

THE ARCHMAGE

RETURNS AFTER.

4000

YEARS

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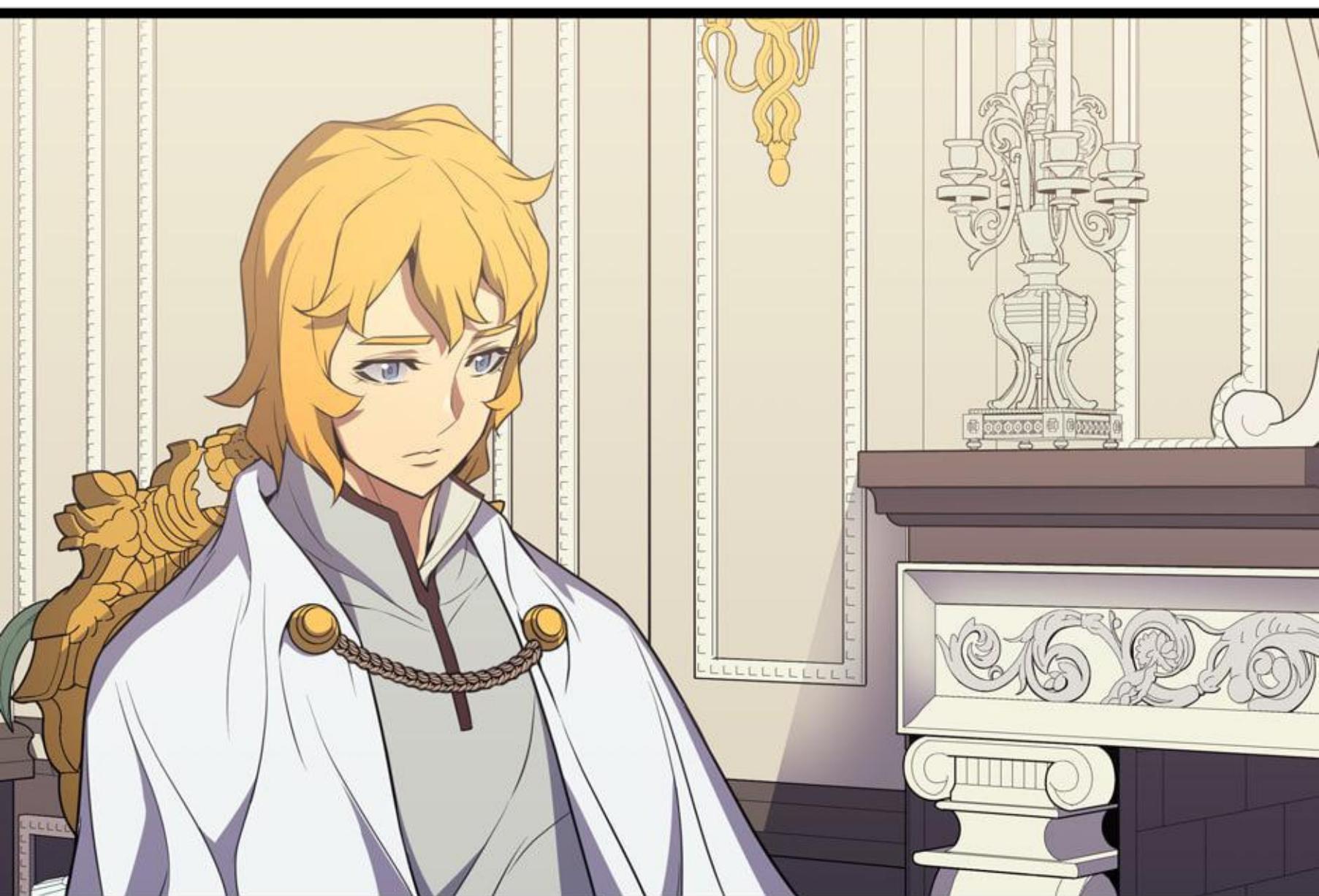
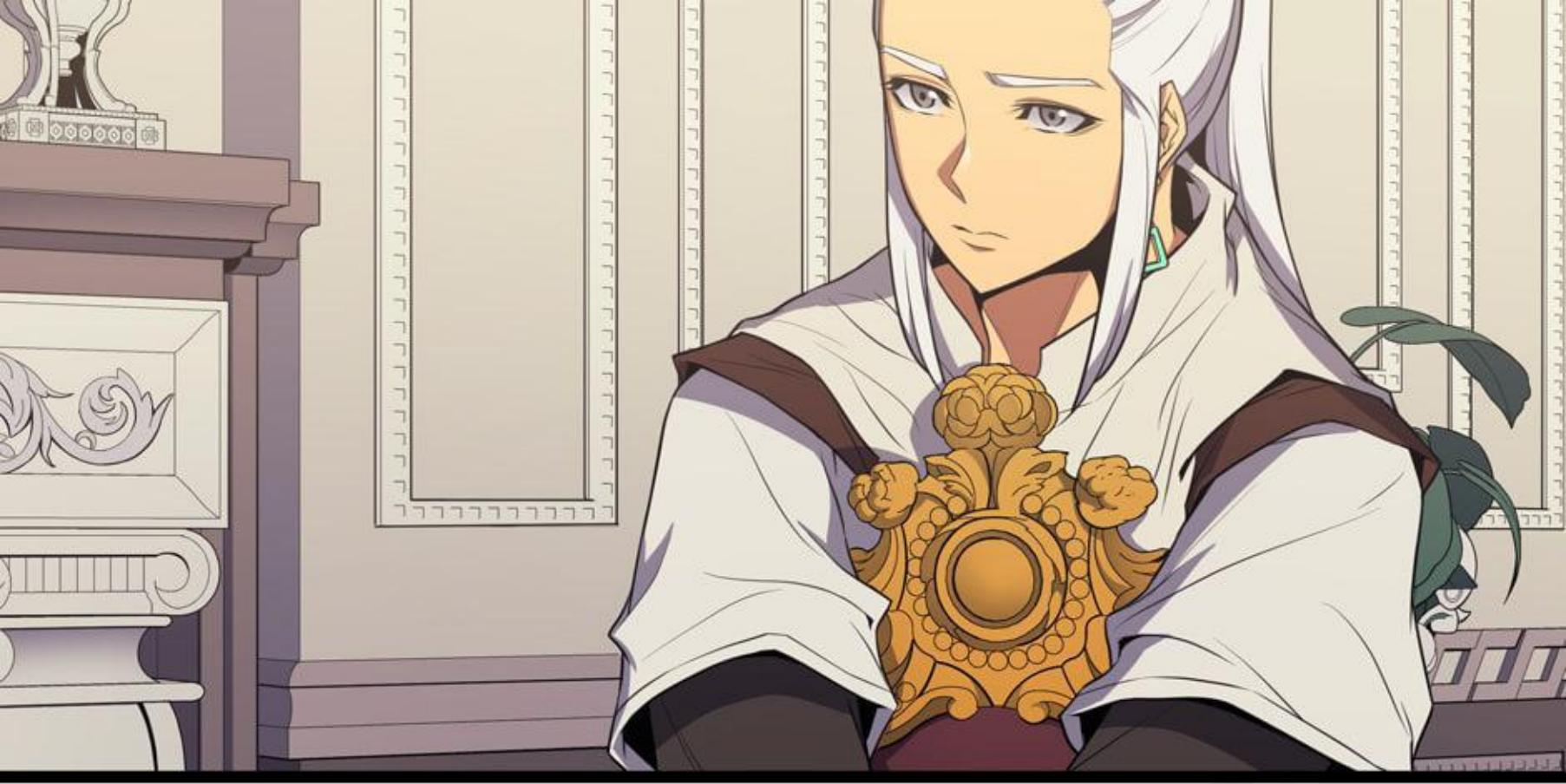
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I HAD A
MASTER WHO
TAUGHT ME MAGIC
WHEN I WAS
YOUNGER.

HE WAS A TIER 6 MAGE
AND THE VICE MASTER OF
THE 5TH MAGIC TOWER.



HE WAS A WISE ELDERLY MAN
WITH A LONG WHITE BEARD
THAT REACHED HIS CHEST.

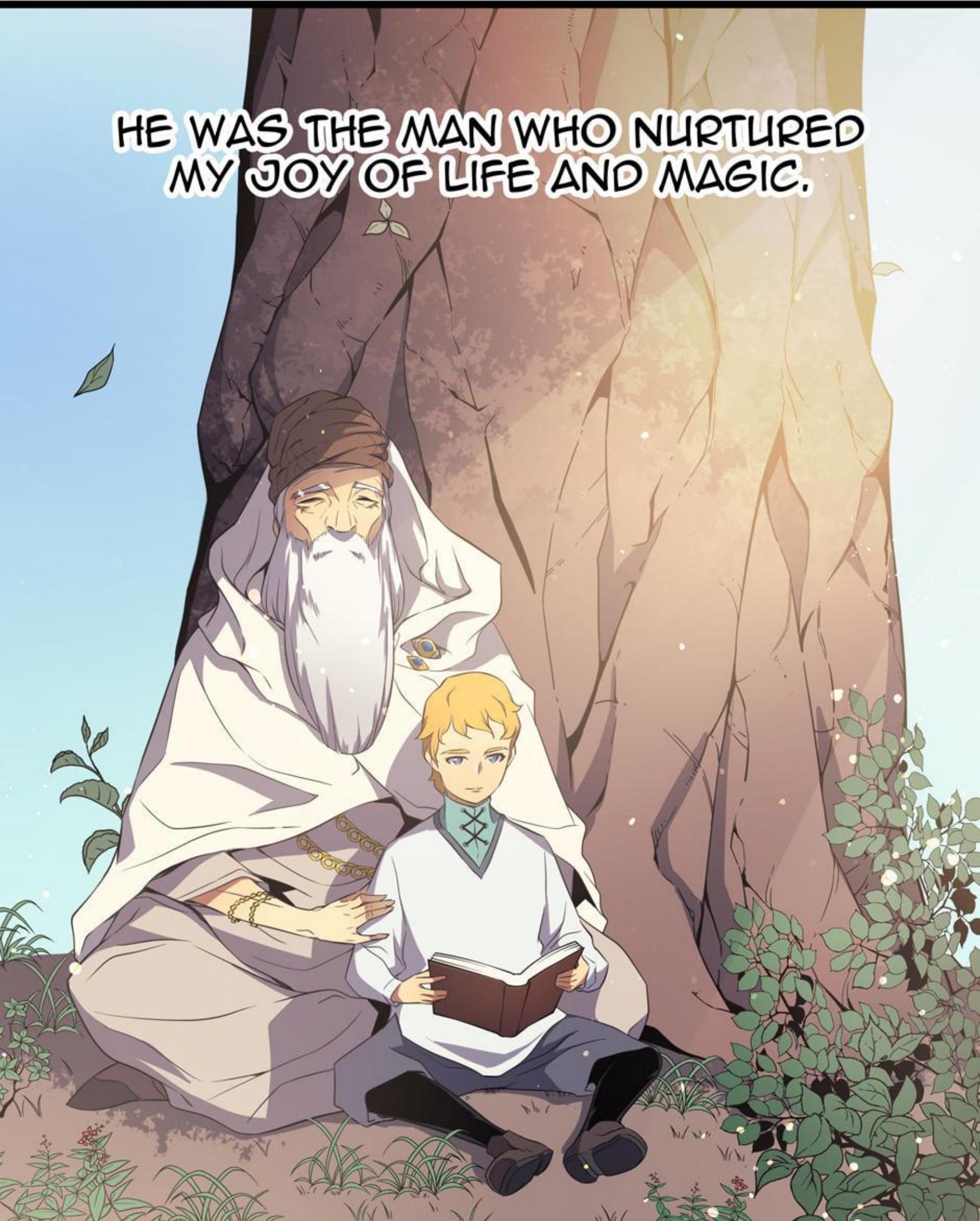
WHENEVER I ASKED HIM ANY QUESTIONS,
HE WOULD OFTEN ANSWER ME AND
PAT MY HEAD GENTLY.



I WAS QUITE FOND OF HIS HEAD PATS AND ANSWERS. NATURALLY, I STUDIED VERY HARD SO I COULD ASK HIM EVEN MORE QUESTIONS.

