

D. Extraction 161

Chapter 161 Butcher

"That thing is looking at us... doesn't it?" Priscilla spoke as she naturally stepped back.

Her spells and mystical items don't work well with a possessed person. At most, she can use her movement spell to run away.

As for Philip, he also has a terrible match-up against such a being. He has a Blood Curse Spell and Severe Ailment Spell but they're not going to work well against a possessed person.

He can use his Lesser Corruption Sword Armlet against it but it is still on cooldown today.

After their battle against Terrence's group, his formed sword was destroyed and needed some time to recover. Furthermore, even if it works, the Darkness Sword may not necessarily be enough to deal with the thick-skinned butcher.

Furthermore, according to their studies, a possessed person would normally have 3 or 5 times their strength and would also have resistance against lower-tier Spells.

"I think we should run... Vale, don't play a hero and deal with it. There should be plenty of authorities here. This is a huge city after all..." Philip said as he looked at Vale with a serious expression.

He was afraid that Vale would try and use his Ghost Hands to fight with it. Although Vale can probably use it to delay the possessed person, he doesn't think that it's enough to win.

It is because of the affinity of the possessed person and the dark spell!

It means that the Ghost Hands wouldn't be as effective when used against someone with the Darkness attribute...

"Don't worry, I'm not thinking of joining the fight... There are already some police officers rushing over. I'm more worried about the person who made him like that." Vale muttered in a soft voice.

"What? Are you telling me that someone used a spell to possess that guy?" Philip asked filled with worry.

"That's correct... That person is still inside the slaughterhouse and observing the situation..."

"Ugh... What are they thinking?! Look, there are already a few injured and dead people!" Priscilla added as she realized that they were too late and there were already some casualties... They didn't notice these corpses for a while since they were too stunned at the menacing presence of the possessed butcher.

"Die!"

As Vale's group was observing the slaughterhouse, they heard someone's voice as a brave commoner thought of killing the possessed person!

He's probably a relative of one of the dead bodies on the ground and he wanted a revenge for that...

He was only equipped with a hammer so he was aiming to smash the head of the butcher...

Bam!

The hammer successfully hit the butcher's head but it feels as if he hit a slab or rock instead!

The butcher didn't flinch and he simply waved his cleaver aiming to slice the man!

Priscilla squinted her eyes thinking that the man would be cut in half, however, the police finally arrived as they heard a series of gunshots!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Three shots were fired...

This time, the butcher stumbled on his feet and missed his target!

"Go away! You're just going to add to the casualties! Let us handle this!"

A group of police officers wearing blue uniforms appeared as they barricaded the street. They have truncheons on their waist and revolvers in their hands.

They seem to know what was going on as they weren't surprised at the sturdy butcher who can resist bullets.

The man who had failed to kill the butcher followed the officer's instruction and fled quickly...

Suddenly, as Vale's group was thinking that this matter would be handled swiftly, another police officer came to their side.

It was a young male officer who seemed to be in a rush.

"Are you guys Arcane Arts Practitioners? Perhaps you're from Holy Arts Faction? Can you help us exorcise this thing?" The young officer asked as he seemed to have noticed their status based on how they carried themselves into this supposedly scary situation.

Vale was quite amused by the question as he answered. "No, we're not from the Holy Arts Faction... Furthermore, we're only freshmen students as well. We haven't learned anything that can be useful in this situation... Please try and ask those guys that were observing the situation. They're near the flower shop."

As he said this, he pointed at the flower shop not too far from their location... Three people wearing white and blue trench coats can be seen in that place and although Vale wasn't sure, they seem to be capable of dealing with this issue.

The young officer also noticed their presence as he nodded in agreement.

"Then, may I ask what faction you belong to?" He asked.

Vale actually didn't want to tell him that but since he deliberately asked, he can only reveal it.

However, before he can speak, Priscilla already answered.

"We're from the Dark Arts Faction..."

She didn't mind answering this question but she soon realized that something was off after looking at the young officer's reaction.

"Dark Arts?" The young officer repeated with a serious tone in his voice.

It seems that he was already being wary of them based on his body's reaction.

"..."

Philip also realized what was going on as he already got a hint from Vale a moment ago...

Since Vale found out that someone orchestrated this incident, the officers had perhaps noticed this as well but couldn't find the culprit as he did!

If that's the case, they might become the mastermind of this incident because they belong to the faction that should have expertise in this type of mystical incident!

"Is there a problem with it?" Vale asked as he looked at the young officer who was in his twenties.

Well, Vale is still an Arcane Arts Practitioner who had seen many mystical things over the past year... He won't easily be intimidated by a police officer like before.

The officer hesitated for a moment before shaking his head and leaving their side. He went to ask the ones in the flower shop instead.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

At this time, another series of gunshots were heard as the possessed butcher started moving closer to the other group of officers.

Vale and the other two shifted their attention to what was happening and confirmed that the butcher was still unharmed and no bullet holes can be seen on his body... It was quite baffling since they shouldn't be this durable.

'It's a good thing that they can't move quickly.' Vale thought as he sees that the butcher is simply briskly walking.

However, as soon as he thought of this, the plump butcher suddenly pounced towards the nearest officer and slammed his body making the poor officer similar to a meat paste!

Chapter 162 Strange

Priscilla gasped and covered her mouth with her two hands. She didn't expect to see such a brutal scene as soon as she shifted her attention.

The butcher can actually pounce like that! It happened so quickly that the officer was unable to react on time.

The poor police officer didn't even have a chance to cry in pain as he immediately died from the weight of that possessed butcher.

They could even see the cracks on the ground making them baffled how the butcher became so heavy.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Gunshots soon followed.

The other police officers didn't have time to grieve at the death of their colleague as they have to ensure their survival first!

Obviously, they know that they have to buy as much time as possible until the special units arrived to take care of this situation.

"Vale, I think we should leave this place..." Philip said as he can tell that the situation is not favorable for them.

They have already filled their curiosity and learned about the possessed being. They should be satisfied with this already.

Priscilla didn't mind whatever decision her companions would have and just remained silent while observing the movement of the possessed butcher.

Vale considered it for a moment before nodding his head.

Well, he noticed that the mysterious Arcane Arts Practitioners who were standing near the flower shop refused the young officer's offer as well.

However, these people still left their position and directly rushed towards the slaughterhouse...

