

# Gift

——《Tales of Tarsylia》12

吴淼作品

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Year 87 of Heroes  
City of Shadow

13 stories underground  
Sibelius's reception room

I normally don't meet outsiders, but  
since Luke wouldn't shut up about  
you...

What I'm trying to say is, stop  
wasting my time. Let me meet your  
grandson directly!

But I don't have a grandson...  
Only a granddaughter.

Dinac Syas is a women's name? What  
the hell! Well, tell her to see me!

Um...Dinac Syas is my name.

What? You are the one who wants to  
study in the City of Shadow? How  
old are you again?

74. Mr. Luke said that age wasn't a  
issue, that I should  
meet with you  
anyway.

Does that bastard think we're a  
nursing home? Shit, you should take a  
seat first.

How about you introduce yourself  
first, old man?

What do you want to know?

I don't care, whatever you want. I  
have all afternoon.

Um, I was born in the South. When I  
was 12, my hometown was destroyed  
by a war. My mother  
and I fled with my  
two younger  
brothers into the  
wilderness.

In our wandering, we came across a untamed field by a lake, and decided to turn it into a small farm to grow our own food. The week before the harvest, Mother passed away.



After my brothers got older, we farmed another plot of land and grew fruit. At that point, more and more people were coming to settle the nearby lands.



I met my wife. Haha, and even convinced her family to combine our land.



That ended up being a great idea. I slowly convinced other people, allayed their fears, to create a farming collective.



Around two years later, we had established a small town. Looking back, that was no small task!



Gradually, our food surplus built up, so I went out to small cities looking to set up trading alliances.



I convinced them one by one, and we started selling our fruit and harvests. We even started keeping fish. But troubles were coming...



First it was the dog-headed gremlins that kept messing around in our fields. They made the scarecrows glow at night and terrified the villagers. But I discovered a few tricks.



When the light tricks stopped having an effect, the gremlins left. And then came the wolf-headed monsters...



That was a disaster. My brother was killed. And then there were the other people, looting and burning.



Those were just normal robbers. Did you organize a militia in response?



No, I persuaded the villagers to forgo a counterattack, then went to negotiate with the monsters' leader.



Are you an idiot? Not resisting means certain death! Whoever heard of the loser calling to negotiate? It's a wonder that you've lived this long.



The other villagers all said the same. But we were just a handful of farmers. If we had the courage to fight, why would we have chosen exile?



That's what I realized after thinking it through. So I went to the monsters and told them to stop attacking us. In exchange, each year we would give them some of our surplus.



That's ridiculous. You not only didn't put up even the slightest bit of resistance, but actually became those jackalmen's slaves? You really messed up.



To survive is to resist, mister! In any case, the amount we gave them was far less than the amount we tithed to those noble lords back in the day.



At night, I used those gremlin's light tricks to make the scarecrows glow, and scare off the bandits. It worked for a while.



Don't you know that these low-life creatures don't understand the meaning of a promise? You all...



I figured that out during the negotiation. That year, I greatly reduced the amount we sent to the trading alliances, and then went to Sidal to negotiate with their commerce ministry!



That mercenary bunch isn't that much stronger than those monsters.



That's right. They sent out soldiers to eradicate the weremen, but at high cost. We joined the federation, and we were forced to cut prices to the absolute lowest.



Joining the federation with your background...you must have been eaten alive.



The ministry slowly took control of the scale and type of crops we were planting, forcing us to concede to their wishes. They also monopolized our trading relationships.



Many small kingdoms have thus been annexed, let alone tiny villages like yours!



So I persuaded the villagers to sell off their property, and invest in other land. It took 12 years, but I eventually convinced nearly 90% of villagers to move to our village



No, if I'm to be precise, we already were a city at that point. The commercial federation's entire food supply was in our hands!



Dumb as it sounds, I admire you. You remind me of an old friend, hah.



It was a long process. I negotiated with Sidal, and we finally got a fair treatment, but there were many other variables along the way. A lot...



In the end, we renamed ourselves Paradise County. I joined the Commerce Ministry and continued to fight for benefits for small cities.



