

D. Extraction 431

Chapter 431 Group Hunt (3)

Maya, Philip, and Crystal prepared to face off against two cunning Imps.

They stood on the stage waiting for the signal from an event official who held the key to release the caged Imps.

"Remember to follow the plan and adjust according to the Imps' movements and illusions..." Philip muttered.

"Yes... Maya, don't get too excited and reveal your secret spells." Crystal whispered as she knew that the Featherstar Family had a secret spell that was exclusive to their family.

If she used that Spell, the battle may end quickly, but in turn, her teammates wouldn't have to do anything at all. Furthermore, Maya could suffer backlash in the Spell as she was still too young to use a high-grade Tier 2 Dark Spell.

"Of course! We'll stick to the plan." Maya replied with a chuckle.

Soon, the Monster Hunt officer I announced the start of the hunt!

Maya, her eyes glowing with excitement, stepped forward to start the battle.

She swiftly activated her Spell as shadows coalesced around her hands, forming a swirling vortex of dark energy.

With a sweeping motion, she released the Dark Nova, a devastating blast that engulfed the Imps in an abyss of shadows.

This quick Spell disrupted the Imps from casting mid-grade Illusions since they had to hastily cast a Spell to protect themselves...

Unfortunately, Maya's Dark Noval Spell wasn't that great against Imps who were essentially living in the darkness. Nevertheless, Maya wasn't worried as she maintained her casting her Spell.

Philip, his gaze intense and unwavering, held out his hand, his voice dripping with a sinister tone.

"Blood Curse!" At the same time, crimson energy gathered around his fingertips. Then, he unleashed the Curse Spell, causing the Imps to writhe in agony as their life essence slowly drained away, weakening them with each passing moment.

The illusions they released and the disguise they planned to do were quickly halted...

Crystal, her presence cloaked in shadows, moved with eerie grace.

"Tsk... That Blood Curse almost hit me..." She softly muttered. She then activated her Darkness Coil, as dark tendrils materialized, wrapping around the Imps, restricting their movements and sapping their strength.

As they thought that it would end like this, the Imps suddenly turned red as they burst with a powerful aura!

The Imps of the previous battle didn't go like this!

"They're going berserk! Change of plans! Fight them with our next combination!" Maya shouted.

Philip and Crystal also had no time to question why the Imps started bursting with power. They could only adapt and continue on with the hunt!

The battle raged on as the Imps fought desperately to counter the students' relentless assault.

Maya conjured Spirit Hand, creating spectral appendages that lashed out at the Imps, striking with precision and force.

The Imps' attempts to retaliate were also met with her Darkness Manipulation, as she twisted their illusory attacks into harmless shadows. It was a complicated use of Darkness Manipulation that disrupts visible illusions.

Philip, his gaze unwavering, unleashed Severe Ailment upon the Imps, infecting them with a debilitating curse. Their movements slowed, and their strength waned.

Philip then utilized Light Absorption after he noticed that Maya's Darkness Manipulation started getting overwhelmed by the Illusion Shift Spell of the Imps...

'Aren't they a bit too strong? They weren't like this with the first team...' Philip couldn't help but complain in his head.

Crystal, her form melting into the shadows, launched a surprise attack with Shadow Step, darting between the Imps with lightning speed.

Boom!

She struck them with the power of Gloom Force, a concentrated burst of dark energy that left the Imps reeling, their defenses shattered.

As the battle continued, the students realized that the Imps weakened a lot and they were no longer bursting with energy.

Each spell cast, each move executed, demonstrated their mastery over the forbidden powers they wielded.

The Imps, realizing the gravity of their predicament, desperately used deceptive tricks and illusory tactics to survive...

Unfortunately, Maya, Philip, and Crystal saw through their charades. Their current Darkness Manipulation and Light Absorption Spells allowed them to have the ability to pierce through the veil of deception.

Maya's Dark Nova severely injured one of the Imps... Philip's Blood Curse drained the life force of the other Imp, leaving it weak and feeble. Crystal's Darkness Coil had then constricted both Imps, leaving them helpless against the relentless onslaught.

Finally, after a few more seconds, the Imps were defeated.

They lay on the ground, lifeless.

Maya, Philip, and Crystal stood silently as they exchanged glances...

As they caught their breath, they couldn't help but comment about the battle just now...

"They're a bit stronger than we thought..." Philip muttered.

"I think they were drugged... That berserk isn't normal for Imps unless they consumed some medicine beforehand..." Maya softly said, agreeing to Philip's statement.

"That's what I thought... It's not a coincidence. We'll probably know more if we watch the next battles. I don't feel right about this." Crystal added. She felt bitter that they didn't kill the Imps faster than they initially planned.

The Imps' skin got tougher, their vitality increased, and their illusions seemed like an Intermediate Rank already.

Unfortunately, they couldn't really complain about the behavior of the Imps they faced to the officials. They couldn't prove anything either, so the officers could just say that they had triggered something on the Imps that made them go berserk.

Instead, it's better to watch the other battles first.

As Vale observed the Imps crumbling before the might of his friends' dark spells, a sense of unease settled within him.

His gaze shifted to the indifferent faces of the judges and officials. Their lack of reaction caught his attention, raising suspicions in his mind.

"Something's wrong..." Vale thought silently, his brows furrowing. "Those Imps were clearly stronger than the ones we faced before. Tsk... Could it be that we're being targeted once again?"

Vale's mind raced with thoughts, his instincts telling him that there was more to this battle than met the eye. He couldn't shake the feeling that their prestigious Vermont Academy was being deliberately undermined, perhaps by rivals aiming to put them at the bottom of the rankings.

As he thought of words to comfort his friends, he suddenly heard the Headmaster's words.

"Vale..." The Headmaster's voice resonated.

"You have to be careful in the upcoming duel tournament. Your well-being is of utmost importance. If the situation calls for it, it's better to concede and prioritize your condition for the Tower Ascension."

Chapter 432 Tracing Mark

"Hmm?"

The Headmaster's words struck Vale with a mixture of concern and confusion.

While he understood the importance of the Tower Ascension, Vale knew well that their Academy would gain more attraction to the audience if they won the duel.

After all, the purpose of this Competition wasn't just to have 'friendly' interaction with the other Academies or to gain various Mystical Items but also to attract people to enroll in their Academies.

The duel tournament, or the Clash of Champions, was undoubtedly the best place to show off.

Vale realized that his own personal strength and readiness for the Tower Ascension were crucial, even if it meant making difficult decisions in the tournament.

"Headmaster Jean, may I know the reason why?" Vale asked, using his telepathy.