'It seems that they're targeting the mastermind?' Vale mused.

"Alright... Let's leave..." Vale finally said as he confirmed that there is already someone dealing with the suspected culprit of this incident...

Whom~

Unfortunately, as they were about to leave, a wave of energy passed through them making them momentarily unable to move.

It only took them a second to recover but to their surprise, the surroundings already turned foggy as the area seem to have been isolated by some sort of Formation Arts!

"They're finally here..." Vale muttered as he saw a couple of police officers entering the scene.

One of them is a female officer with long black hair while the other is a huge man with an eyepatch on his left eye. Compared to the first group that has arrived, these two appear unbothered by everything as they looked at the possessed butcher with disdain.

Anyway, Vale also noticed that these two officers have blue gloves on their hands compared to the white gloves of the normal officers.

The butcher seems to be attracted by their presence and instead of chasing the other poor officers, the butcher pounced on the two newly arrived officers as if they were his mortal enemies.

Bang!

The male officer shot at the butcher but this time, Vale was shocked to see that the butcher used his cleaver to block the bullet!

The butcher didn't parry any bullet when dealing with the normal officer!

This made Vale believe that the special unit officer have different types of bullets meant for this possessed person.

Boom!

The bullet exploded after crashing on the cleaver...

Nevertheless, the cleaver was destroyed into many pieces turning them into shrapnels that made the area even more dangerous.

Vale and the others immediately took cover as they realized that the butcher was simply playing around a while ago!

The man with an eyepatch wasn't bothered by this as he even smiled at this turn of events...

"Good! You have a decent sentence! Show me what you got!"

The one-eyed officer laughed as he pulled the trigger of his revolver a couple more times...

This time, the butcher can no longer block it and tried to evade it with its unexpected nimbleness.

If Vale would make a guess, this nimbleness is similar to when he reached 8 Agility Points! The butcher actually dodged the first bullet and was grazed by the second bullet!

"GGaaaarrgghh!"

A voice a seems to have come from the depths of hell was heard after the butcher was grazed by the bullet! A trail of blood can be seen flowing on his left shoulder and normally, it should not be enough to incapacitate someone.

However, for some reason, the butcher's nimbleness wanes out as it continued screaming in pain before he finally collapsed to the ground.

"Officer Spencer, you used three bullets for this possessed being... That's 2,000 zen per bullet." The female officer reminded him as she looked at the slowly dying butcher. She remained vigilant and held her revolver firmly.

"Ugh... I got too excited... I thought this butcher's Evil Spirit would reach the same level as the one we encountered in Melthorn City---Oh, it's coming out. It's all up to you, Officer Roma!"

The female officer didn't reply as she looked at the cloud of dark smoke coming out of the butcher's body...

As soon as she confirmed her target, she returned her revolver to her holster and brought out a talisman from her pocket. She then chanted a prayer in a language that is not Oardic, Heumish, or Soineti.

Soon, the dark cloud of smoke was attracted to the paper talisman as it turned in its direction.

Officer Roma then took out a small empty bottle with her other hand... She removed the stopper quite swiftly and surprisingly, the cloud of smoke entered the bottle like it had just found its home...

From Vale's perspective though, it looked as if it was sucked into it before Officer Roma closed it up again with the cork and even sealed it again with the same paper talisman she used a moment ago...

Everything happened so quickly!

Then, the butcher that was previously possessed was suddenly dissolved into a purple liquid after Officer Spencer did something to it. It seems to be some sort of spell but Vale wasn't sure what had happened. He only saw how Officer Spencer got closer and waved his hands while Officer Roma was busy collecting the cloud of smoke.

"Hmmm... Now that we're done with this thing... How should we deal with those three kids?" Officer Spencer spoke calmly as he finally shifted his attention to Vale's group.

Officer Roma was also deep in her thoughts as she stared at them.

Chapter 163 Targeted

"We're about to leave this place when we were caught by the Formation Circle you guys have activated so we can only stay here..." Priscilla said as she noticed that they were being stared at.

Officer Roman nodded as she knows this as well.

"You're right... You're also just a bunch of kids so I don't think that you were the ones who released this mutated evil spirit... However, we haven't captured the mastermind yet so you have to stay here until everything is over."

Vale, Priscilla, and Philip can only sigh after hearing this. They know that it would not be easy to leave after getting somewhat involved in this incident.

"Officer, since you don't think we're the ones who released the evil spirit, can you just let us go? Our professors would be worried if we don't return quickly." Vale said as he tried to reason with them.

Unfortunately, Officer Roma simply shook her head as she shifted her attention to the slaughterhouse.

She knows inside the building, an intense battle was going on... It was a battle between third-class Arcane Arts Practitioners and there it won't be easy for her and Officer Spencer to deal with this matter.

Nevertheless, after just ten minutes, there is already a result in this battle...

During this time, the normal police officers were already taking care of the scene as they utilize the Fog Formation to avoid the eyes of the public.

They know that this Fog Formation wouldn't work for a long time so they have to clean up the place.

'Tsk... They didn't even let me touch them... What a pity.' Vale inwardly sighed as he looked at the corpses of the victims being taken away by the police officers.

'Should I visit the morgue later?'

As he thought of this, the battle within the slaughterhouse seem to have come to an end. The previous three blond men wearing white trenchcoats have turned into two. It appears that one of them perished in the intense battle.

"State your names and affiliation..." Officer Spencer spoke while holding his revolver pointed to the ground.

The two simply looked at each other before one of them helplessly smiled at Officer Spencer.

"We're apprentices of the Wisemen... I'm Wesley and my companion here is Leigh."

At these words, the two special unit officers looked at them with interest as they relaxed for a bit. First of all, they already guess their identities because they were able to observe the intense battle that was within their magic zone.

Although they didn't see the battle inside the slaughterhouse, they sense some familiar Arcane Arts used in that building.

They were certainly Rune Arts!

Because of this, they guessed that these people were connected to the Rune Arts Faction and weren't too nervous facing them.

After their confirmation, Officer Spencer gently nodded and asked. "Are you on a mission?"

"Yes, we're 9th-Year Students and we're tasked to kill the mastermind of this incident, Brice Watton, as part of our apprenticeship. That man also caused similar incidents around Steelpoint City and Arcadale Port... His body is still inside and we only needed his right eye as our proof."

