had to quickly report this matter to his higher-ups. Whether that ring was genuine or not, this matter had to be handled by the higher-ups of the Black Horn chamber of commerce.

Two minutes later, the guard leader reached the auction hall and whispered a few words in the ears of a young man. The young man listened calmly at first, before his eyes widened and he instantly got up.

"Shit, take me to him, quick!"

After saying this, he didn't wait for the guard's reaction and apologized to his guests before hurriedly leaving the auction hall.

"Just now, Salen of the Charlotte Family seemed to have been quite disagreeable to them..." As they walked over together, the guard leader recounted the brief interlude to the young man.

"That idiot, Salen..." The young man's eyes widened when he heard that. After cursing under his breath, he shook his head. "Forget it, we don't have much relations with that idiot. It should be fine as long as we take care of our own matters."

"Understood."

As the two rushed outside, the young man put on a warm smile and walked straight towards Lin Yun. "Greetings, High Mage Merlin. Welcome to our Black Horn chamber of commerce. I am one of the people in charge of today's auction. You can call me Ritch. Nice to meet you, High Mage Merlin."

"Hello, Ritch." Lin Yun reached out his hand. "Well, I was thinking of participating in today's Black Horn Auction, would this make things difficult for all of you?"

"Naturally not, High Mage Merlin, you are a most welcome VIP. If there is anything you require, the Black Horn chamber of commerce will do its best to satisfy your needs. If you wish to participate, I'll immediately send someone to arrange the best private room..."

"There is no need to trouble yourself, I only want to take a look." Lin Yun shook his head. He had received the highest treatment in Thousand Sails City, and while it made some things easier, it also gave him some headaches.

Each time Cadgar arranged a private room, he would continue with the sentence: "I wonder if Master Alchemist Merlin wants to entrust something to the Black Horn Auction?"

Thus, Lin Yun had no choice but to bring out some good stuff to repay that favor, once, twice, thrice... In the end, Cadgar got many good things from Lin Yun.

Lin Yun had come to watch today. He hadn't decided whether he would buy something or not, so he promptly refused when that young man offered him the private room.

"Then I shall lead High Mage Merlin in..." The young man knew how to conduct himself, so he didn't insist after hearing Lin Yun's refusal. He was even more enthusiastic to lead Lin Yun inside.

The seat the young man arranged for Lin Yun was in the fifth row, next to five merchants. From William's introductions, they were rich merchants in Okland, but although they were wealthy, they didn't have high status. Those with high status were sitting in the private rooms on the upper floor.

After making arrangements for the two, the young man tactfully took his leave.

Firstly because he was worried that this important person wasn't willing to be disturbed, and secondly because he had to report today's matter to his superiors.

As a result, the young man barely got out of the auction hall when he bumped into the rushed Ross.

"Ross! You just arrived?" The young man had always had a very good relationship with Ross.

## **Chapter 294: Discussion**

"Ritch?" Ross was stunned when he saw that young man at the entrance of the auction hall. He couldn't help feeling suspicious, as that young man's identity was quite special. Ritch Holland's parents were both senior alchemists of the Black Horn chamber of commerce, and he had even studied under the famous Archmage of the Black Horn, Hulad. Although he was in his early twenties, he was still a 5th Rank High Mage. He was considered Hulad's successor.

The Merlin Family had many chances to cooperate with the Black Horn chamber of commerce. It was in one such cooperative venture that the two young geniuses got to know each other and formed a certain friendship. How could Ross not know of Ritch's identity? 'He would usually be inside presiding over the auction, so why is he at the door like a doorman?'

Seeing Ross's strange expression, Ritch immediately said, "Oh, I was just welcoming a VIP, I'm about to go over now. What? Suddenly want to participate in the auction?"

"You personally welcomed a VIP?" Hearing this, amazement appeared on Ross' face.

Ritch might even enter the core circle of the Black Horn chamber of commerce due to his status as the disciple of the famous Archmage Hulad... The honored guests that he would welcome wouldn't be ordinary...

"Yes, he is a very special VIP. I've been paying attention to this matter for almost a year..." Ritch didn't hide the truth, because although this was a secret, it was loosely guarded.

"No way..." Ross held his breath. The Black Horn chamber of commerce no ordinary power. It was considered a peak force in the entirety of Noscent.

The Cloud Tower, the Black Tower, and Okland Magic School were the three major forces of Okland only because their power was centralized here. In contrast, the Black Horn chamber of commerce was a truly frightening existence. Their power infiltrated every corner of Noscent, making their influence far greater than anyone could imagine.

Moreover, the Merlin Family and the Watson Family both believed that the Black Horn chamber of commerce was hiding its true strength and was far from being as simple as most people imagined.

"Nothing I can do about it, today's VIP is truly extraordinary. He is Master Alchemist that hasn't even turned 22..."

"A Master!" Ross' eyes widened. A Master Alchemist at 22 years... If nothing unexpected happened, he was bound to become an Artisan. In other words, Ritch had just welcomed a future Artisan!

"Indeed, Master Alchemist..." Ritch smiled, but it was a bitter smile. He was reviewing the information he had on this young High Mage. High Mage Merlin had been shrouded in a mysterious radiance. After all, they were more or less the same age. Ritch was only a few years older than him, yet the gap was unbreachable. It would be wrong to say that there was no envy or admiration in Ritch's heart.

But Ritch's strong point in the Black Horn chamber of commerce was that he could accept many unbelievable truths if the evidence pointed to it. He was already used to dealing with these seemingly impossible matters, so after bitterly smiling, he quickly recovered. "Moreover, it was said that this young Master Alchemist was only a Magic Apprentice a year ago who rose up overnight for some unknown reason and crushed all his opponents in a domineering way. I even heard that a month ago, that young Master Alchemist defeated an Archmage..."

"An Arc... Archmage!" Ross froze. A young Master Alchemist that also defeated an Archmage... How could this sound real? It felt like the main character of a fantasy novel, how could there be such an abnormal person?

In the past, Ross always felt that Stan Watson was already an abnormal one. He crushed all the young geniuses in Okland and became an 8th Rank High Mage before the age of thirty, making everyone despair. At that time, Ross even felt that he would never see someone as abnormal as Stan Watson again in his life.

But he hadn't expected that Ritch would talk about someone even more bizarre that was in his early twenties...

"Oh right, I forgot to say, that man defeated an Archmage when he was still a 9th Rank Great Mage, and has already advanced to the High Mage realm now..."

"..." Ross was frozen on the spot. He didn't know how he should react. A 9th Rank Great Mage defeating an Archmage truly sounded like a fantasy. For a while, Ross only stared at Ritch with a blank gaze, unable to hear or respond to anything.

"Ross, Ross..."

"Ah?" After Ritch called out to him, Ross woke up from his dream. He realized that he'd forgotten himself and awkwardly laughed. "Sorry, my mind wandered. Right, what did you say?"