Headmaster Jean was a bit taken aback since, with the distance they have, Vale shouldn't be capable of replying since he should be out of range!

He realized that Vale's Magic Zone was bigger than he expected!

"The other factions could use their influence to change the result of the competitions, but not in the Tower Ascension..." Jean replied after some thought.

"Ugh... That's messed up..." Vale couldn't help but shake his head after hearing this. The Headmaster didn't have to say more as he understood what was going on.

"I understand, Headmaster. I'll be careful." Vale could only reply as he saw Maya's group leaving the resting area of the participants.

They weren't planning to watch the rest of the event in the resting area, and they seem to be headed to the audience stand where Vale and Luna are watching.

"Very well... If you need something for the Tower Ascension, tell your Senior Gabbi about it..." Headmaster Jean said as they ended the telepathy.

Vale sighed as he realized that this Competition wouldn't really be fair even though they had already become closer to other factions.

He then waited for his friends to arrive at their stand and said some comforting words to lighten their mood.

"It's fine... I think that something's wrong with this contest. We're unlucky." Maya replied to Vale. Philip and Crystal were in the same mood.

They easily accepted their defeat, but anyway, they didn't believe that the people controlling the results behind the scenes could do it in all competitions in every batch.

Similar to the Dark Arts Academy's strategy, those who had participated in the group hunt would not enter the duel tournament.

This way, they ensured that their student would not reveal their set of Spells to everyone and have it countered the next day.

It didn't take long before the Group Monster Hunt Competition ended with the win of the Holy Arts Academy, followed by the Knights Academy and the Beast Arts Academy.

Furthermore, five groups had actually encountered Imps capable of using berserk!

The officials were, of course, questioned because of this. However, they answered this question by telling people that Imps would normally act like this in certain circumstances depending on how they were attacked...

"Whatever... Let's just destroy them in the duel tournament. Vale, no mercy... Alright?" Crystal suddenly said as she held Vale's arm. She looked at Vale seriously as if she wanted him to kill his opponents.

Vale smiled at this and nodded confidently. "I'll win... Even if the judges will not be fair."

Maya wanted to comment, but after opening her mouth, she realized that she wished Vale to win no matter what, so she closed her lips and nodded...

Clare and Teresa were entrusted with the crucial task of safeguarding the ordinary citizens of the kingdom from the growing presence of Arcanists within the city.

They understood the potential risks that accompanied the increase of Arcanists. It was often correlated with a rise in criminal activities.

Their duty was to protect the vulnerable people who could not wield Arcane Energy. It may sound simple, but it could be very exhausting.

During their patrols over the past two days, Clare and Teresa encountered numerous instances of illicit activities.

They came across cursed objects being sold, capable of causing harm to those who lacked Arcane Energy.

They also discovered rare ingredients being peddled, stored improperly, and posing a potential threat as they could turn into poisonous substances.

There were even some mutated pets being sold, and they recognized them as failed experiments of rogue Alchemists. Those beings are dangerous and must be burned to ashes...

There were also prohibited items that were being sold, like treasure maps leading to a Master Alchemist's Laboratory or Spell Books... They were just things used to scam those Practitioners who were just starting in their journey.

Dealing with such matters had become a routine part of their duties. However, they were primarily assigned to ensure the safety of the audience stands during events held at the Coliseum and other gathering places...

As the latest event concluded, Teresa's attention was drawn to Vale, who was leaving with his friends.

"Hmm? He was marked by a Divine Sense..." Teresa murmured, her voice laced with curiosity.

Clare heard this and shifted her focus. She then followed Teresa's gaze until she spotted Vale, the individual they suspected of being Clovis.

"Ahh... He's indeed marked. How come he can't remove it?" Clare questioned aloud, her mind racing with possible reason.

Teresa pondered the question for a moment before offering her insight. "Perhaps he has chosen not to remove it..." She suggested, recalling how Clovis had also refrained from removing the Divine Sense mark until he was no longer being watched.

Clare nodded... "Then we will know for certain if he is truly Clovis once he decides to remove it. Should we follow him from now on?"

Teresa's brows furrowed as she considered the implications.

"I'm not so sure... Jean might notice it later and remove it. That's precisely why I didn't use the Divine Sense mark on him when we first met him and only the Inspection Ability. Jean would fail to

detect the Inspection of the Divine Sense but not the Tracing Mark it could leave behind." She explained, her voice tinged with caution.

"However, who put that mark on him?" Clare suddenly asked.

Chapter 433 Ominous

Headmaster Jean, the esteemed Headmaster of the Vermont Academy, held a significant role in this year's competition.

His presence at the Roaring Summit extended beyond being a mere chaperone for the students participating in the Twelve Academies Competition. He had a deeper purpose - to ensure Vale's safety even after he conquered the Ascension Tower, or at least that was his fervent hope.

Having consulted with the Dark Seers within their Faction, Jean had received confirmation that their Academy would achieve something remarkable in this highly anticipated competition.

He firmly believed that Vale possessed the potential to ascend to the highest floor of the Tower and claim the coveted item waiting there. He couldn't think of anything else since there wasn't anything special in this place aside from the Tower.

Anyway, Jean understood that once Vale cleared the Tower, he could not protect the special item he would receive.

If necessary, Jean was prepared to relieve Vale of the burden and personally safeguard it. Yes, he was planning to protect it and give up Vale's shadow in exchange.

Yet, amidst the anticipation, Jean couldn't ignore the lingering tensions that existed between their Dark Arts Faction and other factions, particularly the Holy Arts, Elemental Arts, and Knights Factions.

While their connections had improved with the other factions, he knew that those rival factions still harbored aspirations that could potentially threaten their standing.

"At least it wasn't as dire as the competitions in previous years..." Jean thought to himself, recalling past instances when their faction faced more severe challenges from the other Arcane Factions.

He took solace in the relative calmness of the current situation, though he remained vigilant.

During the second night, as his students slumbered, Jean continued his patrol, ensuring their safety and guarding against any potential ambushes from jealous factions.

It was during this watchful endeavor that his attention was drawn to Vale, who somehow bore a mark from a high-level Tracing Spell.

"Mhmm? What's going on here? Vale was marked... And I'm sure this is a spell of considerable power from the Holy Arts Faction..." Jean murmured, slightly taken aback by the revelation.

"It doesn't appear dangerous, but I can't believe they have already set their sights on him."

Jean sighed in frustration.

With a determined resolve, Jean pulled a piece of Vale's shadow from his palm and gently blew on it.

In that moment, the mark on Vale's body dissipated, removed by the Headmaster's intervention.

He decided not to think too much of this as he could tell that the Holy Arts Faction wouldn't dare to really attack him and that Tracing Mark was the only thing they could do.