Officer Roma accepted their explanation as well since this isn't an unusual thing. Arcane Academies would normally send their 8th-year to 10th-year students to conduct dangerous missions.

This is normally a requirement to be officially accepted as a member of the Faction's elite units after their graduation.

If they didn't have enough mission accomplishments, they wouldn't receive an offer from these elite units... Of course, there are many other offers out there but the faction's special squad, or Order of the Prime Wisemen in Rune Arts Faction's case, may not think too much of you if you failed these assigned missions.

"How about your friend? There were three of you a while ago."

After hearing this, the two looked down and shook their heads.

"We've lost our friend. We can't bring him back in his current state so we would appreciate it if you help us take care of his body so we can send him back to the Academy."

The two officers no longer asked questions as they wanted to see the scene themselves.

In the meantime, the two students of the Adaereth, Academy of Rune Arts, didn't leave the Fog Formation as they rested on the side.

They noticed Vale's group but they just ignored them as they slowly recuperated themselves...

As Vale and the others were thinking that they will be able to leave soon, the two special unit officers came out of the slaughterhouse and immediately went to find Vale's group...

"We've confirmed that Brice Watton is a Dark Arts Practitioner... We have no records of him so the three of you must stay here to be investigated." Officer Roma said in a serious tone.

Behind her was Officer Spencer who doesn't seem to care what his partner was doing. He was even smirking as if he was finding this case funny.

Since they can't find anything about the culprit, they thought that they might find a clue from his fellow Dark Arts Practitioners!

Priscilla was obviously alarmed by this as she immediately replied. "Then we'll let you speak to our Professors."

"I don't even think that we even have to stay here at all. Officer, I don't think you should further involve three freshmen students of the Vermont Academy..." Vale added as he reminded the officer about their age.

Philip, on the other hand, remained silent as his arms crossed in front of his chest.

Officer Roma sighed at this as she suddenly turned serious.

"You're not going to leave until we finished this matter. You people from the Dark Arts Faction were causing a lot of trouble to everyone. This should teach you a lesson."

The last part was said in a soft voice but the three didn't miss this. At this point, they already realized that something was wrong...

'Lotus, can you help us destroy the Fog Formation? We need to escape.' Vale asked the Dark Spirit.

'I can't, I'm too weak. I need a few months of rest...' Lotus replied instantly. She already informed Vale about this.

Vale wryly smiled at this. He indeed forgot about that for a moment.

Nevertheless, as he saw the slaughterhouse, he immediately had an idea.

He looked at the female officer and said with a calm tone.

"Very well, we'll follow your instructions... However, you mentioned that Brice Watton is a Dark Arts Practitioner, I want to confirm it with my own eyes. Let me enter the building."

Chapter 164 Extraction

"What?" Officer Roma didn't expect Vale's sudden question.

However, she didn't find anything wrong with this request so she didn't immediately deny it. Furthermore, the Fog Formation can still work for about 9 minutes so it should be fine.

She then looked at her partner and noticed that he didn't care about Vale's request as well.

"Very well. Only two of you can go inside... One of you should stay here with me." Officer Roma said after thinking about it.

The scene inside the slaughterhouse is quite gruesome and filled with blood. This included the blood of humans and animals... Although she had some tolerance for it, she didn't want to enter that building once again if possible.

Apparently, the other workers of the slaughterhouse were brutally killed inside, and there were about a dozen of them.

Officer Roma sneered as she was curious how long they would be able to stay inside that building.

After a moment of hesitation, one of them spoke up.

"The two of you can go... I'll stay here..." Priscilla said as she looked at her brother....

Philip didn't want to leave her at first but after getting Priscilla's hint, he had no choice but to accompany Vale inside the building...

Soon, Vale and Philip entered the site under the watch of the two special unit officers...

There were already a few officers inside who seem to be investigating the scene of the crime.

None of them bothered at the two's appearance and just continued with their work...

The place had a terrible smell so Vale used his Darkness Manipulation to absorb the smell that is attacking his senses.

This is just one of the simplest use of the spell and could do plenty of other things if his mastery of it increases.

Anyway, the scene was quite horrible as Philip almost started vomiting on the spot.

Perhaps, he would really be unable to take it if the light in the building is brighter... Currently, there was only a dim light so they weren't able to see the situation properly and could only vaguely see them.

There were dozens of skinned cows hanging on chain hooks and the dead bodies of the workers were everywhere. They could be lying on the ground, hanging on the wires, and some of their body parts were also everywhere.

"Vale... I'll stay here... It's enough that my crystal can capture everything..." Philip said.

Apparently, after the incident with Terrence's group, Philip decided to use it once again since they are still within the city!

Priscilla knows this as well so she allowed Philip to accompany Vale inside. This is to ensure that he would be able to record the scene inside the building!

Vale had also noticed this so he wasn't surprised.

"Alright... Just endure it for a bit, I'll be quick."

With that said, Vale approached the officers and informed them that he was instructed by Officer Roma to check something on the bodies of the Arcane Arts Practitioners who died here.

After hearing Officer Roma's name, they immediately assisted Vale as they pointed at the four bodies of practitioners...

"There were four of them?" Vale asked the masked officer. He can only see half of his face but Vale can tell that the man is already in his forties... He looked quite exhausted from his job and seemed like he wanted to leave the building as quickly as possible.

Nevertheless, with Vale's question, he still answered calmly.

"The one with a missing right eye is the culprit... The one that was beheaded wearing a white trenchcoat was the companion of the Rune Arts Practitioners. The other two were the owner and the bodyguard of this slaughterhouse. They responded after hearing the cries for help of their employees... only to be killed by that ruthless culprit."

"It's tragic..." Vale shook his head feeling a bit downhearted after the deaths of innocent people.

"Indeed... You can inspect them as much as you want. In any case, we can't tell much about them since they're Arcane Arts Practitioners."

Vale then thanked the officer for explaining things to him before he approached the four practitioners.

He first went to the culprit of this incident, Brice Watton... His body has several tattoos of ancient characters that Vale had no idea about.

'Ahhh... Are these Rune Characters?' Vale mused as he knows that Rune Arts uses another language different from Oardic or Heumish.

Anyway, he didn't think too deeply about it as he touched its body... It looks as if he was inspecting the man but he simply activated his system.

[Human corpse has been discovered. Would you like to extract it?]

'No...'

Vale answered. He simply wanted to confirm whether he can extract the corpse...