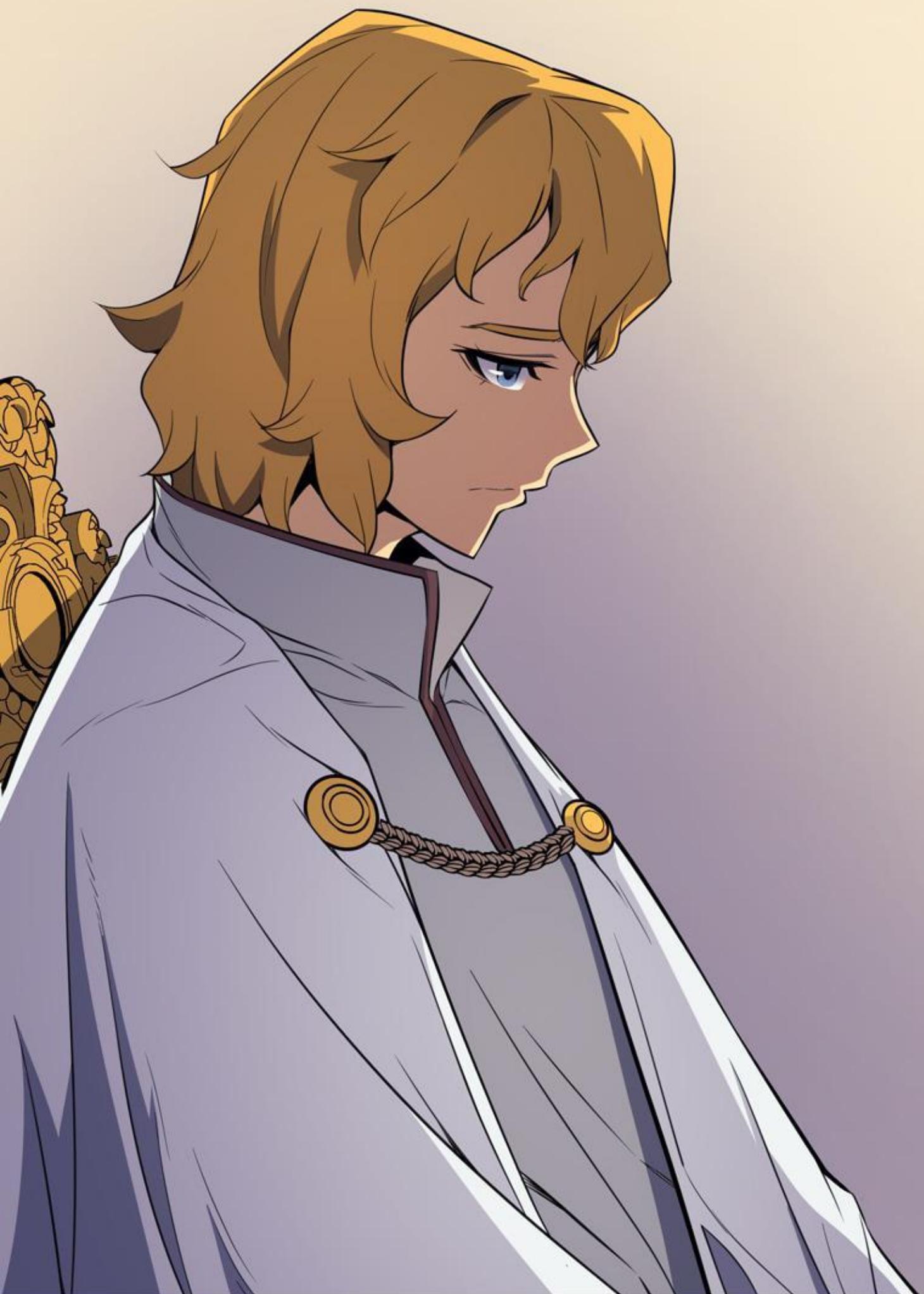


**HE WAS THE MAN WHO NURTURED
MY JOY OF LIFE AND MAGIC.**



THAT WAS
WHAT I THOUGHT
AT FIRST...





IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE
I REACHED TIER 4 UNDER
HIS TUTELAGE.



ONE DAY,
I FOUND MYSELF
ASKING A QUESTION
NOT EVEN MY MASTER
COULD ANSWER
FOR ME.

HE SEEMED BEWILDERED.

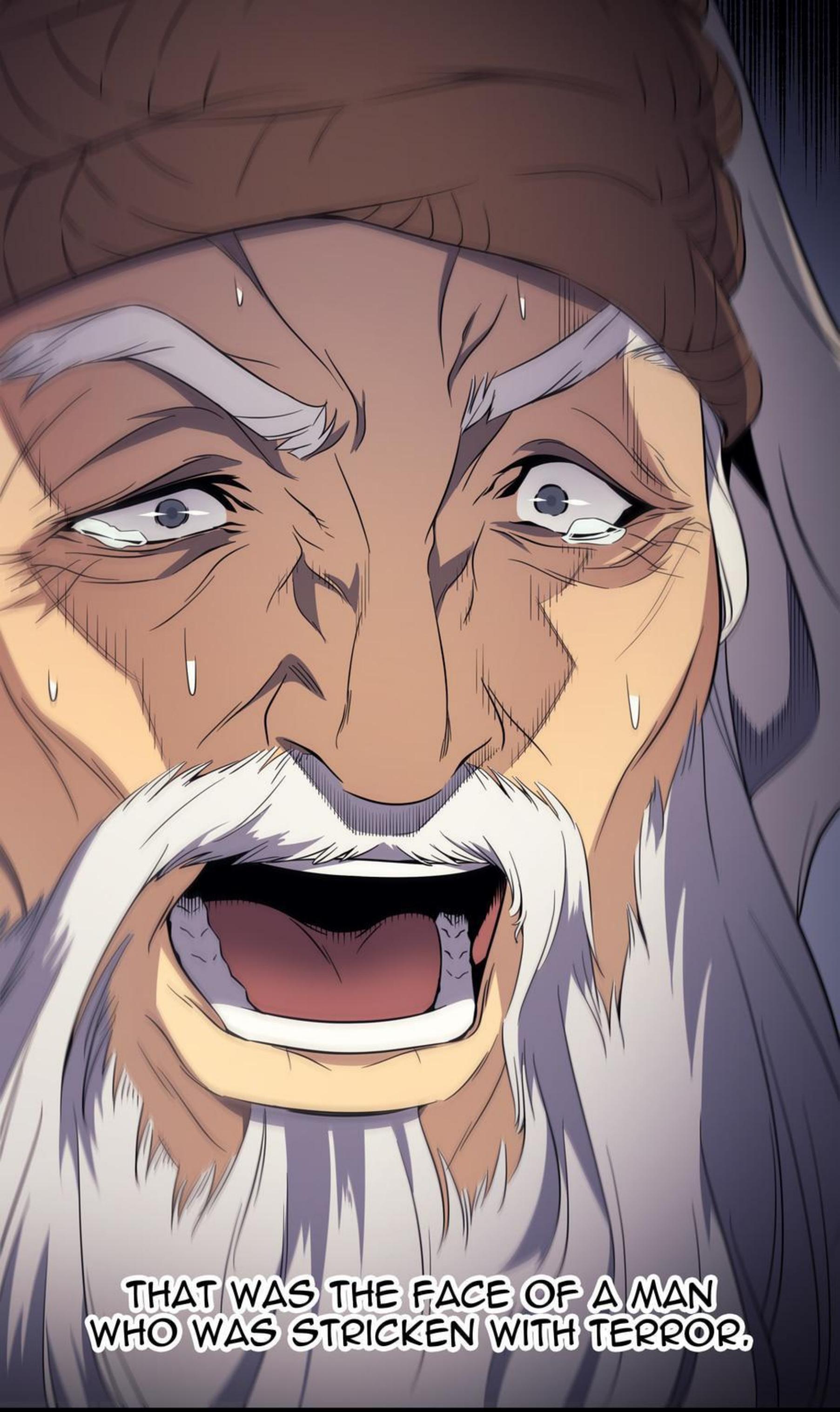


HE WAS SCREAMING
AS HE CALLED ME
A MONSTER.



HE WAS ENRAGED...

ENRAGED?
NO, THAT...



**THAT WAS THE FACE OF A MAN
WHO WAS STRICKEN WITH TERROR.**

ALL THAT TIME,
MY MASTER...

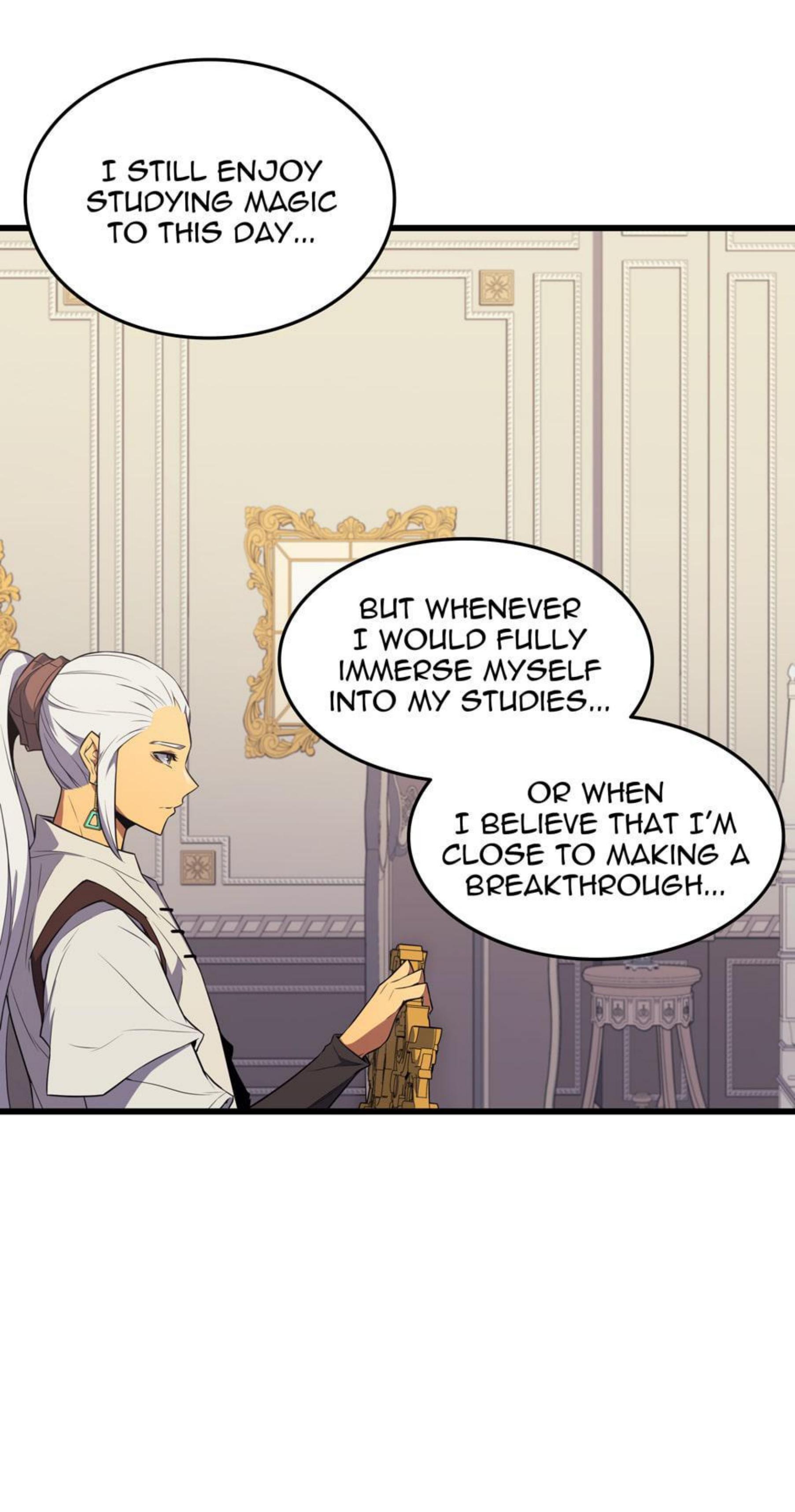


HE WAS
OBSERVING ME
AS I DEVELOPED
MY NATURAL TALENTS
FOR MAGECRAFT AT A
TERRIFYING SPEED, EVER
MORE CONVINCED THAT MY
RAPID GROWTH WAS
AN ILL OMEN.



EVER SINCE
THEN, I'VE LOST
SIGHT OF WHERE
TO GO WITH MY
TALENTS.