"I said, how come you came to participate in the auction today? Didn't you always say that auctions were places where only foolish upstarts would squander money?"

"I..." Ross hesitated for a bit before pressing on. "I'm looking for someone, I want to discuss a transaction with him..."

"Oh?"

"It's simple, I have a distant younger cousin who is holding something that is very important to me, but is useless to him. I spoke to him at the Merlin Family Manor and offered to exchange him magic knowledge and alchemy techniques for it. I even offered to act for him three times. But for some reason, he refused such generous conditions..."

"Haha..." Ritch chuckled when he heard this, "This younger cousin of yours is quite interesting. Didn't you tell him who you were? Who in Okland doesn't know of all the planar expeditions you have been on in the past few years? I don't know how many people are envious and greedy. I'm very interested, I want to see what kind of expression your younger cousin will show later after learning what kind of opportunity he passed on."

"Hey, don't say that..." Ross was vexed enough to begin with. "This thing is very important to me, I absolutely must get it even if I have to spend a huge sum on it."

"Okay, okay, tell me your younger cousin's name and I'll help you search through the guest information. Once I put you in the same room, you can slowly discuss this..."

"Thanks Ritch, I'll definitely remember this favor." A grateful expression appeared on Ross' face. He clearly understood what this meant. Ritch was one of the people in charge of this auction, and helping him was overstepping his boundaries. This might even hinder his path in the Black Horn chamber of commerce in the future.

"It's okay, you can thank others, but we don't need these kinds of things between us. If it hadn't been for your help, I would have been in big trouble in the Raging Flame Plane. Alright, tell me your cousin's name ..."

"Mafa Merlin."

"Oh, Mafa Merlin..." Ritch nodded while noting it down. He was in the middle of writing that name when he noticed that this name seemed awfully familiar. "Mafa Merlin, Mafa Merlin..."

"What is it?" Ross was puzzled.

"Ma... Mafa Merlin..." Ritch was stunned as he looked at Ross, seeming a bit frightened. "Mafa Merlin... He wouldn't be from Thousand Sails City, right?"

"That's right, he came from Thousand Sails City and is the owner of Thousand Sails City's Gilded Rose... Why?"

"The distant cousin who is holding something very important to you and that you want to trade magic knowledge and alchemy techniques to... That's Mafa Merlin?" Ritch gulped as he said with difficulty.

"Yes... It's him..."

"..." Ritch's legs slightly shook. He watched Ross for a long time before putting down his quill and paper. "Hmm, Ross, does your cousin look young, perhaps in his early twenties? Is he wearing a black robe?"

"That should be him."

"... Have you ever sent for a background check?"

"Background check?" Ross was stunned by the odd question. "I did. I heard that his grandfather was Patriarch Ofran's older brother, Judd Merlin. For some reason, he had suddenly given up on everything and gone to Thousand Sails City. Later, his son was born there, Locke Merlin. I heard that this Locke Merlin was very amazing and established the Flashing Gold chamber of commerce in a dozen years, monopolizing Thousand Sails City's alchemy market. He was considered quite wealthy. As for that Mafa Merlin, I'm not too sure. I only heard that his life wasn't in a very good state after Locke Merlin's death. Once the family learnt about it, they sent William over to help him rebuild the Gilded Rose. I also heard that the Gilded Rose's financial resources are quite terrifying, it is already the largest alchemy store in Thousand Sails City..."

"You... That's the background check you made?!" Ritch was both angered and amused by this answer. 'Why are you asking about Judd Merlin and Locke Merlin? You should be checking Mafa Merlin...'

## **Chapter 295: Past Events**

Ritch wanted to kick Ross when he heard that. 'What do you mean you made a background check? Couldn't you go to Thousand Sails City yourself to see how influential the Gilded Rose is? To see what the famous figures of Thousand Sails City such as Solomon, Cadgar, or Lys think of your younger cousin? It's not that hard...'

'Thousand Sails City is only a few days away from Okland, it would only have taken you a few days to visit Thousand Sails City and check! You would naturally have understood why your cousin isn't interested in what you offered... He is a Master Alchemist that isn't even 22! He is someone who beat an Archmage when he was only a 9th Rank Great Mage! All of Okland's geniuses are far inferior to your distant cousin. What Aube Merlin? What Leon Merlin? What Stan Watson? They are far inferior to him...

'If you had learnt this, would you still be willing to use your alchemy techniques and magic knowledge as a bargaining chip?'

Ritch really wanted to tell Ross the truth...

But he couldn't say anything...

Ritch's friendship with Ross was indeed special. He owed Ross a big favor from the Raging Flame Plane.

That was why he didn't mind telling Ross that he was meeting a special VIP, and even some of the matters concerning that VIP. These things were already known to many inside the Black Horn chamber of commerce, and it wasn't a secret with a higher level of confidentiality.

But the identity of the special VIP...

This definitely couldn't be shared.

No one else knew right now besides that guard leader and himself.

He had to report this matter to the higher-ups immediately and wait for them to decide to what extent this information should be kept secret. Before that, he definitely couldn't leak this, even to Ross.

The problem was that if he didn't say anything, Ross would most likely cause some trouble.

The current Ross didn't know how terrifying his distant cousin was. He thought that the young mage was only an ordinary person from a small, distant town, and he even wanted to offer such meager techniques and knowledge to trade for something.

That was too dangerous.

With Ritch's understanding of Ross Merlin, he could definitely affirm that if Ross' transaction failed, he would definitely move on to threats and using force to snatch that thing. At that time, Ross would be finished. Even if Patriarch Ofran personally appeared, he might not be able to protect him.

'What should I do...'

Ritch saw Ross' confidence as recklessness.

'How about I give him some hints?'

As he thought of this, Ritch coughed. "Well, Ross, I think that your distant younger cousin isn't that simple. Why else would your patriarch be in such a hurry to get him back?"

"Haha, that should be because of William," Ross sneered. He had been annoyed by William repeatedly blocking his path. "After going to Thousand Sails City, William kept sending information to the family, embellishing the Gilded Rose's power. Patriarch Ofran is already convinced that the Gilded Rose is

unbelievably wealthy. He thinks that as long as he can control that wealth for the Merlin Family, he will be able to surpass the Watson Family in some respects. It's ridiculous! The struggle between the Merlin Family and the Watson Family has been going on for a millennium, how could it be decided by mere wealth..."

"You..." Ritch had risked unveiling that secret to give him a hint, but Ross was still clueless. So Ritch had no choice but to keep a smile on his face while prodding him with another hint. "This seems a bit arbitrary. You think your younger cousin would be able to gain so much wealth in Thousand Sails City just by relying on William?"

