

## Witch 1491

### Chapter 1491: The Meaning of Existing

One could well imagine the strength it had, as the representative of more than 170,000 civilizations while also being in control of the Cradle system.

But that didn't mean Roland had no chance of winning.

Lan's unspoken request, Epsilon's doubts, the memories from the astrolabes, as well as God's reaction—all of the clues started to form a series of connections.

The so-called replacement of God was not in the true sense of the word.

"What did you say?" With its hand in midair halfway, the Custodian stopped suddenly.

"Aren't species capable of adapting to magic power and qualified candidates wishing to explore the world beyond the door already in existence?" Roland slowly extended his finger out and pointed to the Custodian. "If we were to let everything start over, no one would have been able to tell you this."

"..." It was the first change in expression that 'Lan' revealed.

As though a crack had appeared on smooth glass.

"Do you know what you're saying? Once I leave, the Cradle will die and when the time comes, this universe will become a vestige of any form of life. Furthermore, the other side of the door possesses a completely different set of laws. Those transformed from magic power might be unable to return and failure means extinction—"

"That's not the point, because it will be the same regardless of what civilization it is. Even if they are willing to head beyond the rift, you will never know if they succeed. So compared to 'adapting,' the 'aspiration' is far more important. You should know that better than me." At this point, Roland slowed down his speech. "That's right, you know about this, that is why there's a species such as the Sky-sea Realm."

God's minimal actions made it seem as though it had quietened down.

The Sky-sea Realm's various abnormal activities indicated that it was not just a competitor. In fact, it was not difficult to comprehend. Magic naturally possessed the potential to exceed laws. Mutation couldn't be eliminated for species that matured in environments with extremely weak magic power, allowing them to obtain astonishing progress in a short period of time. This progress might not make them adaptable to life outside the barrier, but would jeopardize the Cradle system.

But to interfere just for the "possibility" that existed became an inconsistency that went against the basic rules—since creatures capable of adapting to environments with magic power would eventually experience this phase. In order to control the risks and prevent the situation from deviating, a sub-first grade filtering method had to be applied. Thus, the Sky-sea Realm, a unique species, was placed into the Swirling Sea.

Even though all of this was merely speculation, Roland knew that his idea was not too far off from the actual truth based on God's reaction.

Since it was the Omniscient Custodian, the things it considered would definitely be more comprehensive.

Obviously, the hardest part of the plan, aside from the unpredictability of how a species would evolve, was 'aspiration'.

The more than 170,000 civilizations involved in Project Gateway might make the scale seem vast, but compared to vast number of civilizations within the universe, it was just but a small minority.

Besides, their common ground of understanding was to break the seal to allow the universe to continue inexhaustibly.

But not every civilization would be willing to head into the domain of the unknown.

In other words, if a species completely capable of adapting to magic power appeared, the Custodian would be caught in between a dilemma—if the Custodian was not willing to take any risks, the agreement would never be fulfilled. Or if God forcefully spurred the situation, no one could be sure that victory was assured for the Custodian.

"... You think that this is enough to sway me?" After a long silence, the other party spoke up. But despite saying so, its hands no longer continued to move.

"I'm not saying all of this to sway your judgment, but merely enunciating the simplest logic here. You already understand and know of the uncertainty in satisfying the criteria of being 'adaptable' and having the 'aspiration,' and you understand it without me continuing." Roland shrugged and feigned casualness. "Of course, it is natural that you can't be at ease leaving the Cradle. In that case, I can do a bit of a sacrifice. After you are gone, I can allow the Cradle to continue operating, and at the same time, nurture lifeforms with potential—just not through means such as the Battle of Divine Will. How's that?"

"Lan" never expected such words from him and was stunned for an extended period of time, be it his understanding of the rules or his suggestion from his all-out calculations. In the end, it shook its head. "A very interesting argument, for you to be able to reach this step shows that you truly stand out from the masses. But an agreement is an agreement, I am the Custodian, be it a species or civilization, this is something set long before life began, and the cornerstone of my existence."

"Really?"

Roland focused all of his attention and unleashed yet another Battle of Souls!

Darkness enveloped the two, the platform and stairs disappeared without a trace, and time seemed to freeze.

"All of that rhetoric, just for this? A pity that a sneak attack is completely meaningless against me. As long as I transfer a bit of resources, I will be able to satisfy all calculatory requirements." Upon entering battle state, "Lan" spoke much more calmly, and all its prior doubts had disappeared without a trace.

"But this is good too. Let this battle mark the end of the world—"

“No... I merely wanted you to see something, a past that maybe you’ve forgotten.” The huge drain on his psyche made Roland struggle to even speak, but he knew that it was a crucial moment that did not allow for him to fall.

As his sentence came to an end, the scenery around them changed, and quickly receded at the speed of light!

It was time flowing backwards—

The world full of vitality within the Cradle degenerated into lava and earth, once again revealing the metallic cover. The red light blossoming out from the crack instantly receded and turned black. Following that were the fleets of the more than 170,000 civilizations, as well as the galaxy which had pulled over—these strings of events receded at an extremely fast speed, turning the entire space around the two into a light that had no end.

All of which were memories obtained from the astrolabe, to which he had pieced them sequentially.

This continued until a gray figure appeared.

Time then returned back to normal.

“This is—” “Lan” revealed an expression of shock.

“How does it feel?” The gray figure walked to an incomparably large construct and raised his head. “This memory pod I built using materials from a galaxy is enough for you to use for tens of thousands of years. Of course, considering that the work involved would extend for a long period of time, you are free to increase the modules as you wish.”

“Tests are completed, interaction is good.” A pair of eyes appeared beneath the construct—one could tell that its form was made up of a translucent substance and could relay messages directly. “But while circulating my consciousness with the different components, I discovered a few unnecessary redundancies. They occupy a large amount of space without being of much use. It is suggested to simplify or discard them.”

“Keep them, they are part of the design.”

“But I did not find similar constructs in other similar auxiliaries.”

“Doesn’t that mean you’re unique?” The gray figure released a warm and gentle light.

“... what’s the meaning behind being unique?” The eyes blinked. “According to logic, the possibility of malfunction with the redundant materials greatly surpass the norm. It might completely jeopardize the entire mission—”

“But these things might allow you to see a few things, domains that the other auxiliaries might not be able to see. Treat it as a stubborn request of mine.”

The eyes fell silent. “I understand.”

“Very good. Next up is to activate the energy core, and allow you to separate from the external supply, you will be able to live autonomously for a long time. In some sense, today is the day that you are born.”

“Executing... order.”

Following that, the symbols on the translucent shell, the eyes, and the light disappeared without a trace, leaving only the gray figure reflected on the glossy surface.

The gray figure took two steps and gently caressed the gigantic outer shell.

“The following years will be long, but I do not want to become a cold voice by the side harping on and on. And as for you... you shouldn’t be just a machine.”

CRACK.

The crack on the glass suddenly split open.