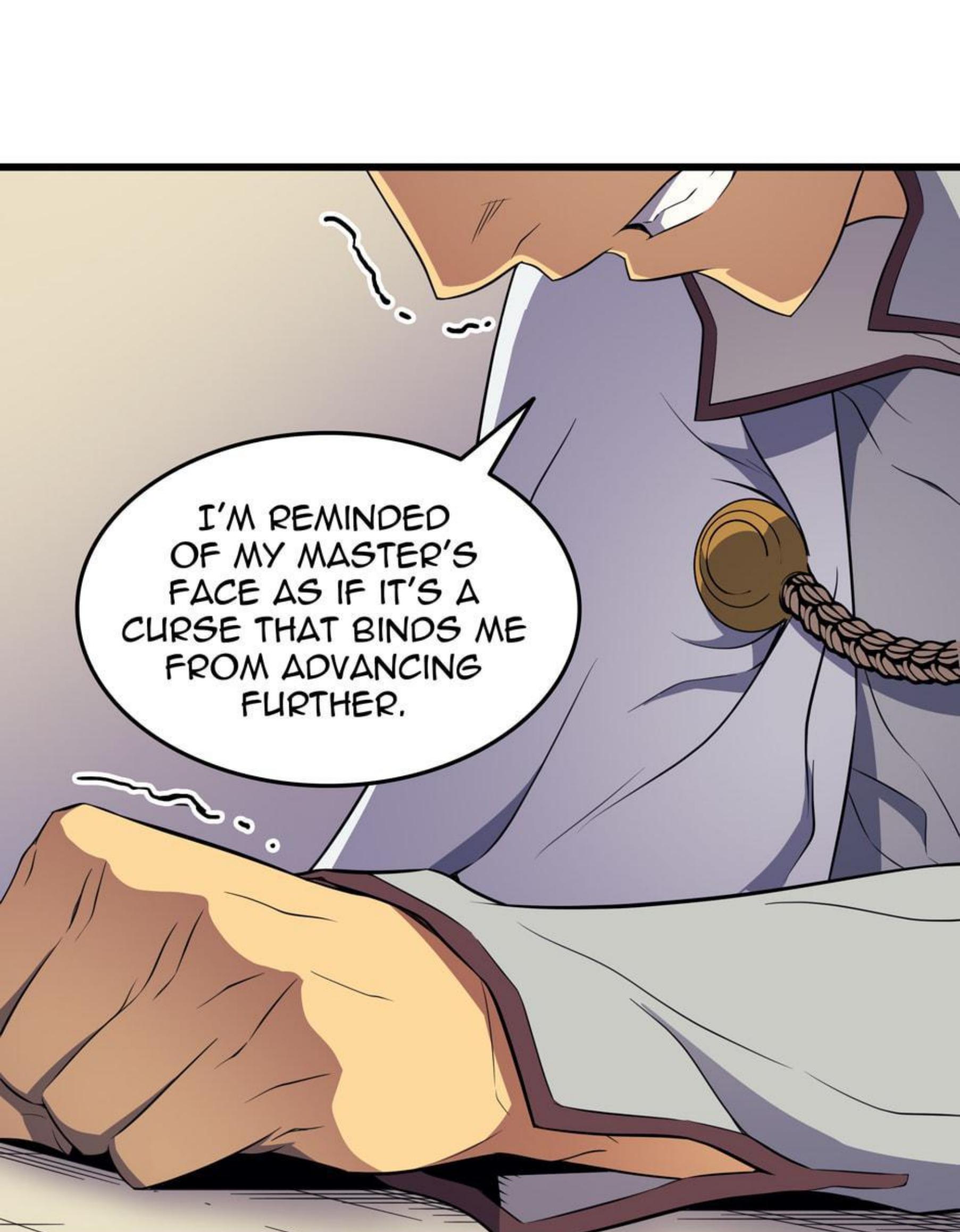




I STILL ENJOY
STUDYING MAGIC
TO THIS DAY...

BUT WHENEVER
I WOULD FULLY
IMMERSE MYSELF
INTO MY STUDIES...

OR WHEN
I BELIEVE THAT I'M
CLOSE TO MAKING A
BREAKTHROUGH...



I'M REMINDED
OF MY MASTER'S
FACE AS IF IT'S A
CURSE THAT BINDS ME
FROM ADVANCING
FURTHER.

EVERY SINGLE



EVERY SINGLE
DAY, HUNDREDS,
THOUSANDS...

NOT A DAY
GOES BY FOR ME
WITHOUT CURSING
THIS TALENT
OF MINE.



IF ONLY...

IF ONLY I'D
BEEN BORN WITH AN
ORDINARY TALENT
INSTEAD...



I WOULD HAVE
ENJOYED FURTHERING
MY MAGECRAFT WITH
MORE PASSION...

AND I WOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN CALLED
A MONSTER...



FERRAN...





**STOP ACTING
LIKE A DUMBASS.**



LISTEN WELL.





FOR THOSE
WHO ARE CALLED
GENIUS, POSSESSING
EXTRAORDINARY
TALENTS...

THERE'S A
PLACE NOT EVEN
THEY CAN REACH DESPITE
HOW DESPERATELY THEY
TRY THROUGHOUT
THEIR LIVES...

AND THAT IS
THE PINNACLE
ENLIGHTENMENT
OF MAGIC.

YOU MET A
LOUSY TUTOR.

IF YOU GOT
DEMOTIVATED FROM
BEING THE TARGET OF
HIS JEALOUSY, I CAN
ASSURE YOU THAT YOU'LL
NEVER BE ABLE TO
REACH THAT
PINNACLE.





FREI...



LET ME BE VERY
CLEAR. BY THE TIME
WE MEET AGAIN...



I WILL HAVE
REACHED SEVERAL
TIERS HIGHER THAN
I AM NOW.

I CAN'T TELL IF
YOU'RE CONFIDENT
OR CONCEITED...

HEH

YOU WILL
ALSO NEED TO
DO THE SAME.





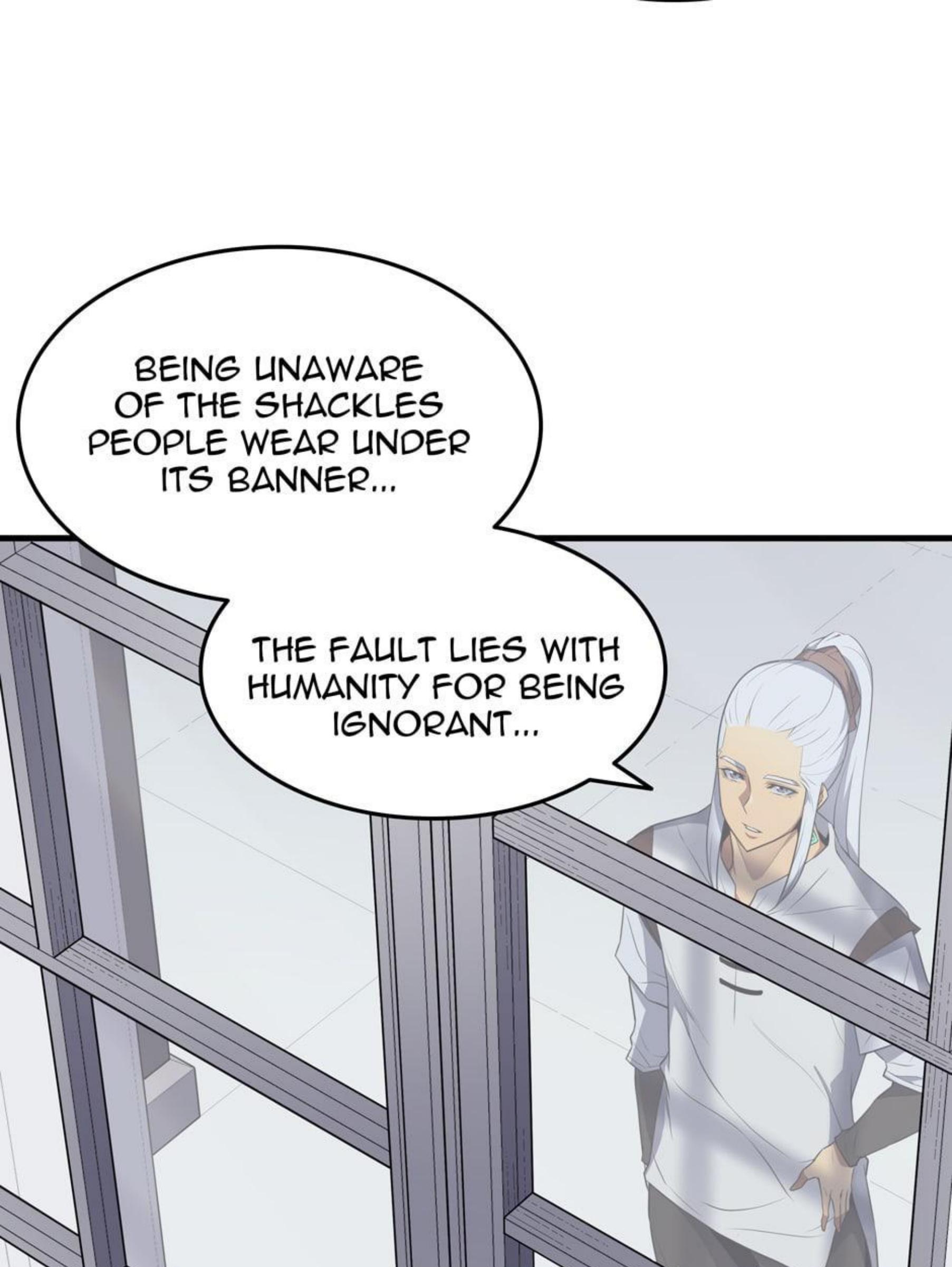
DEMIGOD.

I SEE... SO YOU
KNOW ABOUT ITS
EXISTENCE.



NOT ONLY DOES
IT HAVE AUTHORITY
OVER HUMANS BUT IT
SECRETLY RULES OVER
ALL THE INTELLIGENT
CREATURES OF THIS
WORLD...

ITS EXISTENCE
AS FALSE GODS
CHANGED THE LAWS
OF THIS UNIVERSE...



BEING UNAWARE
OF THE SHACKLES
PEOPLE WEAR UNDER
ITS BANNER...

THE FAULT LIES WITH
HUMANITY FOR BEING
IGNORANT...

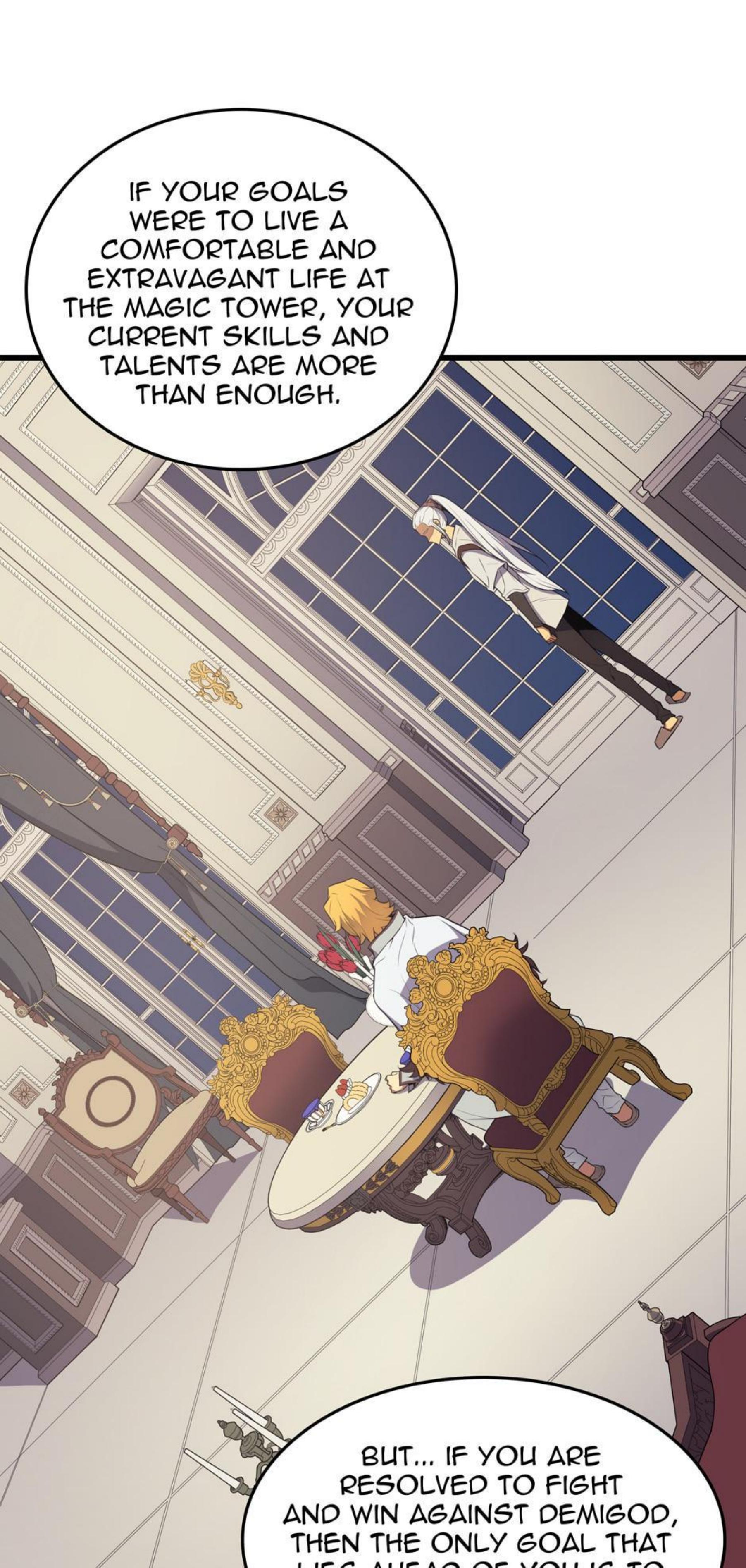


BUT TRYING TO
CORRECT THIS WORLD WITH
UNYIELDING RESOLVE AND
DEFEATING DEMIGOD...

