

## D. Extraction 131

Chapter 131 Disappointment

Vale frowned as he felt that this person tall guy with black hair similar to him was incredibly dangerous...

Seeing a fellow black-haired guy made Vale interested at first but as soon as he saw Leonore's condition, he can only feel disdain for the guy.

Six students around 20 years old are ganging up on a barely 14 years old girl!

Vale couldn't help but look at them with disappointment...

"Seniors, are you harming my classmate?" Vale asked the seventh-year students but he was looking at Leonore.

She was frozen on her spot perhaps unable to comprehend why a handsome young man like him appeared in such a great time to rescue her...

Vale sighed as he erased his random thoughts. It seems that Leonore was slapped so hard she turned into a mute.

"She joined our Club and it's normal for us to do this... You don't have to bother us... You can leave now while I'm still being polite." The black-haired senior said as he threatened Vale.

His voice was a bit hoarse as if he was trying to sound more intimidating. He didn't cast any Dark Spell but it appears that he can do so at a moment's notice.

On the other hand, Vale had a sudden realization about all this fuss...

'Is this some sort of hazing I heard about?' Vale muttered inwardly as he recalled his past life. Although he didn't experience such things since he can't even be invited to join clubs or fraternities since he always has to work in his free time, he still heard plenty of stories about this sort of thing.

There were even some unfortunate people who died during this type of hazing... according to some news he heard at the very least.

Anyway, he can't understand why these people would actually agree to get hurt or experience pain just to be accepted in their fraternity or whatever club it was.

They said that it was to establish brotherhood but he believes that it was just all stupidity.

"Leonore, you have to speak up so I know what I'll do." Vale ignored the man and spoke to Leonore once more.

If she wanted to leave or if the senior is not telling the truth, he wanted to at least hear it from Leonore first.

To make sure, he also swiftly cast a Spell Dispersion around her so that any control-type spell used on her would be removed at this instant.

As much as he wanted to help her, Leonore must also want to be helped or it will just be him being labeled as too nosy.

Priscilla understood this as well so she simply shut her mouth and observed the situation...

From her point of view, she can tell that Leonore was hesitating.

She had mixed emotions and embarrassment seem to be the one on top of it. It wasn't that surprising since her classmate saw her in such a shameful position.

"Hey, Leonore... Answer quickly so these guys can leave." The black-haired guy, who seemed to be the leader of the group, grunted as he ordered Leonore.

"Right, it seems that this guy had also broken my Solemn Field Spell. I want to know how he did that... We can't make him leave just yet..."

Another 7th-year student with a plump face added as he looked at Vale and then at Priscilla who was standing behind the former.

"Tsk... You can handle it later. Who told you to set up a weak Field Spell..." The leader said as he wanted to quickly finish this matter.

"Alright... alright... I'll look for him later..." The plump student said as he shook his head in disappointment.

In the meantime, Leonore finally decided on what to do...

"Thank you for coming here, Vale... This person here is the Vice-President of the Fortune Telling Club, Hector Gabb, and is one of the Dark Seers of the Academy. I'm fine. You can leave now..." As she said this, she wasn't looking at Vale but looking at the ground.

She doesn't want to explain more about what was happening but it was enough for Vale.

Vale couldn't help but crease his brows for a moment as he now understands why Leonore had such a complicated look...

She had wanted to learn the Dark Seer Spell so much that she would rather get humiliated and hurt than pass up the chance.

Obviously, Leonore has probably researched a lot and realized that the only way of learning the Dark Seer Spell is to be part of the Fortune Telling Club.

Perhaps, not even some contribution points would allow her to learn this rare Dark Spell.

'I thought that this club is just a simple assembly that gathers divination enthusiasts... As expected of the Dark Arts Academy, anything can be unpredictable.'

Vale sighed as he realized that Leonore was telling the truth...

He used his Spell Dispersion spell and so he knows that Leonore is not affected by any type of Dark Spell right now.

At this point, he can only give up...

"Very well..." Vale didn't say anything more as he held Priscilla's hands and turned away. He didn't expect that Leonore would be such a decisive girl even at such a young age.

Leonore looked at the receding figures as she bit her lips... There are many things in her mind right now but she just can't give up the opportunity of learning that Dark Spell.

Her position in the Roland Family is also complicated...

'Thank you for coming here...' Leonore muttered inwardly as she closed her eyes and waited for this "ceremony" to be over.

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"What happened?" Philip asked as he met his sister and Vale going out of the garden.

He was already with the Elder from the Ceremony Hall so Vale can only explain everything that had happened.

The Elder didn't seem surprised about this situation but he still decided to act.

"Although the Club Activities are rarely monitored, these types of activities that involve possible injuries must still be supervised by the advisers of the Club. I can still take a look." The Elder who seemed to be in his forties and wearing a gambler hat spoke in a gentle tone as he looked in the direction where Leonore and the others were.

Chapter 132 Insufficient

"He seemed like a responsible guy... Who is he?" Vale asked curiously as the Elder left in the direction they came from.

"He's Elder Richey. One of the Elders in the Ceremony Hall... He's ja good friend of our family. I call him uncle when we're alone. But... Vale, are you going to keep holding my sister's hand? Although she's not telling you off, it doesn't mean you should keep doing that..."

Philip asked while looking at Vale and Priscilla's hands. They were tightly holding each other's hand and he can't help but feel uncomfortable about it.

Vale's eyes widened as he realized what he was doing and quickly removed his hands from her and apologized...

"I'm sorry about that. It probably felt more comfortable than the cold bodies I'm used to—No, I mean... Ugh, Nothing... I'm not going to explain anymore." Vale sighed at himself as he realized that talking more would just make the matter worse.

In the meantime, Priscilla couldn't help but chuckle at Vale's panic reaction.

"So Headmaster Jean was right..." Philip muttered while gently nodding his head.

Once more, Vale decided not to ask what he heard from the Headmaster. He had enough of this so he just shifted the topic.

"Ahem... Let's return to our dormitory... I think that the Elder can handle this matter. It's no longer related to us."

Philip didn't mind this suggestion as he looked in the direction of the garden once more before agreeing to Vale...

"Right... Our last subject will end at one o'clock tomorrow. How about you?"

