

# Trump Card

—— 《 Tales of Tarsylia 》

吴淼作品

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In the fifteenth year of Tarsylia's third age, the Age of Heroes, the Jesper Empire invaded the Rainbow Kingdom. The two armies clashed just outside Rainbow City...

But our protagonist was not within the walls of Rainbow City.

Nor was he to be found anywhere on the tumultuous battlefield.

Instead, he was trapped atop a small hill next door.

These four mages (in truth, they were all apprentices) had already been besieged with a cavalry unit for 18 hours!

Are you sure it's impossible?

We are powerless.  
We're truly sorry.

What about the spell you performed this morning? The one with the realistic illusions of an army was very good.

The issue is that we're all still apprentices. There are limits to any spells that we do.

Illusion of sight and sound is already the most powerful spell we know! And like you saw this morning, we've already used it.

Also, maintaining such a large illusion requires all 4 of us to be casting, but Parker got injured and is currently in a coma.

This is all to say, you all are no different from any ordinary citizen now?

That's right, sir.

There is another way for you to deceive the enemy. As you know, General Erica's main army is at the foot of this hill...

That's right. Our teacher is there as well.



I want the four of you to ride back to the city.



Wait a moment, sir, you want us to act as decoys and draw away the enemy?



I only want for you all to return home sooner.



Sir, when we cast that illusion to hold off the enemies this morning, we had completed our mission.



If we tried to leave now, when the mountain is surrounded by enemy soldiers, we'd be dead meat! Let us go with your troop to break the siege together.



Together? You useless, limp-fisted weaklings are only going to hold us back.



We already fulfilled our mission. Your duty now is to protect us! General Erica is counting on our safety.



Everyone knows how much the general values our teacher.



Hey hunchback! You don't seem to understand. Soldiers don't respond to threats.



We only obey orders. And my orders when we left this morning were this:



"These four wizards will help you confuse the enemy and them down." There was no mention of keeping you safe!



Can't your esteemed teacher just wave his hand and open a portal to anywhere? Didn't he teach you that spell?



Opening dimensional gates is a ridiculously high level spell. How could we learn that when we're apprentices?



And what about your teacher's infamous Holy Light Armor? That one is rumored to stop any sword or bullet.



Doesn't your teacher give the armor to that coward Erica everytime she leads a charge?



That blasted good-for-nothing became a hero with that armor. But what about the rest of us who are out there actually putting our lives at stake?



We're forced to run around playing nursemaid to you piles of trash. I'm going to teach you what war really is.



S...sir!



You wizards are despicable, toadying to those nobles for mere scraps of power and prestige. Yet you still dare to threaten me?



现在看看！贵族老爷不在，你们的大师太忙，法术又用完了……



Pathetic! What are you going to do now, little lamb? I'll give you two choices...



Ride down that hill out of here like a real man...



...or my men will tie you to that horse and send you out of here by force.



Aide! Assemble the men. If the wizards still aren't on those horses in five minutes...



Sir, you can't do this!



Once the decoy has gone, we'll charge down the other path and reunite with Erica's royal guard at the bottom.

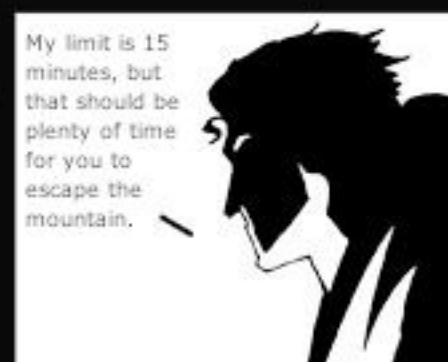
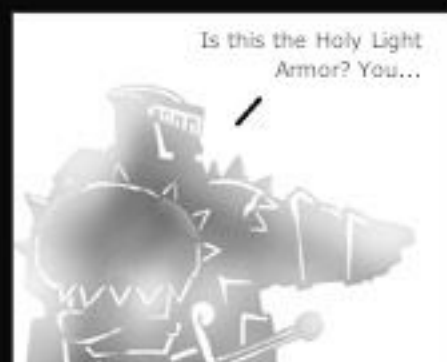


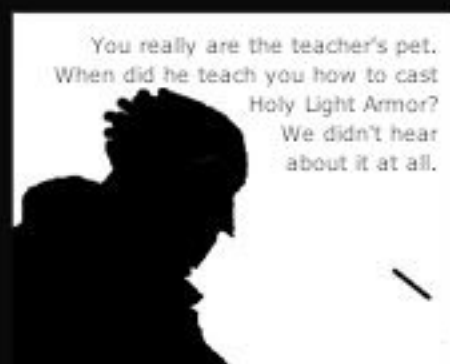
Stop getting in the way. Scram!



Sir.











But before we left, Teacher clearly prohibited us from bringing any scroll spells.



Besides, Teacher examined all of us before we left. Said we couldn't let those spells end up in enemy hands.



