

Chapter 2 - Misfit Magician

"Nothing less than you'd expect from the adventurer prep school in the capital! It's full of magicians!"

In the morning of the next day after I left my home, the school entrance ceremony was held at the capital's prep school. I also participate, and once all the formal stuff finishes, our class moves to our classroom.

Having received a recommendation for being a magician, I've been naturally assigned to the magician class. My lineage...shouldn't play a role here, but I don't have overly much mana, and my enrollment exam results fall into the upper area of the class' bottom bracket. Right now I can't use any emission-based spells because of my lacking mana, resulting in me not really seeming to be a magician at a first glance.

Currently I want my mana capacity to grow as fast as possible so that I can use all those flashy spells, typical for magicians.

"I see. You've got a tall, sturdily-built body, so I thought at first that you're a great sword or battle ax user."

The frail boy sitting next to me has apparently considered me to be a swordsman wielding those weapons when he saw me for the first time during the school entrance ceremony. Hence he's quite surprised after discovering me to be in the same magician class as him.

Certainly, he might consider me to be a swordsman, but...in reality, I've also trained swordsmanship and other weapon arts at the Earl Armstrong House. However, unlike my older brother, I lack ability, making it quite difficult for me to insist that I'm strong at handling weapons.

My strength exceeds that of my brother, but that's only because I've been unconsciously enhancing it with mana. Without that, we'd probably be about even.

"Can you use 『Body Strengthening』 and 『Magic Barrier』?"

"More or less, yes."

However, it's a peculiar 『Magic Barrier』 that only covers my body, and its uptime is short because of my little mana pool. Casting 『Body Strengthening』 and quickly beating up an enemy is faster than deploying 『Magic Barrier』.

"Are you a Magic Combat Style practitioner?"

"I have never studied that style."

Well, it might resemble my own combat style, but I'm still clumsy at learning martial arts. I can't memorize all the martial art forms either!

"Oh, okay. Ah, sorry for being late with introducing myself. My name is Bruno. I've got no family

name since I'm a commoner. What about you?"

"I'm Klimt Christoph von Armstrong!"

"Hee, your family is quite prestigious. Though I had expected you to hail from a noble family anyway."

Am I so noble-like that you can immediately identify me as one?

"I think many people won't think so because you seem to be a gruff guy at first glance. But, your fingers are pretty, and you're sitting on your chair with a proper posture. Such things come from an education received during one's childhood, so children of commoner families won't be able to act like that. Take a look."

The boy sitting in the chair ahead of Bruno's finger has a completely messed up sitting posture. Or rather, it looks like he's not used to sitting on a chair. My fingers being pretty comes from having servants do all the chores for me, even if I might be just the second son.

"You've been educated in your childhood how to properly sit on a chair. You had adults, private tutors and lecturers cautioning you whenever your sitting posture was bad. That's why I judged you to hail from a good family."

Bruno is quite small and his body lines are also very slender, but he has the guts to talk to me, someone from the Armstrong house, without any shyness, and on top of that, he's a pretty perceptive guy.

"You don't feel any fear, talking to me?"

"Well, I won't say that I'm completely fine, but those learning at the adventurer prep school, and especially magicians, are said to become successful in life if they don't shy away, even if they're dealing with royalty or nobility."

Since adventurers and magicians live in a world where ability is all that counts, those who act timidly or sell themselves lower than necessary just because the other party is a noble won't ever become bigshots. Especially if it comes to magicians, it's a well-known fact that the nobles actually beg them to serve in their houses instead. That means Bruno is already paying attention to this for the sake of making a name for himself as a magician.

"Or do you actually want me to revere you by calling you 『Highly esteemed noble』?"

"Right now we're at a place where such differences in social standing don't matter! Just call me Klimt, Bruno."

"I expected you to say that. Nice to meet you, Klimt."

Since he's small and child-faced, he doesn't seem to be the same age as me, but I really like Bruno for his great guts!

"How old are you, Bruno?"

"14."

"The same as me, huh...?"

For him to be as old as me...but then again, I only feel like that because I'm usually judged to be much older than my real age.

"I'm envious of your big mana pool, Bruno."

His mana capacity exceeds mine by far. According to him, he's soon going to hit the intermediate level. In this class he enters the category of being quite excellent with his great exam results. Given that 80% of the class are at the elementary level, Bruno, who's able to reach intermediate level, has undoubtedly a promising future ahead as magician.

It's very enviable!

"Having said that, we have Edgar Tretter with us this year. He's said to be the biggest upstart in this class."

The frail man, who's surrounded by intermediate magicians in a place slightly away from us, already owns a mana in the advanced level, resulting in him being hailed as a very hopeful newcomer magician.

"You're right...his aura is...!"

"Now then, I wonder how much Edgar's mana can grow and how much the number of spells he can use will increase until he reaches adulthood. I hear that the teachers of this school, the adventurer's guild, and the high-ranking nobles and major merchants wishing to hire him are all paying close attention."

I see. A huge difference with me who's also a magician!