"It's the same..." Vale answered as they started walking back.

"Good... We'll clean the Archive Room at around 1:30 so you have to finish your lunch quickly."

Vale nodded since 'cleaning' the Archive Room also means 'watching' the recordings so they have to be there at the same time.

They soon separated in the Seven Pillars Garden as Priscilla and Philip returned to the third and fourth rooms respectively.

After Vale entered his room, he realized that Harith and Zeno were out yet so he decided to just hide his pocketwatch in the middle of his stacked clothes.

He doesn't really have other place he could hide this thing.

He then took a quick shower before taking a nap.

He felt more refreshed this way.

After waking up, Vale recalled the corpse that he kept inside his shadow...

He stood up to check that his door was locked and his curtain was covering the window. He didn't want any more rumors attached to him so he has to ensure that no one watches him.

"Dark Spirit... Take the corpse out..." Vale instructed.

Since he can't really access the "storage space" he has to communicate with the Dark Spirit first.

"Right, do you mind if I give you a name? Calling you a Dark Spirit seems inappropriate... Furthermore, can I see your face again? Ahem... It's not like I want to see it and appreciate your beauty once more. I just need to be sure I didn't make a mistake... Ah, that's right... You have some semblance to someone I know so I just want to check... No, I'm not making up reasons." Vale explained himself even after the Dark Spirit expressed her doubt over his reason.

Whom~

The Dark Spirit suddenly came out of his shadow bringing the cold corpse with her.

Thud...

The cold corpse rested on the floor but Vale wasn't focused on it.

He was looking at the dark spirit that was still shrouded with dark mist so he can't see her face.

"Dark Spirit... It's just the two of us. Can you not hide yourself when you're with me?" Vale asked.

The Dark Spirit didn't immediately reply as if it was hesitating whether to show itself or not.

After some hesitation, the Spirit agreed and Vale saw the dark mist slowly dissipating.

Gulp...

Vale couldn't help but feel excited as he gradually saw the heavenly appearance of the spirit... Her whole body was translucent but Vale can still see her face very clearly. Her long dark hair and her deep black eyes were so captivating as she was solemnly looking at him.

Vale can't believe that such a beautiful being has infamy because of their aggressive behavior and instincts to harm mankind. He can't believe it at all.

"Why would they call you a Dark Spirit? Aren't you supposed to be a Celestial Spirit or something similar?" Vale asked as he waited for the unique response of the Spirit.

However, contrary to his expectation, the Dark Spirit didn't simply reply by making him feel her intention or emotion but she suddenly started speaking!

"Dark Spirit is my race, I'm not a Celestial Spirit... I don't have a name so you can just call me whatever you want."

The voice from the Celestial—No, from the Dark Spirit sounded so ethereal and Vale was unable to immediately react.

He wasn't even sure at first whether the voice came from the Spirit or not in those few seconds!

After a few moments of realization, Vale took a deep breath to collect his thoughts.

"Then, let me give you a name..." Vale can think of many female names if he wanted to but there are only a few names that he was greatly accustomed to. One of them is Alexa...

However, calling her Alexa might feel a bit weird.

Vale hesitated for a moment as he observes the spirit floating in front of him...

This spirit is indeed kind of translucent all over her body but around her feet, it had almost turned transparent... She was also completely naked and what was helping Vale from having some reaction was her really long hair that is covering some parts of her body.

"Lotus... Black Lotus--No, just Lotus... I will call you Lotus from now on, is that alright?" Vale asked after thinking for a moment.

"Lotus? It's fine... Is it the name of your past lover?" Lotus, the Dark Spirit, asked without any hesitation.

Cough! Cough! Cough!

Vale didn't expect such a question coming from her. He didn't think that this Dark Spirit had such a communication skill!

It appears that his knowledge of the Spirit World is greatly insufficient!

Chapter 133 Lotus

"Lotus, can you tell me a few things about the Spirit World? What does it look like? What do you do there? Your population... Your enemies there... Your friends or anything..."

Vale asked a series of questions as he can't contain his curiosity... His knowledge about the Spirit World is greatly limited. Knowing about the place she was living in before would greatly impact his understanding of her.

Lotus pursed her lips as she slowly sat on Vale's bed...

"I think I've lost some of my memories after leaving the Spirit World... I can only recall a few things like the rules we've had, the mighty beings that were protecting our home, the things I've

done in the place, and some residents of the Spirit World... It seems that this is done to protect the security and privacy of the Spirit World..." She replied after a moment of thought.

"I guess that's understandable. In any case, you mention that the Spirit World needs to be protected... I wonder who are you wary of in the Spirit World... Is it us, humans? I mean, the Practitioners of Arcane Arts?" Vale asked as he crossed his fingers hoping that she would deny his question.

Lotus then shook her head and clarified.

"It's not... It is the other race from the Abyss. However, you can also say that we're wary of your kind. Especially those who practice the Darkness Path and the Mystic Path." Lotus answered.

Vale frowned for a moment before nodding in acknowledgment... He needs to process what she just said.

'So the Abyss is real...' Vale muttered inwardly as he read about it in the forbidden book that he obtained from Master Heinz. However, he didn't take note of it before since he thought it was something he wouldn't encounter any time soon.

"The other race from the Abyss... Are you referring to the Church's enemies? The demonic race?" Vale asked as he easily connected the clues he had.

Of the five prominent churches in the continent, only the Church of the Fortune Goddess and the Church of the Divine Sorcerer introduced the demon race that ought to bring humans into eternal suffering...

If there was a place where the demon race resides, the Abyss seems to be the perfect place for them.

Lotus looked at Vale after hearing his question before nodding her head.

"I see... Then why are you wary of us who practices the Darkness Path and Mystic Path? Aren't we supposed to be your friends? I think you should be more wary of the Holy Arts Faction or the Radiant Path. I'm pretty sure they'll be exorcising your kind once they saw someone from the Spirit World..." Vale added.

However, Lotus didn't answer and only looked at Vale with exasperation...

Vale's eyes widened as he seemed to understand what she was trying to say by that reaction.

"Are you telling me that the Holy Arts Faction has deep ties with Spirit World? Aaah--That's actually possible." Vale paused as he realized that a faction greatly tied with one of the churches might indeed be connected to the Spirit World.