"Well..." Ross' expression sank as he thought of this. "My younger cousin is indeed in control of a frightening force. It is very likely that an Archmage is protecting him. You should have learnt about Stan Watson's death already. I suspect that it is the work of an Archmage at Mafa's side. I asked Anna of the Red Dragon Mercenary Group and she said that it was the work of someone very young, probably in his early twenties and holding a staff with an Elemental Amber embedded in it. Help me look for that person if you can. I suspect that this is a shadow following Mafa..."

"..." Ritch nearly blew up in rage. He looked at Ross for a long time before finally sighing, choosing not to say anything else.

'How come you are so smart during each of your planar expeditions, yet retarded when dealing with such a matter... The Red Dragon Mercenary, Anna, already said that it was a young mage in his early twenties, how could you not link that to your distant cousin? Isn't your cousin in his early twenties?'

Ritch truly wanted to take out his staff and hit Ross on the head, at least twice, just to see if it would straighten him up.

"Alright, let's not talk about this here..." Ross didn't notice any change in Ritch's expression and sighed before continuing, "Help me take a look at the guest list, I want to know where my younger cousin is sitting..."

"I..." Ritch's eyes were locked onto Ross. After a while, he ground his teeth and said, "Alright, I'll help you take a look at it..."

Ritch gave up...

Nothing could be done about it. What else could he do? Tell him directly that the distant cousin he kept talking about was actually the special VIP that had just entered? This might end up causing big trouble for himself...

All he could do now was to hope that Ross would restrain himself. He would be courting death if he threatened his cousin after the transaction failed. That young High Mage was holding the Black Horn chamber of commerce's Gold VIP Voucher. Only the few top executives had the power to deliver those. In the Black Horn chamber of commerce's territories, anyone holding a Gold VIP Voucher would be under their protection. Even if that person killed someone, the Black Horn chamber of commerce would do everything within their means to shield them.

This meant...

If Ross Merlin made a mistake, he would die to Mafa Merlin without the latter suffering any real consequences.

“He went in, 5th row. He is sitting with William.” Ritch sighed as he told Ross. But he didn’t feel too reassured with leaving the matter alone, so he urged, “Also, Ross, you can talk business with him, but don’t act without thinking if it fails. This is the Black Horn chamber of commerce’s territory. It will be very hard for me to do anything if there is a problem...”

“Thanks, Ritch.” Ross patted Ritch’s shoulder. “I understand, I won’t make a move in there...”

“...” Ritch was already struggling to keep his composure. ‘Fuck, you are a 5th Rank High Mage, how could you be so retarded? Did I tell you only to not make a move here? I am telling you that if you can’t come to an agreement, you should get out of here. He isn’t someone you can afford to offend!’

Unfortunately, Ritch couldn’t afford to say this explicitly, while Ross was completely oblivious. With a friendly smile, he entered the auction hall.

“Fucking idiot...” Ritch cursed after seeing Ross leave. But after cursing, he couldn’t help following after him.

In order to not be sensed by that young High Mage, Ritch sat especially far back. He absent-mindedly greeted a few guests he recognized while unblinkingly looking at Ross, afraid he would trigger a calamity.

The auction had already started, but only some ordinary things were on display for now: some common potions, Inheritance rank Magic Tools, all kinds of magic materials that couldn’t be considered rare, those sorts of things. Lin Yun wasn’t interested in those, so he just chatted with William.

“Cousin, do you know that guy we met outside?”

“The guy outside?” William was distracted at first before remembering. “Ah, you are talking about the one dressed in gold and jewelry that is blinding everyone? Of course I know him, that’s Salen Charlotte. The Merlin Family and the Charlotte Family had been mortal enemies, but since the appearance of Santon Merlin and the death of Fussen Charlotte, they remained low key. Very few members of the Charlotte Family would participate in the struggle in Okland. But somehow, the Charlotte Family got some support in the recent years and their strength quickly rose up, just like a phoenix being reborn from ashes. In fact, they organized an expedition to the Raging Flame Plane a few years ago. I am very familiar with that Salen Charlotte...”

“Oh?”

“At that time, all the major forces of Okland participated in the battle for the Raging Flame Plane, and the Charlotte Family also sent their own planar army. Salen Charlotte was among them. I was Leon’s second back then. We were tasked with attacking the Radiant Fort. But when I reached the Radiant Fort, I found out that it was already occupied by the Charlotte Family...”

“You saw Leon’s character. How could he leave the Radiant Fort to the Charlotte Family? He directly ordered an attack. At the time, Salen’s strength was similar to mine. We fought for half an hour and ended up in a tie. After Leon took over the Radiant Fort, he rushed over and dealt with Salen. I was

wronged... Salen didn't dare to take revenge on Leon, so he settled for me. When I returned to Thousand Sails City last time, he kept provoking me for a few days..."

## **Chapter 296: Black Moon Splendor**

"This..." Lin Yun thought about it for a long time but couldn't understand the logic behind it. He looked at William with sympathy. "How come you are so unlucky..."

"Yeah, I don't know why my luck is so bad. It had to be Salen Charlotte out of everyone. That guy is a mad dog. I rarely had contact with him in Okland, but he would seize every opportunity to sneer at me or attack me. He became even crazier after becoming an Expert Swordsman. He would use every occasion to challenge me. One of the reasons I accepted going to Thousand Sails City besides just obeying the family was to avoid him..."

"Hmm, a 4th Rank Expert Swordsman, that's very good for his age..." Lin Yun nodded and stopped there.

"It's not bad..." William saw that Lin Yun didn't intend to continue discussing and tactfully remained quiet, but he was praising himself in his mind. 'I'm so clever, I went to Thousand Sails City and had the chance to meet you. Otherwise, I would have been completely crushed by that guy...'

"Cousin Mafa." Ross approached as the two finished their conversation. He had directly homed in on them after entering the auction hall.

In order to let this VIP remain undisturbed, Ritch had picked a location that was relatively empty, but that made it so that Ross could now sit directly next to them.

"Ross, how come it's you?" William rolled his eyes at him. That man was like a ghost, the way he haunted them.

"William, you'd best not provoke me..." Ross was already in a bad mood after being blocked by William again and again, so his gaze was icy cold as he glared at him.

"I'm so scared..."

"I'll say it for the last time. This matter is very important to me. So important that I would do anything for it. Keep provoking me if you think that you can face my fury again after luckily beating me once."

"Haha..." Disdain was apparent on William's face. Others might be scared of Ross Merlin, but William wasn't. He knew that the person sitting next to him wouldn't let Ross act up.

After sneering, William was about to say something to provoke Ross when Lin Yun waved his hand. "It's fine, Cousin, let him finish his words."

"Alright..."

"You can speak now."

"Mafa Merlin, according to our relationship, I can also call you Cousin. I investigated you before coming here, I hope you don't mind..."

“Haha, it’s fine.”

“I know that your alchemy shop is very wealthy and influential in Thousand Sails City. I also know that you have a very powerful mage at your side who might possibly have the strength of an Archmage. That powerful mage killed Stan Watson in the Aurij Mountains. If I’m not wrong, Stan Watson should have had a map on his body, but after his death, the map disappeared. I think that this map is likely in your hands...”