'Lotus, can you extract this person's soul to recover your energy?' Vale asked the Dark Spirit hiding in his shadow.

'Yes...'

Lotus responded with a brief reply. Her voice sounds tired as well so Vale hopes that this can recover her strength.

'Very well... You can take this person's soul to replenish some of your strength.'

Lotus no longer replied as she controlled Vale's shadow to cover the corpse's body...

After a while, Vale heard the Dark Spirit speak.

'It's done... It's not enough.'

Vale nodded as he realized that he didn't sense anything happening at all. Her 'extraction' was also undetectable like his system's extraction.

'Well, you can check the other corpses... Let me just try something.' Vale answered as he tapped the corpse once again and triggered his system...

This time, nothing happened. The Extraction System could no longer detect the human corpse.

'As expected, I can't extract anymore... Was my system feeding the same energy that Lotus needed? Soul? Spirit? Or Arcane Energy?' Vale mused but he still keep moving and allowed Lotus to take the energy of the other three.

It was a pity that he can't extract them anymore but an extraction of a few people wouldn't make some huge changes to him at the moment. It's better to allow Lotus to recover her strength...

'Should we try the normal people? Can you recover your energy from them?' Vale asked.

'I can't... I don't feel any sources of energy from them.' Lotus replied as her voice finally had some energy in it.

Vale also confirmed that Lotus has enough energy to destroy the Fog Formation!

His plan finally bore fruit and he was no longer afraid of the two Special Unit Officers!

Chapter 165 Escape

Vale continued extracting the bodies of the ordinary human corpses that were inside the building...

It only gave him 0.14 in his Vitality Attribute but it was better than nothing.

It was unfortunate that he can't extract the other bodies because they were too mutilated. This includes the animals as well.

Of course, he wasn't sure whether the animals can be extracted at all since he didn't really have a proper sample. The cows and goats in the slaughterhouse are already dismembered after all.

"Let's go, Philip... We're done here." As Vale said this, Philip heaved a sigh of relief as he immediately went out.

Deep in his mind, his respect for Vale increased by a notch. In his eyes, Vale was truly unbothered by corpses and even touch all of them without any hesitation.

It wasn't something he could do without showing any signs of hesitation, disgust, and nervousness...

From this, Philip can guess that Vale had vast experience with these corpses or perhaps, the thing they'd heard from the Headmaster was true.

"How is it inside? You guys took much longer time than I expected." Officer Roma said with a teasing smile.

"Just staying there can be stressful... However, are we allowed to leave now?" Vale asked shifting the topic swiftly.

"As I said, you can't leave just yet. You guys from the Dark Arts Faction can't be underestimated even if you're freshmen... Besides, I want to hear if you find something unusual with the corpse after checking it."

Vale simply shook his head after hearing this and replied.

"Except for the unusual tattoos of that person, there's nothing strange about him. It's probably because of how he was killed by those 9th-year students so I can't find out more..." Vale said as he looked at Wesley and Leigh who seem to be using some sort of Rune Device to get themselves heal faster.

Rune Arts Practitioners or Runecasters have a different method of combat... They were using Rune Characters, Rune Devices, or something they weren't aware of whenever they engage in battle.

The tattoos on Brice Watton's body may not even be from him but they were marks left behind by the weapons used by the three students who killed him.

"Well, I still can't let you leave. You have to accompany us to our station... If you have matters in the Academy, we'll inform them later on." Officer Roma said.

At this point, Vale was already losing his patience.

"Officer, are you just troubling us because we're from Vermont Academy? If you have a problem with Dark Arts Practitioners, they were most likely those rogue practitioners. Even your Combat Arts Faction has many rogue practitioners. You should understand that."

Officer Roma and Spencer didn't like how Vale started reasoning with them.

"We don't belong to any faction. We're working for the government... We're from the police department so you have to watch your words." Officer Spencer finally spoke.

"It seems that you three wanted to rush your death. We're only planning to torture you after learning more about the Vermont Academy... However, I've changed my mind."

Officer Roma said as she finally revealed her true color.

Indeed, these two officers were up to no good since the beginning!

Perhaps, they can't actually cancel the Fog Formation Circle so they were still waiting until it was naturally removed to take care of them...

This is not a new thing since Vale read a couple of books about Formation Circles. Many Formation Circles can not be controlled once they are activated. Most of them are those lower-tier ones and you either have to forcefully destroy them, wait for the time limit, or until their energy is consumed.

Vale sneered after hearing the officer. Priscilla and Philip then stood behind Vale as they know that he was about to do something.

"So it was like that... You've finally admitted it." Vale said as he looked at them with disdain.

"What can you do? The Formation Circle still has 3 minutes. It's enough to bring the three of you down... Officer Spencer, you have to carry these three after I knock them out."

Officer Roma said as she started fixing her blue gloves. She wasn't planning to use her gun against them and it seems that she was thinking of only using her Combat Art to subdue them...

Vale found an opportunity after seeing this. He didn't hesitate anymore as he asked Lotus to break the Fog Formation for them!

'Follow me...' Lotus simply said as she came out of Vale's shadow...

Her sudden appearance stunned the two officers for a brief moment as they unconsciously made a defensive stance. After all, the energy they felt coming from that black thing wasn't weak.

It was a powerful energy that they had to be wary of.

However, they were baffled after seeing it charge in a different direction!

It actually went to the Fog Formation! It must be said that even if Roma and Spencer worked together, they won't be able to forcefully get out of this formation...

Seeing that Vale's group was thinking of escaping, Roma looked at them with contempt as she believed that they'll just fail.

As the three followed the path made by Lotus, their vision was filled with gray fog, and couldn't see any other thing.

This made them nervous for a bit but they keep moving while staying together...

After about 30 seconds or so, they were soon out in the streets as they heard the street vendors calling for their attention to buy their products.

As Vale looked around, he realized that he wasn't seeing the Fog Formation anywhere... However, it should still be somewhere in the city.

'What a mysterious formation art... I wonder if we're going to learn something similar.' Vale mused as he signaled for the two to follow him.

"That was exciting, Vale... I didn't know your Dark Spirit would be so awesome."

"Right! I want to summon something similar... Vale, can you really not teach us how to do it?"

Philip and Priscilla said with anticipation as they looked at Vale's shadow.