It's certainly possible since the Church probably needs the resources or powers that the Spirit World can provide.

"Yes... As for the other details, I can't remember them." Lotus replied.

"I understand... Can you at least tell me what can you do aside from hiding in my shadow and taking corpses with you?" Vale asked as he decided not to pry too much to matter she can't remember.

Lotus then looked at Vale with a meaningful gaze before answering...

"I can fight..."

Just these words alone made Vale smile from ear to ear.

He chatted with Lotus for a while before she felt tired and returned to his shadow.

Since Vale is not using his Dark Energy to sustain Lotus' presence in the real world, she had to use her own energy...

Well, being able to stay active outside his shadow for almost two hours is already a good thing. Although it would lessen the amount of time if she decided to use her abilities, it is still quite a decent addition to his tactics. It can be considered as his additional trump card.

He now felt a bit more confident fighting against the Slender Zombie.

Headmaster Jean soon came to pick up the corpse and left his room like nothing happened.

On the next day, Vale attended the class and got the results of his previous monthly assessment.

"Congratulations, Vale... You got a perfect score on your monthly assessment. As you inquired before, you're allowed to request a Class Advancement Examination... If you pass, you can skip this class and use your time freely. If you fail, however, you have to be my Student Assistant for the rest of the year. So, what's your plan?" Professor Russel Ravinie of the Intermediate Arithmetic Class announced after entering the classroom.

No one uttered any words as they waited for Vale to answer.

They were all interested in whatever the outcome will be.

Vale hesitated for a moment before asking some questions.

"Do I have to perfect the Class Advancement Exam as well?"

Although he's confident in his skills, he still felt worried that there would be plenty of tricky questions that he might miss one or two...

"No need... You only have to at least get 85% and you're good." Professor Russel answered.

"If that's the case, can I also ask about the coverage of the exam?"

"The coverage is everything that I'll be teaching for the rest of the year. You should've checked the Intermediate Arithmetic book already."

"I understand... Please allow me to take the exam, then."

As soon as Vale said this, everyone in the class, except Leonore, looked at Vale with mixed emotions. Some of them are shocked, and excited, while a few of them disdained his guts.

As for Leonore, she didn't attend the class today due to some unknown reason.

"Very well, I'll fill up the request form for the Class Advancement Examination. Once one of the Vice-Headmasters approved of it, you'll be immediately informed. It will take a week or even less so it won't be long."

Chapter 134 Mission

News about Vale's brave attempt to take the Class Advancement Exam one of the stressful subjects in the first year made him famous once more.

Perhaps, the column assigned for the first-year batch was always filled with his name.

Furthermore, it's to be expected that Vale would remain on the topic discussion until his result was out.

Chad, Lisa, and Aubrey didn't even care about their results in the Fundamentals of the Magic Zone including the Physical and Health Education.

Their result in these exams won't really affect their final grade as they heard.

With that in mind, as long as they got an average score in the class, it would be enough for them.

After the class was over, Vale looked at Leonore's desk as he hesitated whether to ask someone about her condition...

'No... I should stop getting involved in such matters for now. I need to focus on the battle recordings...' Vale thought as he went to eat his lunch with his friends before walking straight to his clubroom.

The others also went to their own clubs and busied themselves.

Only Lisa didn't go to the Library, or her club's area, as she decided to attempt recording his Darkness Manipulation Spell once more.

"You're finally here..." Philip said after seeing Vale enter the clubroom.

At this time, Vale also noticed Nadine, Clara, and Priscilla who seemed to be in the middle of a discussion.

"I'm pretty sure I'm not late..." Vale said as he knows the current time.

"Yes... We arrived first since our class ended 30 minutes early. Our professor is quite likable." Philip replied with a smile.

It seems he's also excited to see some battle recordings that are worth being saved in the Archive.

"Alright, Vale. You can sit down for now. Clara is here to give a task to the three of you. It's about the purchase of the Recording Crystal. As you know, we can't really make these things in our academy. We have to purchase it elsewhere outside the Academy. So our club is responsible for doing that and you, first years are assigned to do such menial tasks..."

Nadine explained as she gestured to Clara, who is the Treasurer of the club, to continue.

"Do we have to do it now?" Vale asked.

This time, it was Clara who answered.

"No... However, it will be on the 10th of June, Sunday since there will be a few students who will start challenging the Elite Ranking. In any case, you have to purchase 500 Recording Crystals and the budget has already been approved..." Clara paused for a moment as she looked at the other two.



"I'm just about to tell Philip and Priscilla that the place it can be purchased has been changed. As you know, the one handling the Recording Crystal production is a company under the Mystic Arts Faction. We are purchasing directly from them instead from the distributors. However, we recently received an offer from Alchemy Arts Faction to purchase from them at a discounted price. We need a good relationship with this faction so we agreed..."

"Ohh... Do we not have a good relationship with the Alchemists?" Vale asked curiously.

Clara shook her head at this and explained.

"Not really... We're just starting a good one... However, the Alchemy Arts Faction has been at odds with the Mystic Arts Faction over the past few years due to some territorial dispute. They might be planning to slowly take all of their customers so they're the ones who approached us... Well, it's not like we're no longer going to purchase from the Mystica Arts Faction. We will only lessen the amount since, no matter what, they're still our partners."

Vale nodded in understanding... It seems that the Dark Arts Faction isn't completely unlikable. Perhaps, they were only besieged by the other Arcane Path, not because of hatred but as a matter of profit.

"I understand... How do we complete this purchase?" Philip asked as he leaned closer to the table.

"You'll have to go outside the Academy's territory. The three of you will have permission to leave using our Academy Airship. The transaction will happen on the 10th and it will be in Charville City's Alchemy Branch... They have a business there called Retro Relics Antiques and you'll be completing your transaction in that place."

Clara then further explained that the visit to the city isn't just for their mission. Other professors and students will be joining them in the airship to complete various missions in Charville City.

They will be leaving the city around six in the morning and are expected to arrive at the city after three hours of journey. Then, they were expected to leave on the evening of the next day.

"Are we exempt in our class?" Philip asked.