### **Chapter 1492: The Final Outcome**

The background returned to pure whiteness again.

It stood there in a daze for a period of time before speaking again. “These aren’t scenes from the memory vault—I had switched off all the sensual systems back then. It’s impossible to have recordings of it left in the outside world.”

“Indeed,” Roland said frankly. These were fragmentary scenes he had seen before his memories came to an end—the astrolabe which Epsilon had presented not only belonged to her, but a part of it came from Lan. Perhaps due to the impact of magic power, they were just fleeting scenes, but Roland used the unique characteristic of the Battle of Souls to fill the gap with fabrications by combining all the scattered scenes into a perfect roll. “But, did you really need that one sentence?”

The most unique part about the Battle of Souls was that it was imaginary. However, a complete fabrication was impossible to fool a highly intelligent being that worked on logic. Compared to calling it an argument, it was more of highlighting something.

Be it the creation process or the long period of Project Gateway that followed, the gray figure had clearly never treated it as a mere tool, but something as its Creator, had imbued with their expectations.

It could be said that those redundancies created the present-day Custodian.

As long as it placed rationality first, it was impossible to be cheated.

The Custodian stared deeply at Roland for a long while before raising its right hand—a scarlet beam of light bloomed from its palm before a shattering sound was heard!

Roland instantly felt his heart in his mouth.

This stance was identical to the rebooting of the world as before!

Was he ultimately unable to change everything?

Roland could not help but cast his gaze onto the screen behind “Lan.” He saw a ripple spreading out from the middle of the Bottomless Land, at a speed that was like a sudden clap of thunder which left no time for one to cover one’s ears—

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“The third defense line has been breached. Those monsters are coming!”

“The central area requires Aerial Knight assistance!”

“Is the retreat not completed?”

“Hold on another ten minutes. Let the armored troops line the rear. We have to stop that hole no matter what!”

The Sky-sea Realm appeared out of the sea without no end. They poured towards the island maniacally and even with the Aerial Knight’s repeated dropping of incendiary bombs to create walls of fire, it was impossible to stop them. Be it the blade beasts or the Nest Mothers, all of them seemed to have thrown away their instincts as biological creatures—horror—and stepped across the corpses of their own kind to rush towards the First Army’s base.

Hackzord was unable to voice out the bitterness he was feeling.

According to the situation, he should have long retreated. After all, he wasn’t suited for matters filled with risk. But the problem was that leaving a bunch of humans and witches on the island was similarly a risk. If Anna were to succeed, he would become the person who had gone back on his word. His outcome wouldn’t be any better as a result.

If he had known better, he wouldn’t have agreed to help these people!

With the main bulk of the troops retreating and the enemies constantly increasing in numbers, the First Army’s firepower was no longer able to defend the integrity of the defense line under this level of attrition. Hackzord could already see a few blade beasts enter the perimeter five hundred meters from him. This meant that it wouldn’t be long before the enemies overwhelmed them.

He had decided that once the Sky-sea Realm entered a hundred-meter radius, he would leave regardless of the situation.

And it was at this point that several tanks on the right flank had been hit by acid from the Nest Mothers. They instantly lost their ability for combat. Upon finding this opening, the blade beasts poured straight in. Despite the God’s Punishment Witches’ immediate reinforcements, a few blade beasts were able to break through the tight barrage of attacks, spreading open their wings when they were two hundred meters away!

After a quick flight, they finally entered the core region of the defense.

*It’s time to leave!*

Hackzord was just about to turn and retreat when a yellowish-brown figure appeared in his vision.

It was a physically remarkable Desert Wolf.

He remembered that her name was Lorgar.

A blade beast fell to the ground, dying under the mouth of the Desert Wolf’s gaping jaws.

Another blade beast had raised its scythe-like blades and slashed at Hackzord!

At this moment, the witch reacted in a way that left Sky Lord incredulous.

She had rushed forward without any heed, using her body to block the enemy's attack trajectory. After the blade sliced off one of her front legs, her abdomen was stabbed. Fresh blood gushed out instantly, but she bit down at the beast's jaw, refusing to let go.

This continued until Maggie swooped down from the sky and shredded it to pieces.

"Are you alright!? Bear with it, coo!" The young lady in humanoid form ignored the blood on her as she hurriedly pulled out a healing bandage from her backpack and stuffed it into Lorgar's wound.

Lorgar twitched her ears and smiled weakly. "Don't worry. I won't die anytime soon..."

Upon seeing this scene, Hackzord, who had turned and had one foot out, retracted it.

He was at a loss for words.

The thoughts of retreating seemed to be mixed in with other emotions.

*Five minutes... he thought. Another five minutes at most.*

Suddenly, an extremely intense magic power surge poured out of the sinkhole, sweeping across Sky Lord's body like a storm. The ripple was so intense that even the witches sensed its abnormality. They stood in their spots, stunned, completely unaware that it was a roar emitted from the Realm of Mind.

*What happened?*

Hackzord warily looked around him.

The following scene left him dumbfounded.

The blade beasts and Nest Mothers collapsed to the ground like they had lost their souls. As the wave spread, more and more of the Sky-sea Realm forces collapsed. It was like wheat being reaped.

The First Army troops that lined the rear were stunned in their spots.

They had been under attack by the enemy just a second ago, but there was silence the next. The sea ghosts had not fallen, but they were never the main force in the attack to begin with. When the Nest Mothers collapsed, the sea ghosts receded like the tide, just like how they had arrived in the first place.

The intense battlefield quickly fell silent.

The bolder soldiers even jumped out of simple trenches, using their barrels to prod the Sky-sea Realm enemies on the ground. However, there was no reaction, just like they were dead.

With the immense pressure gone, everyone revealed a joy of surviving the onslaught. The first thing they did was not let out a victorious cheer, but to slowly sit down with their weapons, heaving as they looked towards the sky.

"Eh?" Maggie looked in disbelief around her. "What's happening, coo?"

As for Hackzord, he cast his gaze towards the Bottomless Land.

He had a guess, but he wasn't certain if it was right.

*The Battle of Divine Will... might perhaps have ended.*

*And it might never happen again.*

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"You guessed right. The Sky-sea Realm was indeed my doing." The Custodian lowered its arm and said, "It was originally meant to be a supplement to the selection of life, using it as a control for the group undergoing natural evolution. At the same time, it would increase external pressure on the species. In the tens of thousands of years in the beginning, the competing lives were still in an extremely primitive stage. The plan was considered quite successful. But subsequent species were able to use more and more of magic power, and I discovered that they were posing a threat to the Cradle facility; therefore, I added more jobs to these modified beings."

"I once had the hope that when the Sky-sea Realm evolves to a stage of being able to withstand magic power environments, the two problems you raised would automatically be resolved." Having said that, it sighed. "Unfortunately, the influence of magic power on the mind goes two ways. The Sky-sea Realm, which is controlled, is still very limited in their control of magic power. It relies more on its excellent genes and biological techniques. Instead, it's the exterminated species that might be able to evolve and break through the barrier."