“That’s right.” Lin Yun straightforwardly nodded and acknowledged it. There was no need to hide it. After all, in Lin Yun’s eyes, a 5th Rank High Mage like Ross Merlin wasn’t worth worrying about. Let alone Ross, even Stan Watson, who had made Ross despair, was only a ticket to the Ancestral Land for Lin Yun.

“That’s great.” Unfortunately, Ross didn’t understand Lin Yun’s attitude. He thought that since his young cousin admitted to owning the map, he was indicating that there might be a chance to trade. Why else would he acknowledge it?

“Cousin Mafa, that map is very important to me. As I said, I would do anything for it. But this map isn’t important to you. So I think we should come to an agreement. Give me the map and I’ll give you some other compensation. You should know that I’ve been going on expeditions through various large planes owned by the Merlin Family. Although I didn’t have many outstanding achievements, I’ve had some pretty good harvests...”

“Oh?”

“Today, I brought three Inheritance Magic Tools. As long as Cousin Mafa agrees, these three Inheritance Magic Tools are yours. Moreover, I also have some experience and knowledge, so if Cousin Mafa has any questions, I might be able to give you a few pointers...”

“Hahahahaha!” William couldn’t hold himself back anymore and burst out in laughter.

He then looked at Ross with a strange expression.

The expression was really quite peculiar.

It felt as if he was looking at some rare animal in a zoo.

Ross looked doubtfully at William, but didn’t understand the meaning behind that gaze, so he thought that William was just trying to provoke him.

But Ross didn’t have the time to take care of him. After glancing at him, he focused back on Lin Yun.

“Moreover, your shop might meet some trouble from time to time in a place like Thousand Sails City. I should be able to help, as a 5th Rank High Mage. I can promise you that as long as you give that map to me, I can help your Gilded Rose three times.”

Ross said all this with a sincere expression, but the answer he awaited never came. He looked up and found out that the other side’s eyes weren’t even looking at him.

It was because the auction had already moved on to the middle section and one Magic Tool came out.

“The next item to be auctioned is a damaged Spiritual Magic Tool. The name of that Magic Tool is Black Moon Splendor. According to our Black Horn chamber of commerce’s appraiser, Black Moon Splendor comes from the hand of a Master Alchemist of the 3rd Dynasty. It has over two thousand years of history and might have been damaged due to the passage of time, making its power disappear from the limelight before appearing in front of everybody today. The damage to this Spiritual Magic Tool isn’t too serious. It could completely recover if a Master Alchemist is willing to spend some time to take care of it. Now, this Black Moon Splendor will start at the low price of 50,000 golds.”

“Cousin Mafa, what do you think of my conditions?” Ross had two peak Spiritual Magic Tools as one of the three geniuses of the Merlin Family, so he naturally wouldn’t be interested in a damaged Spiritual Magic Tool. After giving it a quick glance, he focused back on Lin Yun.

“Wait...” Lin Yun didn’t even turn his head and directly bid, “80,000 golds.”

“Cousin Mafa, what do you mean by this?” Traces of displeasure crept onto Ross’ face. ‘For a damaged Spiritual Magic Tool you would put me to the side? Are you trying to humiliate me?’

“Wait, we will talk about this later.” Lin Yun frowned. He had been bothered twice by Ross while bidding and was becoming very unhappy about this.

Because the transaction Ross wanted to discuss simply couldn’t compare to the Black Moon Splendor.

They were on two completely different levels.

The map Stan Watson left behind would at most satisfy Lin Yun’s curiosity, but this damaged Spiritual Magic Tool would most likely become the first Augment of the Doom Staff.

Black Moon Splendor was worthless by itself. Even if Lin Yun fixed it, it would most likely lie idle in his hand, but some of the techniques used for it were very important to him.

It was because this Black Moon Splendor used a rare Array Layering technique, which was what the Doom Staff needed.

Thus, Lin Yun didn’t spare anything to get it.

“200,000 golds.” Lin Yun raised the price to 200,000 with his 3rd bid.

“250,000 golds.” A voice suddenly came out from one of the private rooms on the top floor.

Lin Yun felt that this voice was familiar. Before he even thought about it, he heard William cursing and understood. The one bidding should be that Salen Charlotte.

“William Merlin! You think you can trick me by asking someone to bid for you? I’ll fight over anything you fancy!” The private rooms had been prepared for the famous people of every major force. The Black Horn chamber of commerce had first-rate sound amplification magic items within for them to use. The bid of 250,000 golds came from the arrogant Salen Charlotte.

“That idiot...” William ground his teeth.

“Haha, it’s fine...” Lin Yun smiled before raising his hand. “800,000 golds.”

Lin Yun’s bid silenced the entire venue.

Countless gazes fell on Lin Yun. Everyone wanted to see which wastrel was bidding 800,000 for a damaged Spiritual Magic Tool.

How could this not be wasting money?

An intact Spiritual Magic Tool would sell for that price...

The auctioneer even said that they would only be able to restore it they hired a Master Alchemist.

But was hiring a Master Alchemist that easy?

Which Master Alchemist would offer their services without being paid at least 200,000 or 300,000 golds?

### **Chapter 297: Rainbow Tears**

Moreover, repairing a Magic Tool required magic materials. He would have to spend another 200,000 to 300,000 golds on magic materials, making the actual price of that Spiritual Magic Tool become more like a million golds. With luck, this might be enough to buy two Spiritual Magic Tools.

800,000 golds was a really scary price.

Even Salen Charlotte, who wanted to oppose William at all costs, immediately became silent after hearing that frighteningly high price. He had to remain silent. Bidding a few hundred thousand golds to buy a damaged Spiritual Magic Tool while embarrassing William seemed quite worthwhile. But now that the price had reached 800,000, even the bold Salen couldn't say anything...

"Isn't that too expensive?" William was a bit worried.

"Not really..." Lin Yun shook his head with a smile, waiting for the auctioneer to recover.

Completely unsurprisingly, the bid of 800,000 golds defeated all the competitors. Soon, the hammer fell as the auctioneer announced the winning bid.

"Cousin Mafa..." Ross looked a bit stunned. It looked like this cousin from the distant Thousand Sails City indeed had shocking financial resources. He had taken out a sum of 800,000 without hesitation.

Ross chose his words carefully this time, feeling that the conditions he had raised before couldn't move such a wealthy person.

"That wasn't very worthwhile. I have two peak Spiritual Magic Tools that are ten times stronger than an intact Black Moon Splendor. I'll let you choose one of them if you are willing to trade the map for it!"