Since they'll be returning on Monday evening, they will obviously miss the morning class.

Clara looked at him with a smile before shaking her head.

"No... There will be no classes on the 11th of June that's why we chose this date."

"What the occasion?" Priscilla asked.

"Hmm... Was it not taught in your history class?" Nadine asked.

This time, Vale's eyes lit up as he recalled the event that had happened on this specific date.

"Is it for the celebration of that event? The recapture of the Dark Sorcerer Tower?" Vale asked with interest.

Priscilla and Philip also recalled this topic in class. Well, they weren't really interested in the history of the Faction. It's enough for them to know a bit about their origin. They're much more inclined to know about the present situation.

Nevertheless, they can still easily recall this matter after being reminded.

The recapture of the Dark Sorcerer Tower was actually a huge matter in the previous war. This happened after the great feat that the Gold Necromancer had done in the past.

"So it's a celebration for recalling that event... Recapturing the Dark Sorcerer Tower was led by Morgan Vermont, the one who established the Academy. I guess it's not that surprising, huh..." Philip muttered

"That's right... And one more thing... Professor Stella Harwin will join you guys since she also has business with the Alchemists. If you have concerns on that day, you can talk to her."

Chapter 135 Archive Room

"Ahem... Then, can we now clean the Archive Room?" Vale asked after the arrangement was made. Although he was looking forward to going out of the Academy and getting into another city, he was more excited to see the battle recordings in the Archive Room.

He wanted to watch various combat styles of the Spellcasters of this faction to broaden his horizon but what was more important is to find a collection of battle recordings with Slender Zombies involved!

His battle against Larkin Nevil's Slender Zombie would not be easy since it wasn't only him having 2 months of preparation, it was also the same for his opponent.

With that in mind, Vale can't take this matter lightly since he hadn't seen how a Slender Zombie fights while Larkin must've heard about his battle against Wilfred Moontomb.

Clara smiled and looked at Nadine about this matter.

Well, she was like them when she had a chance of cleaning the Archive Room so she can understand how they feel.

"Well, if you have no more questions about your trip on the 10th, then go ahead and get your cleaning tools. Here's the key to the Archive Room. I'll be leaving already so just lock the door. Priscilla, I'll take the key from you later this evening. I'll visit your room around seven... Is that alright?"

Nadine provided a series of instructions as Vale and Philip found their cleaning tools in the locker.

As soon as their ready, Priscilla unlocked the door with the key she got from Nadine...

The two seniors were watching the three with a hint of a smile on their faces.

"Alright... Just wipe the crystals properly and return them to their previous positions. Don't break them. The item inventory list is on the book on your left side... We're going to leave now." Nadine said as she left the clubroom with Clara.

"Thank you, Senior Nadine, Clara..." Philip and the other two replied as they entered the Archive Room.

The light within the room is coming from the shelves where all the crystals are left.

The room was only small about half the size of a classroom.

Nevertheless, it has a total of seven shelves with eight rows each... Vale then counted the number of carefully placed Recording Crystals and realized that there were 40 crystals in each row!

This means that each shelf has 320 crystals!

There is lot of them and the three students couldn't retain their calm anymore.

"We'll clean them all in half an hour and watch the recordings after. We have five hours to do this..." Priscilla reminded as held back the two from immediately browsing the Archive to find a suitable battle to watch.

The recording crystals can't be easily viewed after all.

There is a device needed to project the content of the crystal and there is only one of it inside the room.

"Alright... Let's clean, let's clean... I'll take the shelf on the right side. Vale, you can take the one on the left side. Priscilla, start at the center." Philip said as he started walking to the side he pointed for himself.

Vale didn't waste any more words as he got to work immediately.

Vale carefully picked up the crystal at the bottommost row of the shelf using a soft fabric that has been prepared for the cleaning.

The crystal seems to be the size of an infant's fist and it's surprisingly light. It's probably only about 10 grams in weight and Vale even felt that the inside of the crystal was hallowed.

The crystal has a bit of dust but after wiping it with a special fabric, it would shine once more. Then, Vale noticed that there was a serial number engraved on the crystal... This must be the one being used to identify each crystal.

Vale continued his action and as time goes by, his movement became faster and faster...

"Vale, don't use your Ghost Hand..." Philip suddenly spoke as if he could read his mind.

"I'm not planning to, don't worry..." Vale answered without looking. He just continued on with his actions.

It indeed came to his mind to use his Ghost Hand to work faster but the Crystal is just too fragile. One mistake and he wouldn't even know how he would replace it. He might even get kicked out of the club if that happens. That is something he wanted to avoid so he needed to be careful at this moment.

Soon, the three students wiped their sweat as they finished their task in a bit less than an hour. They exceeded the timeframe they made but that is still alright since they weren't used to the task yet.

"Whew! Now, let's check the item list!"

Philip suggested as he stood up and checked the book of records. It contains the list of all of the Recording Crystals within the Archive Room.

"Vale, do you have a battle you want to watch? I already thought of one." Philip said as he browsed the book.

"Hmm... I just want to see any battles involving Slender Zombies." Vale replied.

"I see... Priscilla wanted to watch any of the battles involving the current third rank in the Elite Rankings of the Academy... It was Senior Light." Philip explained.

"How about you?" Vale asked curiously while looking at Philip flipping the pages of the book.

"Ahem... I want to watch Senior Lesley's battle. She already graduated from the Academy but I was told by the Headmaster I should watch her since her skills are incredible."

As soon as Vale heard Philip's answer, he couldn't help but freeze and smile wryly.

He didn't expect that up until now, he would still hear her name.

"So you're interested in her..." Vale muttered.

"No... no... Although we're from a different branch, she's still a distant relative..." Philip immediately denied it.

Of course, Vale was simply teasing him so he didn't push it too much.

Soon, they found all the recording crystals they wanted to watch. Vale found two crystals, Philip found three, and Priscilla found four.

"Alright, let's do this. Let's do a rotation. Let's watch one of Vale's crystals first followed by one of my crystals, then Priscilla..." Philip suggested.

#### Chapter 136 Disgusting

Vale didn't mind this arrangement so he immediately agreed.

Philip then took the projection device that would allow them to watch the contents of the crystal. The mechanical device reminded Vale of the projector in his past life.