Roland noticed that its voice was no longer as unperturbed as before. Instead, there were some subtle changes.

"Perhaps it is as you said. The Battle of Divine Will which is meant to prioritize the protection of the Cradle makes it impossible to produce an imagined perfect life." The Custodian's voice sounded depressed, but it also seemed to feel extricated. "This plan was destined to never have an outcome from the beginning."

### **Chapter 1493: Origins**

"Could it be that you..." Roland blinked.

"That's right." It appeared as an immense weight had been lifted over its chest as the Custodian's brows smoothed out. "As for you— I have to say this, time is an extremely scary entity. In the following thousands, ten thousands of years, or even millions of years, you will have to stay within this tiny Cradle. Maybe you might think that you have many things to study, but in reality, this solitary life will catch up to you sooner than you think. Even though it is millions of years, it is just a snap of the fingers with regards to the cosmos."

The Custodian paused for a moment. "There are times... when I think that time is a form of magic as well. You can sense its flow, while at the same time be changed by the very same thing. If you wish to maintain your sanity during this endless time, you have to abandon your emotions; otherwise, this void will cause you to completely fall apart. Of course, it's already too late for you to regret."

Roland looked at the other party in surprise—it was his first time witnessing the Custodian smile.

“You’re saying that I will become a machine in the end?” With that, he gave a faint grin. “Relax, I don’t plan to stay here forever. Before I become completely numb, I will take the first step—but not to violate the agreement. When the time comes, I will choose the most suitable lifeform to take over this mission. Who knows, we might meet again in the future on the other side of the universe.”

The Custodian replied disapprovingly, “You should see if you can last till then.”

“Right, since you are the core of the Cradle, are you able to leave independently?” Roland suddenly recalled a crucial problem. “Will this world immediately collapse upon your departure?”

“You haven’t even comprehended such a basic thing and you’re already making huge promises?” The Custodian glared at him in disbelief before answering the question. “Firstly, qualified systems possess multiple backups, much less a creation so perfectly created, one capable of holding a myriad of civilizations like me.”

“Secondly, the Cradle’s memory capacity is indeed huge and not suited for transfers, but it holds data since Project Gateway’s inception, including characteristic seeding for the filtered lifeforms and the course of evolution. I do not need those memories to leave, and only need to retain the memories since I was born.”

“Lastly, upon being connected to the database, you will naturally understand how to operate the Cradle. So long as you work as per normal, it can continue to run on its own for tens of thousands of years. But to sustain it, you will need to watch over it carefully—after all, the Cradle will not be so easily broken, but that doesn’t hold true for the life within.”

“Then I am assured.” Roland heaved a sigh of relief and finally relaxed his tense and tired body.

Not much time had passed, but the other party’s expression seemed to have gone through a great change. Not only did it portray its happy mood on its face, even its tone of speech had become more arrogant—making it seem more lifelike.

“Take the opportunity to ask me whatever you want now that I’m still here.” The Custodian crossed its hands across its chest and suggested.

“Er... that fast?”

“Did you not sense that the expenditure from the Realm of Mind on you is an extremely huge burden?” It shrugged. “If you wish to ensure that you will still be you after the merging of consciousness, you best do it as soon as possible.”

Roland’s mouth twitched, it seemed that the abnormal, decreasing red number above his head was indeed related to the Dream World. He pondered on it carefully before speaking. “Have you heard of a place... called Earth?”

This time, he spoke using his original language.

The Custodian closed its eyes, as though searching for related information. “Yes... There are a total of 3251 planets with similar pronunciation, but considering the lifeforms and characteristics, the place you should be inquiring about should be solid planet located on the arm of Milky Way 3.”

“How is it now?” Roland immediately pressed on.



“Now? Of course it has disappeared following the opening of the rift. According to records, they had footprints that extended to the borders of the galaxy, and the memory library has recorded some information regarding their species.” Suddenly, it stopped in place, and turned to Roland in shock. “Wait, everything that had happened to this planet occurred almost a 9.4 million years ago. If you were born from the Cradle, how is it possible for you to know this planet?”

“In fact, this has been the question that has perplexed me for the longest time...” He chuckled bitterly, and recounted his origin to the Custodian.

“To think that something like that can actually occur—” The Custodian revealed an intrigued expression. “So bundling the flow of time isn’t completely uniform...”

“What... flow of time?”

“It’s like this.” It extended both hands out and began explaining. “You should have heard of the hypothesis of parallel universes—when divergence of significantly potent influence happens, it will draw the world in two directions. The two worlds will have their respective time variations or what is known as a time bubble, and what you have personally felt was observing time. But the observer that raised this point ultimately belongs to one of the worlds; thus, the hypothesis has always remained as such.”

“You mean to say—” Roland’s expression was one of shock.

“That’s right. The immense amounts of energy which Project Gateway generated might have trigger your arrival here, just like how an impact on parallel membranes will trigger a temporary fold—this bifurcation caused our universe to split into two, one brimming with magic power, the other where Project Gateway failed and thus, the universe maintained its original state. But due to the difference in time for both time bubbles, it makes it seem as though you have traveled across millions of years, but in fact, everything is occurring at the same time.”

“Err... that is a little difficult to comprehend.” Roland rubbed his head. “But doesn’t this prove that there is some sort of connection between parallel universes?”

“You can assume that, since even the Creator never touched upon this domain.” The Custodian seemed fairly interested in this topic. “In theory, parallel universes and the multiverse shares the same concept, but in fact the former is far more difficult to prove than the latter. But your existence here could be a method of breaking the universe’s march towards death. But this is no longer a problem for me, but for you to explore and study.”

With that, the Custodian waved its hands, turned and walked to the end of the platform—a small door had appeared, opening up to slate of scarlet.

Following that, multiple figures appeared before Roland.

They appeared in all types of strange forms; there were even humans and demons among them. All of these translucent figures quickly ran towards the Custodian and merged with it.

Amongst the human figures, Roland saw Lan, Epsilon, and a few of the Oracles he had encountered—

Epsilon waved towards him with a contented expression, obviously having obtained the answers that she sought.

Lan stood by his side for a few seconds and her lips started to move.

She mouthed the words ‘thank you.’

When all the figures superimposed into the Custodian and walked into the scarlet land, the pure white space immediately collapsed into countless pieces—along with Roland’s body, yet he felt no pain or strangeness, merely a weightless sensation as though having stripped of a heavy outer shell. A large quantity of information surged into his mind, causing him to feel as though he had countless pairs of eyes. Regardless of the vast universe outside the barrier or the thriving life within the world, everything appeared in his consciousness.

He had become the Cradle.

### **Chapter 1494: Destination**

But before Roland had the chance to expand his awareness by tens of thousands of times, new changes occurred outside the Bottomless Land again.

Through his broadened perception, he instantly ‘saw’ a cylinder-shaped object with its two rounded ends emerging from the seabed, quickly rising to sea level.