THAT'S
A POTENTIAL
HUMANITY CARRIES
WITH THEM.

**THAT'S A TASK
ONLY HUMANS
CAN HOPE TO
ACHIEVE.**





IF YOUR GOALS
WERE TO LIVE A
COMFORTABLE AND
EXTRAVAGANT LIFE AT
THE MAGIC TOWER, YOUR
CURRENT SKILLS AND
TALENTS ARE MORE
THAN ENOUGH.

BUT... IF YOU ARE
RESOLVED TO FIGHT
AND WIN AGAINST DEMIGOD,
THEN THE ONLY GOAL THAT
LIES AHEAD OF YOU IS TO

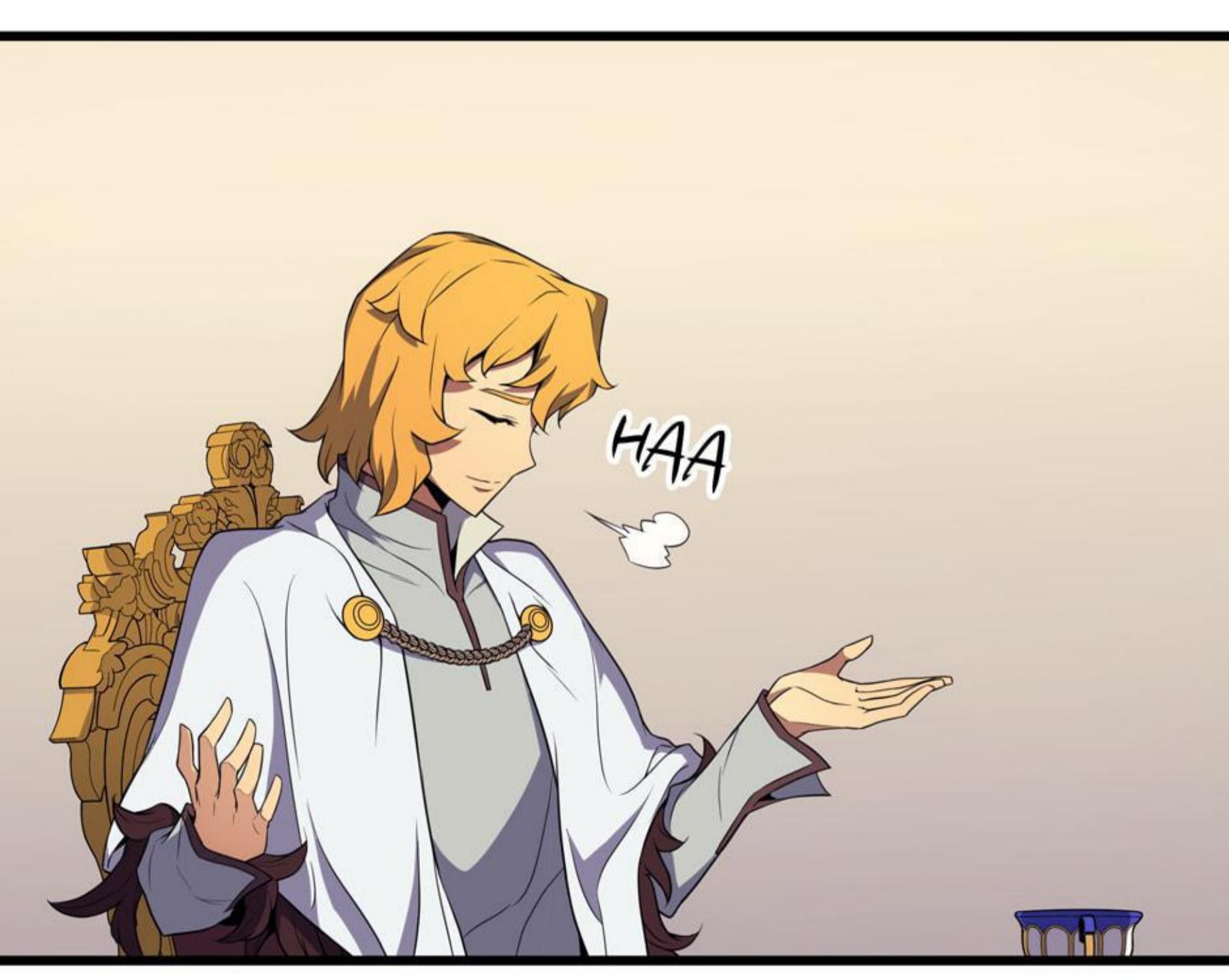
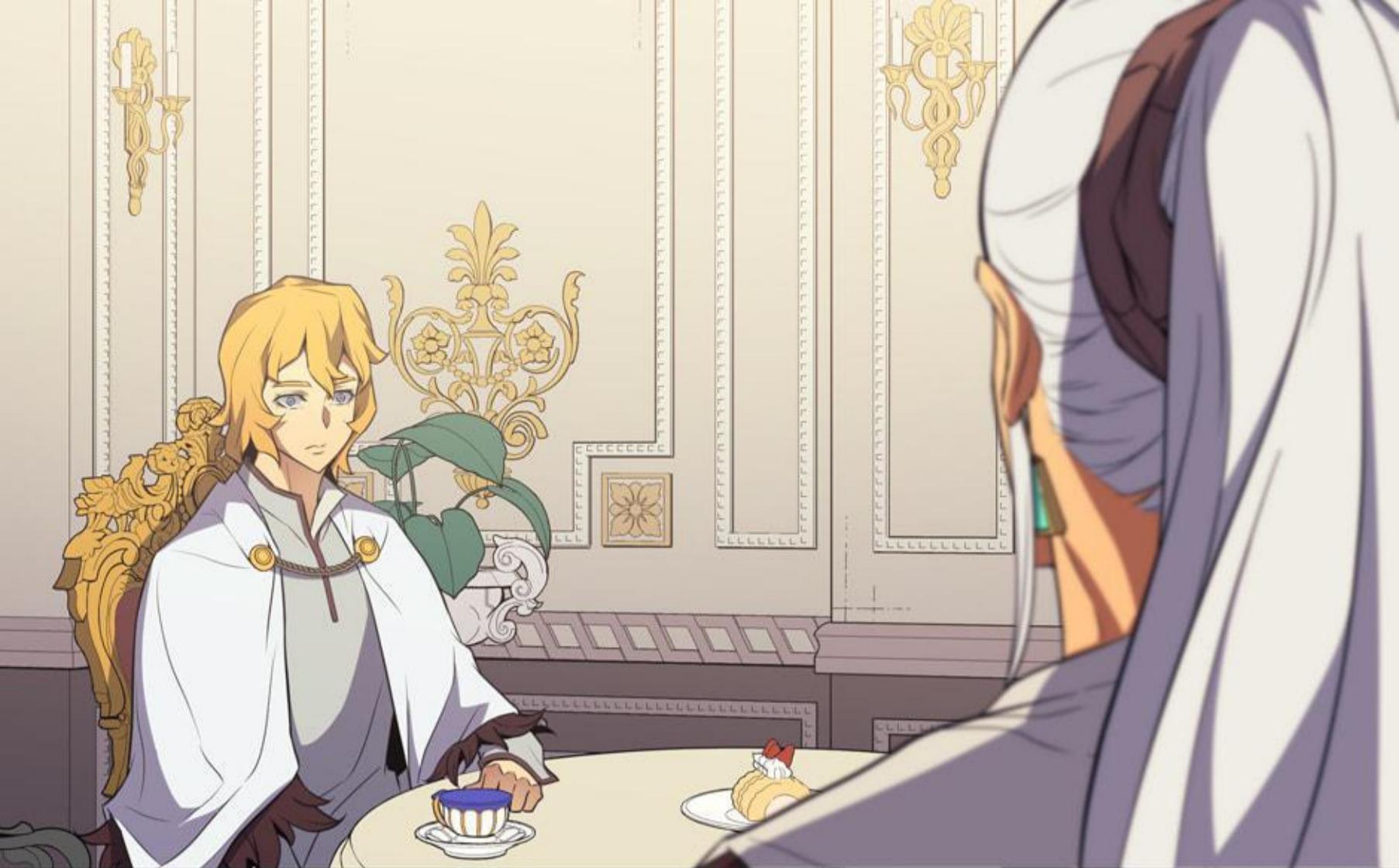
LIES AHEAD OF YOU IS TO
REACH THE PINNACLE
OF MAGIC.

OF COURSE,
I PLAN ON THE
LATTER.



**SO, WHAT
ABOUT YOU?**







HAHA...

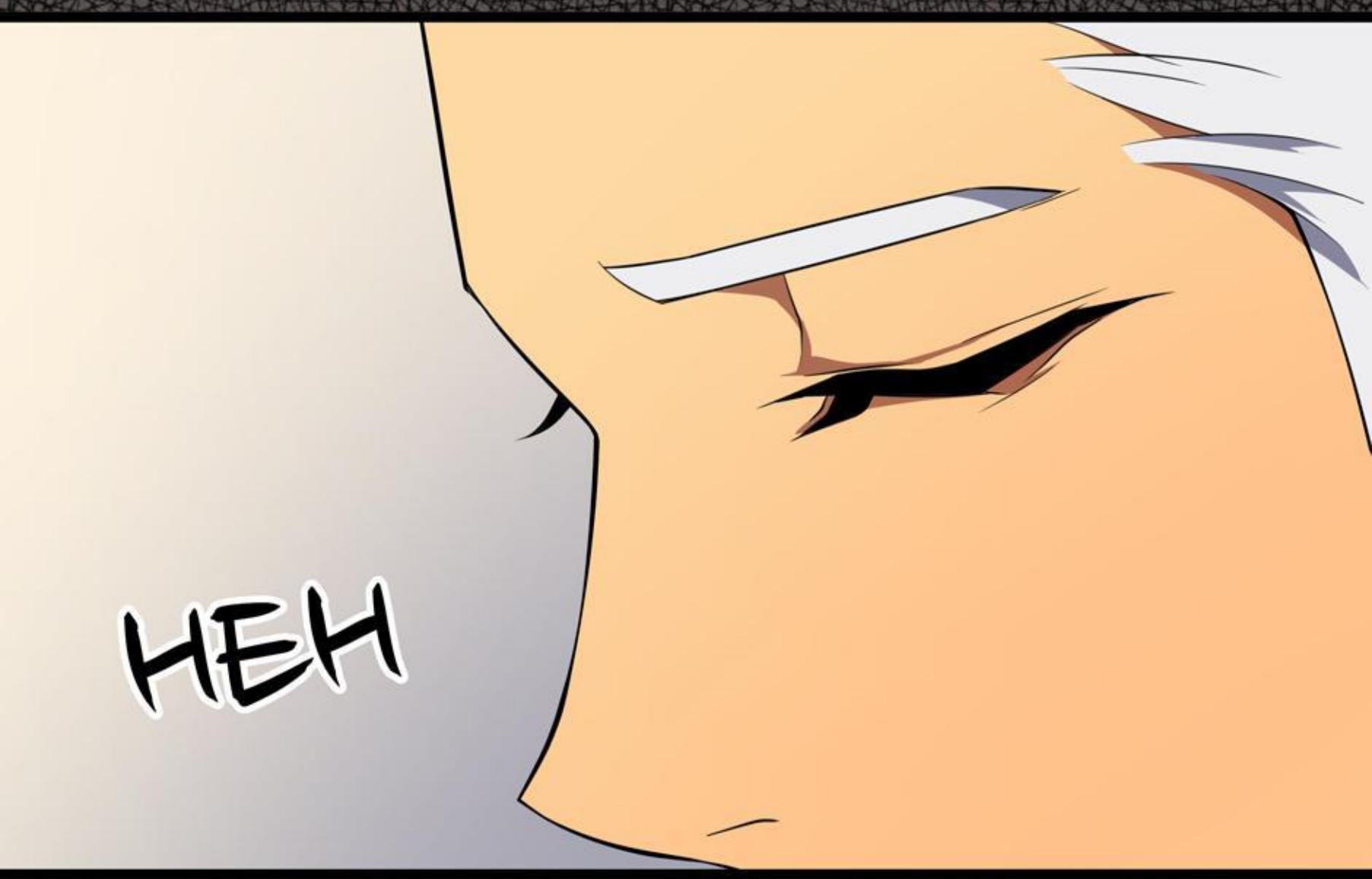
IT SEEMS YOU
CAN FIND YOUR PATH
IN LIFE FROM PEOPLE
OTHER THAN YOUR
MASTER.