Iago, you're too naive. I thought about all that already.



Teacher assigned us to teams of four and sent us to different cavalry units. But he left us no scrolls and never checked in. Why do you think that is?



His goal wasn't to win the battle. It was to test our survival skills!



You're saying the reason Teacher put 200 apprentices on this treacherous battlefield was to...



We're just low-level apprentices though. We haven't even been acknowledged by the Wizards Guild.



Also, Parker is the teacher's son!



Well said, you're starting to see the light.



So Parker and Aimerdar the almighty are placed in the same team.



And Parker is given the scroll spell for Holy Light Armor.



It all comes together.



Then the teacher gave him that scroll to protect Parker, right? But he...



Exactly. We must report this as soon as we get back, and then it'll be end for him!



You...you can't! You know what Teacher is like. He would....



His kind of backstabber needs to be taught a lesson!



But if you report him, how are you any different?



You...how dare you?!



Just pretend I didn't hear, okay? We will all have to get our hands dirty to survive eventually.



I'm sure he's also beating himself up about this. Just leave it be.



If I were the one with the scroll, I might have done the same thing.



Don't be absurd, Iago. We don't have the talent or background to ever garner such respect.



I'm just grateful I can stand side-by-side with these geniuses...



The next morning



You're awake?



Shouldn't I be asking you that?



Those two kept me up all night with how loud they were talking.



They really kept watch the whole night?



Of course! Only you could fall asleep in this kind of situation.



I was really tired.





I put together most of what happened yesterday from their conversation. Thank you for taking care of me.

I'll report back to my father exactly what happened. But there's still one thing I don't understand.

What?

There's no way you had the spell scroll for Holy Light Armor.

Oh?

Father guards that spell so closely he's never written down a copy of it.

And he definitely wouldn't teach it to you, no matter how much he respects you.

Then you must have cast it with some third method. I just can't figure it out!

You're overthinking this.

I'm positive you used the illusion spell yesterday. Because you're Aimerdar...

You've probably got another basic spell up your sleeve. I don't think it was a group illusion, right?

That would have taken way too long.

I'd also guess that you wouldn't prepare two illusion spells, right?

I've said it before: of all the apprentices, you are the one who understands me best!

If I truly understood you, I wouldn't have failed to come up with this answer for three straight hours.

Adosinafa~ Hatilasa~  
Summon the war horses!



Alright, the fatty probably drew  
away the enemy. Let's head home.



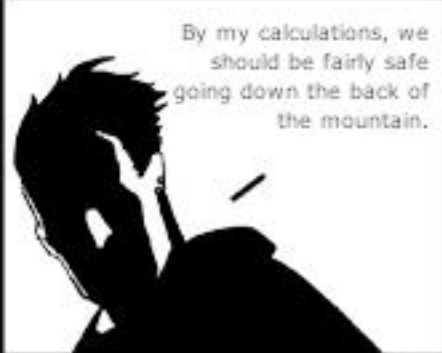
Exactly how many spells have you  
been hiding?



Enough. This horse  
is for you and Iago.



By my calculations, we  
should be fairly safe  
going down the back of  
the mountain.



I'm not leaving til you  
tell me!



You know the  
flash spell. Normally  
it produces a white  
light.



But change the  
spell ingredients  
a bit, and you  
can adjust the  
color.



象这样!



I can produce the 3 primary colors  
and two other colors, but you know  
blue has always been my favorite  
color...  
Can we get going now?



In Year 35 of Heroes, Iago succeeded  
his teacher Ilardorf as chairman of  
the Wizards Guild upon  
Ilardorf's death.  
Iago died of illness  
in year 46.



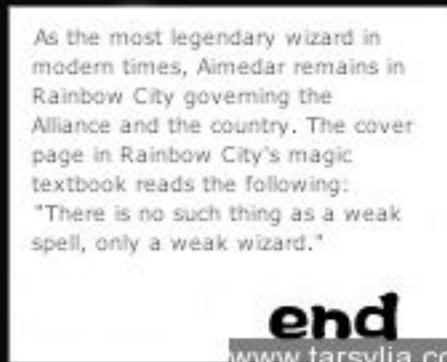
In Year 48 of Heroes,  
Spre led 76 elite  
wizards in breaking  
away from the Wizards  
Alliance and founded  
the Shadows. In the 11  
years of Iago's  
leadership, he had  
devoted his efforts to  
uniting Tarsylla's  
magical factions.



In year 47, Aimerdar  
returned to Rainbow  
City after 19 years of  
travel, and took up the  
mantle of chairman of  
the Guild. The following  
year, he changed  
its name to the  
Wizards Alliance.



As the most legendary wizard in  
modern times, Aimerdar remains in  
Rainbow City governing the  
Alliance and the country. The cover  
page in Rainbow City's magic  
textbook reads the following:  
"There is no such thing as a weak  
spell, only a weak wizard."



end