Philip simply put the Crystal like some sort of Compact Disk inside the projection device and soon, the device activated.

It indeed seems like a projector as they have to use the wall of the room to view its content!

'Impressive... This is made through Mechanical Alchemy? Or is it just a normal technological advancement of this era?' Vale mused as he started watching the battle from the referee's view.

That's right!

Vale was actually surprised after realizing this. He thought he'll be watching it from the audience or spectator's perspective or even from the bird's eye perspective.

This is much better than he thought!

It is closer to the duelists on the stage and he could even clearly see their faces.

"Miles Ellis of the Necromancer Branch versus Rayleigh Henry of the Dark Magic Branch. Your battle starts... now."

The referee announces and his voice seems quite young. Vale could guess that it was a student referee even if he can't see him.

Miles Ellis is a female student with long black hair and dark patches on her natural white skin. Except for a book in her right hand, she doesn't seem to have other weapons. In the meantime, Rayleigh Henry is a male student who is wielding a staff. However, the staff doesn't seem like a weapon meant for striking but for casting spells.

The staff looks like a frozen blue snake, on its end was the snake's mouth biting a fist-size red orb. These mystical items weren't on the list they'd studied. They would probably learn more about this in the next few classes.

Philip and Priscilla were also watching the recording with full attention. No matter what, this will broaden their horizon about the real battle between spellcasters.

They know that this type of battle is nothing compared to Vale and Wilfred's match...

As soon as the battle started, it only took half a second before Miles summoned three types of undead.

There was a Slender Zombie, an Infested Zombie, and an Assassin Zombie.

The Slender Zombie is similar to what he had read in books. They are skinny, tall, and have extraordinarily long limbs...

The Infested Zombie is probably weighing about 600 kilograms in weight as it looked like a human ball with a stomach that seem to have mutated into a huge mouth!

The Assassin Zombie, on the other hand, has a figure that is similar to a normal adult human male and the only difference is that its nails were four or five inches long and they seem to be made of a special alloy.

What surprised Vale for a moment was their nonexistent clothes... It seems he was influenced by many games and movies in his past life where all the zombies have torn pants or shredded shorts on their lower bodies.

Well, this is probably because they were summoned by a Necromancer from the underworld or something instead of being infected by a zombie virus...

Anyway, Vale shifted his focus to Rayleigh.

The latter simply summoned a Dark Mist that covers about 3 meters in radius. It is not to disrupt Miles but to hide his own presence!

'So it can be used like that...' Vale mused.

However, this move was futile...

The Assassin Zombie seems to be more excited after the Dark Mist was summoned! It pounced toward Rayleigh and attempted to tear him apart!

Clang! Clang! Clang!

From within the Darkness, Vale and the others heard a clashing noise and sparks would appear from time to time...

At this moment, they realized that Rayleigh have the means to deal with the Assassin Zombie in close combat!

Unfortunately, they can't see the battle because of the Dark Mist. They also can't use their Magic Zone to sense the situation since this is only a battle recording.

Nevertheless, Miles seems to be worried about something as she ordered the Slender Zombie to assist the Assassin in battle.

As for the Infested Zombie, it probably couldn't move from its position as its task seems to be to defend Miles from any harm.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Soon, the Slender Zombie continuously attacked... It didn't care whether it would hit the Assassin Zombie inside the Dark Mist...

Everything happened so quickly as Vale realized the terrifying speed of the Slender Zombie.

Boom!

After a series of attacks inside the Dark Mist, the spell finally reached its limit as Rayleigh's figure was shown to everyone.

"Ah?"

The spectators in the recordings, Vale, Philip, and Priscilla had the same reaction. Rayleigh was unscathed!

As Vale was wondering what kind of trick did he use to do this, he realized that the orb of the snake staff was glowing faintly...

"Do you guys know about that snake staff?" Vale asked.

"Not really... However, I have a guess. The orb seems to be similar to the ones used in Dark Alchemy. It works similarly to Destruction Orb that we heard in class but it should be stronger than that..." Priscilla answered as she was also trying to figure out the mystical item being used.

After pointing this out, Vale realized that the Assassin Zombie had its nails broken and some of them turned dull.

It appears that the staff was capable of providing a strong defense to its wielder.

However, the Slender Zombie doesn't seem to be injured or damaged in any way...

Whoosh~

In the blink of an eye, Rayleigh's figure dissipated like a cloud of smoke and reappeared close to Miles...

This time, he was already covered by the Cloak of Darkness spell! It is a Tier 2 Dark Spell and is one of the most popular spells among Dark Spellcasters.

As Miles was about to get bombarded by three Curse Spells that Rayleigh released upon his reappearance, something unexpected happened...

The Infested Zombie moved and its strange Stomach Mouth opened widely before swallowing her whole!

Rayleigh was momentarily stunned after losing his target... Nevertheless, he still laughed it off and spoke with interest.

"Haha! I didn't know you can do that with an Infested Zombie... Isn't it disgusting inside?"

Chapter 137 Recordings

To some other viewers, it was such a traumatizing sight.

Seeing the huge and disgusting Infested Zombie swallow a girl completely wasn't a good sight... Luckily, Vale already had some sort of tolerance after seeing so many corpses over the past year.

'Well, this is probably why she has patches or infections all over her skin.' Vale mused as he recalled the girl's appearance who seemed to have a skin disease.

On the other hand, Priscilla was frowning as she didn't expect to see such a gross move by Miles.

"Ugh... She's so brave." Philip couldn't help but comment as he held his hands together. He couldn't imagine how it would feel to be inside that zombie.

If he was in her position, he probably wouldn't dare to do such a thing.

This battle made him realize that he really isn't fit to become a Necromancer.

Being a Dark Magic Caster is probably the best for him. They look mysterious and have unpredictable combat styles.

The battle between Miles and Rayleigh started getting dragged for too long because Miles was hiding inside the Infested Zombie and Rayleigh was doing his best to break the zombie's defense, it wouldn't be so easy.

Unfortunately, aside from it being extremely tough, the Infested Zombie can also spit out acid attacks although it can only remain in its position and turn its head. Furthermore, the Slender Zombie can always follow Rayleigh's movement and he has to defend against its attacks or he will be in a bad position.