As he continued on his patrol, a peculiar sensation enveloped Jean, causing him to perceive a subtle disturbance within the summit.

It felt as though a clandestine ritual was taking place, yet he struggled to pinpoint its exact origin.

"I don't have a good feeling about this..." Headmaster Jean muttered, his instincts warning him of potential danger in the upcoming days in the Roaring Summit.

It wasn't just Jean who had sensed something off. All high-level Arcanists were able to perceive that a 'storm' that would disturb their peace was coming... Whether it was from nature or man-made, they weren't sure.

On the third day of the Twelve Academies Competition, the highly anticipated Clash of Champions, a duel tournament exclusively for fourth-year students, was finally set to commence.

This marked a significant departure from previous competitions, which had only allowed sixth-year students to participate. The inclusion of fourth-year students in this event added an extra layer of excitement and anticipation.

The tournament followed a relatively simple yet somewhat unfair structure that hinged on luck.

It all began with the assignment of numbers to the twelve participating students. Each student would randomly draw a number, which would dictate their matchup in the duels. This random pairing system meant that the matchups were largely unpredictable and could potentially pit strong competitors against each other in the early stages.

After the initial pairings were determined, the students would engage in their duels, with only six emerging victorious.

These six winners would then advance to the next round, where they would once again be randomly paired against each other. This additional element of chance ensured that the matchups remained unpredictable throughout the tournament.

Eventually, the final three winners would emerge from these subsequent duels. These top three students would then engage in a battle royale, fighting against each other to determine the first, second, and third-place rankings in the competition.

At the very least, this thrilling climax to find out the rankings added an extra layer of intensity and excitement to the Clash of Champions, as the remaining contenders would fight fiercely for the coveted top positions.

In short, the participants would only need to win a couple of times to get to the top three.

"Hehehe... Vale, I think they would pair you to fight Ceres... Holy Arts versus Dark Arts... They probably think you would be easily defeated." Philip muttered.

"I don't think they can influence the matchup that heavily..." Luna muttered.

"Heh... Don't underestimate them... I'm sure that this rule was implemented for her sake. The previous duel tournaments weren't like this." Maya interjected.

"Ahem... I'm sure Vale would be happy if they really matched him up with Ceres... Is that right, Vale?" Crystal added.

Vale simply smiled at their reaction as he realized that his friends had enormous trust in him.

"Matching up against Holy Arts might be tricky, but I don't think I would lose unless..." Vale didn't finish his words as his eyes focused on the stage they were using...

Something feels odd about it.

Furthermore, he also felt something off around the city after they went out to have breakfast.

Well, the city was still lively, and there were still plenty of peddlers. However, Vale could feel a gloomy atmosphere starting to cover the Roaring Summit.

'Am I overthinking this?' Vale thought as an ominous sensation crept over him...

Chapter 434 Duel

As the Clash of Champions began, the participants were called to prepare themselves for the assigning of their numbers.

The tension in the air could be felt as everyone eagerly awaited the announcement of their opponents. Soon enough, the matchups were determined through a random selection process.

Vermont, Academy of Dark Arts versus Lovell, Academy of Beast Arts.

Lakrine, Academy of Summoning Arts versus Farrel, Academy of Psychic Arts.

Rakmiths, Academy of Elemental Arts versus Mortimer, Academy of Transformation Arts.

Kildare, Academy of Knights versus Langhorne, Academy of Combat Arts.

Adaereth, Academy of Rune Arts versus Aufidius, Academy of Alchemy Arts.

Dorelts, Academy Mystic Arts versus Magrath, Academy of Holy Arts.

The arrangement appeared acceptable, but Vale couldn't help but think that it was planned after seeing the Princess' reaction, including the smug faces of the panel of experts.

Vale shook his head at this as he focused on the announcements made by the organizers.

Since there was only one stage, the battle had to be done one at a time.

The first battle on the stage was set to be between Vale of the Vermont Academy of Dark Arts and Cain of the Lovell Academy of Beast Arts.

"So we will start with an exciting battle..." Odessa, the Royal Mage, muttered as she heard the first battle would be participated by a student that garnered her curiosity.

It was the same for the panel of experts watching the event. They all looked at Vale either with curiosity or with animosity.

Apparently, when Vale completed his performance in the Spectacles of Talent, he had already caught these people's attention.

Because of that, the experts, including Odessa, went to the organizers to get a copy of the Recording Crystal to rewatch Vale's performance.

They had to watch it a few more times to understand the phenomena that Vale had created.

In the end, all of them felt something off about the Aurora that he had shown off, but none of them could find real problems with it.

They could only tell that the Aurora doesn't seem to be a harmless ability...

Their investigation didn't end there. They also used their influence to get Steven's recording crystal! This made them aware of Vale's ability inside the Labyrinth... They had all seen Vale's performance, and even Odessa was already thinking of recruiting Vale in her Mage Tower.

After all, she doesn't discriminate against people. It doesn't matter what Arcane Path you choose; she'll gladly accept you if you have enough talent.

'He defeated that Evil Creature so easily... It must be a Forbidden Art, but since it's only a recording, we couldn't tell what forbidden art it was.'

'Now that you're going to fight a genius Beastmaster, I'm sure you'd be forced to use that same technique... If that were a Forbidden Art, then this would be the last competition for your Academy.'

'Show us that technique once again, Vale... My Appraisal Eye would always be here.'

These were the thoughts of the panel of experts watching the first duel commence.

Vale could feel their intense gaze and was momentarily confused about their unusual behavior.

Anyway, he may not be aware of why they were looking at him like that, but he had a guess about it.

"Ohh... Is that the guys who showed us the Aurora?"

"Indeed... His team also broke the record of the Labyrinth completion. Although they're only fourth-year students, they're all promising."

The audience buzzed with anticipation, expecting Vale to emerge victorious due to his previous performance.

However, as the battle commenced, an unexpected turn of events occurred.

'I knew it... There really is something off with this stage...' Vale silently thought after stepping on it.

A subtle formation art was activated, and he wasn't sure what it did to him... However, he suddenly felt that his Spell Lights were disturbed.

Furthermore, he wasn't sure if it was really part of the competition or just aimed at him.

"Stand within the inner circle of the stage." The referee of the match said as he waited for Vale and Cain to be in position.

Vale wanted to ask the referee about the formation art, but Cain suddenly sent him a message through telepathy...

'Just surrender... You're not my real target, and you might just die since I can't properly control my power. Do it while I'm being kind.' Cain said with a calm tone but arrogant behavior.

Vale was a bit speechless as he didn't know what to say...