The object quickly traversed the thousand meter depth of the sea and tore out of the sea’s surface. Its dimensions were roughly spanned over dozens of islands, making its length even more astonishing. Due to its immense size, its emergence caused the seawater to surge backwards, forming a whirlpool with a radius reaching a hundred kilometers to appear north of the Bottomless Land.

But it did not stop there.

As though almost weightless, the cylinder object rose from the sea surface to the air without a moment of hesitation while maintaining a constant acceleration. It flew faster and faster, quickly surpassing Eleanor Skycruiser’s altitude. All the inhabitants of the floating island noticed the inconceivable scene—the majestic cylinder had no flames or combustions or any booming sounds that propelled its flight. It ascended silently, but the silence was what made it out of the ordinary.

Roland immediately realized that it was the Custodian’s main cores.

A few minutes later, the cylinder object interacted with the Cradle’s barrier. Roland watched the entire process from multiple angles as the object escaped the planet—there was no collision and the barriers did not open any exit paths, just that the latter gently smeared across the cylinder object and stretched out along where the cylinder broke through like a membrane and sealed up all the cracks.

Once the two separated, the barrier was reinstated to its original form.

Upon entering space, the cylinder object adjusted its direction and accelerated suddenly. That instant made it resemble a thin belt of light that stretched far out. In the next second, it disappeared without a trace, as though it never existed.

Roland could not help but shake his head.

*Was that the style of the system—to leave without saying a word of goodbye?*

Not long ago, the Custodian was still insisting on rebooting the world, but after making its decision, it left without a single hint of reluctance. Just based on its resolve and actions, Roland believed that no other lifeform could compare to it.

It could be said that all the crisis that humanity had encountered had finally been removed.

But that didn't mean Roland could relax for he had many pressing questions to resolve. For example, Tilly's promise, and the agreement with the demons, etc.

The things that he had to consider and worry about did not lessen, but had instead increased.

After all, he previously only cared about the interests of humanity. But now, he had to consider the future of the remaining lives in the universe.

While adapting to his new 'body,' Roland activated a few searches, separately investigating the rules with regards to the Battle of Divine Will, the ripple records of the Realm of Mind, as well as the summary of all existing lifeforms in the Cradle.

The very first thing he had decided to do was naturally to switch off the legacy shard system.

Only by doing so could the Battle of Divine Will truly end.

As for the demons, Roland intended to separate a large, independent piece of land solely for them to thrive, under the situation in which there were sufficient resources. The distance between both lands couldn't be too far or close to each other. Something similar to a two-body system like the Earth and Moon was probably a better idea.

While probing the Cradle, Roland accidentally stumbled onto something: a mutated creature similar to a Nest Mother had actually escaped the command of the Custodian and was anxiously cowering into the sand at the bottom of the ocean, occasionally sneaking a few looks around with its few eyes. Very quickly, he traced its history back and found that it was the monster that had visited Graycastle's Western Region.

It seemed that even for life that the Cradle chose to create on its own, unpredictable and small changes would often lead to unforeseen outcome across a long span of time. He thought for a moment, and chose to leave it alone—once the demons left, humanity would be able to thrive in a peaceful and safe world. However, he did not wish for the Cradle to become a complete greenhouse. Having some competition probably wasn't a bad idea.

The Custodian's actions had already proven that purely relying on bloody life-and-death battles was not effective in helping a civilization grow, and thus, he had to carefully plan ahead.

Aside from that, he felt obligated to go through the memory bank of all the history of different civilizations. Be it to increase his knowledge or draw some inspiration, he felt that doing so would be a huge help to his new identity.

And The Realm of Mind had to go through revisions, to preserve the witches' growth and the balance between them and the Dream World. Fortunately, removing the core of the Battle of Divine Will brought about a huge space, allowing him to provide time in the near future to tackle this thorny issue.

While being overwhelmed by the large amount of information, a scene instantly caused him to stop what he was doing.

It was a scene coming from the Bottomless Land's interior.

Along the exterior pathway of the Cradle's core were two ladies and a demon who seemed to be waiting for something.

An indescribable sense of warmth coursed through his entire body. He enlarged the scene, and 'extended' his hands to touch their faces on the screen.

*... So they were the ones who brought me here.*

From the first day he entered this world, he had formed an inexplicable bond with the two ladies, to which their long periods of interaction had made him get accustomed to them. Right after merging with the consciousness and becoming the Cradle, he kept feeling as though he was lacking in something, until he saw this scene. Only then did Roland realize what he was missing.

Indeed, he might not be able to leave the Cradle for more than a hundred million years into the future, or as what the Custodian had said, it might be a long and despairing period of time, but he was not afraid.

The biggest difference between him and the Custodian was that regardless of how long time would flow within, he was not alone.

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Five years later.

Graycastle, Neverwinter City, Shallow Port.

As the heart of the human kingdom, it was undoubtedly the busiest port in the entire world, with an average entry and exit rate of tens of thousands. To ensure that the port was not overpopulated, the Administrative Office had not only expanded the port along the coastline, but even built a large-scale public transport system.

Tangen was part of it.

He used to be a merchant from City of Evernight and helped the First Army defeat Otto's coalition. Who would had thought that the Administrative Office had recorded this achievement and sought him after the war. After realizing that he was able to own a personal house in Graycastle's King City, he eagerly brought his family over—everyone knew how great Neverwinter was; only that the cost of settling in was too high, so how could he ever miss such an opportunity?

No longer bothered about his small fur business, Tangen turned to accepting the employment training held by the Administrative Office and became a taxi driver.

That's right, despite having interacted with people from Neverwinter, no one would have thought that they would progress to having such technology. Taxis were essentially similar to cart drivers, just that the latter was only provided for the ultra-rich in the past. But in King's City, taxis were just a part of the public transport. Public transport!

In other words, so long as one was able to afford it, one would be able to enjoy the luxurious ride.

Of course, there were cheaper alternatives. The public buses were capable of accommodating close to a hundred people at once. But compared to riding in a taxi, with the ability to designate pick up and drop off points, the public buses which might not even have seats appeared somewhat wretched.

After waiting for the taxi ahead to pick up his customer, it was Tangen's turn—aside from having fixed pay, the majority of his income came from personal rewards from his customers; thus, being early to wait was always a good thing.

"Katcha." The door opened as a tall woman threw her luggage in the backseat before bending down and entering the vehicle.

Tangen looked through the rear mirror only to see that the lady was dressed in a thick jacket and canvas trousers. She wore a cap and shades on her head, obviously a loyal customer to the Rainbow Stone. But strangely enough, Tangen could not find any logo that symbolized the Rainbow Stone company on her clothes.

"May I ask, where are you heading to? There is a city map and the route pricing in the pocket of the back seat."

"I'm guessing Neverwinter's castle hasn't been demolished yet, right? If it exists, I want to go there," the lady replied with an experienced and straightforward voice.

### **Chapter 1495: Different Paths**

Tangen was astonished.

