

## Chapter 3 Part 2



The structure of the royal capital can be summed up in one word: *hierarchical*.

Centered around the royal castle towering on a small mountain peak, the houses of distinguished families that had supported the country for generations line a significantly lower tier. Public institutions such as guard posts, government offices, banks, and hospitals were arranged in a circle, separating them from the lower world.

And the area at the foot of the mountain was commonly called the '*royal capital*'.

Originally, Vegalta focused on trade with neighboring countries, and remnants of that still remain in the current royal capital, where various shop signs can be seen on the main street.

That was because many people visited the '*royal capital*' itself.

With its artistic and historic streets, modern magic technology not seen in the countryside, and the latest popularized magic tools, Vegalta, being at the center of the continent and a transit point, gathered items from various places. Regular markets featuring these items were held, attracting tourists from the countryside and making the royal capital an important place for those engaged in commerce.

And so—

"—This is it! The promised metropolis, the royal capital of Vegalta!!"

In the heart of the royal capital, there was an excited country bumpkin.

Reid and the others were watching the country bumpkin from a distance.

"Millis, are you satisfied now?"

"...Eh, why is everyone else's excitement level so different from mine?"

"Well, everyone but you has lived in the royal capital. It's not like we'll get excited seeing it again."

Agreeing with Reid's words, the other three nodded.

Elria and Faregh, from distinguished families, had always looked down on the royal capital from above. Wiesel, having lived in the royal capital with its magic equipment workshop, found nothing novel there.

"B-But, Reid-san! You're from the countryside like me, right? When you see this magnificent royal capital, you get a little excited, right!?"

"Well, I thought it was amazing at first, but when I lived in the Caldwen mansion, I got used to seeing it all."

"Oh... so, you betrayed your countryside roots too, huh..."

Millis, disheartened, gave Reid a strangely dishonorable nickname. Her sulking figure was pitiable.

Watching Millis, Faregh snorted in boredom.

"In the first place, where we're going is the industrial area with workshops. It's not a place for country bumpkins looking to sightsee."

The royal capital essentially had its outer perimeter designated as a tourist area, and moving further inward from there would be the industrial park where magic equipment workshops and factories were located.

The industrial park was not intended for tourists, but primarily for merchants and craftsmen to visit for business discussions and procurement. It was not a place or thing to be viewed as a tourist attraction.

"If you want to sightsee like a country bumpkin, you can go to the tourist attractions by yourself."

"No, the industrial park is also a city to me. Because in the countryside, we don't have magic equipment workshops and factories."

"So, you're just happy with anything...?"

"Faregh-san wouldn't understand it... All I could see were grasslands and mountains, and the only things to look at were sheep and cows. For me, who came from a place where the biggest events in the village were the birth of livestock or an elderly person going missing and being found a few hours later, everything here is new and fascinating for me...!!"

"Yeah... okay, enjoy the royal capital as much as you want, you country bumpkin."

Pressed by Millis's enthusiasm, Faregh looked at her with a pitiful gaze. He probably decided it was risky to say anything more.

"Seriously... even though today is a day off, it's so noisy. And because there are a lot of conspicuous people around, I feel bothered by the stares of passersby."

"I agree with Faregh. I don't like being stared at."

"...Don't say that when you're the one causing it, *Caldwen*."

As Faregh said, most people were looking at Elria.

Today, she was not in uniform but in casual clothes. However, due to her good looks, everyone turned around at least once. Those who noticed that she was Elria due to her silver hair, which was rare even in Vegalta, couldn't help but let out a gasp of admiration.

But, of course, it was the hiding behind Reid's back that made it more conspicuous.

Today as well, she firmly grasped Reid's sleeve and peeked out from behind him. However, Elria tilted her head in wonder.

"This is how it always is, so there shouldn't be a problem, right?"

"Well, within the academy it's one thing, but if I let Elria walk alone outside, she might get lost. I'd feel more at ease if she clung to my sleeve."

"Yes. A lifeline is important."

"...Is she supposed to be the person who is from the same distinguished family as me, and is also seen as my superior?"

"Well, Faregh-san's character and actions are also flawed, so it's somewhat similar."

"You should show a bit more respect to me, you country bumpkin!!"

".....Am I as bad as Faregh?"

"Don't worry about it. You're just flawed in a slightly different way."

Seeing Elria shivering in shock, Reid comforted her by lightly patting her head. He felt guilty for not denying it.

Thus, the group of five made their way through the bustling royal capital, entering the industrial park.

As the crowd thinned out, the street's atmosphere changed from flamboyant to rugged and chaotic. More people dressed in work clothes and merchants appeared.

And so, their destination was—

"—This is the Blanche Workshop, my family's home."

Compared to others, it was a smaller, aged building.

"Isn't it quite small for the workshop of a famous magic equipment engineer...?"