He just continued approaching the referee, and as soon as he got inside the inner circle, the referee immediately announced the start of the duel.

He didn't bother to repeat the rules at all, leaving Vale no chance to ask about the Formation Art...

'Mhmm?'

As Vale wanted to cast his Ghost Hands and Dusk Imprisonment at the same time, he realized that his Dark Spell Lights became blurry...

They were still there, but they seem to have been temporarily blocked!

'Is this the Formation Art's ability? What the... They're blatantly cheating already?' Vale thought as he looked at Cain...

'It seems that he didn't know about the Formation Art affecting me...' He thought.

This sudden handicap was a surprise for Vale, but he wasn't too worried about it. Aside from his incredible Attributes, he also noticed that his other Spell Lights worked perfectly well.

'Very well... Let's win this for now and ask the Headmaster what to do after this.' Vale thought of a plan as he looked at his opponent.

In the meantime, Cain, with his mastery of Beast Arts, summoned the strengths of various beasts to enhance himself.

As a genius fourth-year student of Lovell Academy, he was able to draw upon the power of four beasts! Normally, only in 7th year or higher could do something like this.

Vale could even see the phantom image of four beasts that Cain used to strengthen himself... A huge dog, a fierce falcon, an aggressive crocodile, and an exotic swordfish!

This was the first time Vale had seen anything like this, so he couldn't help but wait for Cain to finish his ritual...

Chapter 435 Winner

Cain had obviously noticed Vale's reaction to his preparation... To be honest, he was prepared to cancel his Spell the moment Vale made his move.

However, contrary to his expectations, Vale allowed him to finish with his Enchantments, and he even seemed amused by the Beasts he summoned!

'Tsk... He's underestimating me...' Cain silently thought.

Well, he was right...

During Vale's third year in the Academy, he had a subject called Twelve Arcane Paths that allowed them to study the other paths to their introductory level.

Vale could somehow recall that Beast Arts could summon the powers of mythical beasts in another realm... This was why he was a bit curious and wary about his opponent.

After all, he had no idea which Mythical Beasts could Cain summon. He may have to adjust his abilities depending on which Mythical Beast it was.

'T-that was it?' Vale sighed as he seemed to have forgotten that fourth-year students could not draw the power of Mythical Beast.

Because of that, Vale wasn't worried, even if he couldn't use his Dark Spells.

'Anyway, this will still be a good learning experience since Beastmaster at Sherman's level might also appear someday.' Vale thought as he watched Cain accumulating his strength.

'It's also a good time to analyze the Formation Art suppressing my Dark Spells...' Vale mused.

Whoosh~

As Cain finished consolidating the strength of the four beasts, Vale decided to let him take the initiative.

He wanted to assess Cain's tactics and gauge the full extent of his abilities. With a calm and focused demeanor, Vale braced himself for the incoming assault.

"Come..." Vale muttered, and with Cain's enhanced hearing, he didn't have trouble hearing Vale's provocation.

Cain, fueled by the strengths of the dog, falcon, crocodile, and swordfish, lunged forward with incredible speed.

"Look at my fist!"

His movements were a blend of grace and ferocity as he unleashed a flurry of strikes, each one infused with the essence of the respective beasts.

Pah! Pah! Pah!

His attacks were swift and precise, aiming to exploit any opening in Vale's defense.

Vale, relying on his honed physical capabilities, evaded Cain's onslaught with deft footwork and agile maneuvers.

Of course, it was the footwork of the Shadowblade Dance...

Furthermore, with his current Agility Points, it made him easily anticipate and counter Cain's attacks. Despite not being able to unleash his Dark Spells, Vale remained a formidable opponent.

At this moment, the people who had placed the Formation Arts started sweating after seeing Vale's current movement. They could certainly tell that Vale already knew that he couldn't use his Dark Spells, but he wasn't panicking at all!

As the battle continued, Vale seized the opportunity to study Cain's technique and adapt his strategy.

He analyzed the patterns in Cain's movements, searching for weaknesses to exploit.

'So he could summon four beasts to strengthen himself, but he can't release their unique powers at the same time...' Vale silently thought after seeing how Cain would use the Falcon's Claw Strike, but he couldn't use the Dog's Charm Eyes at the same time.

It would probably be a perfect combination if he could use those two at the same time... It would be even more deadly if he could actually release four unique Abilities simultaneously!

With each dodge and parry, Vale learned more about his opponent's style and the limitations of his beast-enhanced abilities.

As Vale continued to suppress his strength and be at Cain's level, he realized that Cain's strength lay in his speed in switching the unique abilities and his physical agility.

'I guess that was it...' Vale thought as he felt satisfied with everything he had learned about the Beast Arts.

Learning this in duel had given him a deeper impression than the ones he learned in class.

Vale then decided to use his true Agility and Strength against Cain.

He waited for the perfect moment, watching for a slight opening in Cain's defenses. Then, with a burst of explosive power, Vale launched a counterattack.

With lightning-fast strike and precise movement, Vale's physical prowess was on full display.

A single blow landed with precision, delivering a powerful impact that tested Cain's defenses. The clash of their powers created a symphony of sound reverberating throughout the arena.

Boom!

It was such a powerful strike that Cain was almost dazed from a single strike!

However, the swordfish's phantom image appeared behind Cain, and it seemed to have brought him alive and regained his strength!

'Oh... So it had that ability...' Vale thought as he continued attacking. He wanted to see how much healing prowess this swordfish could provide to Cain.

Cain, though formidable with his swordfish's help, struggled to keep up with Vale's relentless onslaught. He tried to match Vale's speed and power by drawing more mystical energy from his crocodile but found himself still at a disadvantage.

'How is he so strong?! He's not even using any of his Dark Spells! How is this?!' Cain couldn't help but find this astonishing. The strength of the beasts he had summoned could only take him so far against Vale's unwavering attacks and refined physical abilities.

'Not good...'

Vale seemed to think that he didn't have to use his Dark Spells... or perhaps he was too dumb to realize what Dark Spell Vale was using against him.

"Aaahh!"

With one last battle cry, Cain summoned all his strength to trade blows with Vale!

However, Vale no longer wants to prolong this fight. With a final, mighty blow, he landed a decisive strike that sent Cain sprawling to the ground.

Thud!

The crowd erupted into applause, acknowledging Vale's prowess... Many of them expected him to win, but not in this manner where he didn't use any of his Dark Arts!

While Cain had put up a valiant fight, it was Vale's unfathomable physical prowess and strategic adaptability that secured his victory... at the very least, this was what the audience had seen.

As the announcement of the winner was made and the cheers subsided, Vale extended a hand to help Cain up... or that was what everyone thought.