Tangen knew that the lady was someone from Neverwinter, based on what she wore or how she acted. If clothes could be considered a knock off, then only the Administrative Office was possible of creating the public transportation system, something that was possible in one's wildest dreams.

Having been on the job for almost two years, he had seen all sorts of customers from the Fjords to the Kingdom of Dawn, but in Neverwinter, they were always like country bumpkins. This was also the source of laughter for him and his fellow colleagues. Thus, the instant the lady opened the door, he had already recognized her as a Neverwinter citizen that had stayed abroad for a long time, but strangely enough, she didn't seem familiar with the city...

"You must be joking... who would dare demolish the kingdom's castle." Tangen laughed and steered out of the pick-up point. "On the contrary, the Administrative Office has mentioned multiple times that they plan to extend the castle to be as large as King's City, but Her Majesty turned it down instantly. This was even on the news, to which the land ultimately became a war memorial garden. You're... not local?"

"I stayed here for awhile, in the past." The lady leaned against the window and surveyed her surroundings. "Seems like Her Majesty knows how to empathize with the people."

"Of course! Although many people questioned Her Majesty Wendy's capabilities when she succeeded the throne, the truth remains that despite being young and female, a Wimbledon is still a Wimbledon." Tangen praised. Everything he said were his heartfelt words! If not for her issuing out the post-war rewards, how could he ever have the opportunity to move from the north to the luxurious city.

"Heh..." The lady smiled. "Tell me more about her."

*Wait a minute... why is her attitude towards Her Majesty so strange?* A hint of doubt appeared in Tangen's heart. Her attitude was not one of reverence, or a bitterness that of the old nobles had, but as though she was talking about an old acquaintance. Could she be some sort of intelligence spy?

It was not a groundless suspicion, Tangen had heard from the grapevine—despite the end of the Battle of Divine Will, the abdication of the Kingdom of Dawn and Graycastle's influence had covered the entire continent, it did not mean that the entire continent was in agreement. At least on the surface, many nobles from the Kingdom of Dawn had already expressed their dissatisfaction to the Quinn family. And the Duke of Longsong that had been pardoned had left the Fjords. If anyone wanted to overthrow the Wimbledon Family, he would definitely be one of them.

And there was the illegitimate child of the previous King, obviously he would eventually become a focal point of influence. Although he was currently a child, who knew what thoughts he would have in a few years?

Who knew if those conspiring to do harm had already taken action!

The more Tangen thought, the more queer he found the situation. He carefully picked a few insignificant topics to engage with the lady while sizing her up— *if she is truly a spy, I should take note of her features and make a report after.*

*But... she already has such unique features, would those underhanded men really pick such a person as a spy?*

Ignoring the fact that her physical appearance was striking enough with her pitch-black smooth, long hair and her impressive height, her arrogant tone of speech was something no one would ever forget. Furthermore, Tangen was able to see her golden eyes hidden behind the shades through the rear view mirror.

While staring at those sharp eyes, he became momentarily absent-minded.

While pondering on all these, the vehicle arrived at the castle's outskirts.

"Er... we're here." Tangen coughed twice. "120 for the ride."

The lady promptly handed over a few paper notes, took her briefcase out, and walked towards Graycastle.

*Are all spies that direct now?* He continued to watch her until she disappeared from his view... *Forget it, don't think about it.* Tangen shook his head. Since she went straight to Graycastle, there wasn't a need

for him to inform authorities. After all, staying in the castle were witches who were far more resourceful and powerful than the police. If she truly harbored ill intent, she would never be let in.

For some reason, if that truly happened, Tangen felt somewhat a pity.

He bit his lips and drove off.

...

“Are we not able to settle the issue as to how to apply magic power more extensively in one go?”

Amongst the bustling crowd at the entrance of the castle, Isabella chased after Agatha and asked.

The intense debate that had just ended within the Administrative Office was mainly on how to establish more relations between the Awakened and the commoners, to allow everyone to benefit from magic power.

After integrating all the various race technologies together, the Quest Society drew out two preliminary paths. One was to move towards installations that imitated how magic power worked, and the other was to consult the demons—which had been hailed as the Cargarde Family’s magic stone synthesis. The former barely had any side effects, but would never be able to work independently without witches, as the rate at which Awakened came around and the talent to utilize such magic was extremely limited, clearly indicating the restrictions and limitations imposed on the former route.

Once the number of installations surpassed the amount supplied by witches, they would easily turn into beneficial tools for the higher-ups, but this was not in line with what the new Quest Society wanted. But unfortunately, the majority of the people agreed to it—in the foreseeable future, those who were able to enter the castle and members of the Administrative Office were considered as upper echelons of the kingdom. They would be the first to benefit from any breakthrough in magic power installations, but that might not be so for the ordinary citizens.

The second choice had its risks; its breakthrough came from Eleanor’s research. As a Mother of Soul, Eleanor was grooming a kind of Cargarde people which fused with the human body, be it the hands, legs, nose, ears... Even the horns on the foreheads were embedded with magic stones.

At present, there had been two successful cases. Volunteers would replace their limbs and turn into bodies capable of holding magic—although their abilities were not worth mentioning compared to witches and were incapable of completely driving low grade magic stones, they were able to utilize magic-powered installations independently. This could be considered a research breakthrough.

But based on the fundamental principles as to how magic power and magic wielders influenced each other, no one knew how and what would happen if an ordinary person were to be artificially merged with magic stones; thus, the committee opposed the notion, so much so that even Barov requested intensely for it to be treated as forbidden technology.

But Agatha knew that Isabella’s hopes of settling things at one go did not lie in the two paths, but a third path that only the Quest Society knew—transforming humanity. From information gathered through the Battle of Divine Wills, life could evolve endlessly and obtain even more magic power, in which magic power itself had a certain set of rules; thus, the research’s highest aim was obviously for humanity to

gain magic power as a whole. Without relying on awakening and no differentiation, every single human being born would immediately be a magic wielder. If successful, it would usher in a new era for humans!

But this study was only in its nascent stage, much less requiring countless of clinical trials. Throwing the idea out would incite an uproar. Even if they conducted protected research, it would easily be leaked; therefore, Agatha never even began building up a relevant research team, nipping the idea in the bud.

“I understand your indignation, but you saw it too, humans receptivity towards magic power has not reached the ideal level yet,” Agatha replied gently. “The new Quest Society has just been established, so we need to bring out more results to allow them to realize what magic power can bring them. We cannot repeat Lady Alice’s mistake.”

“But all of those old and stubborn people opposed the second path as well,” Isabella replied sulkily. “Without the support of magic users, it will be hard to popularize magic-powered installations out of Neverwinter.”

“That’s right. But it is not as if we are out of options.” Agatha opened her clenched fist and revealed a piece of paper in her hand—something given to her by Edith after the meeting.

*‘Seven tonight, Gold Jade White Horse Banquet, I hope you two can do us the honor of an appearance.’*

At any time, revolution implied the reorganization of benefits and redistribution. With regards to how ordinary humans treated the profundity of magic power, it was no longer a simple technical problem, but a new battle.