"Everyone has arrived, right? Unlike with the other classes, this class is exclusively for magicians. Please introduce yourself first. You will study in the same class for the next year, and even after graduation, it often happens that you will remain connected through your work."

Upon the instruction by our homeroom teacher, we end up introducing ourselves. Some students are surprised after hearing my name, but parentage plays no role for magicians.

Edgar Tretter, who's this year's promising new star just like Bruno, limits his introduction to a light greeting with a refreshing smile.

"I see. The prodigy and guaranteed top student sure acts calm. So he has no need to act sarcastically towards someone with bad grades, huh?"

"Talent gives birth to leeway!"

"That's for sure."

This is how I safely entered the prep school and started my new life.



"Today's your first day, so I think I'll have you show us your abilities for a bit."

The lesson starts immediately after we finish our introductions. Having said that, there's not much time left anymore since lessons only take place in the mornings at the prep school.

Accordingly, the teacher in charge of magic, Hack-sensei, sets up a doll made out of wood and straw on the field where we'll have our practical lessons, and tells us to attack it with our best spells.

The school should have grasped our abilities through the interviews and examinations, but I guess he simply wants to take a look with his own eyes first? Still, it's definitely a simple and quick method.

My classmates, who are called up in order, attack the doll with their strongest spells.

"Most of our classmates use fireballs."

"It's commonplace, and many people are capable of using it. Besides, it looks quite flashy, wouldn't you say?"

"Because the doll burns, huh?"

Many of my classmates, who are mostly at the elementary level, demonstrate 『Fireball』 which goes up in flames if it hits the doll. Some of them pack quite some power with their spell, and others even destroy the doll in a blaze of fire, but many of them had received special training from a master in magic before entering the school.

Those who released 『Fireball』 with lacking firepower, will improve their magic under Hack-sensei's tutelage for the next year while those who haven't reached the limit of their mana capacity yet, will put efforts into that area as well. I guess that's the basic idea here.

"They're a minority, but some of our classmates also use spells of other attributes."

Just as Bruno has pointed out, some of my classmates knock down the doll by hitting it with 『Waterball』, 『Pellet』, or 『Wind Cutter』.

Still, it looks to me like their firepower is still lacking when at elementary level.

"I'm next, I guess."

"Bruno, what magic do you specialize at?"

"Just look forward to finding out."

Being called out by Hack-sensei, Bruno immediately casts his spell at a place around twenty meters away from the doll.

"『Frozen Blade』!?"

"Correct. I have an aptitude for water and wind. I tear enemies to pieces by using ice blades."

The crescent-moon-shaped 『Frozen Blade』 unleashed by Bruno beheads the doll in one blow.

"There's nothing to criticize about your control and firepower. I think that your mana will doubtlessly grow up to intermediate level. I'm looking forward to your growth, Bruno."

Hack-sensei seems to have a high opinion of the talented Bruno.

"Next up, Klimt, but...have you been able to learn any emission-based spells since then?"

"About that, my mana is still too low for that!"

"I see...It's because your mana is still growing as well, Klimt. Once your mana gains in quantity, I'm sure you will become capable of using emission-based spells as well."

I was told the exact same during the interview held at the prep school's examinations for scholarship students.

With my mana not really growing despite being a magician, I can only use 『Body Strengthening』, and a 『Magic Barrier』 that only covers myself. Additionally I can pour mana into my legs and fists to beat up enemies. There was a time where I took lessons from a magician tutor at home, but in the end I was never able to use emission-based magic.

According to my tutor, 『Klimt-dono, you should also become able to employ emission-based magic if your mana pool grows. Although your mana capacity continues to increase, its growth speed is abnormally slow. You have no choice but to patiently wait for your mana to increase far enough』.

Thanks to that, it's been suspected that I might rather be a Magic Combat Style fighter than a magician. Father and brother praised me, who doesn't seem to be much of a magician despite actually being one, saying 『Your combat power is high, suiting a member of the Armstrong House, a family deeply rooted in military arts』.

I'm grateful for that, but seeing how I've been born as a magician, I want to learn magic befitting that description. That's also why I've left home.

"Try attacking the doll in your own way."

"Sure!"

In that case, I've got no choice but to use my usual attack style.

Covering my body in a 『Magic Barrier』, I ram the doll with my shoulder. Adding the strengthening of the 『Magic Barrier』, the weight of my body and my charge speed cause the doll to

be smashed apart.

"I'd say you have quite the power. Your assignment for the future will be to work on emission magic, I think. And the highest priority will be an increase of your mana pool."

"Okay, sensei."

It'd be great if I reached a point allowing me to use emission magic within one year, but...

"That's allowed?"

"That guy simply pulverized the doll with his big body..."

"Does that still count as magic?"

There are quite a few people criticizing me among those watching from the sidelines, but this is something I won't be able to resolve as long as I don't learn emission-based magic. But then again, the ones commenting on my performance are only the guys who had to put in all effort to burn the doll with a 『Fireball』. It's pointless to concern myself with their opinion.

"Klimt, the attack just now is quite handy, isn't it?"