Chapter 436 Extracted

'I thought he had some sort of special ability... He even told me to surrender.' Vale silently mocked his opponent. He couldn't help but look at Cain disappointedly.

'Haa~'

It seemed that his expectations were a bit too high.

Cain, who was still feeling the pain caused by that last punch, saw Vale offering his hand. As a young man from a prestigious noble family, he felt that it would be fine to accept Vale's sportsmanship. Furthermore, many people are watching him, and dismissing Vale's hand wouldn't look good.

Even if he lost the match, he wanted to look better in front of many people as it would at least save his dignity.

However, as soon as Cain held Vale's hand, the latter decided to use his selected Extraction System...

It wasn't his Auto Extraction where he gets energy points, attributes, or spell lights. As soon as Vale triggered the Spell, he immediately browsed through his Spell Lights!

Well, he still couldn't understand the Spell Models that Cain had since they were different from Dark Spell Models. Nevertheless, he could see how complicated they were, so he simply needed to select the most complicated Spell Model to extract.

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40]

[Extraction Successful. Strength +0.85]

[Extraction Successful. Agility +0.45]

[Extraction Successful. Complete Spell Light]

[Extraction Successful. Complete Wild Whisper Spell Model?]

[Extraction Successful. Memory Fragment]

Vale was quite happy with the Wild Whisper Spell, which allowed him to communicate with beasts and animals. The higher the mastery, the higher the level of understanding he would have with them...

However, he was shocked by the last extraction.

"There's a memory fragment? Is it a bonus?" Vale mused as he hadn't tried extracting the young man's memory.

After all, he had only previously extracted memory fragments from the spirits of the dead, and he had no idea how to extract them purposely.

On the other hand, Cain only felt dizzy and slight pain in his chest after completing his Extraction since Vale had been really careful in doing this. His proficiency in this was all thanks to the seventh squad of the Evanescent Vessels.

Cain's knee had then weakened as he almost fumbled to the ground.

However, thanks to Vale's attentiveness, he was able to hold Cain and not let him fall to the ground. It was at this time that the medical practitioners arrived.

It just seemed as if Cain was still feeling the pain from Vale's last attack, so no one suspected that he attacked him once again with his system.

"We will take it from here."

Vale nodded at the physicians as he was also quite busy absorbing Cain's memories.

Vale seemed pretty dazed while walking to the resting area, but people just thought he was contemplating the battle he had just won...

None of them could think that he was already learning about Cain's past...

'It's not as useful as I thought...' Vale thought to himself after a couple of minutes.

The memory fragment didn't contain a very important technique or skill he could benefit from, but it made him aware that Cain knew about the Immortal Shards.

That's right. The memory had given him a clue where he could find more of these Immortal Shards or Formation Nodes, as the Practitioners would like to call them.

'Those Formation Nodes are indeed so expensive... No wonder they're really mad after I turned them all into dust.' Vale silently thought as he recalled his first encounter with the Immortal Shards.

He then shifted his attention to the stage and saw that the students from the Summoning Arts Academy and the Psychic Arts Academy were about to fight...

Avery, representing the Lakrine Academy of Summoning Arts, stood tall with confidence radiating from his body.

Across from him stood Maurice with a staff in his hand, his eyes gleaming with determination. He was also a skilled practitioner from the Farrel Academy of Psychic Arts.

One of them might be Vale's opponent later, so he certainly had to watch this battle.

"Come!" Avery shouted.

Using his grimoire, he summoned a towering Silver-Haired Ape that made the audience gasp.

The massive creature stood by his side, exuding strength and agility. Furthermore, Avery's arsenal also included a variety of spells that could enhance his summon's abilities and boost their combined speed. This might be a tough battle for the Mind Controller.

"Why don't you try attacking me?" Maurice, on the other hand, was well-versed in the intricate arts of the mind.

"Fine!" Avery wasted no time as he commanded the Silver-Haired Ape to fight.

The majestic creature pounded the stage, its silver fur glistening under the spotlight. It looked at Maurice with hostility before charging at him.

Avery also cast spells to strengthen his summon and increase their speed, turning them into a formidable force.

Maurice, relying on his mind spells, attempted to disrupt Avery's strategy with a Misdirection Spell and Confusion Spell.

The Spell obscured the vision of both combatants. It wasn't affecting the surroundings and was targeted to their minds. The blurriness in the surroundings was only in Avery and the Ape's perspective.

However, Avery's connection with his summon made them avoid panicking in the situation as they carefully located Maurice...

"Graaahh!" The Silver-Haired made a deafening roar that made Maurice almost stumble.

Avery and his Silver-Haired Ape moved in perfect harmony. The moment the Ape roared, Avery's Magic Zone sensitivity increased as he located Maurice's location!

The Misdirection and Confusion Spell was now useless!

Maurice had no choice but to adjust his battle style as he wielded his staff to fight while casting Mind Spells...

Unfortunately, Avery and his Ape showcased their agility and power, aiming to overwhelm Maurice with a relentless onslaught.

Maurice couldn't find the right timing to cast his Mind Spells because of their relentless assault!

It was such a bad match for a Mind Controller like him!

The battle raged on, with each combatant displaying their skills and tactics. Avery's summon unleashed devastating blows, while Maurice utilized his Psychic Arts to deflect and evade, relying on his misdirection spells to confuse and disorient his opponent.

Despite Maurice's best efforts, Avery's summon proved to be relentless. The last body slam of the Silver-Haired Ape incapacitated Maurice, leaving him unable to continue the fight.

Chapter 437 Winners

The crowd erupted into applause as Avery emerged victorious. His strategic use of enhancement spells, combined with the strength and speed of his summon, proved to be too much for a Mind Controller.

Nevertheless, Avery didn't seem to consider shaking Maurice's hand as he turned his back and left the stage as soon as the announcement was made. No one commented on this as they realized that Maurice was also exhausted.

He may have won, but the time limit of the Silver-Haired Ape was definitely reaching its end. After all, they could see how the Silver-Haired Ape started appearing illusory like a ghost... It was one of the signs that the summoned creatures were about to return to the Grimoire.

The audience and the panel of experts had all noticed this, so for sure, even the participating students had realized this as well.

'So I can simply drag the battle for long, and the summon can automatically disappear in 5 minutes or so?' Vale mused as he was looking at the Grimoire held by Avery.

It seemed a nice strategy, but Vale probably didn't have to do that much just to defeat this person.

The battle then continued with other academies.

The next duel was from the students of Rakmiths, Academy of Elemental Arts, and Mortimer, Academy of Transformation Arts.