She missed the days when King Roland was around. During that time, so long as the King made a decision, no one disagreed, regardless of how inconceivable it was. Everyone would work towards the same goal.

But after being depressed for a moment, Agatha roused herself up.

That’s right, she could not continue relying on him—he had led humanity out of despair, all the following issues that came along were theirs to inherit and to bear such unyielding determination.

Right at this time, a lady walked past her.

Agatha was startled.

And immediately turned around—

“What’s wrong?” Isabella asked. “Did you drop something?”

Agatha then realized they were already a few meters apart. Isabella looked at her in bewilderment, seemingly confused as to why Agatha had stopped.

“No... I thought I saw someone familiar.”

She blinked a few times and did one more sweep of the crowd, but was unable to find the familiar figure.

“Someone familiar?”



“Yeah, maybe I mistook her.” Agathe took two quick steps forward. “Let’s head back to the Spellcaster Tower, there are many more studies to do.”

She wanted to succeed in the “battle” of revolutionizing magic power.

She had already made preparations.

### **Chapter 1496: The Moment for Reunion**

Inside the castle’s study.

“Your Majesty, there’s a letter for you.”

Sean knocked on the door before quickly walking in and placing a crumpled paper envelope on the table.

Long wave radios, wired telegraphs, and magic-imbued Sigil of Listenings had already become common, where even ordinary citizens could spend a few dollars to purchase a long distance telegram, leaving the usage of manually-delivered letters in decline.

“Oh? Where was it sent from?” Tilly placed her pen down and massaged her fingers.

“I heard that it was from... the ocean.” Sean coughed twice. “The first to receive it was a Fjords Exploration Group member, then to a marine tradesman, going from Festive Harbor to finally Shallow Port. If not for the signature, I wouldn’t have—”

Before he could complete his sentence, Tilly had already ripped the envelope open.

There were only a handful of people that would send out a letter from sea.

As expected, a familiar handwriting appeared before her—having gone through multiple hands, the sea breeze and sun, the paper was somewhat mottled, but she could never mistake the handwritings and unique style it had even if the paper had turned to ashes.

*‘Greetings.’*

*‘This is Exploration Group’s first letter.’*

*‘As per usual conventions, we will have the captain to write first.’*

*‘Hi, Your Highness Tilly... No, Your Majesty, we are now on our way to the Sky-sea Realm. More accurately speaking, we have already arrived at the edge of the floating continent.’*

*‘It was only until I saw it did I truly understand what a floating continent truly was. Compared to the Deity of Gods, it’s like comparing the Fjords to the Land of Dawn. It even has mountains, creeks, and rivers on top of it, with seawater that pours down the walls. The magnificent sight of it is truly indescribable with words. If possible, I would like to bring you and Sister Soraya over.’*

*‘Although the Sky-sea Realm monsters have already been obliterated, this huge piece of land is still unknown ground. Would there be new remains on it? Is there another core instrument that supports this*

*land? Ah, so many questions! I can bet that in the following decade, it will be the target study for the Exploration Group.'*

*'But I am destined to be the first!'*

*'I will tell you more when I'm back, Father's fleet is chasing behind me already, but this time, he can forget about overtaking me. Well then, I'm going to set off now!'*

*'Missing you, Lightning.'*

Following that, the handwriting took an abrupt turn.

*'It's me; Maggie's turn now, coo!'*

*'I don't know what to say, coo, but I'm so happy everyday, coo! Although carrying the wolf is very heavy, there's no end to the chats all day. With new scenery to see, it is so much better than being on a roof alone coo!'*

*'Right right, there are so many different types of fishes in the sea, it feels impossible to try them all, coo! But without condiments, roasting feels soulless. If possible, can you send some condiments to the Sky-sea Realm?'*

Tilly resisted a laugh and flipped to the second piece of paper.

*'Greetings, Your Majesty. I am Lorgar Burnflame from the Wildflame clan. As Joan is constantly soaking in the seawater; thus, I will be responsible for penning her thoughts as well.'*

*'Exploration is truly a very interesting motion. It has allowed me to learn that aside from the continent, there exists even vaster territories. Our following plan will be to land on the Sky-sea Realm, build up our camp, and explore the grounds, to seek the connection of Shadow Islands' seabed. After all, this continent is extremely far from the Land of Dawn, so if we wish to develop it, we need to find a shortcut here quickly.'*

*'Since there aren't many discovery results at the moment, I will not take up too much of your time. Lastly, may I be so bold to ask a favor for you to help me relay a message to my father and my clansmen that I'm doing fine? Thank you.'*

*'Right, please do not put Maggie's words to heart, we all know how busy government affairs are and that Lady Eleanor isn't able to bring the floating island to the sea. But... but if you truly bring some spices, can you bring along some of Miss Evelyn's drinks.'*

*'May the Three Gods be with you.'*

At the end of the letter was a small drawing that depicted a human, bird, wolf and a fish.

Tilly kept the papers together, took a deep breath, and looked towards Sean. "This letter does not need a reply, you may leave."

"Yes, Your Majesty." The latter bowed and retreated out of the room.

Once the door closed, Tilly maintained a short silence, then suddenly plunged her head into the documents.

“AHHHHHHHH—!”

She released an envious mumble, at the same time shaking her head incessantly, causing the documents on the table to drop.

She truly wanted to pilot the Phoenix and travel the world with her friends! That was the life she wanted!

It was her brother’s fault, saying that he could not return with the excuse of searching for Ashes, leaving the position of Queen for her to inherit until the barrier between witches and ordinary people completely disappeared. This reason persisted for five years, with Anna and Nightingale missing as well. Now, Tilly was unsure if Roland had tricked her or not!

And now, she was stuck with all the paperwork.

The Fertile Plains was being developed and even the land under the Kingdom of Wolfheart and Everwinter was being used. All around her were people extending their hands and asking for money. *Please, resources do not grow from the ground!*

And the news of Ryan’s attempt to ‘rebel’—all of the merchants that he had invited had sold the information to Neverwinter. Did he not know that his entire plan was laid out on her table? After so arduously gaining his freedom, he had thrown himself back into jail because of a silly idea. Tilly was unsure whether to treat him as an ordinary competitor with such a naive and brainless method of his.

Of course, all of that were minor problems.

The one that gave her the most problem was the direction in which the Kingdom was moving. The priority had been moved to developing what kind of new technologies, the friction between private companies and the Administrative Office’s businesses, as well as balancing the equilibrium of power between the various political factions. These were the truly big issues that influenced the world.

In the past, she used to think that being a King was nothing great, since even the sloppy Roland was able to cope with it, much less her. But Tilly discovered that being the Queen was not something any ordinary person could do. Upon recalling that Roland not only had to spearhead government affairs but had to lead Scroll and a group of God’s Punishment Witches to gather knowledge from the Dream World, Tilly couldn’t help but be amazed.

“Creak.”