"Is it?"

Bruno admires my magic attack effusively after watching it.

"This place is a prep school for the sake of becoming an adventurer, and the only ones capable of being employed after catching a noble's attention are those producing achievements as adventurers. Advanced magicians won't get scouted by nobles for just being advanced magicians. Magicians will be scouted when they retire after having accomplishments to show, using their magic."

"That makes sense."

"Your attack just now should be able to kill fairly strong monsters. Compared to that, 『Fireball』 is ill-suited for hunting monsters."

For adventurers it's best to bring down monsters without damaging them as much as possible so that their materials remain undamaged. Burning monsters, whose fur can be sold for a lot of money, with fire will lower the value of the raw materials. That means it's most efficient to kill them with a body blow like me or cutting their vital spot apart in one attack with 『Wind Cutter』 or 『Frozen Blade』.

"However, with my current amount of mana, I can't use this kind of magic attack overly often either. Anyway, currently increasing my mana takes the highest priority."

"That also applies to me."

The very last student called by Hack-sensei is Edgar Tretter. In the end, the star performer makes his appearance at the very end.

"By the way, Edgar also excels at fire-based magic."

"In that case, the doll will disappear without leaving any ash behind."

If it's his mana pool and firepower, it wouldn't be strange for things to pan out like that.

"You think a man like him will use such a simple fire spell with a high firepower?"

"You mean he's going to use a fire spell grounded on some elaborate finesse?"

"That's what I think, yes."

I've heard that he's an outstanding talent with the biggest mana pool in this class and high expectations by the adventurer's guild.

I thought he'd simply reduce the target to ashes through a blaze, but...suddenly the doll's head drops down with a plop!

My classmates start to make a racket because of that unforeseen situation. I think it's because the majority of them haven't comprehended the underlying magic.

"What sort of spell did he use?"

"I suspect he probably burned it off. What terrific skill."

Bruno has apparently seen the spell used by Edgar Tretter, but I didn't see it at all! Currently I'm simply cursing my own lack of ability!

"I believe he caused the doll's head to drop down by burning off its neck with a very thin fire thread."

"Is something like that possible?"

"I'd say it is, for Edgar at least."

Not only does Edgar Tretter have a big mana pool and lots of firepower, but he can also use his mana so precisely...

Burning off the doll's head sounds simple, but the doll should go up in flames if you don't manage to accurately burn through its neck with a terrifying speed.



If a fire magician can behead a monster in such a way, they should be able to work as an adventurer without any problem whatsoever!

"As expected!"

"To be honest, it makes me fully realize the existence of prodigies."

Could Bruno possibly stave off Edgar Tretter? That's what suddenly crossed my mind.

"I don't have much mana...and even my firepower and magic accuracy falls behind his by one or two degrees."

Even if you can somehow offset the difference in the firepower and efficiency through hard work, one's mana pool is decided by birth. Bruno has apparently realized that the upper bracket of intermediate level will remain his limit, no matter how much effort he invests.

"Rather, aren't you the one with the bigger potential here, Klimt?"

"I am as you can see."



I'm half-baked as a magician. As magicians are fairly rare, and since magic is completely unrelated to pedigree and heredity, the surroundings harbored big expectations when a magician was born into the prestigious military Armstrong family!

However, the growth of my mana pool is extremely slow, and currently it's at the elementary level. My mana only allows me to fight by cladding my body in mana. If my mana keeps increasing from now on, even emission-based spells...but, at the current pace, it'll be a miracle if I manage to exceed the elementary level until my growth stops.

『If he could at least reach intermediate level, he'd be more like a proper magician』

This was the surrounding noble's assessment of me.

『A magician, huh? How nice, Klimt-nii-sama』

『Don't mind them, Klimt. It's just the jealousy of the nobles who can't use magic』

『What's there to feel ashamed about!? The men of the Armstrong House just need to be strong! You don't need to pay any attention to the prattling of the gutless rumor mongers at the court!』

The only ones not speaking badly of my questionable magic were Nina, His Highness, father and brother.



"Since my birthplace isn't all that great, I don't really understand the world of esteemed nobles, but only folks with too much time on their hands would criticize others despite being unable to use magic themselves."

"It's a fact that there's a lot of worthless folks!"

It's a situation making me believe that it's great for me to have been born as the second son. It's allowed me to leave for the outside world under the pretext of training!

"You might be able to increase the mana growth rate through clever training methods. Also, I believe that you'll become quite the bigshot, Klimt."

"Is that supposed to be flattery?"

"I'm a magician, so I won't flatter others meaninglessly."

Figures. At his level, Bruno doesn't need to butter up to nobles. Even if he's hated by a certain noble, other nobles, who oppose the first noble, will happily offer him a place of employment. That's what being a magician means.

"We might have many chances to meet even after becoming adventurers. I'm looking forward to those times, Klimt."

"So do I!"

Now then, I wonder how much I'll be able to grow as a magician in this one year. It's not like I have no worries, but having met Bruno is a huge boon!



It looks like he'll become a good friend!