In a display of skill and mastery, Susan, a talented student from the Elemental Arts Academy, emerged victorious. Her control over the elements proved to be a formidable force against Mortimer's transformations.

Next, the clash between Kildare, Academy of Knights, and Langhorne, Academy of Combat Arts, took center stage. The battle was intense, with both sides showcasing their prowess in combat.

It was a battle between an Arcane Knight and an Aura Master. The battle lasted more than 15 minutes, and both got really tired that it was difficult to tell who would win.

However, it was Geraldine, a fiery red-haired beauty from Kildare Academy, who ultimately emerged as the victor. Her skill with a sword and unwavering determination proved to be the deciding factor.

As the excitement continued to build, it was time for the battle between Adaereth, Academy of Rune Arts, and Aufidius, Academy of Alchemy Arts.

Vale's interest was piqued as he watched Iris from the Rune Arts Academy and Cathrine from the Alchemy Arts Academy prepare for their duel.

'I know that Runecasters also use Runic Weapons in their battles... However, I'm not sure about the Alchemy Arts... Are they going to Alchemical Weapons too?' Vale mused.

In their study of the Twelve Arcane Paths, they've only tackled the Achievements of the Alchemy Factions in the field of medicine and craft. However, they didn't discuss any of their battling achievement.

Iris soon brought out her Runic Weapon in the form of a sword... However, she flipped it with her hand, and it suddenly turned into a whip!

This runic weapon glowed with ancient symbols, pulsating with raw energy.

Across from her, Cathrine can be seen only wearing a cloak on her body. She doesn't have visible weapons at the very least.

As the battle commenced, Iris swiftly moved across the battlefield, her whip slashing through the air with deadly accuracy.

She was trying to use her distance to attack Cathrine!

Pah! Pah!

Each strike sent waves of runic energy surging toward Cathrine, who deftly evaded the attacks with agile movements...

"That's useless!" Cathrine shouted as she conjured flames using her unique alchemical mixtures.

Though she lacked the ability to create flames like the Elementalists of the Elemental Arts Faction, her mastery of combustion potions and other alchemical materials allowed her to control and manipulate fire as a formidable weapon.

The clash between the Runic Weapon and Cathrine's controlled flames created a mesmerizing display of light and heat.

Cathrine, utilizing her alchemical expertise, controlled the powerful flames as they danced and swirled around her.

'So this is an Alchemist... They use fire to fight with the help of their potions. Interesting.' Vale mused as he saw Cathrine unleash waves of fire, attempting to engulf Iris in a torrent of heat.

Iris, relying on her agility and the protective enchantments on her Runic Weapon, skillfully dodged and parried each fiery assault.

She soon countered Cathrine's flames with calculated strikes of her whip, aiming to disrupt her opponent's focus and control over the fire. It didn't take her that long to realize that Cathrine required more focus to control those raging flames.

Cathrine, in turn, utilized her alchemical arsenal to create explosive bursts of flame, attempting to overwhelm Iris with sheer intensity. Well, it doesn't matter if she couldn't control the fire explosions as long as she wasn't getting too affected.

As the battle intensified, Iris found herself on the brink of defeat.

Cathrine's flames grew more fierce and unpredictable, threatening to consume her.

However, Iris, driven by determination and the will to protect her academy's honor, mustered her remaining strength.

Vale's eyes widened at the final move she made.

Iris turned her whip back into a sword as she channeled the ancient powers of the runes into a powerful spell.

The runic symbols on her sword glowed brighter than ever, releasing a surge of energy that disrupted Cathrine's control over the flames.

Vale realized that it had the same essence as his Spell Dispersion, but it was more complicated than what Master Heinz had created for the Malefic Branch!

"What kind of Rune Arts is this?" Vale couldn't help but feel curious.

Then, Iris threw the sword beside Cathrine as it exploded with the disruptive energy!

Crash!

Iris' runic weapon was destroyed in the process, but it did its job!

Iris managed to disperse the power of the flame! Furthermore, the disruption left Cathrine vulnerable and unconscious due to backlash!

Just like that, Iris won the battle. However, she was also too exhausted and even looked saddened at the fact that her runic weapon was sacrificed for this first victory.

As Vale saw the battle ended, he soon heard the Headmaster's voice inside his head.

"Vale... Did you have problems in your duel a while ago?"

Vale didn't hesitate and answered immediately.

"Yes, Headmaster. There was Formation Art that stopped me from using Dark Arts."

Chapter 438 Petrified

"As expected... They probably used an Ancient Formation Technique to create that. I can't find any traces of it." Headmaster Jean answered with a sigh.

"Can we do something about it? I don't think I have to tell you this, but that's cheating, Headmaster." Vale added.

"Unfortunately, Professor Evans isn't here, so we can't find any evidence about this Formation Art. The fifth-year students used their Dark Spells in the same stage yesterday, so we can tell that they can freely activate and reactivate this Formation Arts. It will be difficult to prove unless we find the nodes they used."

"Oh... You're not a Formation Art Expert, Headmaster? That's interesting..." Vale replied as he found this information quite valuable. "Ahem, if that's the case, what are we going to do about it?" He continued...

"I'm afraid that they might try to cause trouble and prohibit you from participating in the Tower Ascension if you make a scene. They wanted the Third Princess to reach the highest floor, and you've shown too much threat to her plan." Headmaster Jean gravely said.

"What? They were thinking of that?!" Vale exclaimed in shock.

"That's what my Shadow Soldiers heard... However, Odessa doesn't seem to be part of their plan, so I'm still thinking of consulting this matter with her." Jean said...

Vale raised his brows after hearing this as he couldn't help but glance at the Royal Mage.

"Be careful, Headmaster... She might be part of this as well."

"I know... Just try finding the nodes on the stage. I can't investigate it since there were too many people watching."

Vale could only nod at this, but it might be part of their plan to try and prohibit him from participating in the Tower Ascension.

After all, if he finds the Formation Nodes and they try removing them, he might be accused of destroying the Barrier Formation Art that protects the audience from stray Spells of the contestants.

If they could use the Formation Arts so stealthily, they should be capable of disguising these Formation Arts as well.

Vale sighed as he realized that his duels had suddenly become complicated.

'If they really wanted to accuse me of something to get disqualified, then this would be difficult... Tsk...'

Vale couldn't help but look at the Third Princess with a cold gaze.

"Mhmm?" Ceres noticed a piercing gaze cast on her, so she quickly shifted her attention to the source... She noticed the elite student of the Vermont Academy staring at her, and she couldn't help but feel disrespected.

As the Third Princess of the country, she certainly didn't like being stared at like that.