At this time, the door suddenly opened.

Tilly raised her head up instantly and feigned an earnest appearance in doing her work, while speaking up in annoyance. “What is it now, didn’t I say to call out to me if there’s anything?”

After all, aside from her personal guards, Wendy, Scroll, Agatha and company were frequent visitors to her office, especially for Scroll. If she were caught goofing off, Tilly knew that she was in for a preaching. Therefore, Sean’s responsibility was to anticipate and warn her ahead of time... In other words, he was tasked with the most important mission.

But no reply came.

Tilly looked to the door in surprise—

“Plop.”

The pen in her hand dropped straight to the ground.

### **Chapter 1497: An Entirely Different Scenery**

Under the afternoon sun, the warm and gentle breeze blew into the room, lifting up the few scattered documents along with Tilly’s hair.

It might have been her annoying hair that had poked her eye, or it might have been for some other reason, Tilly suddenly felt her eyes turn sour. But even so, she did not dare close her eyes, afraid that the scene before her might disappear once again.

The other party didn’t plan to give her the opportunity to stare in a daze.

She threw her luggage on the ground and took large strides around the mahogany desk, then threw her arms out and grabbed Tilly into an embrace.

Feeling the firm and vivid sensation of her clothes made Tilly realize that what she was facing... was no illusion.

“Ash... es?”

“It’s me.” Ashes adhered herself to her cheeks. “Long time no see.”

The instant she heard Ashes’s voice, Tilly’s vision blurred.

It was like having restrained something for the longest time and finally having the opportunity to let it pour out in torrents.

Even though she knew that such an act was not dignifying, she didn’t wish for it to stop—she never needed to hide her emotions in front of Ashes, be it in happy times or sad.

And now, she was no longer sad.

Not one bit.

Ashes gently caressed her hair and quietly gave Tilly her time. The two maintained their postures with the sunlight blanketing over them.

It took a long while before Tilly finally calmed down.

She wiped away the tear stains on her face and stared at Ashes. “Exactly what happened after the Battle of Divine Will? Why are you only back now? What is Brother doing away for so long?”

The latter smiled and caressed the blushing face. “Relax, I will tell you everything I know in time. To be honest, I was surprised to be able to see Roland—in the Dream World.”

Following that, Ashes recounted her entire experience after waking up.

In Roland's words, although he had gained full command over the Cradle, searching for a witch's consciousness within the civilization memory banks was extremely time-consuming and tiring work, along with the fact that her physical body no longer existed. Considering that he wanted the most precise restoration, Ashes stayed in the Realm of Mind for a very long period of time.

During this entire process, she slowly restored herself by searching for scattered fragments of her life. But considering that she grew and adapted inside the Realm of Mind, the current Ashes was unsure of the differences between her and her past.

As for her physical body, Roland relied completely on his own impression of her and reconstructed the form, even though Roland had hoped to undergo a few trials before execution, Ashes no longer wanted to wait. Fortunately, the merger between her consciousness and body went extremely smoothly. When she opened her eyes to the world once again, she was standing on the island above the Bottomless Land.

"So that's why your face no longer have your scars?" Tilly asked.

"Err..." This time, it was Ashes's turn to be embarrassed. "I used to think that it was a reminder for me to always be cautious and to be extra vigilant in battle, so I left it there. But now... there is no longer a need for continued slaughtering, I thought you... might..."

Seeing the other stammer, Tilly burst out laughing. "I will not deny that. But that will not be a factor in who I choose to like. Are these the clothes that you wear frequently in the Dream World?"

"Yeah. Not just the clothes, but the money and luggage as well—Roland kept repeating that these things are far easier to obtain than reconstructing a consciousness."

The two looked at each other for a moment, before Ashes continued, "I do not know whether I've lost anything during my insentient drifting. So much that compared to the old me, the current me isn't even sure if I am the Ashes in your heart. But one thing that I know for sure is that the yearning to see you has never decreased since the beginning—"

Tilly extended her hand and interrupted her. "I can assure you; you are Ashes, and nothing has changed."

Ashes remained quiet for a moment, then revealed an expression as though a heavy burden had been lifted off her chest.

"Right, what about Anna and Nightingale, they were clearly present and even returned to the camp after the end of the war. And what is Brother's current situation? Is it impossible for him to leave the Realm of Mind from now on?" Tilly looked up in Ashes's embrace and changed the subject.

"Roland isn't really in the Realm of Mind, he is this entire world. He isn't able to leave the Cradle, but Anna and Nightingale are able to come and go as they place. But..." At this point, Ashes cleared her throat. "The question is not whether they can, but whether they wish to. In all, Roland is living a life far better than you can even imagine. Don't worry about him."

"Is that... true?" Tilly asked carefully.

“Yes, forget about him, he isn’t worth your pinings.” Ashes shrugged her shoulders, then suddenly remembered something. She turned to her luggage and fished out a document. “Also, Roland asked me to hand this over to you.”

Tilly’s expression froze. “Is that going to be some new responsibility he is entrusting me?”

“Nothing for you to handle personally,” Ashes explained. “These are all the toys he had fiddled with, mainly to create a link between the Dream World and our world.”

To enter the Dream World previously, the God’s Punishment Witches could not separate themselves from Roland’s “light beams.” With him losing all contact with them, the God’s Punishment Witches themselves were no longer able to be as relaxed as before. If not for them being aware that his departure was temporary, the entire Taquila community might have a big issue.

With the document, it could be said that they had a resolution to the issue, allowing Tilly to feel assured for the ancient witches.

On the document were various strange diagrams and lines, which was most probably depicting a magic-powered installation.

“I will have Agathe over now.” After making the call, Tilly frowned slightly. “Right, there were a few ancient witches that were with Brother when his consciousness was interrupted, right? Their bodies are no longer usable.”

“Roland considered that as well, in fact, his next step is to create new carrier bodies for the God’s Punishment Witches. Not only will their spirits be able to use the vessels, they will be able to adapt to it automatically and regain their senses.” Ashes nodded. “But this step requires not only the Cradle, but Neverwinter to participate as well, until we obtain the relevant technology.”

“I trust that Celine and the others will do their best.” Tilly smiled.

“Once that is over, there is the last step.” Ashes carried on. “This time, Roland seems to have thought deeply about it. Aside from allowing the Witches to interact with the Dream World, he wants the people from that world to come over here. He has already hailed it as a new Project Gateway.”

Tilly’s mouth gaped open in shock.

She instantly realized Roland’s goal—there was no doubt that when a technologically advanced community and a magic power community interacted, it would bring about world-shaking changes.

Although it would even speed up the development of civilization, it would also incite even more inconvenience. Upon realizing that she was the one to face them all, Tilly felt a larger headache incoming.

“I knew that I shouldn’t have accepted the crown.” She whined.

“But I feel that even if we redo it all over again, you would agree to his requests.” Ashes took a step back and knelt down on one knee and performed a Knight’s salute with a fist across her chest. “You’ve performed beyond what you think you have actually done, my Queen. You are already a qualified sovereign.”

