

## Chapter 13: Of Science and Magic - Alth

It was surprisingly busy in their little village in the sands. There were only between 2 or 300 residents in the entire village, yet there was a buzz of tasks and chores, the village needed work on the wind-mills that helped in raising water from underground. The injured and sick came almost hourly in search of Eli for remedies for their family members or animals. He was in truth not from the Green-Dragon world like Asuka but from beyond the giant walls that separated each world.

"I was born in the White-Dragon world, but found my talents more appreciated abroad." He said as he patched up a patient's broken arm with a splint and a strange glowing green stone woven over the injured point. "The stone has a rune carved into to act as a spell-host. Helps weave the bones back together faster."

Julia checked the wrap. Eli really was almost a doctor. The wrap was tight enough for blood flow, but also re-aligned the fractured radius.

"I studied as a medical student - magi division." "You mean there are non-magi as well?" "Certainly. This world has schools for all types. Gifted or not, everyone can learn a skill. I surely couldn't do what Asuka does." Eli seemed a very happy man despite being slightly crippled. "Are there ways for non-magi to use magic here? I mean just as a thought." Julia's curiosity had been peaked. "Yes, actually I could give you a few basic tool courses. You'd need a magi to create a host spell, but once attached to an object, you could use it, too."

Eli explained the theories of spell-hosts over the rest of the day as he, Julia, and Yuni worked on several stones: Smoothing, cutting, cleaning, and marking. Yuni and Julia seemed to get along well, almost like siblings, Eli noted. Yuni was just as apt to learn as Julia. It wasn't until Julia cut her finger while making a final set of marks that she learned why.

Yuni asked for Julia's hand and quickly cleaned away the blood before chanting a set of words three times. The cut stopped bleeding, scabbed over, and began stitching itself together leaving only a small red line where the cut had been.

"You're a magi, too Yuni?" "Yeah, I got that from dad. Says it's a family thing." "Can Alex use magic, too." "Nah. He's a lot more like Mom. He can find anything out there." She pointed out the door way.

It was around that time of the day Asuka had taken Will and Alex outside, after the hottest part of the day to work on the mills around the village. The mills were much larger and complex than they appeared. The screw at the back of the top wheel powered an underground rotor that drew water to the surface. But more than that, the drill-head at the bottom seemed carefully crafted by arcane arts of some form.

"Well, Will. Do you think you could help us repair a few drill-heads? This village has a fair number of artisans, but we are a bit short on magi with mechanical aptitudes." Asuka gave a hopeful look at Will. He wasn't 100% sure he would be able to replicate the drill-heads but he could try.

"What does the drill-head do exactly, besides drill?" He wanted more information before starting. "Ah. Well, Eli said there is a rune of some type that draws moisture from the ground to the rotor, like a type of water-magnet. It runs off a heat-transfer principle."

Will still wasn't sure it would work, but he tried drawing out the diagram Asuka had described in detail. This 'rune' could perhaps be put on the object, "Enchanted" most people would call it.

Will and Alex carefully assembled all the parts for the drill. Will knew he'd have to find the center of the 'bit' if he was hoping for the 'rune' to work right. He used a few calculations runes Kedde had taught him to find the center of its rotations before setting to work on the 'magnet' spell. Using a small metal chipper and precise finger motions he cut his rune into the metal and chanted a set of instructional incantations to make sure it would stay in place a while.

Finally the big test came as they sent the entire apparatus down the hole into the ground. The wind began to hit the propeller blades and the entire thing sprang into action. The wind powered the gears, shifting to a constant grinding of the bit at the bottom. Slowly the central pipe gathered water and pulled it up to a collection bulb close to the surface near the sands. Water, the thing of life so far from rivers or cities. Here in this vast sandy wasteland, more valuable than gold.

"Is it working?" Will asked as others gathered round to check the wind-mill's progression. "Beautifully, Will! You should make a living doing repairs. You've got a knack for it." Asuka smiled as she whipped the sand and grit from her hands.

It was quite a different thing from the various spells he had been using for years before. On Myrah, so much emphasis had been placed on offensive and defensive magics. Yet, there seemed so much more to the world of Arcane arts than just battle. In so many ways it was like a tool for every day life on multiple worlds.

The afternoon's work was hot and long, but by day's end the wind mills that had been out of working order were running again, and by all accounts better than ever. The night's rest was very welcome for both Julia and Will. Julia told Will all the things she learned about 'spell-hosting'.

"You know, we could fix your staff no problem. It might be fun." Julia was lying awake on the long sofa. "I need a new core, the main body of wood the staff is based on." Will said coldly. He wasn't as enthusiastic about making a new staff. He felt he needed more time here. There was a lesson in this world that had to be learned. The voice in Geb knew it too. "Well, okay Will. Any ideas?" Julia felt a desire to push the questions ahead. "Before we left Geb, the voice, That voice, told me about this world. As if there was something I needed to learn here." Will said drifting to sleep. "We'll ask Asuka and Eli, they could help..."

And both of them were soon asleep.

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