However, she was about to fight in the duel, so she had to focus...

Her eyes fixed on her opponent, Anya Hao, from the rival Dorelts Academy of Mystic Arts.

She was actually quite surprised that her opponent was not Serena, who won third place in the Spectacles of Talent. Serena left a deep impression on her, and indeed, even the others were surprised by Anya's participation.

Nevertheless, they all know not to underestimate someone from the Mystic Arts Academy.

The air was filled with excitement as the battle was about to commence.

"You may now begin!" The referee shouted to signal the start of the duel.

Taking a deep breath, Ceres summoned the power of the Radiance Spell, casting a brilliant beam of light towards Anya.

She didn't waste her time!

The intense energy surged forward, seeking to blind and overwhelm Anya.

However, the latter swiftly countered with a huge Mystic Hand! This illusory hand deflected the radiant attack.

Ceres was undeterred by her failure to end the battle quickly as she swiftly followed up with the Magic Immunity Spell, enveloping herself in a shimmering barrier that rendered her impervious to Anya's Mystic Spells.

Aside from the Exorcism Spell and Healing Spell, the Holy Arts was quite famous for this Magic Immunity Spell.

For the next 30 seconds, Ceres was shielded from Spells, allowing her to launch a relentless assault.

Ceres felt more confident with this active Spell as she unleashed the Holy Smite Spell, channeling holy energy into a concentrated blast.

The Spell erupted towards Anya, aimed at disorienting her and disrupting her ability to cast spells.

Anya, sensing the danger, swiftly employed the Revitalize Spell, empowering herself and weakening the effects of Ceres' attack.

'So a Holy Smite is only this weak since I'm not evil...' Anya thought to herself as she looked at the third princess carefully.

"I'm not yet done... Come at me..." Ceres shouted as she noticed that Anya seemed to be taking her time to analyze her attacks.

Since a direct assault might not be enough, Ceres decided to use her strategic advantage. With a swift incantation, she activated the Spell Reflection, creating a protective shield that would bounce back Anya's spells.

This Spell Reflection wasn't part of the Academy's exclusive spells. As a matter of fact, it wasn't being taught in the Academy. It was a Neutral Spell, but it could use any type of Arcane Energy, like Holy Energy, to activate. In a way, as long as she uses her Holy Energy to activate it, it could be considered a Holy Art and doesn't break any rules.

The battlefield seemed to shift as Ceres anticipated Anya's next move.

Anya, unaware of Ceres' defensive maneuver, prepared to unleash her most potent Spell, the Petrification. It was one of her Academy-Exclusive Spell!

Haa!

Without hesitation, she released the Spell as she planned to change her strategy depending on how Ceres would respond. After all, she could only cast this Petrification Spell thrice a day, so she had to consider whether she had to save her other chances and use them for her next duels.

"W-what?!"

However, as she cast the Spell, her attack rebounded after hitting Ceres' body!

Anya didn't have the time to react, turning her into stone!

The audience was silent as the battle that was seemingly reaching the climax ended abruptly.

"Oh... So the Holy Arts can actually reflect Spells?" Vale muttered in interest.

The battle came to a dramatic close as Anya remained frozen in petrified form.

Chapter 439 Chaos?

Ceres, triumphant but compassionate, approached her defeated opponent to cast a Rejuvenation Spell and ensure Anya returned to normal.

After this, the medical practitioners quickly checked Anya's condition and brought her to the infirmary...

The second round of the duel tournament would continue after a 15-minute break to ensure that all the contestants had rested enough and received treatment for their injuries.

It didn't take that long before the event continued as the second-round matchup was announced. Once again, the matchup was through a random selection, which was participated by the students.

Ceres from Holy Arts Academy versus Avery from Summoning Arts Academy.

Iris from Rune Arts Academy versus Geraldine from Knights Academy.

Vale from Dark Arts Academy versus Susan from Elemental Arts Academy.

'So they didn't want me to match up with the Third Princess in the end...' Vale thought after hearing the announcement.

They were soon sent back to their resting area to give them their last 5 minutes of preparation before they commenced the battle.

In the meantime, while this was all happening in the coliseum, a commotion occurred in the city.

A rogue Dark Arts Practitioner infiltrated the city and summoned a Mysterious Evil Entity through a ritual!

The city guards, the various Orders of the Factions, and the various Academy Officials were alarmed as they sent people to stop the entity and investigate the matter.

This is a huge matter since the summit was filled with talented students from all over the country... Furthermore, the First Prince and the Third Princess were also in the city!

They have to quickly settle this problem!

Teresa and Clare were also sent to investigate the matter as special officers of the Order of the Untainted Sentinels.

They were in their white uniform while also carrying their white umbrella. They were moving quickly while spreading their Magic Zone around them.

They were not part of the Evil Entity Subjugation Squad, but they were assigned to search for the rogue Dark Arts Practitioners who had infiltrated the city.

After all, they concluded that a single person couldn't do the ritual as it requires numerous sacrifices and ritual prayers by at least a dozen people to get a response from the Evil Entity.

"This is getting more complicated than I thought..." Clare muttered.

They originally wanted to be here to investigate the mysterious young man they met before. They just wanted to see Clovis and learn more about his identity.

However, it seemed that they would have to put in more effort.

"Well... We're still doing our job as Sentinels, so I don't see any problems---Oh... I found them. They're inside the Tailor Shop... I can see traces of their Dark Energy." Teresa informed Claire, and they immediately moved to enter the shop.

Teresa and Clare cautiously entered the Tailor Shop, their senses heightened and alert.

As soon as they stepped foot inside, the air pulsed with dark energy, and the ambush of the Rogues sprung.

The room erupted with chaos as the practitioners unleashed their sinister powers, aiming to overwhelm Teresa and Clare.

Dark Coil, Ghost Hands, Ghastly Ailment, and Lung Curse were among the Spells that were thrown to the two Sentinels.

However, the two skilled Holy Arts Practitioners were not caught off guard.

Their Divine Sense had warned them of the impending danger, allowing them to prepare for the attack. With swift reflexes and quick spellcasting, they engaged their adversaries in a battle...

Teresa flicked her sleeves as she channeled her Holy Arts with grace. She conjured divine shields to deflect the incoming dark spells while simultaneously launching radiant beams of light that pierced through the darkness, striking her foes with righteous force.

"Don't die so easily... We still need you to let us know about your plans here." Teresa muttered as she controlled her strength.

Clare, on the other hand, embraced her inner strength and unleashed her Holy Arts with ferocity.

Instead of casting Spells, she weaved intricate patterns with her hands, summoning gusts of wind and cascades of holy flames with each of her punches.