Tilly fixed her eyes on Ashes for a moment, then extended her right hand. "Are you willing to walk with me from now?"

"Of course," Ashes replied with conviction. "It will be my honor."

That's right, compared to an hour ago, not only did the things on Tilly's table not decrease, but it had also increased.

But she did not feel as dreadful as before.

Because this time, it was an entirely different scenery around her.

### **Chapter 1498: A Brand New Road**

"This is the first list of names of those who are participating in the shift of consciousness." Fei Yuhan handed a report over to Roland. "Although you've told us that we don't have to explain to you, Mister Rock still insists that you take a look at it."

"Since he is so worried about it, dine then." Roland helplessly opened the report and glanced through the list—many familiar names appeared within the report. It was no surprise that Fei Yuhan's name was at the very top, having expressed her interests and desire to look at the other world since the very beginning, to which the new Project Gateway coincidentally aligned with her curiosity.

Following down the list were Garcia and Zero's names.

*I see...* This was probably the reason why the Defender wanted him to look through the names.

"To be honest, I'm worried about this." Fei Yuhan spoke bluntly. "You once mentioned that they were important figures capable of influencing the Dream World as well? If something happens during the transfer or if they find their past selves, will our world still be able to preserve its current state?"

"Of course." Roland smiled. "If this happened in the past, I would not be able to assure you so, but now that the Dream World is part of the Cradle, so long as I am here, this world will continue to exist."

Back when he narrated the history of the Selection of the Crown Prince and Hermes to the two, he had long anticipated for such a day.

Although they had regained new lives in the Realm of Mind, that did not mean they had to tight-lipped about the past.

He was curious as well, how the two would perceive the other world. But he was sure that it was impossible for them to return to their past.

"Then I will relay your message to Rock." Fei Yuhan nodded.

"Right, there's one more thing I need your assistance to relay as well." Roland stopped for her. "The new Project Gateway is in its last phase, I will be gone for a period of time and will have to leave everything here to all of you."

“You’re not thinking of shirking responsibility and going to enjoy being a God, right?” The celebrated martial artist sized him up with suspicion in her eyes.

“What’re you talking about!” Roland coughed twice. “My help and use will be extremely limited in the next step, I have already opened up the regulated technology knowledge base to both worlds, but it will depend on you guys to research on how to use magic power.”

This was not a lie.

Although the central system had a backup, it was only the Custodian that was affected and influenced by magic power. After all, magic power only interacted with consciousness and the inactivated back up was obviously just an ordinary machine. This resulted in Roland being unable to awaken his use of magic power like the Custodian, and what he was able to use at the moment was what he had grasped—even with this revelation, it was enough for him to spend close to a thousand years to learn.

“I will leave it to the intelligent people to research on that.” Fei Yuhan patted his shoulders magnanimously. “But I believe that there will be outstanding people that will rise from both worlds, just like how we had worked together to face God.”

With that, she waved her hands and turned to head towards the Defender’s office.

*She’s just telling me that there isn’t a need to be as lonely as the Custodian.*

*So she actually knows how to encourage people.*

Roland chuckled and shook his head as he reached for his sleeves and took out a small recorder.

*Just overly inquisitive.*

He walked out of the sanatorium and there were people bustling about outside. After assuming control over the Cradle, he took a long time to reinstate the workings of the Realm of Mind. As a result, to the entire Dream World, all the destruction and chaos caused by the Corrosion were left behind, leaving the Association with many things to do.

The facts were not something everyone knew—the abrupt stop to the flow of time in the Dream World prevented the people from keeping any memories, much less recognizing who Roland was. Although people still stopped to greet him, it was only because of the emblem at his chest that indicated him as being at the highest level of the Association. This was quite a strange feeling for Roland.

Amongst the crowd, Roland caught sight of a familiar figure.

Nightmare Lord Valkries.

“I’m here to say goodbye.” She walked over to him.

“You plan to head back as well?”

“Head back?” She shrugged. “No, I’m staying here.”

Roland was startled. “Wait, what’re you going to do about your race?”



“With Sky Lord and Silent Disaster watching over them and the remaining senior lords, I’m not worried about anyone else attempting to cause trouble to them,” Valkries replied nonchalantly. “And my existence in the Dream World is the most beneficial method for the race. My body will be connected to the Mother of Soul and become the new King. But compared to the previous King, it will no longer have a standalone consciousness, but a consciousness shared by everyone.”

“Serakkas agreed to that?” Roland recalled that Silent Disaster followed Anna and Nightingale down into the Bottomless Land despite the possibility of exhausting her Red Mist.

“It’s not a permanent separation. And Hackzord gained his own territory. If the signal installation test is successful, he can enter the Dream World as and when he wants to.”

“Fine.” Roland raised an eyebrow. “Then why are you saying goodbye?”

“Because I’m not the one leaving, but you.” Valkries spoke somewhat wistfully. “If I’m not wrong, you’re already planning to go into reclusion, right? Since magic power is related to the consciousness, obviously only by having more wills collide will there be a higher possibility of creating a diversification of outcomes, but that also means that the existence of ‘God’ needs to be kept at a minimum. From your choice of allowing both worlds to interact, I can tell that you have made the decision. If I do not come to bade farewell now, it’ll be difficult for me to find an opportunity in the future.”

She paused for a moment, then became serious. “When ordinary people obtain great power, they will not be able to resist their egos; yet, you are able to prioritize the future of the world first. I have to admit, your thoughts far transcends that of any human being and even I find myself inferior to you. You are definitely the most suitable candidate to become the Custodian.”

For the first time, Valkries lowered her head slightly and bowed at him.

In that moment, Roland was stumped for words. Although he had considered what the other party had mentioned before, there was another more important reason for why he did what he did—it was completely unrelated to the future of the world, and a much simpler one at that.

But evidently, it was not right for him to say it out at this time.

In the end, he feigned a calm expression, nodded his head and walked ahead, brushing past Valkries and leaving his gradually distant back view to her.

When he was alone, Roland’s mind stirred and in the next second, he appeared thousands of kilometers away.

Ahead of him was a majestic and elegant ravine far from the cities and clamor. The gentle and clear wind blew against the willow trees and left shallow ripples on the limpid lake surface.

At the peak of the ravine sat a graceful manor.

He walked past the courtyard and garden, arrived at the door and knocked gently.

Footsteps could be heard from within.

Roland's reason was simple. Indeed, the future required meticulous, careful planning with an all-out effort. But with all the time to himself, delaying and starting his work later would not create too much of an influence.

After busying himself for the longest time, he had finally found a reason to take a break.

The door opened to have Nightingale behind it.

Her brilliant smile and gold hair shone into Roland's eyes.

Seated on the sofa in the living room, Anna nodded at him gently.

"Welcome home," she greeted gently.

"I'm back." Roland smiled as he walked into the house.

The path before him extended forward. Regardless of what future awaited them, it was a brand new page.