You're very skilled at persuasion.  
Seems like you were put on this  
world just to negotiate with people.



I had no choice. Someone has to say  
it. Up until I retired 5 years ago.  
Everything was running  
smoothly enough, and  
they didn't need this  
old fart running  
around anymore.



My son took his daughter and  
moved to Rainbow City to set up  
shop, my wife  
passed away last  
year. I figured I  
should go travel the  
world while I still  
could move about.



Then, I met that young man Luke  
on a boat. He mistook me for a  
wizard.



Haha I never thought an old farmer  
like me would appear a wizard. And  
so we became friends.



And so he brought me here. He said  
you would definitely take an interest  
in me. In truth, I was  
just curious. But  
anything I learn  
is still something.



Wait, stop! Stop! Did you say just  
now that you knew the were-men's  
light trick?



Yes. I would add a few lights  
around our crops once the sun set.  
I thought it was interesting and  
wanted to learn, and  
then one day I just  
knew it.



Ah, so it's like that! Show me the  
trick, quickly!



I happen to have some moth dust.  
All I need is my ring finger.



Agnalla arisina...



Come over here. Mister, do exactly  
as I do.



Don't pay too much attention to  
your senses. Let your...intuition  
guide you.



Aibonatu elesyial... ...not bad.



Likayo majinal roma...  
...can you go faster?



Aluhalana...even faster!  
Chinosi... Akulo...



Focus on feeling it. Let your fingers  
and mouth catch up to your mind!  
Siwozaponiasi...



Cacaoke yuaninikesholan...  
Faster, faster!



Wait a second! No more...I...



I can't control it!



BOOM!!!



S...sorry. My head is spinning, sir.  
Looks like a commoner like me  
really wasn't cut  
out to be a wizard  
after all...



What have you been doing all  
these years? You old fool!



What? I...



When you were younger...no, when  
you were a child, had you felt  
anything like that before?



Felt anything like what?



Skill is something you are born  
with. From your birth, you knew the  
path that you would one day walk.



That was what your soul told you.  
What the power flowing through your  
blood told you.



It was your mission, your life's calling.  
It was your fate!



Forgive my stupidity, but does  
what you are saying have anything  
to do with me?







Deep down, is there anything  
you've always wanted to do?  
Some inextinguishable dream?



Dream? It's laughable when I say  
it. When I was a small child  
fleeing with my mother, I was  
constantly terrified  
of getting caught.  
So I always  
wished I could fly.



That way no one could catch us.  
Later, when my brother and I started  
farming the new land,  
I would often look  
up, yearning to join  
the birds in the sky.



Many times, when work became  
too tiresome and tedious, I would  
imagine flapping my  
arms and slowly  
rising up until I  
could fly off into  
the distance, haha.



Then why don't you try it? Use the  
power in your blood, your talent to  
learn how to fly!  
You can definitely  
do it.



You...you're kidding, right?



You're the one kidding yourself! You  
don't know how...ugh, it's infuriating!



It was just a bunch of childish  
daydreams.



Have you really never felt that  
sense of loss? A feeling of regret,  
of pain, that you're missing out?



Why would I regret? Doesn't  
everyone feel like this?



You may leave. I'll tell Luke to  
arrange quarters for you.



Thank you,  
and goodbye.



How was it,  
Master?



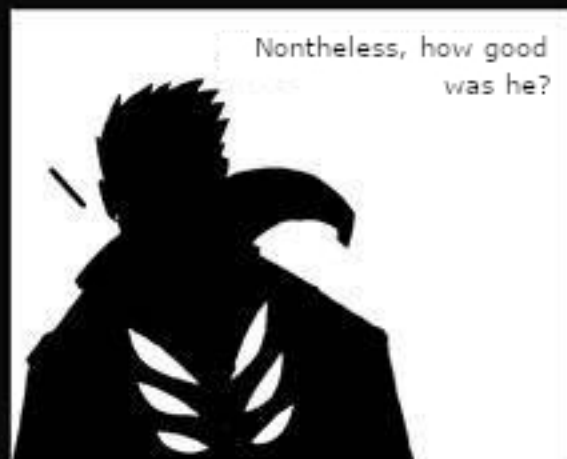
I'm giving you two  
months to teach  
him how to fly!