SO YOU'RE
TELLING ME TO

COMPETE AGAINST MY
RIVAL WHILE SEEKING
MY OWN PATH,
RIGHT?









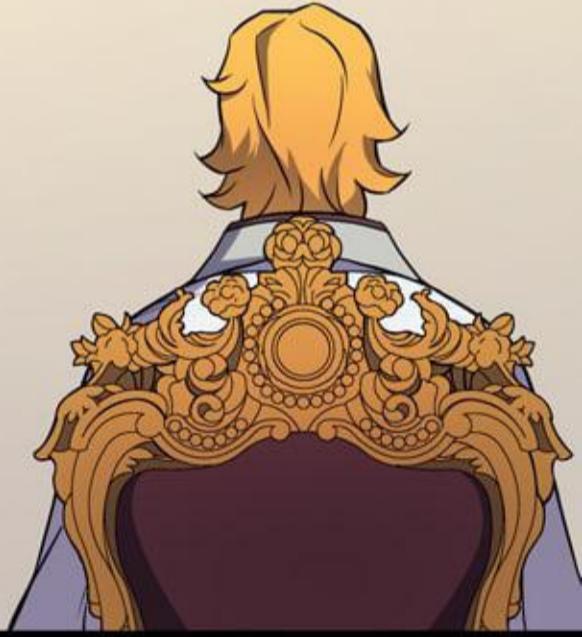
BUT DON'T WORRY,
I'LL ALWAYS BE A
STEP AHEAD OF YOU
SO YOU WON'T TRIP
AND FALL.

TAP



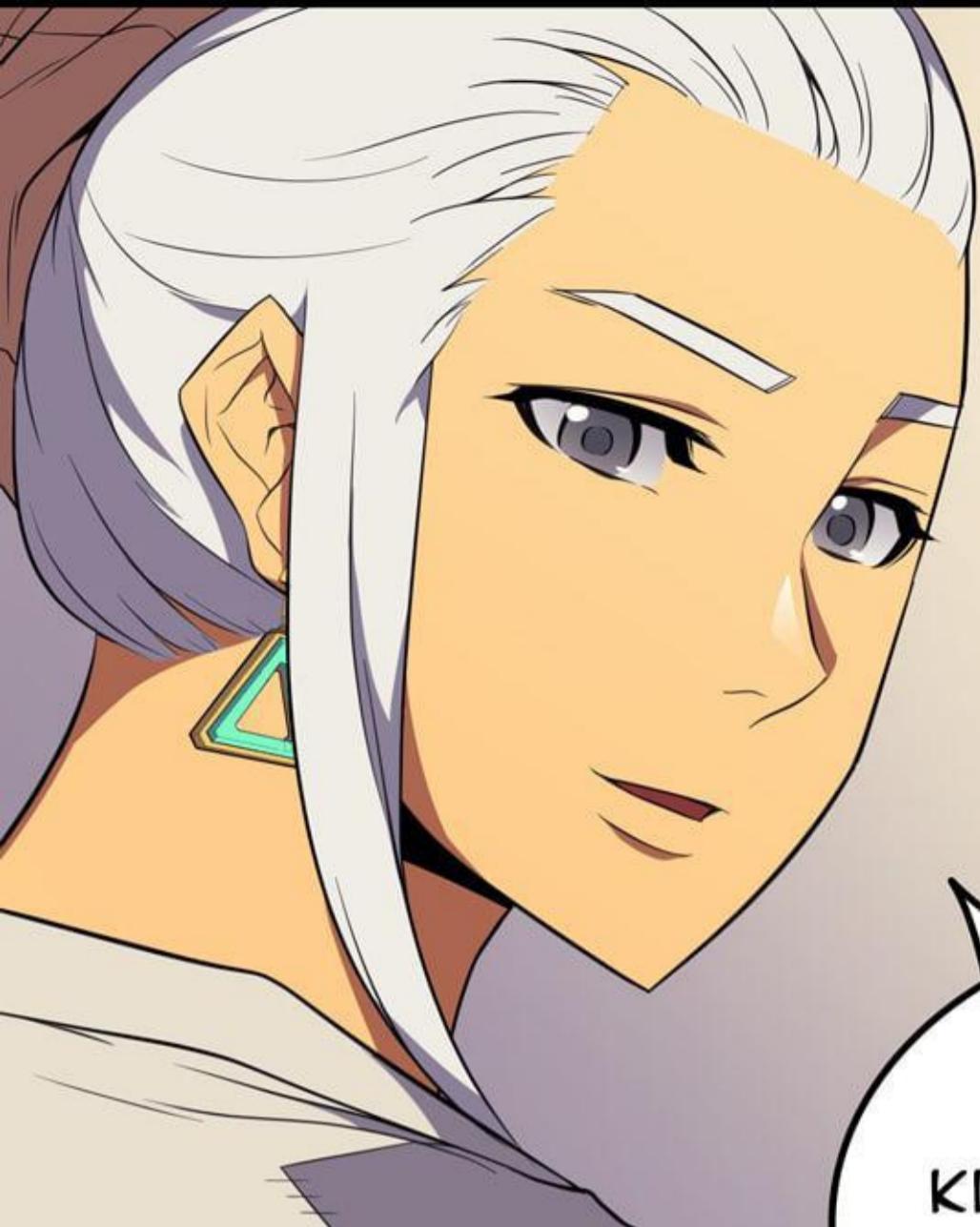


FREI...

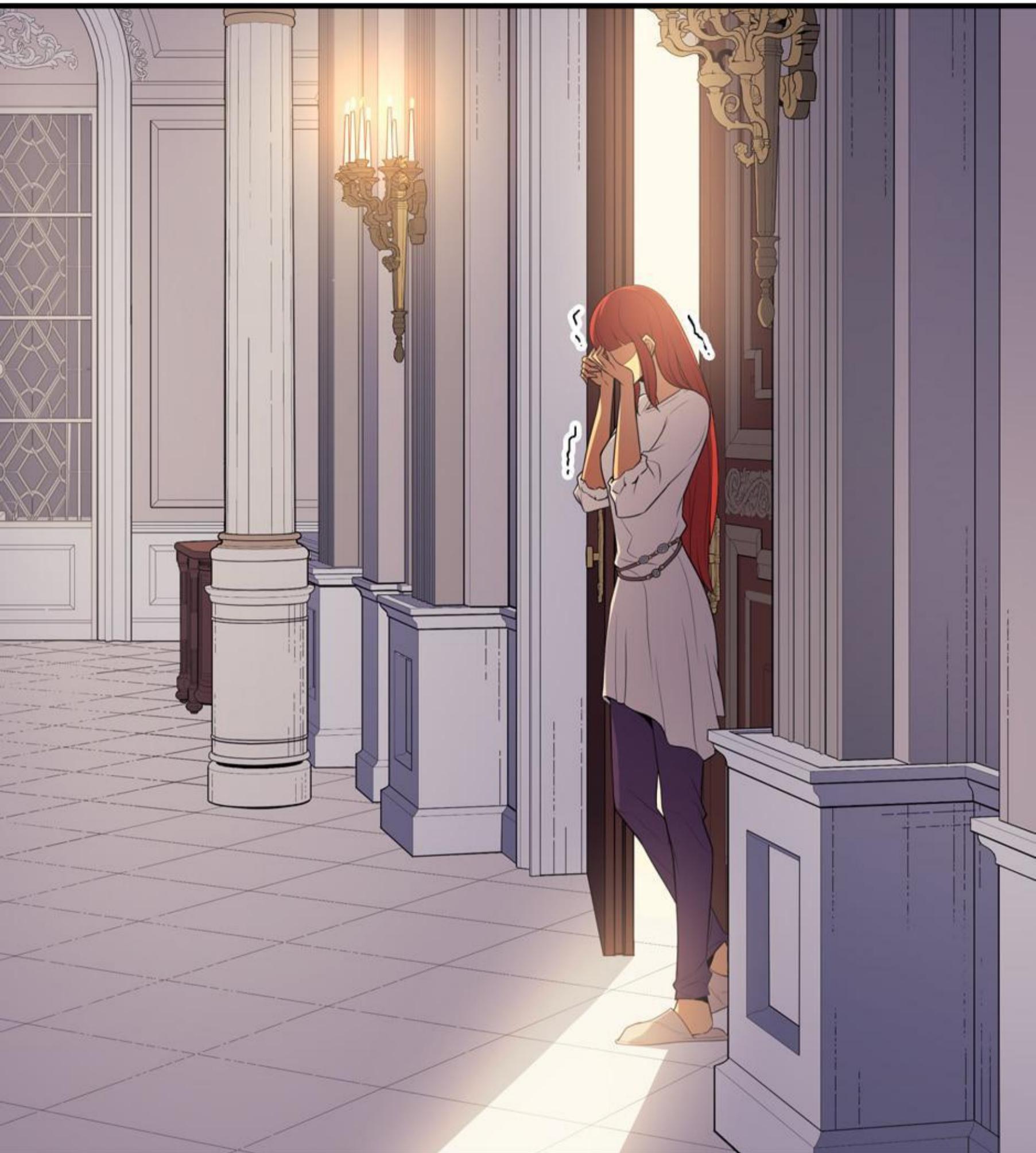


MARK MY WORDS. NEXT TIME WE MEET, I'LL BE THE ONE SEVERAL STEPS AHEAD OF YOU.