Ross was staring at Lin Yun with reddened eyes. This was the greatest card he could use. The two peak Spiritual Magic Tools had been the trump cards that allowed Ross to come back from the Raging Flame Plane. Their value was unimaginable. Ross had taken these two peak Spiritual Magic Tools to every planar expedition and kept defeating formidable opponents and pushing his way through all kinds of dangers. They could be considered Ross' last support, his second life.

Ross Merlin had always considered them more important than anything.

Even those that he considered closest and most trustworthy weren't allowed to touch them.

But now...

Ross Merlin had no choice but to take out these two peak Spiritual Magic Tools to try to trade one for that map.

This was Ross' bottom line... He was willing to trade half of his second life. If this offer was declined, he would have to use some special methods...

His eyes didn't leave Lin Yun after saying that.

Ross waited, he waited for his younger cousin's answer...

But before he could get his answer, his younger cousin raised his hand once again to bid.

"300,000 golds."

Seven thumb-sized magic gems were being auctioned at this moment... Red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, purple. The seven colors were all different and looked like a rainbow inside the crystal display.

This was an intact set of Rainbow Tears. Each of the seven gems had a different power, with each one being comparable to a decent Magic Tool. Moreover, the seven gems shared the same origin and had some mysterious connection. After they were processed, they could form a very powerful array.

Even in the center of the kingdom, this set of Rainbow Tears would be considered a valuable treasure. Bids kept being made one after the other when the Auctioneer finished introducing it. Lin Yun took the opportunity to bid 300,000 golds, but someone else outbid him before he could relax.

"320,000 golds."

"350,000 golds."

"380,000."

"400,000 golds."

"450,000 golds."

"500,000 golds."

...

Hands were raised one after the other as bids kept coming. In an instant, the price of the Rainbow Tears reached 600,000 golds...

This was a very shocking number...

"800,000 golds!" Salen Charlotte's voice resounded again from one of the private room. "William! I don't believe you can take out more than 800,000 golds again!"

Salen's voice was overbearing and haughty.

That enormous bid made many others feel depressed. Salen Charlotte had been pondering what he could do to get back at his nemesis, but he hadn't expected the opportunity to come back so soon. He felt as if fate was on his side. The Rainbow Tears were one of the items the Charlotte Family was after. Although 800,000 golds was on the expensive side, it wasn't too much for them.

Most importantly...

'I already bid 800,000 golds, I don't believe that you can outbid me, William.'

"1,500,000 golds." Just as Salen was rejoicing, someone on the 5th row placed a bid.

Salen suddenly froze. He thought he had misheard at first and grabbed one of his subordinates to ask, "What... What did he say?"

"He... He... He bid 1,500,000 golds..." The subordinate was frightened by that number. He stuttered for a while before managing to answer.

Salen's expression fell apart, looking very unsightly. His eyes were wide open, as well as his mouth. It looked as if he wanted to say something, but his tongue wasn't listening. He stood there in a daze for a long time before fiercely swearing, "Fuck, he is crazy!"

Yes, this was what everyone was thinking...

As the bid was called, everyone in the hall was wondering who would create such a sensation. No one expected the Rainbow Tears to sell for almost twice their market price. Their eyes all converged on Lin Yun.

They then discovered that the person who bid 1,500,000 golds on the Rainbow Tears was also the one who spent 800,000 golds on Black Moon Splendor. Many of the onlookers were chatting among themselves, trying to figure out the spendthrift's identity. This was too frightening... He had spent over two million in a few minutes, how could he not be considered a spendthrift?

As for the result of the bidding over the Rainbow Tears, there was no suspense.

Who would compete with Lin Yun when he had placed a bid of 1,500,000 golds? Although the auctioneer followed the rules and inquired a few more times before doing a countdown, not one bid was heard. In the end, the Rainbow Tears also fell into Lin Yun's hands.

"Cousin Mafa, you..." Ross was also stunned.

'It looks like this distant cousin is even more wealthier than I had imagined...'

That was 1,500,000 golds! In the past few years of expeditions, Ross had managed to save up no more than a million. He felt that his savings were insufficient for him to be participating in such an auction and immediately felt uncomfortable.

'What should I do...'

Ross Merlin wasn't very optimistic...

Although his distant younger cousin's wealth had been the hot topic in the Merlin Family recently, Ross always felt that since he was from a small place like Thousand Sails City, he shouldn't have seen much of

the world. Thus, he had been overconfident, thinking that his resources would be enough to impress this younger cousin.

But Ross no longer thought so...

He'd only moved his hands a few times and spent over two millions, how could he be moved by Ross' offerings?

But...

Ross had no more cards to show...

'What should I do? I absolutely have to get that map!'

As he thought of this, Ross made his decision... He ground his teeth as he said, "Cousin Mafa, I'll say it once again. I would do anything for this map..."

The intent behind that sentence was very clear...

Ross felt that no matter how calm and collected that younger cousin was, he would have no choice but to seriously discuss the offer when hearing these words.

But he hadn't expected to not receive an answer at all.

"Cousin Mafa!" Ross frowned as he said in a louder voice.

...Still no answer.

Here, Lin Yun turned his head and softly said to William, "Cousin, go get me a list of the auctioned items."

Lin Yun was delighted after getting the Rainbow Tears. How could he be in the mood to pay attention to Ross?

He'd spent over two millions and gotten two of the key Augments for the Doom Staff. This made Lin Yun somewhat interested in the auction.

## **Chapter 298: Star Gem**

Lin Yun originally didn't expect much of this auction. After all, the magic gem needed for the core of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel could only be described as priceless. He had only come here to try his luck and see if anything interesting showed up, but he hadn't expected his luck to be this good, getting him two items that he needed. He was finally focusing on the auction.

This auction was worth coming to.

Even if he couldn't find the core gem for the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel, it would be worth it as long as he could complete a part of the Doom Staff.

He was even feeling somewhat regretful...

He would have already visited this place instead of wasting his time in Thousand Sails City if he had known earlier that Okland had magic materials that were this good... And not only had he wasted time, but he'd also been exploited by Cadgar.

As a VIP with a Gold Voucher, Lin Yun's request was immediately met, and William quickly returned with Ritch in tow.

Normally, with Ritch's identity in Thousand Sails City, there was no need for him to personally deliver a list of items.

However, the young High Mage's identity was a bit special. He had already received a Gold VIP voucher, and because of that, Ritch needed to show some goodwill. There was also the fact that Ross Merlin was there...

Ritch and Ross had been friends for a few years and he truly didn't want to see Ross run himself into a corner because of some item. Besides representing the Black Horn chamber of commerce, Ritch also came to give some hints to Ross... once again.

"High Mage Merlin, this is the list you requested," Ritch said respectfully before handing a fancy scroll to Lin Yun.

"Thank you." Lin Yun nodded before taking the scroll, unfolding it, and starting to read. Soon, a happy expression appeared on his calm face.

'High Mage Merlin?' Ross suddenly froze when he heard this. He truly hadn't expected that his distant cousin already had the power of a High Mage.