As for the Assassin Zombie, Rayleigh has a perfect way to counter it but it requires the usage of his Snake Staff's ability. It means that he would have to switch on defense most of the time.

Then, if Rayleigh was about to kill one of the movies using one of his powerful Dark Spells, they would simply hide behind the Infested Zombie and take all the damage for them.

Rayleigh can be said to be a very impressive Dark Magic Caster...

Vale estimated that Rayleigh has seven Dark Spells not including the spells stored in the Snakes Staff. Anyway, two of the seven spells are Movement Spells and are extremely helpful in how he deals with the Slender Zombie's attacks.

'The Slender Zombie doesn't have a strong physique... Every time it's about to collapse from Rayleigh's Dark Spells it would hide behind the Infested Zombie to recover. It's dexterous but not

durable enough.' Vale analyzed as he was already planning in his head how he would deal with this zombie if he was in Rayleigh's position.

Soon, the match between the two ended in a draw...

It was quite a boring battle but it is certainly an eye-opener. Both of them had prepared really well for their battle.

As the battle ended, Vale saw how the Infested Zombie spits out Miles from its stomach... She was drenched with a sticky white and purple fluid. She looks like she was in a terrible condition but after a few stretches on the ground, Miles stood up and looked at Rayleigh with a proud smile.

"It's the first time I see this method of hiding... I'm impressed." Rayleigh commented while kneeling on the ground. He's extremely tired because of how the Slender Zombie and Assassin Zombie kept him running around the stage.

"Hmph... Since you didn't defeat me in the duel, it's considered my win in our bet. You have to pay up." Miles demanded while a few purple and white fluids were trickling down her face.

At this time, the recording stopped before the projection turned completely black.

"What a match..." Philip commented."

"Indeed. No wonder the list recorded described this battle like that..." Vale muttered after recalling what he read in the book.

The book of records in the Archive Room didn't just list the date and participants of the recorded battle. There's also a description of what to expect in the battle.

This is how Vale learned that a Slender Zombie was used in this specific Recording Crystal.

The book described this battle as an 'Interesting combination of zombies against a Curse Specialist. Slender, Infested, and Assassin.'

"Alright... It's my turn now!" Philip said as he removed Vale's crystals from the device and replaced it with the crystal he had prepared.

It is now time to watch Lesley's battle!

Vale also wanted to watch this battle so his full attention remained on the projection.

Soon, Vale witnessed how Lesley dominated her battles. She was a dual specialist and she was both a Dark Alchemist and a Ritual Expert.

She's allowed to use her Variants as a Dark Alchemist and it wasn't limited to one. She's allowed to use three Variants at the same time!

Then, while these three keep her enemy busy, a blood ritual is completed by her in less than 20 seconds.

This Blood Ritual would summon a hand of what seems like a giant devil enough to frighten her opponent into submission.

"That was sick... Ahem, that was terrifying." Vale commented as he can't be sure whether his Advanced Realm Ghost Hand can even stop the fingers of that summoned devil's hand.



In addition to that, the devil's hand doesn't look illusory at all. It feels like there's a real Giant Devil on the other side of the blood magic circle that Lesley had formed.

Time quickly passed, and they all watched the Recording Crystals they collected.

It was unfortunate that Vale only found two Battle Recordings since some of the descriptions in battles didn't write whether a Slender Zombie was used.

Nevertheless, this gave him a rough idea of how to deal with this creature in his upcoming match-up against Larkin's zombie.

Since they still have some time after watching all their selected recordings, they decided to watch a few "popular" battle recordings on the shelves.

They know they are popular because of the notes or descriptions written in the Book of Records.

It seems the secretary of the club was the one writing these notes so it was really helpful for the three.

"Let's continue watching... We still have two more hours. We can watch several more battles." Philip said as he browsed the records book.

#### Chapter 138 History

The three of them found the battle recordings involving the top rankers of the Academy. Most of them are in their 10th year but many of them were also in the 9th and 8th year. Some special students are in their 7th Year but they can be counted in one hand.

Over the past couple of hours, the three of them realized how clueless they are in the world of mysticism...

They found several unique combat methods especially those who are Ritual Experts... They were capable of forming magic circles so quickly that would allow them to summon spirits, familiars, or even a being in the underworld.

Not knowing what they could summon out of their magic circle is extremely nerveing. They have to either stop them from performing the ritual or get overwhelmed by the summoned beings.

There were only a few Dark Arts Practitioners who can deal with the Ritual Experts and they are surprisingly the Corruption Specialists.

They may not have Vale's Spell Dispersion but they have a unique way of disintegrating the summoned creatures into nothingness...

Vale wasn't sure if they were summoned back to the spirit world, or maybe the underworld, by these Corruption Specialists. Well, there's also the possibility that they were just completely eradicated by their unique method.

"They're interesting... Should I choose this field of study in my fourth year?" Vale mused as he considers his future path as a Dark Arts Practitioner.

Since the academy doesn't have a Malefic Branch and he obviously can't form a branch by himself, he has to study under a different branch and became a dual specialist.

Of course, he'll be the only one to know that he's a dual specialist. Anyway, the Academy will not recognize his Malefic Branch any time soon.

Grug. Grug...

Vale touched his belly as he felt hungry after a long day.

'Watching these battle recordings was quite draining... I should've brought some snacks.' Vale sighed as he finally realized what was missing in their activity... It could've been a lot better if they were watching while munching some snacks!

He would make sure to prepare some food the next time they did this.

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After eating his meal, Vale returned to his dormitory.

His exhaustion finally came to him as he had the urge to sleep immediately.

However, as he saw his room, he recalled how the Headmaster came to pick up the corpse on his floor last night.

Recalling how a corpse was in his room lying on the floor yesterday, Vale had no choice but to urge his body to clean the place...

It took him another half an hour to do this before he took a shower and finally slept.

Saturday came quickly and their monthly assessment for the Millton Kingdom History class and Essential Dark Spell class came.

The history class is quite a simple subject filled with memorization of important events in the past.

On the other hand, the Essential Dark Spell class greatly focuses on various Dark Spells in their faction. This is unlike the Darkness Path under Professor Lucius where they study all the paths they could take.

