

## SUPREME MAGUS

Chapter 11 I know that I know nothing

Having officially learned how read and write, Lith practiced every day. While his family considered him a genius, he knew better. Needing to practice hard to memorize just twenty-one letters and ten numbers, Lith did not feel much brilliant.

Striking the iron while it was still hot, he asked Raaz to carve for him a wooden ruler, 50 centimetres (19,7 inches) long and 3 centimetres (1,2 inches) both high and wide.

In the front he had engraved all the alphabet, on the back the numbers. It was Lith's clutch during his homework, a tool necessary for him to be free of practicing anytime without bothering his parents.

Raz was still on cloud nine, so he didn't make any question about the oddly big sizes Lith requested. He could have easily made it much thinner and shorter, making it easier to carry around. But Lith refused the proposal, begging him to fulfil his wish.

Lith had not missed Orpal's hostile glare every time someone called him a genius. He had to be sure for it to be not easy to break or go missing by "accident".

It was also the perfect pretext to always carry around something he could practice spirit magic on.

When the weather finally cleared up, Elina decided that it was the perfect moment for Tista to be checked out by Nana. With all the cold and wind during those last days, no matter how much effort Raaz and Orpal had put in the house's maintenance, it had still been kinda drafty.

Tista had been coughing enough for Elina being seriously worried about her. So, she took the mule cart and brought Tista and Lith to the village of Lutia.

The bad weather had lasted too long, and the accumulated farm work needed everyone's help to be finished before another frost wave arrived.

She had to bring Lith along, he was too small to be left alone. After stuffing them with the warmer clothes they had, the trip began.

Lith was really happy, it was the first time for him seeing the world outside the farm's bounds. There was much he could learn from such experience.

On the road they were bothered more than once by stray graaths. They were wasp like insects with a venomous sting at the end of their abdomen. Compared to Earth's wasps they were much hairier, and blue instead of yellow.

"Why in the Great Mother's name are they still around?" Elina complained. "They are supposed to be asleep during winter!"

One graath was particularly stubborn and despite all their shooing, it kept going back until it got too close to Tista for comfort.

Lith slammed his hands hard, missing it entirely. He was still nimble as a brick, but his spirit magic wasn't.

It had already reached a radius of full ten meters (32,8 feet) radius of effect, so the graath was squashed effortlessly.

Lith showed the prey with pride. "Don't worry big sister, I'll always protect you." After hugging him, Tista was really curious about the dead insect, but Elina was still worried by the venom, so after throwing it away, they resumed their trip.

When they came in sight of Lutia, much of Lith's doubts got cleared up. It wasn't just his family, the whole village resembled closely one of those early middle ages drawings he had seen in history books.

There was no sign of any complex technology, even a windmill or a watermill would have been considered a marvel of science.

When Lith asked Elina about the village, she explained that only artisans, scholars and merchants lived there, the rest of the population lived in their own farms tending the fields and raising livestock.

Lutia consisted in a few dozens of one or two stories high wooden houses well-spaced between them. Not even one was made out of stone or bricks.

There was also no road pavement of any sorts. The space between the houses was just like the road to the village, bare earth and mud.

From the signs hanged outside the buildings, he could spot a blacksmith, a tavern and a tailor shop.

The bakery didn't need any sign or advertisement, the delicious smell that came out its chimney was enough to make every passerby's mouth watery.

Lith's hunger stroke so hard that he already knew what he would have dreamed about that night.

When they arrived at Nana's house, Lith was surprised noticing it was bigger than their own, yet Elina had told him more than once that Nana lived alone.

In his eyes it meant that either she was from a rich family, or more likely healing was a lucrative business. Lith decided that he had to master light magic as soon as possible.

The door was open, and inside Lith felt the familiar feeling of a doctor's waiting room. Inside there was a single huge room that smelled of medicinal herbs and incense.

At the end of the room, on the left there was a door, probably leading to Nana's living quarter. On the right there was a huge wide curtain, behind which Nana was visiting and treating the patients.

The rest of the space was filled with benches and chairs, and many of them were already occupied.

It seemed that many families had decide to make use of the good weather. Elina removed all the extra clothing from her children before instructing them to be quiet and don't disturb others.

The waiting room was filled with bored mothers, and soon Elina joined the chatting, sharing her experiences and advices with them.

Lith could wander around undisturbed, the women were too busy keeping their children under control to take notice of his existence.

The room was bare and uninteresting, but once he got close to the curtain he stumbled on a treasure. He found a small open cabinet, filled with books about magic.

"Maybe in this world is the equivalent of a doctor hanging his degrees and masters." Many of the titles were specific about an element or its application, but one caught his eye immediately.

It had "The basics of magic" written on the cover. After checking that no one was paying him attention, he grabbed it and started reading.

"I'm only three years old. I can afford a better to ask forgiveness than permission attitude." Lith then moved to a corner, giving his back to the curtain hoping to go unnoticed as long as possible.

It was clearly a book for beginners, so he skipped the introduction going straight for the elements' description.

Lith discovered that water magic was not just about conjuring and manipulating water, it also allowed the user to lower anything's temperature. Any magic apprentice was supposed to be able to generate ice, and use it as a mean of both offence and defence.

Air magic too had an ability that he had never taken in consideration. Air magic highest peak was weather control, but even at the basic level a mage could generate lightning.

Fire and earth were just plain and simple as he had pictured them all along, so he moved to the last two elements.

While reading, it became clear to him that because of magic, whoever had written the book had no idea what anatomy was.

The book would speak about the importance of keeping a wound clean, there was no use of terms like disinfection or sepsis, so he barely found unknown medical terms.

Lith remained dumbfounded upon discovering that light and darkness were explained together instead that in separate chapters.

According to the book, both elements were the bread and butter of any healer. Darkness magic could be used as a weapon, but it was not explained in detail.

The author was very clear stressing out the fact that he was not a fighter, and that beginners should never bite more than they could chew.

Then he proceeded to explain that darkness magic wasn't either good or bad, just an element like the others. It was an invaluable tool for a healer, since it allowed to clean wounds, tools or even to fumigate houses from rats and insects to avoid the spreading of diseases.

Also, it was the only way of getting rid of parasites that had grown inside the patient, since light magic would allow the healer to detect their presence, but could do no harm to them.

Light and darkness worked best when used together. Light magic specialty was the ability to perceive life forces and scan them for anomalies. It also allowed to correct such anomalies and to guarantee an instant recovery from most diseases.

Restoring broken bones was more difficult, and was explained in another chapter.

Lith felt incredibly ignorant and stupid. He could have discovered most of those elemental properties on his own, if he hadn't been blinded by his narrow-minded superstition.

"How could I possibly have been so idiotic? I have lived here more than three years and I am still thinking like this is a video game with fixed rules and levels?!? Darkness is evil and light is holy or something? No, this is science, dammit, the same one I studied all my life. If fire magic is converting mana into heat, then water magic is nothing but converting mana into cold, condensing the water in the atmosphere and turning it into the liquid state. It's all so obvious, it's like the damned Culumbus' egg!"

He was about to turn the page and learn about healing broken bones when a firm hand squeezed his shoulder, locking him into place.

"That's not a toy, young man. I really hope that you have not damaged it, otherwise your family will have pay for it dearly."