Ross took a proper look at his cousin for the first time...

Indeed, the mana fluctuations emitted by his cousin had the trace of the Magic Conducting Runes being fused. This was usually very easy to recognize because no matter how powerful a Great Mage was, they weren't High Mages. Their mana fluctuations would always remain chaotic. Only High Mages could emit condensed mana fluctuations as their Magic Conducting Runes were fused, making their mana feel thick and steady.

Although Ross had come into contact with that younger cousin several times, he'd never really registered this, as he was biased.

Only at this point, when Ritch called him High Mage Merlin, did Ross discover that his younger cousin was a High Mage...

Moreover, he was a very wealthy High Mage...

The only saving grace was that although this distant cousin had entered the High Mage realm, he still seemed to be in the early stages of that realm. From his mana fluctuations, Ross could clearly sense that he had the power of a 1st Rank High Mage. In other words, his cousin was still far from being at his level.

Realizing this, Ross sighed in relief.

The other side's huge wealth already put a lot of pressure on Ross. If his magic power was also comparable to his own, Ross would have to think twice before going for that map.

“Oh, Ross, you are also here. What a coincidence...” After respectfully handing the scroll to Lin Yun, Ritch looked at Ross with a surprised expression. “It’s been a few months since we last saw each other, hasn’t it? How about we go get a drink after the auction? Oh, right, High Mage Merlin shares the same family name as you... Isn’t he also part of your Merlin Family? No wonder your Merlin Family is a millennial family. Let me tell you, Ross, this High Mage from your family is far from being simple. Even my teacher Hulad keeps singing praises about him...”

Ritch said all of this while trying his best to keep eye contact with Ross.

‘I hope he will finally connect the dots and figure out that he is the special VIP I talked about earlier...’

“Haha, I definitely have to congratulate Cousin Mafa. Sir Hulad is one of Okland’s Archmages. To be valued by such a person... Cousin Mafa definitely has a great backer...” Unfortunately for Ritch, Ross connected the wrong dots and merely congratulated Lin Yun.

“...” Ritch felt like spitting blood after hearing this.

‘How could you be this fucking stupid? I’m not helping you this much just to have you congratulate him. Fuck, I told you that my teacher is paying attention to your younger cousin, don’t you know who my teacher is? He’s one of the uppermost powers of the Black Horn chamber of commerce! I just told you that your younger cousin is a High Mage, I even talked with you for a long time at the door earlier! Did you forget everything?’

Sadly, Ritch couldn’t afford to let his thoughts out in such a place. He could only do his best to convey his intentions to Ross by giving him a meaningful look.

“Eh? Ritch? What’s going on with your eye? Are you feeling uncomfortable?” But as a result, Ross only became concerned for him.

“I...” Ritch almost couldn’t hold himself back anymore. ‘Forget it, whatever happens, happens!’

“Whatever, go ahead,” Ritch said. He left while full of anger after that short discussion.

Only Ross was quite baffled by his behavior...

‘Is there something wrong with Ritch? He was already quite strange during our discussion at the door, and it was even worse just now... Why was he blinking incessantly? Was he trying to tell me something?’

But, after thinking about it for a bit, he didn’t come up with anything special.

Lin Yun had been studying the list of items all this time.

This trip to the Black Horn Auction was truly worth it...

After the Rainbow Tears, there were a total of seven items that he was interested in. Six of them could be used as Augments for the Doom Staff.

‘That’s... That’s the Crystal Page!’

From the introduction on the scroll, it could be seen that this Crystal Page was the size of one’s palm and covered in numerous characters...

If he wasn't wrong, this Crystal Page was most likely the 6th Page of the Book of Death, the Truth Chapter!

But...

What drew most of Lin Yun's interested was the final item.

That was a fist-sized Star Gem. The illustration and description made it seem dazzling. With one glance at the illustration, Lin Yun knew that he had found the gem he needed for the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel...

It was rumored that every star in the starry sky had its own life. It might live for several million years, billions, or even more. But it was said that before one fell, it would burst in a split second, burst with all its light and heat before transforming into dust, only leaving a Star Gem behind.

Naturally, it was only a legend.

No one ever witnessed the fall of a star, even Lin Yun didn't know how Noscent ended after its destruction 30,000 years later.

But one thing was certain: the Star Gem did come from the sky. They would fall in Noscent alongside meteor showers, buried for millennia until someone discovered them.

Star Gems innately held massive amounts of power. There had been quite a few famous True Spirit Magic Tools in Noscent History that used a Star Gem as their core.

But Star Gems had always been very rare, especially a fist-sized one. Lin Yun had seen mentions of no more than ten of them in those books!

He roughly estimated that if this Star Gem became the core of the Ten Thousand Spell Wheel, it might make the Spell Wheel become a peak True Spirit Magic Tool immediately, and once Enderfa moved it, it might even become a Magic Tool that would truly leave its marks on history.

Lin Yun knew that the first True Spirit Magic Tool he crafted would soon be born.

"William, come over here!" As Lin Yun was thinking about this, Salen, who had been defeated twice in these bidding wars, had left his private room.

He also seemed very aggressive as he pushed aside a guard of the Black Horn chamber of commerce while rushing towards the fifth row.

"William Merlin! Are you looking for a beating? You think I don't know why you are competing against me for those items? You are quite bold..." Salen was followed by half a dozen subordinates who looked a bit scary. He ignored everyone else and stopped in front of William, pointing right at his face. "Don't think that having a bit of money is anything amazing. Just wait, I already requested the family. The Charlotte Family is determined to win the next seven items, as well as the final one!"

**Chapter 299: Move Your Hand**

"I am so scared..." The current William Merlin wasn't even afraid of Ross Merlin, so how could he fear Salen Charlotte? He stood up as he sneered, "You said you are determined to win the next items? You think the Black Horn chamber of commerce is owned by your Charlotte Family?"

"William, did you think that I can't do anything to you in the Black Horn chamber of commerce's domain? Let me tell you, I am a Black Iron VIP of the Black Horn chamber of commerce..." After saying that, Salen waved his hand and his subordinates immediately surrounded them.

In the eyes of ordinary folk, these people indeed looked quite fierce, but to Lin Yun and Ross, those who had walked countless times on the thin line between life and death, they could see with a single glance that they were elite, experienced warriors. Each of them had been tempered through life and death trials, and killing was nothing out of the ordinary for them.

"Alright, Salen, you have been noisy enough." Seeing that a fight might break out soon, Ross had no choice but to step forward.

No matter how much he disliked William, he was still a Merlin. How could he let him be bullied by the Charlotte Family?

And with Salen making a ruckus here, how could he get that map from his distant cousin's hands?

Ross had thought that since he stepped out and intervened, with his status as a 5th Rank High Mage, Salen would have no choice but to withdraw, no matter how unwilling he was.

Unfortunately, Ross forgot one thing...