"You can frankly call it run-down, Lady Millis."

"So, it's a run-down workshop."

"The inside isn't like that. Though not necessarily a tradition of the Blanche family, we invest most of our profits in developing new magic equipment and procuring materials, hence the exterior looks like this."

With a wry smile, Wiesel took out a key from his pocket, and entered the workshop.

Moving past the customer waiting room and opening the workshop door—

"—This is the workshop of the Blanche family, involved in magic equipment for generations."

Seeing the sight, Reid and the others could not help but let out a gasp of admiration.

A mountain of weaponry filled their view. It was not just typical weapons like swords and spears, but also armor like gauntlets and gaiters, and even musical instruments, farming tools, and fishing equipment.

"Amazing... Are these all magic equipment?"

"No, these are like molds used to create magic equipment."

Saying that, Wiesel casually lifted a large hammer nearby.

"We refer to these molds to calculate the necessary magic circuits based on the client's magic power system and their strengths in magic. We then select the shape and materials of the magic equipment that suit those magic. After deciding on the overall design, we determine the placement of the magic circuits and request a magic craftsman to engrave them."

"Heehh... I always thought magic equipment was more like wands or weapons, but seeing it now, there are so many shapes."

"If you're interested, feel free to look around. I've closed the workshop for the day, so we have it all to ourselves."

"Really!?"

"Yes. Lord Welminan and I have work to do."

Saying that, Wiesel rolled up his sleeves and headed to his workbench.

"Please hand me the magic equipment, Lord Welminan."

"Yeah... If you fail, I'll cry...!"

"Don't worry. I'll show you the skills of someone who bears the Blanche name."

Taking the magic equipment from Faregh, he narrowed his eyes and then—

"———<<Output Composition>>."

The moment he waved his right hand, the magic equipment was enveloped in a faint light. Various symbols then began to appear on a crystal in his left hand.

"As I suspected. Frequently used magic formulas are fixed in place, and it's arranged to repel other types of magic. Are these the five most recently used spells?"

"Y-Yeah... Those are the recent magic formulas I have used."

"I see... Indeed, it has greatly changed from the spells you used before. While we might not need to change its shape, we might need to tweak the converter and stabilizer a bit."

While looking at the various symbols, Wiesel diagnosed.

The converter built into the magic equipment could transform the channeled magic power into another color system. While the output decreased, it could add versatility to the magic that was executed.

And in the case of magic that required stable outcomes such as support magic and healing magic, they had a role of keeping the output of the magic being exercised constantly by passing it through a stabilizer.

And... these were technologies that Reid was very familiar with.

"...They have adapted it quite well to magic, haven't they?"

"Yeah, they have done a great job."

"Isn't this technology looted from Altein?"

"It was found on the battlefield, so I restored the broken parts, analyzed them, and then applied them to magic."

Elria proudly showed off her accomplishment.

The mechanisms like converters and stabilizers were used in Altein's 'machinery' technology.

In Altein, they were incorporated into tools that used 'electricity', but perhaps during wartime, they dismantled the looted weapons, and Elria adapted and replaced them with magic power.

Even Reid, who actually dealt with them, could not fully understand the mechanism. However, with the actual item in question, she correctly understood the structure and its role and further refined it into her magic technology, truly deserving of being called 'Sage'.

While immersed in such nostalgic feelings, Wiesel's expression slightly darkened.

"This might be... a bit difficult."

"I-It's difficult?"

"I can tamper with the converters and stabilizers, but considering the operational time of magic, it's ideal to increase the magic power efficiency. However, in that case, we have to change the layout of the magic circuits."

".....So, why not just change it?"

"Changing the layout requires the removal of the existing magic circuit and drawing a new one. What we magic equipment engineers do is overall design and efficient creation of magic circuits. The engraving of magic circuits falls under the domain of magic craftsmen."

"So, you're saying you can't engrave the magic circuit?"

"I have some knowledge of the engraving itself. But the problem is that the magic power system of Lord Welminan and mine don't match."

After explaining, Wiesel took a breath and looked at Elria.

"If I remember correctly, Lady Elria can handle six types of magic power, right?"

"Mm, I can use them, but... I've never done magic circuit engraving, so it's difficult."

"...I see. The work area is narrow, but intricate work is required, so it's tough without experience."

"In that case, why not ask a magic craftsman you know?"

"I can make a request, but... the magic craftsman that Blanche requests often interacts with the upper class, and the fact that they engraved on Welminan's magic equipment is significant for a magic craftsman. So, there's a possibility they might accidentally spill the beans to the Welminan household."

"We absolutely need to avoid that!!"

"...Understood. As a magic equipment engineer, I don't want to hand over an incomplete item to the user, but considering your situation, I'll keep the modifications within the possible range——"

Just as the compromising Wiesel was about to get back to work, his shoulder was lightly tapped.