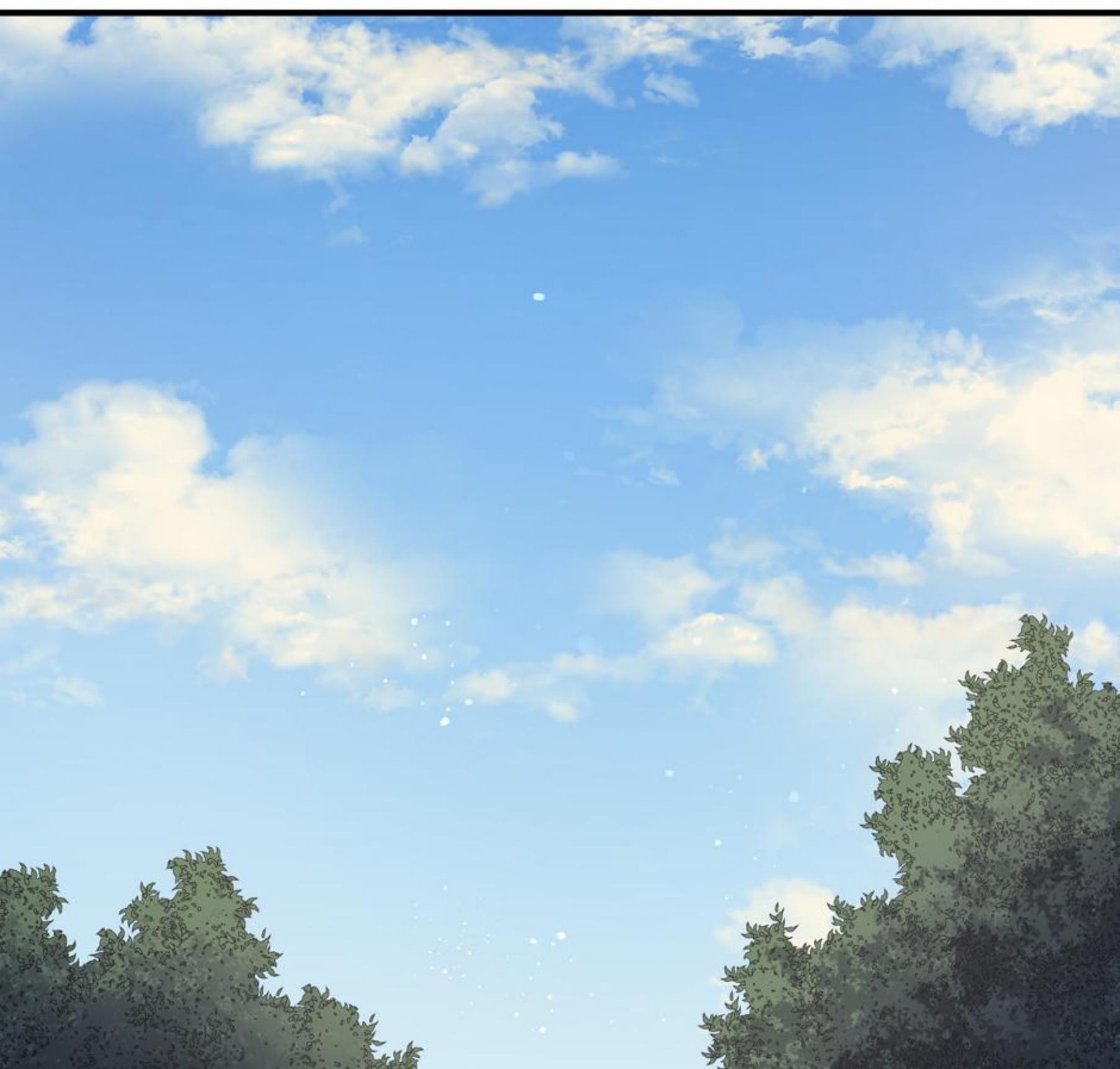


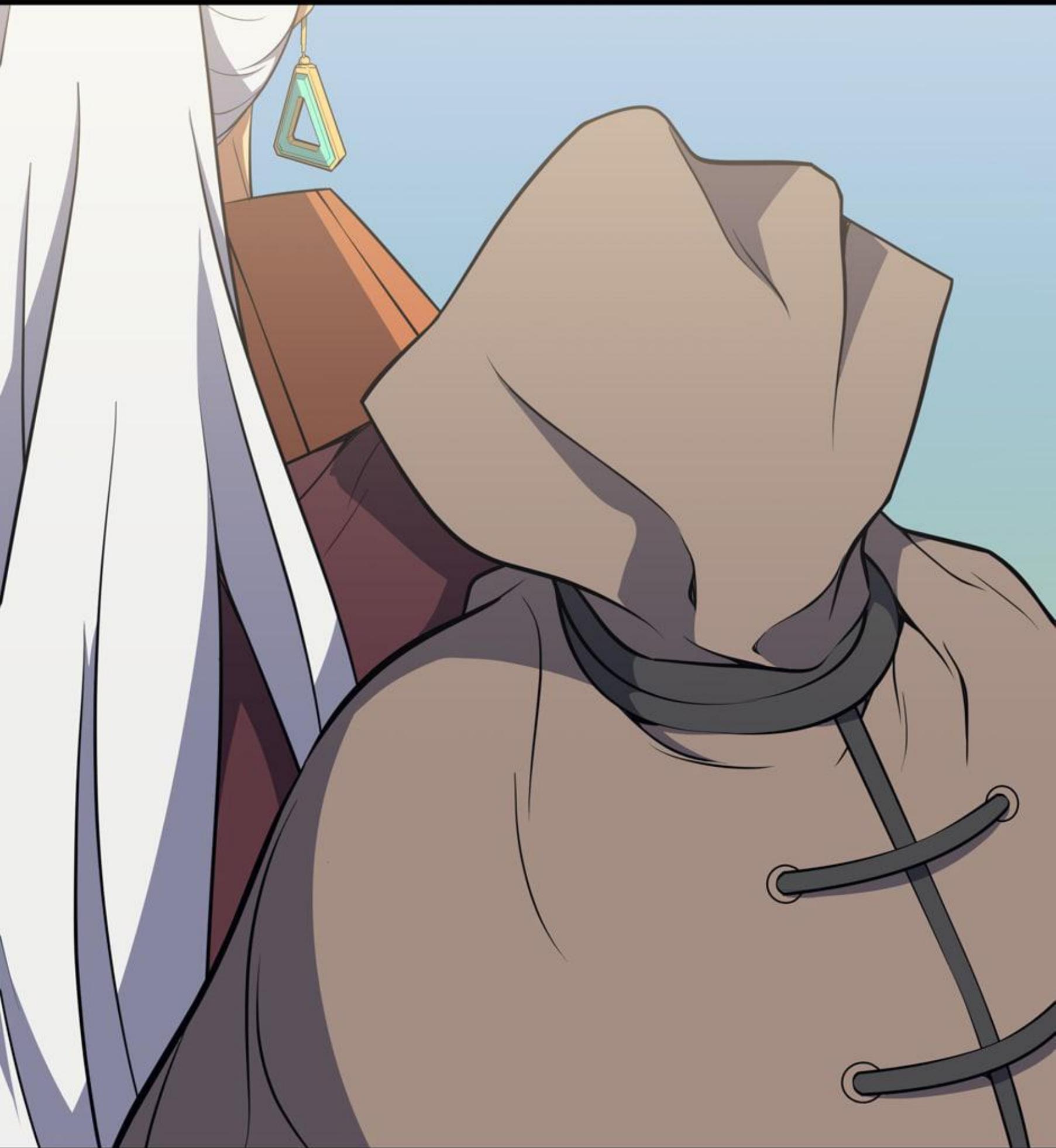


OH YEAH,
THOSE ARE THE
KIND OF GUTS YOU
NEED IF YOU WANT TO
CALL YOURSELF
MY FRIEND.











HMM,
NOT BAD.

THIS IS GOOD
WEATHER AS I
SET OFF ON MY
JOURNEY.





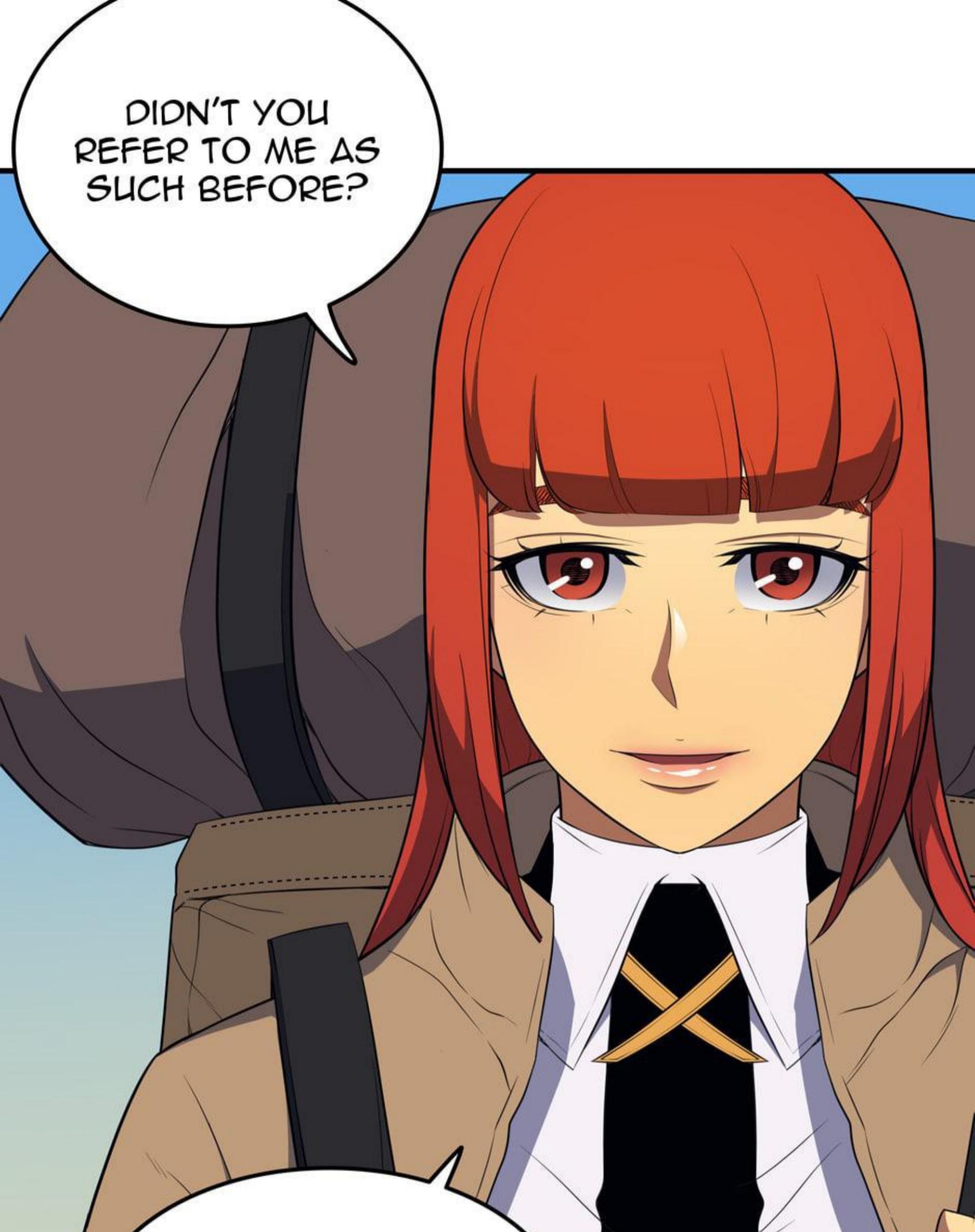
WERE YOU
PLANNING ON
LEAVING YOUR
LUGGAGE
BEHIND?



HMM?

I PACKED
EVERYTHING
I NEED.

YOU REALLY
DON'T MINCE
WORDS.



DIDN'T YOU
REFER TO ME AS
SUCH BEFORE?



A HINDRANCE...
LUGGAGE YOU
SHOULD HAVE
LEFT BEHIND.

WAIT, ARE
YOU COMING
WITH ME?



WHAT ABOUT
THE ACADEMY?

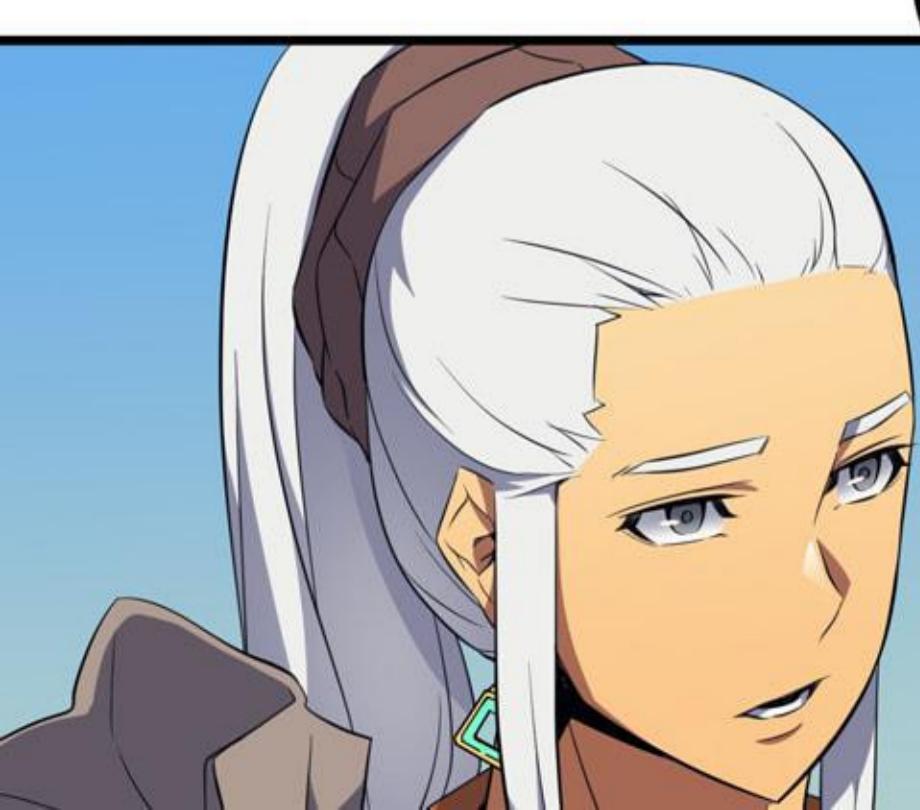
I PLAN TO
STUDY MAGIC TO THE
UTMOST LIMITS.