He forgot that he had spent the past few years doing planar expeditions and that although he had become very famous throughout, he had rarely shown himself in Okland.

Sadly for Ross, he didn't even get to finish his words before Salen retorted, "Who are you to dare interfere with my business? Kid, don't think that you can be impudent in front of me, Young Master Salen, by hugging William's thigh! Your future is going to be very difficult if you offend the Charlotte Family."

"Ahahahah..." These words made William burst out in laughter.

Although he didn't say anything, he looked as if he was having fun watching Ross in this situation.

"..." Ross almost exploded in rage.

He, as one of the three young geniuses of the Merlin Family and a 5th Rank High Mage with the power of the Endless Spring, was actually mistaken for someone trying to suck up to William? How many people would laugh if this spread?

If he could, Ross would have slapped him and broken all his teeth.

But there was one issue with this plan.

Ross hadn't forgotten that this place was the Black Horn chamber of commerce's domain.

He was also a Black Iron VIP like Salen Charlotte. If a battle broke out here, the Black Horn chamber of commerce would inevitably interfere. This was because of the rules of the Black Horn chamber of commerce, and he wouldn't be able to change it even with his friendship with Ritch.

Ross endured it, taking a few deep breaths to suppress his anger, and when he talked again, his voice was already scarily cold. "Good, good, Salen Charlotte, I'll remember you."

"Hahaha, Okland is so big, there are plenty of people that remember this Young Master Salen," he disdainfully responded before pointing at Lin Yun. "And you, kid, don't think I don't know you were helping William bid. You'd best remember this Young Master Salen. I'll slap you ten times if you bid on any of the next items, and I'll slap you twenty times if you bid twice."

"Move your hand. You are blocking my line of sight." Lin Yun was single-mindedly focused on the list of items and simply had no interest in Salen Charlotte. But now, Salen Charlotte's hand just happened to be in Lin Yun's line of sight. This movement immediately made Lin Yun's eyebrows scrunch up slightly.

Only William noticed Lin Yun's subtle change.

'Idiot, you provoked the one person you shouldn't have, you are truly out of luck...' William naturally wouldn't warn Salen Charlotte. He only enjoyed the spectacle from the side while acting as if this had nothing to do with him by looking at the ceiling of the auction hall.

Salen Charlotte simply didn't realize anything was amiss and just kept going further and further down this unlucky path.

"Oh wow, you are quite arrogant, kid!"

"I'll say it one more time, move your hand, you are blocking my line of sight..." Lin Yun raised his head slightly to throw a glance at Salen Charlotte.

"Shit, how could you dare speak to this Young Master like this?" Salen flew into a rage after being treated like that. "You guys, come over and throw this kid out for me. I want to see if he'll still act so arrogantly after seeing his own teeth scattered on the ground!"

A few fierce subordinates pounced over after hearing Salen's order. These experienced warriors were most likely a part of the Charlotte Family's planar legion. They hadn't shown it before, but they were now bursting with formidable Aura. The onlookers scattered away. Those subordinates' Auras were almost as powerful as Expert Swordmen's. If they weren't careful, they get injured.

Seeing this situation, Ross prepared a Flame Ring, but he stopped himself just as he was about to cast it, remembering that this was a great opportunity to make his cousin owe him a favor.

Thus, Ross waited.

He was waiting for the conflict to start.

He knew that Salen was a 4th Rank Expert Swordsman with some strong subordinates. He felt that even if his cousin was a High Mage, he would definitely suffer in that conflict, so all he had to do was wait for that moment.

Afterwards, he would be able to step in to clean up the mess.

'Then, would he still not give me the map after such a huge favor?'

But Ross didn't know that William had already noticed his actions and was inwardly ridiculing him.

William was acting as a bystander this time. He obviously saw that Ross had been preparing to cast a Flame Ring and naturally understood what he was thinking about.

'You think you are so clever, yet you missed such a huge opportunity...'

William felt that Ross' actions were extremely stupid because he knew too much about his younger cousin.

He was the type that hated owing others anything. As long as Ross had immediately helped him, no matter the outcome, he would have made his cousin owe him a favor. That favor might not have just been a simple map, it might have changed his entire life, just like it had changed William's.

Unfortunately, Ross had missed such an opportunity.

And sure enough...

Just as Ross restrained his Flame Ring, the young High Mage who had been sitting suddenly moved. A flaming snake appeared, twisting and turning. The few warriors approaching Expert Swordsman Rank immediately let out mournful screams.

A bloody smell permeated the auction hall in an instant.

Before anyone understood what had happened, those few elites collapsed on the ground, letting out blood-curdling howls as each of them used one of their hands to hold the other wrist.

Everyone could now see the outcome.

All the subordinates that Salen Charlotte brought here, without any exception, had their right hands burnt by that flaming snake. Their right hands looked like charcoal, the outer layer black like a charred piece of wood.

But it wasn't over.

The flaming snake remained after burning their arms. It jumped out of one of the subordinates and stopped in front of Salen.

Salen was completely terrified.

His face was as white as a sheet of paper. Although his right hand was gripping the sword at his waist, he was shivering and couldn't even draw it out of its scabbard.

He was still in that state as the flaming snake moved closer to his body. He just kept retreating, shivering incessantly. When he finally recovered, he screamed, "Help me! Help me! Get that damn thing away!"

The auction hall was completely silent.

Only Salen's screams resounded in the auction hall for a very long time.

They were all looking at Salen Charlotte with sympathy. A 4th Rank Expert Swordsman could already be described as outstanding in Okland. He would hold a key position in the Charlotte Family in the future.

But now, this 4th Rank Expert Swordsman was scared shitless by that flaming snake.

The snake was now coiled around Salen's arm, the arm that had blocked Lin Yun's line of sight.

Although the Expert Swordsman had Aura protecting his body, its power paled compared to the flaming snake, and it could only hold on for a short time before quickly darkening.

"Guards... Guards!" After retreating a few steps, Salen suddenly remembered to use his status as a Black Iron VIP. "Damn guards, where are you! I am an honored Black Iron VIP, this shouldn't happen to me in your Black Horn chamber of commerce!"

But what a pity... No one cared about him...

### **Chapter 300: Fear**

The Aura covering Salen's body was getting dimmer and dimmer and the flaming snake wrapping around his arm was becoming so hot that it was emitting a blinding glow.

"Fuck, what are the guards doing? Hurry up and save me! I am a Black Iron VIP! You can't do this to me!"

Salen's shouts echoed loudly throughout the hall.

But no one answered.

Not only were there a few dozen Great Swordsmen guarding the auction hall, but there were also a few guard leaders who were Expert Swordsmen. There was also Ritch, who was a High Mage, as well as an Archmage keeping watch. This was necessary to maintain order in the auction hall. The Black Horn chamber of commerce's reputation wasn't for nothing.