There stood——a smiling Millis.

"I've done magic circuit engraving before, you know?"

".....What did you say?"

"Back in the countryside, it takes time to call someone, so when a magic tool broke, I fixed it myself. And in the village, I had the nickname of 'Magic Tool Doctor'."

While speaking proudly with her thumb up, Wiesel paused for a moment to think and then nodded in agreement.

"Then, I'll prepare something suitable. As a test, please try copying and engraving the magic circuit that is engraved into the magic equipment. Feel free to use any tools for the engraving."

"Yes, yes. It's not much different from a magic tool, right?"

"It's not much different, but the magic circuit is more complex than a magic tool, and precise work is required. Even a small deviation will reduce magic power efficiency."

"Hmm, I see."

With that light tone, Millis moved her pen-like tool smoothly—

"Here, is this how it's done?"

".....What?"

"I copied it according to the original size since there was no specification, but this is okay, right?"

With that, Millis showed a metal plate to Wiesel.

A delicate pattern emerged due to the glow of magic power.

Taking it into his hands, Wiesel looked closely, adjusting his glasses multiple times.

"No way... there's not even a single error...!?"

**"HA HA HA!! Welcome to my era!!"**

With triumphant enthusiasm, Millis raised her arms high in the air, looking more joyous than ever before.

And with a smile, Millis turned her head to face Faregh.

"Hehe... Faregh-san, do you want me to do the magic circuit engraving?"

"Kugh... What do you want in return...!?"



"That sounds pretty rude, doesn't it? I don't really have anything I want right now, but how about keeping it as a 'favor' for the future?"

"That's even scarier since I don't know what you'll ask for!!"

"**HA HA HA!** I hope you live in fear of me from now on!!"

With that, Millis, full of vitality, stood on a chair, looking down at Faregh. She seemed to be having a blast.

As Faregh looked frustrated, Wiesel adjusted his glasses and put his hand on his shoulder.

"...Lord Welminan, I think you should owe Millis a favor."

"You want me to owe this unpredictable country bumpkin a favor? Are you out of your mind!?"

"However, the ability to engrave a magic circuit so accurately is rare, even among magic craftsmen. From my perspective as a magic equipment engineer, such skill is practical. I'd even go so far as to say I don't understand why Millis didn't pursue a career as a magic craftsman instead of becoming a mage."

"Well, I thought being a mage seemed more urban and cool!!"

"You're leaving this to someone who says such stupid things!?"



"I'll handle the instructions and drafting, so there shouldn't be any issues with the work itself. And with such skills, we should be able to incorporate even the ideas I had given up on and deliver the best work...!!"

Perhaps overwhelmed by the joy of being able to do his best work as a magic equipment engineer, Wiesel, with a maniacal smile, firmly grabbed both of Faregh's shoulders.

"I will definitely craft the best magic equipment...! So, close your eyes to any future worries and let Lady Millis handle the work...!!"

"Eeek!? I-I get it!! Just do whatever you need to do!!"

Pressed by Wiesel's intensity, Faregh turned pale and nodded repeatedly.

The moment they got Faregh's word, Wiesel and Millis silently exchanged a high-five. The two seemed oddly in sync.

"Now, I will draw up the blueprint for the new magic circuit. Lady Millis will engrave on it just like before, without a single discrepancy."

"Please leave it to me! By the way, I'm getting thirsty!!"

"Lord Welminan, go buy a drink for Lady Millis."

"Am I being forcefully made to owe her a favor, and on top of that, being turned into her errand boy!?"

"The words of a magic craftsman are absolute. Things will get busy afterward."

The three chatted and bustled about.

Watching the trio, Reid and Elria looked on calmly.

"They all seem to be having so much fun."

"That kind of thing feels like a privilege of young people."

"You're young too, Reid."

"I may look young, but inside, I'm an old man."

"To me, Reid will always be young."

"If you say that, then you're the one who remains a child, both inside and out."

As they exchanged casual remarks, Millis approached them.

"Hey, what's the matter, Millis?"

"Well... I felt a warm gaze, like the one elders from the village give."

"Stop beating around the bush and calling me old."

"By the way, I think it's okay for the two of you to just walk around outside. It looks like Wiesel-san is very enthusiastic, and the work might take a while."

Looking at Wiesel, they saw him consulting with Faregh and sketching a magic equipment diagram on his desk.

"Since we have come all the way to the royal capital, why don't you two go on a date together?"

" ".....Date?" "

"Could you two not react like you've never heard the word before...!?"

"No, of course, I've heard of it."

"I've heard of it, too."

"That's strange... I'm sure I used a very common word...!"

Seeing their reactions, Millis let out a tired sigh.

"Alright... I'll have to ask you two for a favor."

With that, Millis opened her eyes wide and—

"I'd like the two of you to go on a shopping date right now!"

So, with a pointed finger, she declared.