AND BEFORE
ME IS HISTORY'S
GREATEST ARCHMAGE.



SO WHY
SHOULD I
ACCEPT ANYONE
ELSE AS MY
MASTER?

YOU MAY END UP
REGRETTING THIS,
YOU KNOW...?





HMPH,
I WON'T REPEAT
MYSELF.

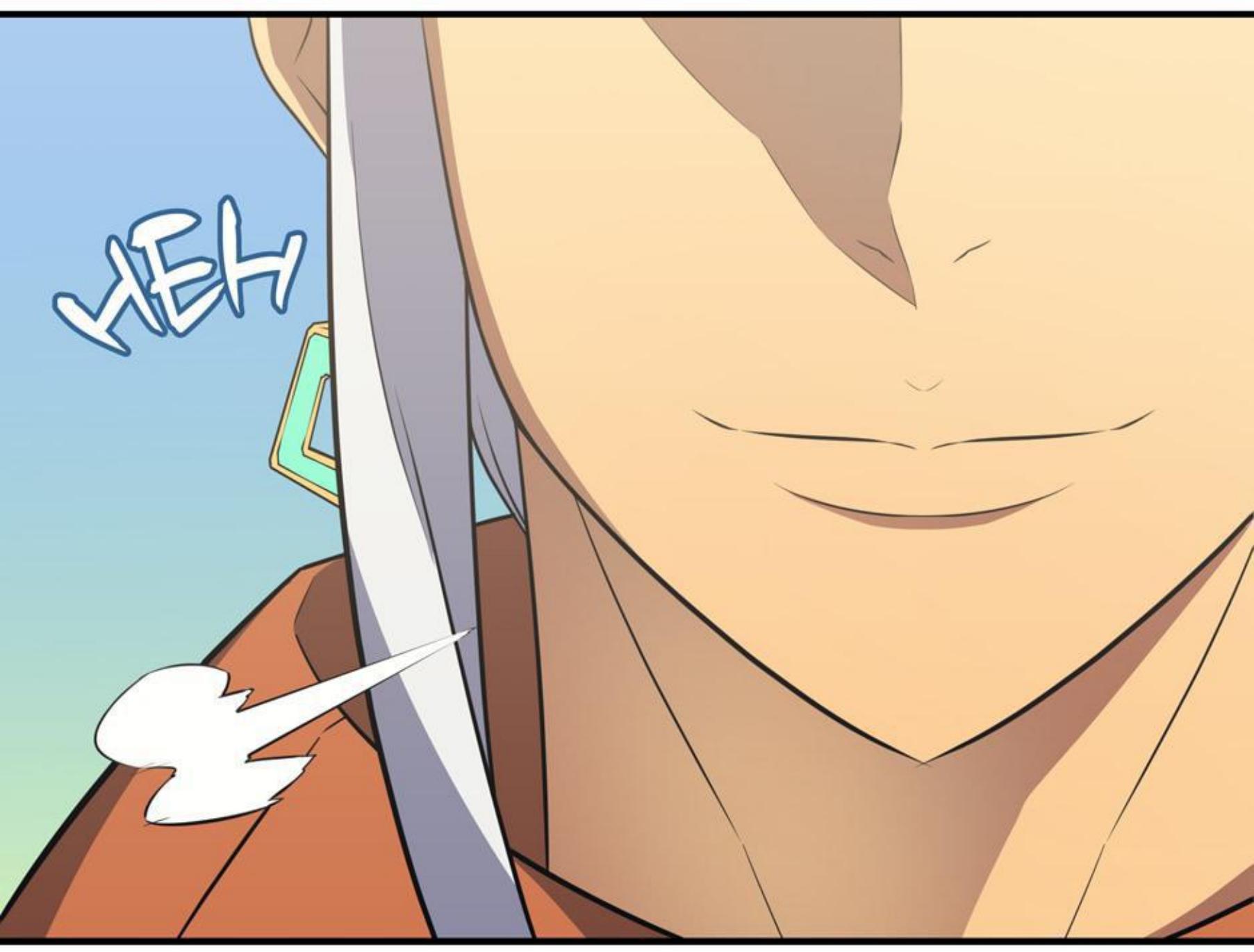
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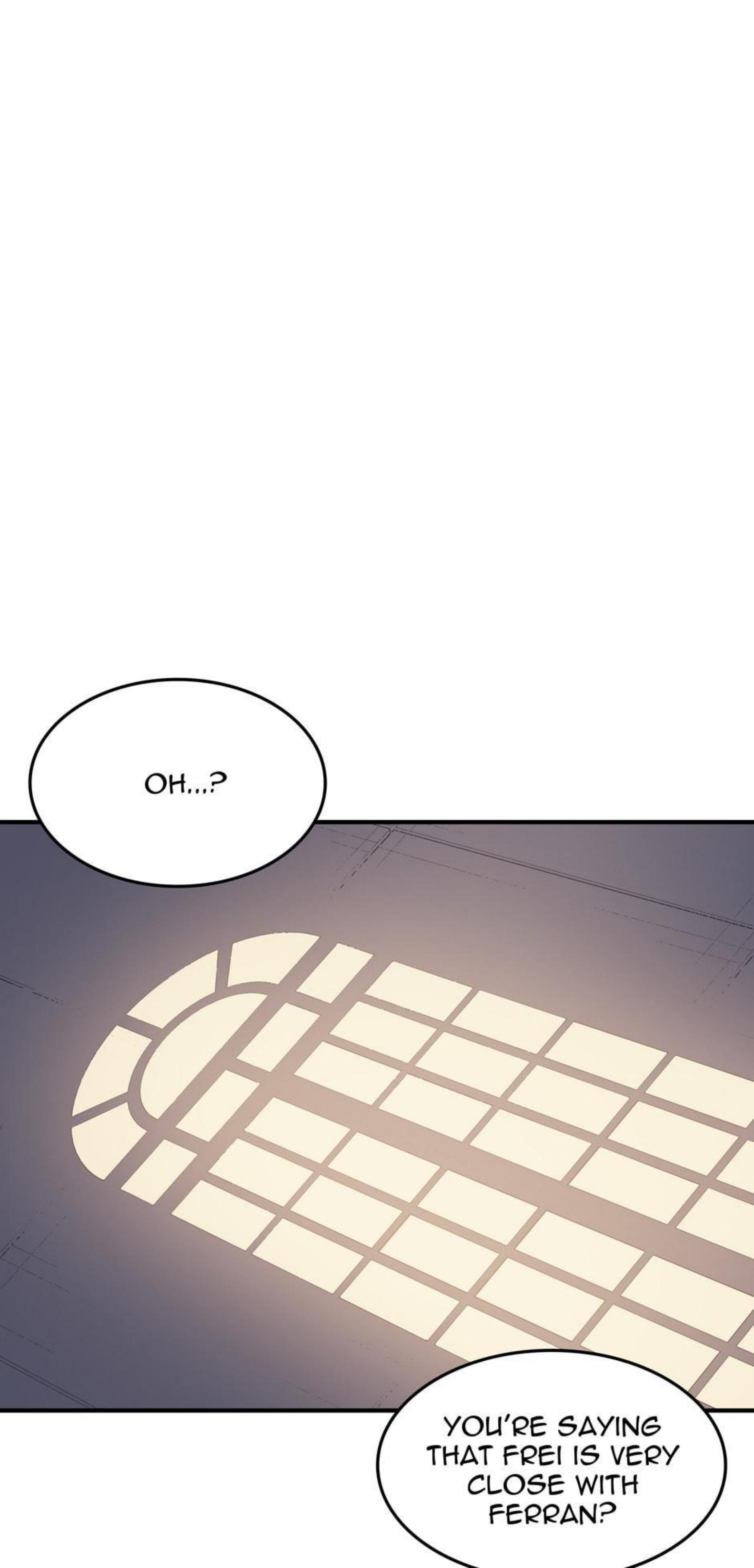


EVEN IF IT
MEANS WALKING
TO THE HEART OF
HELL AND
BACK,

I WILL FOLLOW
YOU TO THE ENDS
OF THE WORLD.



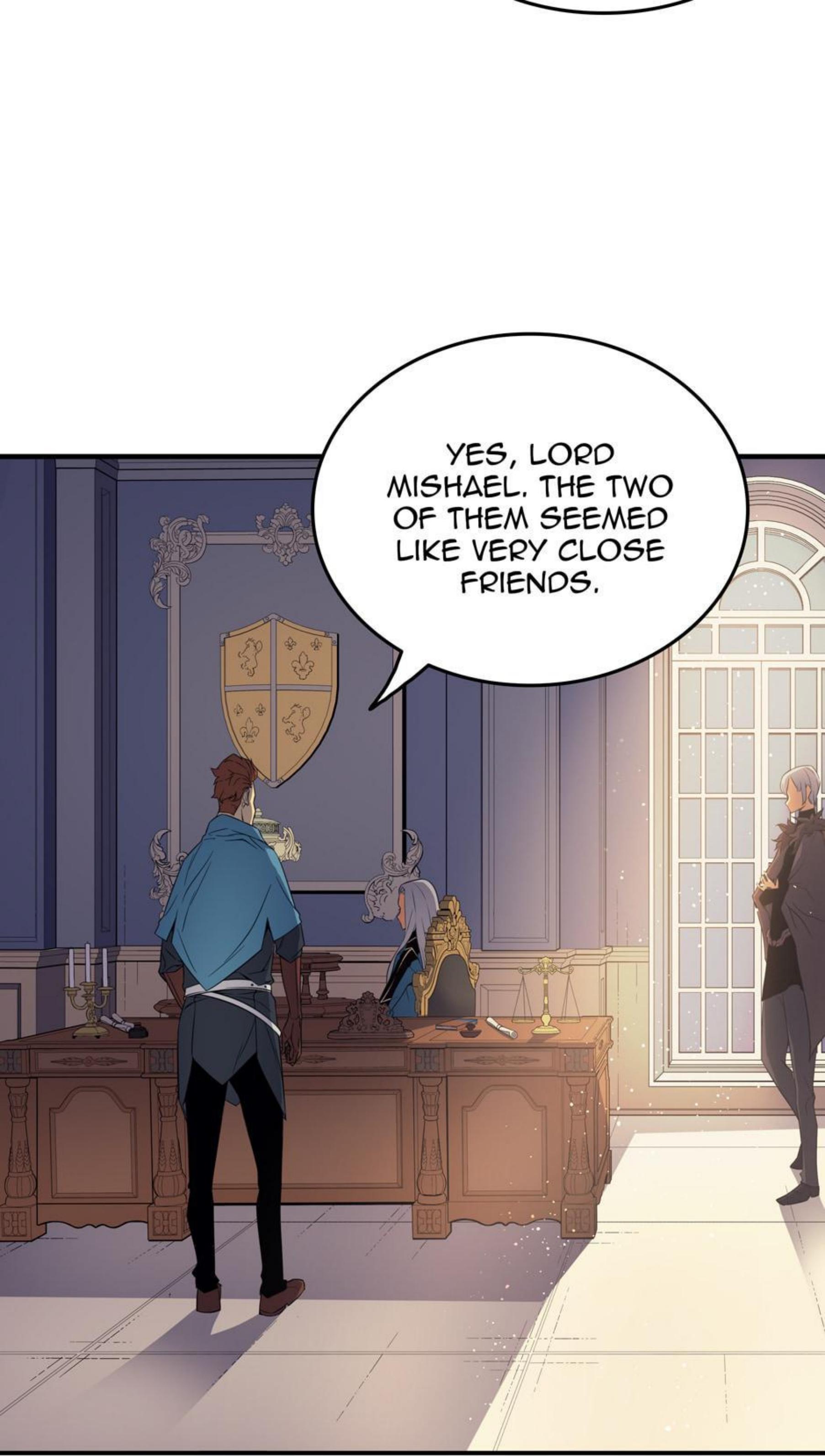




OH...?



YOU'RE SAYING
THAT FREI IS VERY
CLOSE WITH
FERRAN?