"I really can't... You can think of it as a family secret. Anyway, let's get out of here first."

They were still not safe and the two officers must've realized that they have successfully escaped.

At this time, Vale also heard Lotus complain about the huge amount of energy that was used just now.

Chapter 166 Points

Officer Roma and Officer Spencer took a few seconds before realizing that Vale's group successfully escape the Fog Formation Circle!

Furthermore, they escaped in a way that they have never thought of! It was only possible unless you're a Formation Art Expert!

It should be impossible for even many graduating students of each Arcahe Academy much more for freshmen students!

However, they did it... They escaped by making a hole in the Fog Formation and they didn't even leave it open!

As soon as they escaped, the hole they created was repaired as they got out! It may be the self-repair effect of the Fog Formation itself or it could be their doing but it was still something they have never seen before!

Officer Roma immediately glanced in the direction of the two 9th-year students of Adaereth Academy.

"Hey! This Fog Formation was bought from your Faction's Silver-Class Rune Designer, I think he was called Roger or Rogene, but a bunch of first-year students managed to break out! I think we should get a refund for this. Do you know where that guy was?" Officer Roma complained as she stood closer to the spot where Vale's group disappeared.

Wesley and Leigh looked at each other with a frown as they were also baffled by how Vale's group managed to escape. Nevertheless, they didn't like how Officer Roma was looking down on the expert of their Faction.

"There was no way that the Fog Formation was at fault. If it is faulty, you can try copying what they did and escape from here. Furthermore, we don't know any Silver-Class Rune Designer at our current level."

Officer Roma knows this as well but she just can't help but blame someone.

She cannot make a hole out of the Formation Circle!

"Don't worry, Officer Roma... It's just a couple more minutes and the whole formation will come off." Spencer said to calm her down. It was indeed annoying how three 13 or 14-year-old practitioners escaped from them but nothing good will come out if she stayed angry.

At this point, Vale's group had no idea how stressful they have become as they hurriedly returned to their inn...

As they reached the building, they were able to see the students of Rakmiths Academy including their Professors exiting the building.

They noticed Vale's arrival and couldn't help but look at them with a complicated gaze...

Seeing their reaction, Vale knows that Professor Stella solved the problem for them.

"Should we tell her that we probably made another problem?" Vale considered for a moment as he looked at Philip and Priscilla...

The two didn't seem to like the idea as they feel like they were some sort of troublemaker if they report another problem to them.

"Let's just inform her tomorrow, I'm quite tired..." Philip said after a moment of hesitation.

"Or you can just let her know secretly. I don't think you need us to explain the matter anyway... You can also take Philip's crystal as another piece of evidence." Priscilla suggested.

In the end, they let Vale take care of this matter.

Vale wryly smiled and just agreed to them.

Anyway, he felt that these two are still growing up and needed to sleep early... As an adult, he decided to just take care of the matter without complaining instead of passing it to children.

After entering the inn, the people looked at them with interest as they probably heard the whole story at this point.

Vale and the other two didn't care about their gazes as the siblings went upstairs to rest while Vale was invited by Professor Stella into her room.

It's the only place where they can talk privately after all.

"Professor, what happened to your meeting with them?" Vale asked after entering her room.

"Thanks to the recording you guys have saved, everything went according to plan. We didn't even have to check the recording as they were already intimidated and confessed everything." Stella said with a proud smile on her face.

It seems that she's genuinely happy about winning that discussion...

"Then what happened to Dale Morvell. He testified that he saw us beating up those first-year students."

"Ha! Don't worry, his 9 Contribution Points will be taken and shared by the three of you." Professor Stella said with a smile but after noticing Vale's confusion she immediately explained.

"Don't think too lightly of this punishment. Any contribution point is hard to collect... It's not simply because missions are difficult to accomplish but also because the number of missions or achievements that can be completed is limited..."

"Is that so..." Vale muttered.

"Yes... We also can't be too harsh on him since he's still a capable student in our Academy... A few months later and there will be the Twelve Academies Competition... He'll be one of the participants so he still has some privilege on this matter."

Vale wryly smiled as he can't really do anything about this kind of rule within the Academy. Well, the world isn't fair and this academy wouldn't be fair either.

"Do you know what can you get from 3 to 9 contribution points?" Professor Stella suddenly asked.

Vale's eyes lit up as these are the things he wanted to know. Since he's only a first-year student, the Professors weren't discussing things related to contribution points. Normally, first-year students wouldn't earn any points at this point after all.

However, now that he had a few Contribution Points, he certainly had the right to know more about it.

"Please tell me, professor."

Professor Stella smiled and answered. "You can get low-grade to high-grade Mortal Rank mystical items with that points. On the other hand, you'll get Noble Rank items if you have 10 to 20 Contribution points."

"So it was like that... How about the Royal Rank items, professor?"

"They're a bit more difficult to obtain as you'll need 60 to 90 contribution points. That's not easy to collect."

"Ah? The jump on that price was huge..." Vale commented as he thought that it would only be around 30 to 50 points.

"What about the Sovereign Rank, professor?"

Professor Stella looked at Vale with an amusing smile as she answered with a chuckle. "There were only 3 Sovereign Rank items in the Academy... Each of them is worth 1,000 contribution points. You probably need to save the Faction or perhaps block a meteor that was about to decimate our academy to get that many points."

Chapter 167 Second Spell

Vale wasn't sure whether she was serious about it or not... Nevertheless, it feels like the Academy made it impossible to get a Sovereign Rank mystical artifact from them.

Of course, it is not that surprising considering how they only have three of them! If they made it easy, those three would've been taken away already.

Even the Royal Rank items are quite impossible for many students in the Academy.

After all, the contribution points have many other uses... Aside from the mystical artifacts, it can also be used to get some rare Spell Models, rare ingredients for Alchemy, secret Dark Arts Books, an exclusive Tier 1 or Tier 2 Variant, and other services and products that Vale wasn't aware of...

Because of all these things, it's difficult to collect enough contribution points for a single Royal Rank mystical artifact.

"Thank you for your explanation, Professor. Since we will be sharing Dale's 9 Contribution Points, I'll be having 3 more points with me."

"Yes... I heard that you earned 2 points from Professor Lucius after killing that Evil Creature kept in the Serenity Hall. With that 5 points, you can get a relatively good Spell Model."

"What kind of Spell Model would that be, Professor?"