But none of these people who should have been maintaining order moved.

They all remained at their assigned spots, as if they couldn't see what was happening.

"What are you doing!?" The Aura on Salen's body was almost gone and he could already feel some sharp pain on his arm. The frightening heat almost drove him crazy. "I am a Black Iron VIP!!!"

Salen felt more and more hopeless.

The high temperature and sharp pain on his arm made him dizzy. He felt as if the world was flashing black and white while the sound of his own voice seemed more and more distant.

"Forget it, Cousin..." William's words assisted Salen. "His grandfather had some friendship with your grandfather..."

"Oh?" Lin Yun frowned.

But ultimately, Lin Yun had Syudos withdraw.

After being freed from Syudos, Salen was laying on the ground, gasping for air like he was collapsing from heatstroke.

It took a few minutes for Salen to recover some energy, but he no longer dared to provoke Lin Yun. He only threw a glance filled with fear and hate before quickly retreating a dozen meters.

It looked like someone suddenly retreating after seeing a viper in a bush, afraid that they would be bitten if they were too slow.

After getting far enough away, Salen stopped. He didn't dare to look at Lin Yun and instead vented all his anger on Ritch with a dark expression.

"Ritch, what is going on with your Black Horn chamber of commerce!? I am a Black Iron VIP! Shouldn't you take responsibility if something bad happens to me?"

"My apologies, Young Master Salen." Ritch kept a smile on his face as he calmly answered, "The person you attacked is a Gold Vip."

"I don't care about Gold..." Salen stopped before finishing his sentence, his mouth wide open as his eyes bulged comically. He looked at Ritch for a long time before carefully inquiring, "What... What did you say? Gold... Gold VIP?"

"Indeed, Young Master Salen. The person you attacked is a Gold VIP." Ritch nodded. "As a result, you might have some trouble. You and your Family will have to give an explanation for this matter. That Gold VIP can also pursue you further for what happened. Believe me, this is not good news at all. If this happens, the Black Horn chamber of commerce would have no choice but to blacklist you and your family..."

"..." Salen was standing there, stunned. He gulped before asking, "Is he... Is he really a Gold VIP?"

"Definitely, he is a Gold VIP."

"No way..." After confirming once again, Salen Charlotte became teary from fright. 'How... How... How could I be so unlucky? It was just a small conflict, how could I fall onto a Gold VIP... This must be a joke...'

How could Salen Charlotte not know the seriousness of the consequences of attacking a Gold VIP in the Black Horn chamber of commerce's territory?

This was no laughing matter...

As long as the Gold VIP said something, the guards, guard leaders, and even Ritch and the Archmage would unhesitantly attack him. They could even kill him on the spot.

And the Black Horn chamber of commerce could pursue the Charlotte Family to make them take responsibility, and the Patriarch would have no choice but to come out to give an explanation.

"I... I truly didn't know!" Salen wept.

'He wasn't even in a private box, how could a Gold VIP just be in the auction hall? Isn't that misleading people?'

"Young Master Salen, I'm only a minor official in charge of the auction, explaining to me is useless..."

“Ritch, Ritch...” Salen had lost his head. He was holding onto Ritch, begging, “You must help me, I truly didn’t do it on purpose. Help me, the Charlotte Family will be grateful and repay you...”

“I said, Young Master Salen, I am only a minor official in charge of the auction. You attacked a Gold VIP, it is far above the limits of my power to do anything...” Ritch helplessly shook his head. “But I can give you a personal suggestion. You can try pleading with that Gold VIP. If he is willing to pardon you, our Black Horn chamber of commerce would naturally not pursue this.”

“Pleading, pleading, great, I understand. Thank you, Ritch.” Salen no longer cared about his fear and after hurriedly thanking Ritch, he put on a disgusting smile and rushed towards Lin Yun while shivering.

“Cousin Mafa...” Ross’ mood was quite complicated.

At first, Ross had thought of waiting for the fight to start before cleaning up the mess and saving his distant cousin, defending the Merlin Family’s honor while conveniently making his cousin owe him a favor. He wanted to trade this favor for the map.

But now...

Ross suddenly found that his plan had been bound to fail. His cousin simply didn’t need his help to settle this conflict. Moreover, he had settled it in a way he himself would never have dreamt of.

That scene truly scared Ross.

Just one flame injured several seasoned peak Great Swordsmen before making a 4th Rank Expert Swordsman such as Salen Charlotte soil his pants.

Such frightening power far surpassed what Ross Merlin could have thought of...

Ross pondered about this situation. If he wanted to defeat Salen Charlotte while he was under the protection of several peak Great Swordsman, he would have to use the Endless Spring.

Yet, his younger cousin didn’t even move, he only sent out one flame and then waited peacefully.

What did this mean?

It was shocking. Even if that flame was just a Magic Tool, without enough power, how could one control such a powerful Magic Tool?

Ross was finally aware that this distant cousin from Thousand Sails City was far from being as simple as he’d thought.

He had ridiculously thought that this cousin of his was only an ordinary wealthy businessman that had money but hadn’t experienced the real world, all because he came from a small city. He’d been sure that as long as he offered some benefits, he would be able to exchange for that map. But he could now tell how ridiculous his previous words had been.

Alchemy techniques, magic knowledge... With the way he spent money, how could he not have the money to buy those? That was over two million golds! That was enough to move an Archmage!

As for his two Spiritual Magic Tools...

It felt like a joke now.

He had clearly seen the power of that ball of fire. If it was from a Magic Tool, then that power was at least True Spirit Magic Tool level. His two peak Spiritual Magic Tools couldn't compare.

And that wasn't the most important part.

Ross realized something troublesome because of that terrifying flame.

He realized that he would have ended up facing that True Spirit Magic Tool if he had kept threatening, or even tried to attack him.

That was a power on par with an Archmage. If it burst out to attack him, even he as a 5th Rank High Mage with the Endless Spring might not be able to contend with it. It would be a question of whether he could retreat in one piece; getting that map wouldn't even matter.

As he thought of this, Ross started sweating profusely.

He had his mouth open, but didn't know what to say.

"The map, right?" Lin Yun was actually the one who spoke first. "Let's talk about it after going back..."

"Eh?" Ross was startled at first, before suddenly looking happy. "Yes, yes, when we go back, when we go back..."

Ross' mood was like a roller coaster. It originally was at rock bottom, but he immediately cheered up after hearing Lin Yun's words. That map was too important to Ross.

"Just don't bother me now."

"Of course, of course..." Ross would naturally change his attitude after hearing that there was still hope to get the map.

After dealing with Ross, Lin Yun's gaze returned to the auctioneer. The auctioneer was in the middle of introducing an item. That was a Darkness Evil Python's Python Skin. Needless to say, that item definitely came from the Mercury Tower. Traces of Darkness Evil Pythons could only be found in the Gold Forest Plane occupied by the Mercury Tower.