With your  
permission, one  
month should be  
enough.



Nonetheless, how good  
was he?



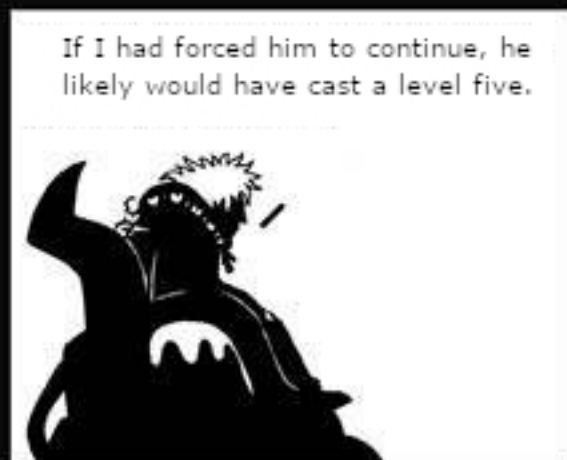
With my guidance, he was easily  
able to produce a fourth-level spell.



What? Level  
four? That  
utterly exceeds...  
I can't believe it!



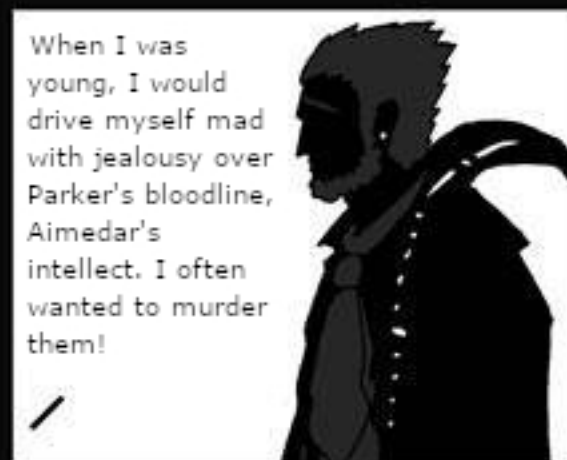
If I had forced him to continue, he  
likely would have cast a level five.



He's the closest I've ever seen to  
Parker's degree of wizard heritage.  
He's almost entirely  
pure warlock  
blood. Did you  
know, Luke?



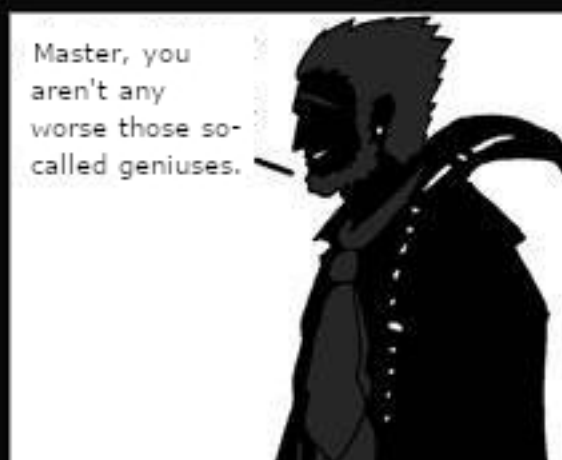
When I was  
young, I would  
drive myself mad  
with jealousy over  
Parker's bloodline,  
Aimedat's  
intellect. I often  
wanted to murder  
them!



What others can spend their whole  
lives working towards without  
success, they can just wave a hand  
and get it. This  
world isn't fair at  
all, especially to  
us hard-working  
commoners.



Master, you  
aren't any  
worse those so-  
called geniuses.



That old man spoke the truth.  
"Doesn't everyone feel that way?"  
Haha...everyone...



Chefs, poets, old husbands...  
Everyone is the same...



What did you want to be when you  
were young?



A wizard. Even if it was the  
crappiest, dumbest wizard ever, as  
long as I was a wizard...



**END**