"Don't expect too much but it certainly is a lot better than the 20 Free Spell Models that the Academy provides. Ah, if it wasn't taught by your Darkness Path professor yet, it will probably be taught soon..."

"I understand, Professor."

Vale felt even more curious about this as he asked more questions.

Apparently, the Academy only has 20 Free Spell Models, this includes simple spells like Ghost Hands, Dusk Imprisonment, Ghastly Ailment, and others... If students wanted something better or rare Spell Models, they have to earn it by getting contribution points to exchange for it.

As for Tier 2 Dark Spells, they were even more expensive as their lowest price was 30 points.

Vale can finally understand why the students in the higher years extremely value these contribution points!

It was no wonder they were always struggling to get it and would envy those who have many of them.

Because of how he easily earned 2 Contribution Points last month, he didn't really feel pressured but now that he started learning about the usage of these points, he realized that he truly needed plenty of them and he has to be smart about using them and not waste each point.

The student and professor continued chatting about many things as Vale also confirmed that the Rakmiths Professors apologized by giving them compensation. It was 12,000 zen. It was quite a large sum of money and it was supposedly 6,000 zen but she protested it and raised it by a double.

Thanks to that, the three of them who were victims of false accusations would receive 4,000 zen each. That is quite a large sum of money considering how an average person only earns about 50 zen a week.

Vale didn't just earn back the money he spent to purchase the Murloc's Gem and Nymph Scale but he also profited from it.

After this, Vale informed Professor Stella about what had happened in the streets of the city a while ago... She was shocked by the incident they encountered and if Vale didn't mention the recording crystal, she might not believe everything that he said.

"Are you sure those two officers are Combat Art Practitioners?" Stella asked after a while.

"Yes... I'm sure that they're using that mysterious Aura... Their weapons were also Rune Devices if I'm not mistaken."

"Aura and Rune Devices... They're indeed signs of Combat Arts Practitioners... Alright, I'll let the Headmaster know about this. Hand me over that recording crystal."

"Yes, Professor." Vale complied as this is also what he wanted to happen.

On the next day, Vale didn't see student Dale or even Professor Russel as if they were avoiding him. Well, they were probably too ashamed after what they'd done and didn't dare to see him.

In the afternoon, the people who had gone out for their mission had started to return one by one... They all boarded the Academy's Airship at the same time and left Charvale City to return to the Academy.

After a long trip, they returned to the academy safely... It was uneventful but it was for the best.

After Vale's group sent the Recording Crystals to the Clubroom, Vale swiftly returned to his dormitory and saw Harith and Zeno playing a board game in the living room. It was already seven in the evening so it was quite baffling that they were still playing at this time.

"Vale, you've returned... I heard you had a mission outside the academy. What a lucky fellow..." Zeno commented as soon as he saw Vale entering their room.

"It's not really a pleasant trip... Anyway, what happened today?" Vale asked. There were no classes today because of the commemoration of the Recapture of the Dark Sorcerer Tower.

He only knows what happened on that particular date but he doesn't know any of the traditions they celebrate because of that...

The two paused their game for a moment and explained what happened in the academy... It seems that there is a monument of Morgan Vermont together with the list of people he saved in the tower from the hands of the Holy Arts Faction.

There was a ceremony of giving flowers to the monument and a speech from the Headmaster was also made and it only lasted for about an hour.

After this ceremony, they were able to look around the gallery where they saw various paintings, sculptures, and ancient items that were related to that event.

"A monument? Where is that located?" Vale asked curiously.

"It's at the garden on the east side of the Serenity Hall."

Vale nodded at this as he hadn't visited that place yet. He only knows that on the west side of the Serenity Hall was the Contribution Points Exchange Hall which not many people would visit as well... Even if they do, perhaps they only visit the Exchange Hall about twice a year.

About two weeks later, on June 23rd, Professor Morton of Essential Dark Spell Class, confirmed that all students of class 2 managed to finally record one of the three Primary Spells of the Academy!

It was time for them to learn the second spell!

Chapter 168 Knowledge

"Anyone had an idea about the Second Spell?" Professor Morton asked the class.

A few of them immediately raised their hands after hearing the question.

He gestured to the one sitting in front since he probably can't remember his name.

It was Roswell Curtis and one of the average students in the class.

"It's called Light Absorption, Professor."

"Correct... What about the third Primary Dark Spell?" Professor Morton asked once more and this time, he gestured for Lisa to answer.

"It's a Dark Summoning Ability called the Shadow Soldier..." Lisa answered promptly although she was surprised after being called. She did not raise her hand after all.

Professor Morton nodded as he continued to ask questions.

"It hasn't been taught in class yet, but tell me anything you know about the Light Absorption, Leonore..."

It was his first time calling someone's name so she must've left some impression on him.

This is what most of the class thought after hearing Leonore's name.

Leonore hesitated for a moment as she tried to recall what she heard from the seniors in her club.

"Light Absorption doesn't just allow us to steal the light in a certain area but it also passively grants a Night Vision ability to us."

Professor Morton was satisfied with this as he added.

"She's right... This is the reason why Night Vision isn't a spell that is recommended to record in one of your spell lights. As a matter of fact, all three Primary Spells overlap a few lower-tier Spell Models so these three are very important. It doesn't just provide you with a strong spell but grants you a few passive abilities that you can use elsewhere."

Professor Morton looked at his students and realized that some of them are looking at him in a daze.

It appears that they weren't aware of what he just said or they had a moment of realization after hearing his statement.

Because of that, he continued to explain...

"Alright, think about the first Primary Spell, the Darkness Manipulation doesn't just allow you to control or shape your Dark Energy, it also grants you a boost in your Dark Spells, especially with Curse Spells... In short, those Spell Boosting Spells that you may have would overlap with the Darkness Manipulation... Of course, you can think of it as having a stronger boost but it can also be a waste of Spell Light in your bodies."

Professor Morton then paused for a moment before asking another question.

"What about the third Primary Spell? Is there anyone who can tell us more about it?"

This time, only one student had raised their hand. It was Chad Bulmung.

"I heard that the Shadow Soldier is nurtured for months or years depending on the quality of your shadow... I wasn't sure how it was done but I believe it takes a long time. If I'm not mistaken it was a Spell that doesn't just require Spell Recording like the others but it needed an ingredient or material to successfully record this Spell Model."