Anyway, the Essential Dark Spell class includes the teachings about three required Dark Spells to learn before they can even be acknowledged as a real student of the Academy. There is also one optional Dark Spell they could learn exclusively in the Academy making it a total of four Primary Dark Spells.

Vale looked at the test paper provided by their professor in the history class.

"Hmmm?"

Vale was intrigued by the type of assessment that their professor prepared for them.

The monthly assessment was actually forming an essay on how they would change the mistakes of the past.

\*\*

March 13, 877: The Dark Sorcerer's Oakvalley Camp was completely wiped out because of the combined forces of the Prime Wisemen of the Rune Arts Faction and Lore Hunters of the Elemental Arts Faction. A total of 458 people died within the camp during their raid.

This includes 52 Third-Class Dark Magic Spellcasters, 12 Second-Class Dark Magic Spellcasters, 19 Second-Class Necromancers, 5 Third-Class Dark Alchemists, and 2 First-Class Dark Magic Spellcasters.

The enemies, on the other hand, have 8 First-Class Runecasters and 12 First-Class Elementalists.

The side of the Oakvalley Camp was completely defeated because of the enemy's strategy. They successfully blocked the supplies of the camp, isolated them, and massacred them after three days.

What could've been done to avoid the disaster?

\*\*

Vale read the assessment that was given to them. The matter about the Oakvalley Camp has been their topic for a short period of time within the class.

They studied the tactics used by the two factions to win against numerous spellcasters with their small team.

There were 90 spellcasters on the side of the Dark Arts Faction and only 20 on the side of the enemy team.

Although those twenty were all First-Class Arcane Arts Practitioners, they shouldn't easily win against the Oakvalley Camp with their advantageous position.

'This is a good assessment... I guess they want us to learn from past mistakes.' Vale mused with interest but he saw his classmates frowning at the sight of their test paper.

"This is too difficult... What can we do if the First-Class Spellcasters on our side can't even formulate a way to win?"

"This might be a tricky question, however, there must be a way to resolve this."

"Tsk... Finding a correct answer is difficult since the professor is merely looking for an opinion on what should've been done."

"Right... We're only giving an opinion on how to avoid the disaster. No one would really know whether our opinion is valid since we can't return to the past."

"Good thinking! Then this is easy!"

As Vale heard his classmates in the back row, he couldn't help but shake his head as he thought of this exam differently.

The old professor is definitely looking for something in their answers and not just an opinion.

Vale analyzed the story for a little while longer before he had an idea and started answering on his paper.

'I don't know if this is the correct answer but I hope it is close to the ideal answer.'

### Chapter 139 Set Of Dark Spells

Vale believed that the Dark Arts Faction of the past lacks something very important which is why they've lost against a small number of experts even with the advantage of having a fortified camp.

It is their failure to take advantage of the technological advancement of mankind.

Although spells, rituals, mystical items, and other arcane techniques are incredibly powerful and useful in battles, they should've taken advantage of the technological advancement that mankind has developed...

Guns and explosives.

Vale started writing about how powerful the guns and explosives can be... He noted how they were used by the police or the military to protect the peace and security of not just a city but the whole kingdom itself.

Anyway, based on the books he read, a revolver can still shoot to death the Third-Class and Second-Class Arcane Arts Practitioners.

As for the First-Class Practitioners, it can be said that killing them with guns is quite tricky but not impossible.

At this level, a huge part of their Magic Zone can already become a safe zone for the magician. They wouldn't even need a strong Spell to defend themselves against gunshots.

Just entering their Magic Zone is enough to deal with the problem.

'Hmm... Is this enough?' Vale asked himself as he finished writing about 500 words in the paper. He glanced at his classmates and realized that they were still writing intently...

After noticing this, Vale decided to just add a few more words of advice about how they should've remained in the vicinity of the camp instead of sending out a part of their elite forces in hopes of catching the enemies off guard.

Then, Vale ended his assessment as he can't really be bothered about the result of this exam. If he failed, it will not affect his mind since their result here is not enough to affect their overall grade.

Furthermore, he's not thinking of skipping this class unlike the Arithmetic Class so he didn't mind getting a lower score.

Soon, everyone finished writing their papers and submitted them to the professor.

They would know the result of the exam next week.

"Vale, you look confident when you handed your paper to the professor... You think you can win against those 20 First-Class?" Chad asked curiously.

"I can't really say... Although I heard how strong the Runecasters can be once they're prepared, I just believe that the Necromancers of our Faction wouldn't lose so easily if they have better plans." Vale answered vaguely.

"How about you, Aubrey? I noticed that you didn't write a lot in your paper." Lisa asked softly. She had noticed that Aubrey finished writing early but waited for everyone to finish writing before she put down her pen.

"Hmph... The Oakley Camp did something stupid that's why they lost. They failed to rely on their fortified camp to fight against their enemies. I don't think I have to write a long narrative for this." Aubrey replied.

The others also started talking about their answers but most of them are similar to what Aubrey had just said.

The commanders in the Oakvalley Camp should've utilized their camp by fortifying it until reinforcements arrive.

However, because their intel made them aware that they were only dealing with a small team of 20 people, they felt humiliated and started an offensive move instead.

"Professor, are you not going to tell us the answer before you leave?" Neil asked as he saw that the old professor was about to leave.

"Hoho... There can be a lot of answers to this question. I might even discover a different answer that can be effective. I've many answers from the previous first-year students but it won't be surprising to get some new answers... All I have to say is that as long as you believe that it can be effective to win against the Runecasters and Elementalists, then you have a high chance of passing the assessment."

Neil and the others felt satisfied with this answer.

After all, they felt that what they've written can be really effective in that situation... This is to the extent of their knowledge at the very least.

As soon as the professor left, Professor Morton of the Essential Dark Spell class arrive a few minutes after...

"I heard from Professor Lucius that aside from Vale Chambers, Leonore Roland has already completed her Spell Recording. There's also Dalton Stranway and Warren Lawstein if I'm not mistaken. Aside from those four, are there other students who have recorded the Darkness Manipulation Spell?" Professor Morton asked.

"Dalton and Warren as well? Ugh..." Neil commented as he already heard the news about Leonore but not the other two.