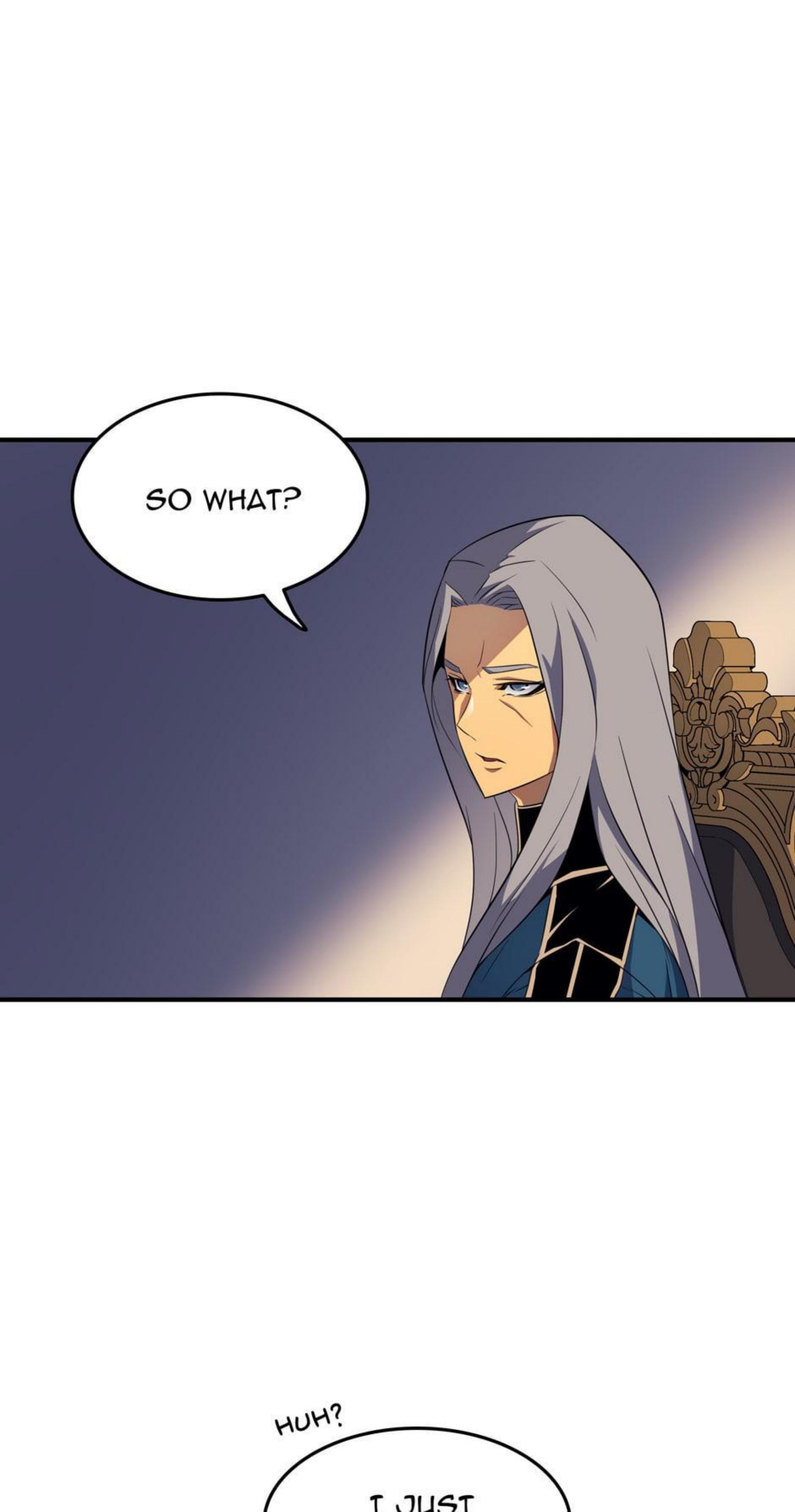


YES, LORD
MISHAEL. THE TWO
OF THEM SEEMED
LIKE VERY CLOSE
FRIENDS.



HE EVEN DECLARED LOUD AND CLEAR TO EVERYONE PRESENT THAT FREI WAS HIS MOST VALUED GUEST AT THE BANQUET!





SO WHAT?

HUH?

I JUST

I SAW
MEANT TO...

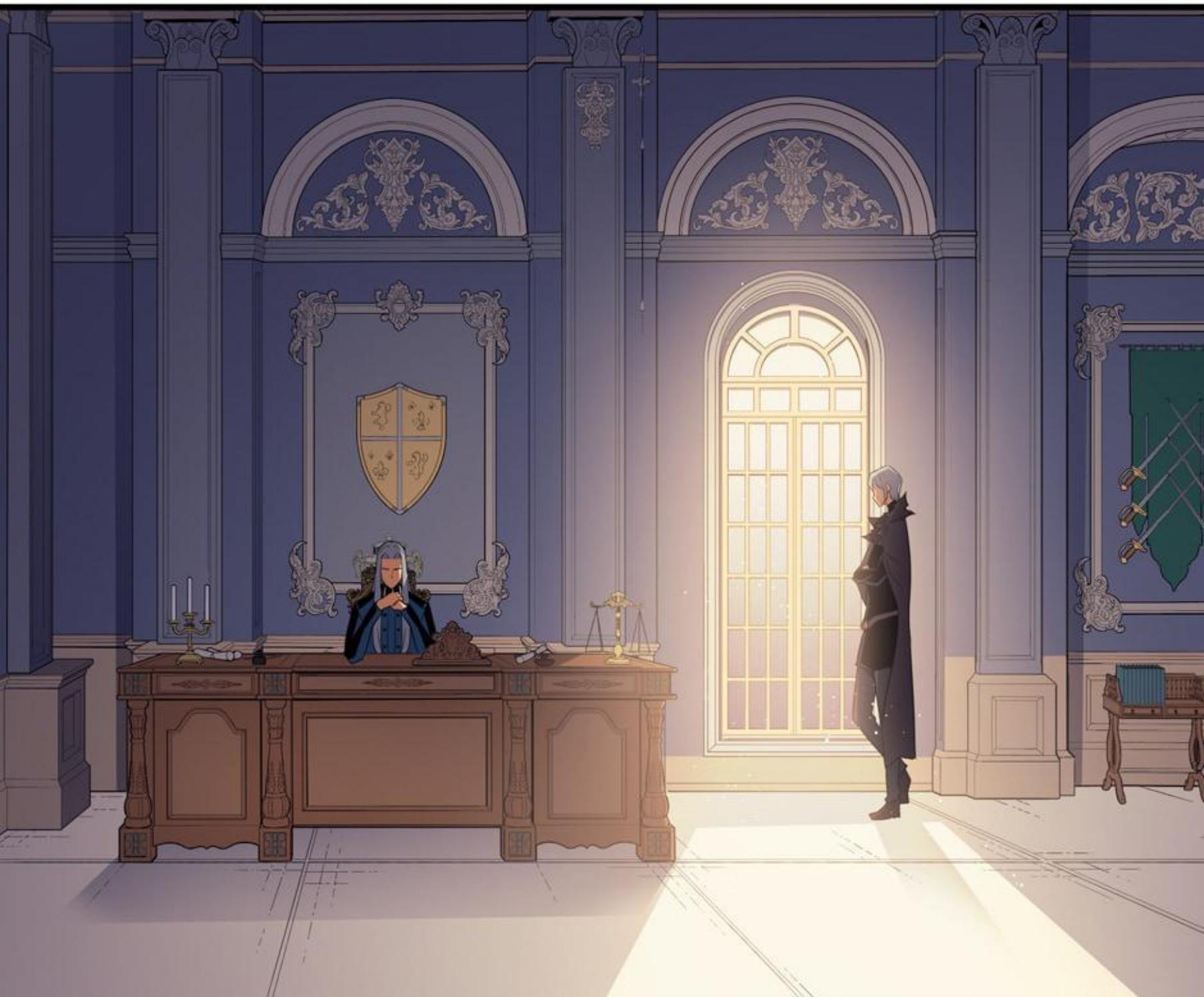
I THOUGHT
I SHOULD INFORM
YOU ABOUT THIS SINCE
YOU ARE THE FLOOR
MASTER AND...

WHY SHOULD
I CARE WHO MY
LITTLE BROTHER
MAKES FRIENDS
WITH?

N-NO,
THAT'S NOT WHAT
I MEANT....!

UNDERSTOOD.
YOU'RE DISMISSED.

Y-YES, SIR...!

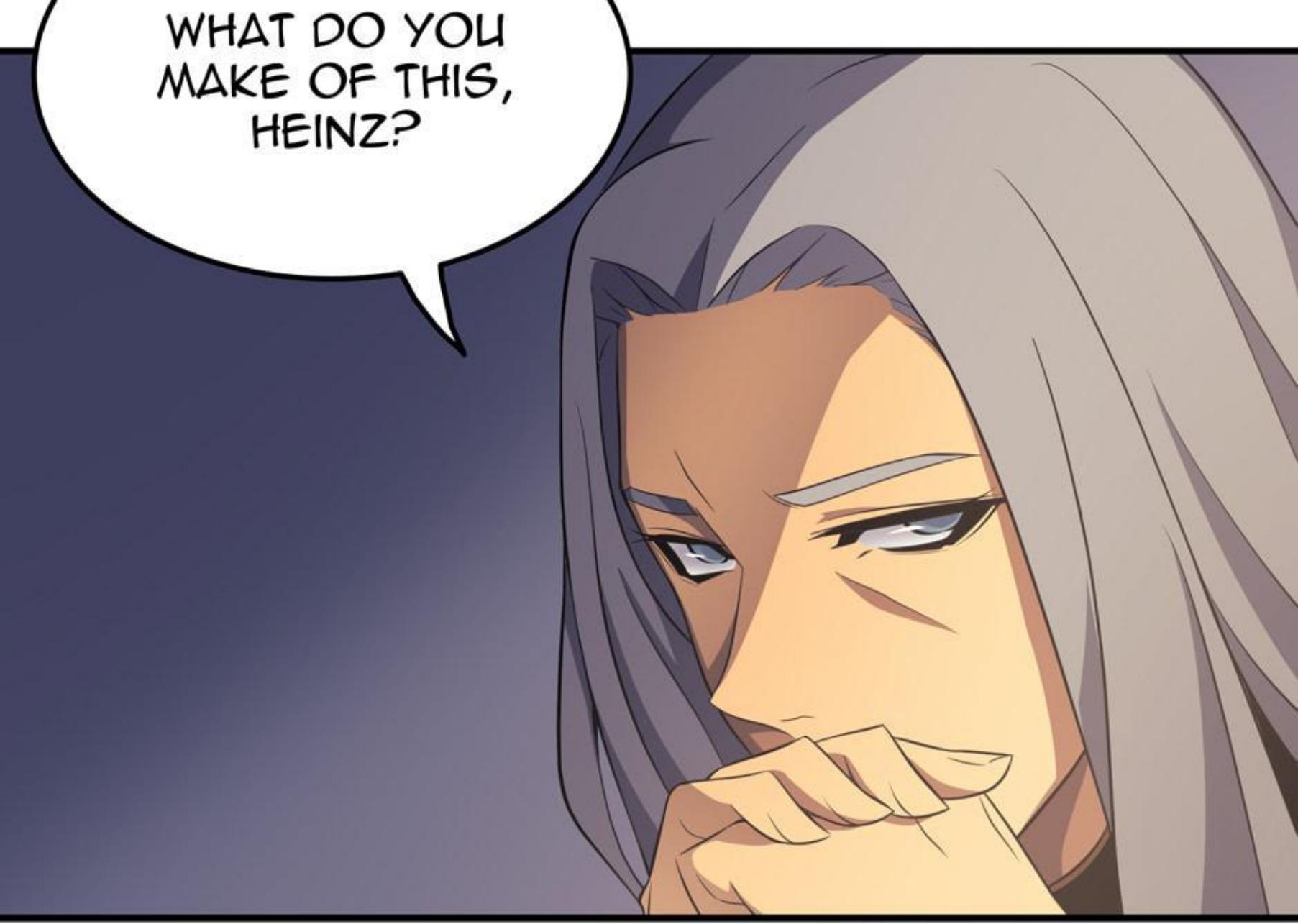


TO THINK FERRAN
CONSIDERS FREI HIS
BEST FRIEND... THAT'S
VERY UNEXPECTED.



I SUPPOSE
EVEN GARBAGE
HAS ITS USE FROM
TIME TO TIME.

WHAT DO YOU
MAKE OF THIS,
HEINZ?



I'VE NO
INTEREST IN
THIS MATTER.





THEY GO
TO THE SAME
ACADEMY, SO IT
DOESN'T SURPRISE ME
IF THEY BECAME
FRIENDS.



WELL, I
EXPECTED YOU'D
SAY AS MUCH.

DRRK

**PERHAPS I SHOULD
INFORM FATHER...?**

**WE MAY BE ABLE
TO USE THIS TO
OUR ADVANTAGE...**