Many students in the class, including Vale, looked at Chad with interest. They didn't know this information at all.

"You're right.... The third Primary Spell can indeed take years to learn. It may be in your 6th year up to your 9th year and if you're terrible, probably in your 10th year... The earliest one in our record though, took only 2 years to record the spell. However, that only happened to one student. Her name was Lesley Hoffman and the niece of the current Headmaster of our Academy."

Everyone was quite surprised after hearing this... She was probably a genius and they were quite interested to meet her.

"Professor, is she still in our Academy?" Chad asked curiously.

"No, she already graduated and is continuing her research outside the Academy..." Professor Morton answered.

In the meantime, Vale couldn't help but smile after hearing Lesley's name again.

He had a sudden feeling that he would be able to meet her again someday.

Anyway, Jody raised her hand as she asked another question. She wanted to know about the ingredient that was needed for the spell so they can make enough preparations.

"Oh? You haven't even learned the second Primary Spell... Learning Light Absorption isn't easy as well. Anyway, Shadow Soldier can only be created once your shadow was mutated to a certain degree... This is why the Vice Headmasters or even the Headmaster themselves would rip apart a portion of your shadow... This action will help you mutate your shadow."

Their eyes lit up after hearing this... So the shadow that was taken from them had another purpose aside from binding them to the academy!

'So it was like that... It was a preparation for the third Primary Spell...' Lisa thought in silent. The class had a similar realization as they all bobbed their heads in understanding.

Professor Morton then explained that shadow mutation takes a long time to happen and there are only a few methods known on how to do it...

Of course, he didn't discuss this matter deeply as they still have to learn the Light Absorption Spell.

The Essential Dark Spell class lasted two hours and all of them received a copy of the Spell Model.

They were now tasked to record the spell in their free time. Furthermore, they have their whole Academy Year to learn this spell!

A month had quickly passed and during this time, Vale had been very busy in his club. Apparently, the higher years started challenging other students to get into Rankings.

Well, only fifth-year to tenth-year are included in this.

Nevertheless, the three Arenas became quite busy and of course, the members of the Battle Arena Committee had their hands full.

Thankfully, these battles were also quite useful for Vale, Philip, and Priscilla as their understanding of various Dark Spells started going deeper and deeper.

It was beneficial for their growth as well.

This was especially for Vale who had originally thought that all Dark Spells are quite disgusting, cruel, and fear-inducing.

"So Dark Arts can also be beautiful..." Vale muttered as he looked at Clara Campbell, the Treasurer of the Battle Arena Committee, fight against her challenger from the Dark Magic Branch...

Chapter 169 Spell Model

Clara Campbell is a sixth-year student of the Rituals Branch. She appears quite harmless but her set of Dark Spells made Vale realize how this branch greatly differs from the other Dark Arts Branch...

Over the past month, Vale had seen numerous duels among students of different branches and concluded a few things.

The Necromancy Branch focuses on Undead Creatures and spells that contain Negative Energy. It can be very nasty the stronger the spell they learned. They also seem to have the strongest physique among all the practitioners of Dark Arts.

The Essential Corruption Branch focuses on Darkness Abilities, Evil Aura, and Destruction or Corrosive Energy... They seem to have the weakest physical capabilities but their spells can be so devastating.

The Dark Alchemy Branch, on the other hand, was quite complicated. After all, the Alchemy Branch was further divided by a few specializations. They can be pill-making, potion concoctions, variant or golem creation, poison arts, and lastly, mutation techniques...

All of them can be learned by Dark Alchemist but only one or two of them can be mastered unless you spend decades of study in each of them.

As for the Dark Magic Branch, they seem to have the most balanced abilities among other branches since they have a wide range of choices in their Dark Spells... You just have to be smart with your selection of Dark Spells.

Lastly, the Rituals Branch where Clara belongs focuses on chants or incantations, spirit techniques, and some dark ceremonies... They seem quite weak but if they have made enough preparation in their battles, they can become unbeatable.

"What are those spells she used, Senior Nadine?" Vale asked curiously after seeing how Clara defeated her opponent in such a strange but beautiful method.

Vale saw how her opponent cast a couple of Dark Spells at the same time. One of the spells was the Rotting Chains while the other is called Blind Apparition if he wasn't mistaken.

The opponent's dual cast was quite incredible and he was also moving while he was casting to potentially avoid any quick spells.

As Vale thought that Nadine would be on the defensive because of how troublesome the Rotting Chains can be, Nadine simply spoke two words in Oardic--No, he wasn't even sure if that was Oardic. However, it sounds like it was so Vale was a bit confused about what happened.

Anyway, after saying those two words, two gorgeous Spiritual Beings appeared out of nowhere and protected her from harm!

Then, those two simply destroyed her opponent in less than a minute...

"Hmm... If I answer you, you'd probably choose the Rituals Branch as your specialization in your fourth year."

Nadine said with a teasing smile. She wasn't the Referee or Corner Judge of the duel. She simply came here to watch and support her friend like Vale.

"Really? Is that a spell suitable for me?" Vale asked.

Nadine thought for a moment before nodding at his question.

"Well, it might be very compatible with you since I've heard about your Dark Spirit..." She answered.

Vale then looked at her with interest waiting for further explanation.

"You have to treat me... and Clara for lunch if you want to learn more about it." Nadine said after seeing Vale's expectant gaze.

"Alright!" Vale immediately answered. With his money, he didn't mind treating them to a buffet a few times.

Clara chuckled at Vale's quick answer as she replied. "It's called Name Evocation... Days or weeks prior to the date of your duel, you can form a temporary contract with some Spiritual Beings through Sacrificial Rituals or Spirit Calling Ceremonies. After the contract, you can use Name Evocation to call for their names and they can be instantly summoned."

Vale's eyes widened after hearing this ability.

It has similarities with the power of Summoning Undead or other Summoning Techniques... However, it also feels similar to how he was connected to Lotus where he could summon her out whenever he needed as long as she has enough energy.

'No wonder she said that it could be a suitable branch for me...'

"Name Evocation... What an awesome ability. However, I'm guessing that those Rituals or Ceremonies can be costly. Am I right?" Vale asked.

"That's correct... But these costly rituals allow you to find the suitable Spiritual Being that you needed in a specific battle. As long as you have enough time to prepare, you can easily beat up your opponent if learned about their abilities, weaknesses, and mystical items they're using..."