"Leonore? Is that why you were absent yesterday?"

"So it was like that... You want to surprise us, huh..."

Leonore's friends said with excitement after hearing about her achievement.

Leonore simply smiled at the two before she sneakily looked at Vale with a complicated gaze.

Vale didn't fail to notice this but he decided to act clueless. Anyway, he's not planning to reveal what she did with the "entrance ceremony" of the club she joined.

'Hmm... Did she learn how to record the spell with the help of those seniors before?' Vale mused.

He was sure that Leonore hasn't learned the spell yet when she met her in the garden.

Just a day had passed and she already learned it.

It's not difficult to guess how she did it.

"Alright... Since no one is answering, I'm assuming that it's still just the four of them. Very well, our monthly assessment will now begin..."

Professor Morton then paused for a moment to check his notes before he started explaining the assessment.

"I want you to write your ideal set of Dark Spells and explain why you want this set... This is all assuming that you will be Dark Magic Casters. I want you all to exclude the three required Dark Spells. This assessment may sound simple but this will let me know how you understand the Dark Spells of our faction... You have two hours to complete this assessment so you can take your time."

#### Chapter 140 Spell Plans

This assessment was quite exciting for the students.

None of them felt nervous and as a matter of fact, they felt excited.

After all, they were hoping to get genuine feedback from the professor.

They wanted to know if their train of thought is wrong and if they should change their planned set of Dark Spells.

With the help of the old and experienced professor, they were hoping that their choice of spells would become perfect if there are flaws. In that way, they won't regret recording their spells.

It must be remembered that removing your recorded Spell Models is not only difficult but it can also be very dangerous. It may even end their life as an Arcane Arts Practitioner.

That's right, it's not impossible to remove their Spell Model but it would have to be done with extreme caution and someone at the level of a Paragon must help them complete the task. In short, it is almost impossible.

'Hmm?'

Vale can still feel Leonore's eyes on him. However, he decided to ignore it and focus on writing on his paper. He no longer wanted to be involved in her matter.

'I guess it's alright to write about my Spell Dispersion and Ghost Hand... I don't have to write about the Incorruptible Body since this is a special physique and not a spell...' Vale silently thought as he considers what to safely mention on his paper.

The Malefic Arts didn't just allow him to learn Spell Dispersion and Incorruptible Body, it also prepared him to learn forbidden practices without suffering from heavy backlash...

He learned this already from Master Heinz but he only appreciated it after reading the Forbidden Practices of the Unlighted.

'Ugh... Should I really write this?' Vale hesitated.

He wasn't sure if there would be other people who might read his paper so he was worried that his secrets would leak.

After a while, he decided to stand up and speak directly to Professor Morton.

His actions obviously caught everyone's attention but he didn't mind it. He knows that Professor Morton really wanted to help them but he wasn't sure if it's appropriate to write about spells that he didn't teach them!

Chad looked at Vale curiously before shifting his gaze to Aubrey and Lisa. The two seem clueless as well about Vale's actions.

Seeing that Vale and the Professor engaged in a silent conversation... They soon ignored him and continued with their paper.

In the meantime, Vale was surprised to know that Professor Morton actually knows his Master.

"Hmm? It's not that surprising... Sir Heinz is an excellent Dark Alchemist. Although he was unlike the eccentric Dark Alchemists that I've known, his skills are the real deal when it comes to potion-making. As for the other branch of the Dark Alchemy, I can't really say that much." Professor Morton replied as Vale continued to explain his matter.

"Then I guess my matter would be understandable. The set of spells that I have already has the blessing of Master Heinz... It includes some of his original Dark Spells so I'm quite unsure if it's appropriate to write in the test paper."

"Original Dark Spells? So he was really working on that new branch he wanted all these years, huh? I guess he succeeded now that I'm looking at you." Professor Morton commented as he finally realized why Vale has such a unique ability.

It's not normal for a first-year student to be able to kill another student at the same level and even dare to fight a sixth-year student.

However, since he was actually Heinz's student, Professor Morton could imagine that the stubborn Dark Alchemist had succeeded in his experimentations on this kid.

"You're correct, Professor." Vale answered with a smile.

"Alright... I already used my Magic Zone to isolate our surroundings. You can speak freely..." Professor Morton said.

Since the Professor is most likely a Master-Class Dark Magic Caster, his Magic Zone alone can already be used as field-type magic.

This is possible simply by having a strong Dark Energy gathered within his body. If he further used it with the Darkness Manipulation Spell, the radius of his isolation would become stronger and bigger.

Vale sighed in relief after confirming this as he mentioned to the professor his current set of spells, no matter what, this Academy would know of this matter sooner or later. He would be planning to study here for 10 years after all.

Even if he wanted to do a shortcut and take an Acceleration Exam that would still take quite a long time.

He has to build a better foundation of spells and he needs Professor Morton's opinion about this matter. If it's possible, he would also ask the Headmaster for a second opinion.

"So, Heinz wanted you to learn three Dark Spells and you already learned one of them which is the Spell Dispersion. Hmm... I've never heard of that spell indeed. So it's really an original spell... I guess the other two were spells I'm also unaware of."

"Yes, Professor... The other one is called the Malevolence Infection Spell and the third one is something he would mention after I learned this second spell."

"Ugh... I haven't heard of it as expected. So I may not give you proper advice about it. However, you should still think of getting one of the rare Dark Spells in our academy. I'm not sure how great those spells of yours are but I can guarantee that the academy has many rare Dark Spells you'd want to learn aside from the three required spells of the Academy."

"I understand, Professor... Then, I'll change my answers to the test paper. I'll only write the set of spells that I'd learn if I'm not Master Heinz's successor."

"Hmm... You can do just that... At most, with your talent, you can probably get 8 or 9 Spell Lights. You should try and write six spells you wanted to learn."

Vale agreed to his decision and soon returned to his seat as if nothing happened.

He already thought of the Dark Spells he wanted to learn before he attended the academy so it was quite easy for him to decide.

Aside from his Ghost Hands, he wanted to learn Madness Inducement, Cursed Contract Bestowal, Heart Burst, Severe Ailment, and Passive Curse Break.