"Indeed... Those two beings she summoned weren't just beautiful, they're also powerful... None of the man's Dark Spells worked against them."

"Right... That's what having enough preparation does." Nadine said with a proud smile as if she was the one who won the battle.

After Vale watched three more battles, he finally returned to his room.

However, he didn't return to rest... He attempted to record the Light Absorption Spell Model in his Spell Light but after one hour of attempt, he lost his concentration again and made a mistake in the Spell Model he was creating...

He doesn't have a problem with the amount of Dark Energy he needed because of the Animus Haven Magic Circle he was using. However, he was having trouble with the complicated design of the Spell Model he needed to record.

The Light Absorption Spell Model was approaching the difficulty of the Spell Dispersion Spell Model.

'Should I purchase a mystical item that helps with my Concentration?' Vale mused as he believes that his 5 Contribution Points should provide him a decent lower-tier mystical artifact for this.

Chad had previously given him a silver pocketwatch that can increase his Focus but it wasn't enough...

In the end, Vale decided to just give up for the day and try again on another day. Anyway, he has a whole Academic Year to record this Dark Spell... It's better to take his time since he doesn't have to compete on this.

In addition to that, he doesn't think that Light Absorption Spell would help him in his fight against the Slender Zombie next week.

As he recalled his duel against Mad Larkin, Vale sighed as he looked at his shadow.

Chapter 170 The Favor

"Lotus, I'll be relying on you on my next duel..." Vale said in a soft voice.

He already discussed his plan with the Dark Spirit and the latter had certainly agreed as long as he provides her with enough energy she can use.

He obviously agreed with her as he had even decided to use one of his favors from the Headmaster. He already mentioned to Headmaster Jean that he would like to visit his precious basement as long as it has corpses that he can touch...

The Headmaster was elated after hearing this so on the 28th of July, the day before his duel, he would have a 3-hour tour in his basement!

Since he was expecting to encounter a few high-quality corpses there, he was expecting that Lotus would get a lot stronger and he would also have a chance to extract other corpses...

"I've never fought against a Slender Zombie before... However, I should be capable of destroying its energy source if my Dark Energy is stronger than the zombie."

"Yes... We will make sure that you'll be in your strongest state before the battle. But... are you sure you're not going to just disappear so suddenly?" Vale asked.

To be honest, he was still quite worried that Lotus would suddenly disappear... After all, their relationship is quite odd and it was formed in a strange way...

He indeed summoned her through a ritual he made with the blessing of the rulers of the Spirit World, but it's not a ritual to make a contract with her...

Lotus is just his friend and not his servant of some sort... This is what he requested in his prayer chant after all.

This is also the reason why he's being really cautious about his treatment of the Dark Spirit. Although he requested a friendly spirit in that ritual, it doesn't mean that this spirit would forever stay like that whatever treatment he gave to her.

"I'm not going away... I can't even return to the Spirit World. At most, I can probably use another host but that's too troublesome and will make me a lot weaker." Lotus replied as she sensed Vale's emotion.

"I see... Thank you for saying that."

Lotus no longer replied after this.

Days quickly passed and the day to visit the Headmaster's basement finally arrived.

Vale suddenly heard the Headmaster's voice inside his head telling him to visit him in his office.

This was just after Professor Morton's class ended.

"Vale! Have you finished your preparation? We will come and watch your match tomorrow..." Chad suddenly said after seeing Vale hurrying to get out of the classroom.

This attracted the other's attention as they also said some encouraging words to him...

Lisa and Aubrey, on the other hand, looked at Vale with smiles on their faces. The two of them had given Vale a report regarding Slender Zombies and even mutated Slender Zombies that they found in the library and heard from their seniors.

Vale didn't ask for it but they still gave it to him in hopes of helping him in his duel.

Vale then thanked everyone and ensured that he will do his best in his duel before leaving the classroom.

The stake in that duel is a huge deal to him after all. If he wins, he gets the scrolls and his opponent's contribution points. If he loses, he had to participate in Larkin's experiment to advance his research in Undead Creatures.

The stake may not be fair but the battle isn't fair either... Vale would be the one to fight in the duel and he can use his Mystical Artifacts and Dark Spells. On the other hand, he will only fight a Zombie that is not capable of casting Dark Spells or using Mystical Artifacts.

It would seem that Vale was the one in favor of this battle...

However, since this duel was suggested by Larkin himself, there should be something off with this rule and he surely has tricks up his sleeve.

As soon as Vale entered the Headmaster's room, he greeted Headmaster Jean who was smoking behind his desk.

This is Vale's first time seeing the Headmaster smoke... He didn't quite expect that he was smoking but now that he thinks about it, it seems quite fitting to his character.

Headmaster Jean simply flipped the cigar it disappeared in his hands as soon as Vale entered.

"Alright. Let's go..." Headmaster Jean said as he stood up and approached Vale.

"Headmaster, may I know where this place is?" Vale asked. He was simply curious to know the location of the basement whether it is within the Academy or not.

Headmaster Jean smiled at his question as he didn't immediately answer.

He then held Vale's right shoulder before speaking with his deep voice. "I can't tell you."

Vale wanted to say something more but his surroundings suddenly turned dark and he can only see the Headmaster's white smiling teeth before they also vanished in the darkness...

'This...' Vale was stunned.

It was quite alarming but he remained unmoving as he believed that the Headmaster wouldn't harm him at all... If he has plans of harming him, he could've done it a long time ago and wouldn't make it so complicated.

In addition to that, his Spell Dispersion's passive ability didn't work either... It means that the Headmaster's spell was incredibly stronger.

Soon, a blinding light appeared in the darkness and after a few seconds, he realized that he was already in a different place!

He's now in the middle of a forest with a cottage house in front of him!

"Illusion? Wait, Teleportation Spell? Is it Tier 2—No, a Tier 3 Dark Spell?!" Vale was shocked as he realized what was going on!

Only about 20 seconds had passed and he already arrived at a place he had no idea about. Vale couldn't help but look at the Headmaster with deep respect.

He wanted to learn this Dark Spell too!

Headmaster Jean chuckled after seeing his reaction... Well, he expected that Vale would be surprised so he didn't mind it at all.

"Just study well and you'll learn all of it. Follow me, I'll be showing you my collection. You have to ready your heart as you might find something that will blow your mind."