Her attacks engulfed the rogue Dark Arts practitioners, leaving them scorched and disoriented.

"Hey... Don't kill all of them." Teresa reminded.

"It's fine... We just need two or three people anyway." Clare replied.

The clash of powers reverberated throughout the shop, the sound of spells colliding, and the crackling energy filling the air.

The rogue practitioners, realizing the formidable strength of their adversaries, grew desperate, attempting to overwhelm Teresa and Clare with sheer numbers and create a path to escape.

But the two Sentinels stood their ground. Their synergy was evident as they fought as a well-coordinated team.

It wasn't easy to guess that these two had been partners for a long time.

They moved with synchronicity, covering each other's blind spots and countering their enemies' every move. Their combined Holy Arts created a radiant barrier of protection around them, shielding them from harm.

The battle didn't last that long as the tide gradually turned in favor of Teresa and Clare.

One by one, their opponents fell to the ground. Most of them had died, and the others were luckily incapacitated.

The room fell silent, save for the heavy breathing of the victorious Sentinels.

"Whew... That was good exercise. We should do this from time to time." Clare muttered.

"I don't want to..." Teresa replied while shaking her head.

As they took a moment to gather their strength and assess the situation, they turned their attention to the five surviving rogue practitioners.

They suddenly felt that the Evil Entity outside was still not defeated by the Arcanists who went to subjugate it.

With a sense of urgency, they approached the captives, their eyes piercing with determination.

Teresa spoke firmly. "Who sent you? What is your objective?"

The rogues exchanged glances, their expressions filled with a mix of defiance and fear.

One of them, a hooded figure, suddenly burst into maniacal laughter, his eyes gleaming with madness. "We've succeeded! The Roaring Summit is doomed! Hahahaha!"

The man's words hung in the air, leaving Teresa and Clare momentarily puzzled. They weren't too surprised by his actions since they'd seen numerous crazy people with their job as Sentinels.

Then, the realization quickly dawned on them. The attack they had just experienced was not merely an act of revenge or chaos but a deliberate plan to set in motion a series of events that would bring chaos to the city.

Chapter 440 Second Round

Before they could interrogate the leader further, he abruptly took his own life, leaving the Sentinels stunned by the abrupt turn of events.

The man seemed to have used a hidden poison to silence himself! The others who were captured noticed what had happened and swiftly killed themselves... It happened so quickly that Teresa and Clare failed to stop them in time.

The room fell silent once again, but the impending danger loomed over them like a dark cloud.

"What a bunch of lunatics..."

"We have to inform the others about this quickly. At least we should let Odessa know..."

Teresa and Clare said as they exchanged a knowing glance.

They understood that time was of the essence, and they needed to prevent the summoning of the three Mysterious Evil Entities before they wreaked havoc within the city.

Without wasting another moment, the Sentinels sprinted toward the locations where the entities were likely to appear.

They weren't merely guessing, but by using their Divine Sense, they could locate the presence of many Dark Arts Practitioners a lot faster than the other Arcanists.

"I've only sensed two gatherings of Dark Magicians..." Clare commented.

"It's fine... Let's just focus on those two. I already informed Odessa about the situation. Let's hurry." Teresa replied.

They could already sense the terrifying presence of the entities. Although the ritual wasn't completed yet, they could feel the malevolence seeping into the very fabric of the city.

As they arrived at the first location, an eerie stillness filled the air. The people were already evacuated by the police officers, and a group of Arcanists from the Order of the Prime Wisemen had also arrived. They were all carrying their unique runic weapons, so it wasn't difficult to identify them.

The two groups nodded at each other. They didn't have the time to exchange pleasantries as the matter was too urgent and pressing.

Thud... Thud... Thud...

Suddenly, the ground quivered, and a massive entity materialized before them, its grotesque form emanating darkness and despair. The Sentinels and Wisemen braced themselves for the imminent battle, their determination unyielding.

They immediately signaled for the police officers to get away as they would just become casualties if they stayed in the area.

Soon, the Sentinels and the Wisemen engaged the four-meter-tall Evil Entity into a fierce battle.

Meanwhile, the second Mysterious Evil Entity emerged in another part of the city, causing panic and chaos among the unsuspecting residents.

However, the reason why Teresa and Clare didn't worry about them was because Odessa was already rushing to help.

The crowd in the coliseum buzzed with anticipation as the second round of the duel tournament was about to commence.

Vale Chambers sensed something off in the surroundings once again, but because they were inside the coliseum, protected by numerous Formation Arts, he couldn't tell what was going on outside.

As the first match of the second round began, Vale's attention turned to the duel between Ceres and Avery.

'Ceres will most likely win if Avery only has that Silver-Haired Ape in his Grimoire...' Vale silently thought as he waited for the duel to start.

He was certainly not underestimating the Ape's power, but he knew that Ceres had already thought of a plan to deal with this creature.

As soon as the referee announced the start of the battle, the two students immediately sprang into action.

Ceres radiated an aura of purity as she activated her Rejuvenation Spell.

This Spell doesn't just remove abnormal statuses of the target but also provides regeneration of her stamina, strength, and Holy Energy.

Whom~

She followed it up with Sanctify Spell, creating a protective film of barrier, and Radiance Spell that bathed her in a brilliant glow, enhancing her strength and agility.

Of course, the Radiance Spell could also be thrown to the target, but once it was cast on herself, it created another layer of protection.

Just like that, Ceres used three Spells simultaneously! It appears that she was getting to fight in close combat against Avery.

On the other side of the arena, Avery opened his Grimoire, as he summoned forth his Silver Haired Ape, a massive creature with incredible strength and agility.

Bam!

The stage trembled as the Ape charged toward Ceres, its primal fury unleashed.

The battle unfolded with a flurry of intense exchanges. Ceres moved with grace as she weaved through the attacks of the Silver-Haired Ape.

She doesn't appear to be worried about getting hit, thanks to the Sanctuary she cast that could deflect the Ape's powerful strikes to a certain extent...

'Let's see what you'll do if I kill your Summon...' Ceres thought as she cast her most potent offensive Spell.

With a radiant burst of energy, she unleashed Holy Smite, searing the Ape's flesh and forcing it to retreat momentarily.

However, Avery did not panic... His gaze turned cold as he gave a series of commands to his summon.

The Silver-Haired Ape, wounded but not defeated, charged at the frail woman in front, its primal instincts driving it forward.

It continued attacking Ceres like it was ready to die!

With each clash, the stage shook... Ceres continued to dodge or deflect the desperate attacks of the Ape while the latter chased after her.

However, the Ape started turning illusory after 3 minutes... It was a lot faster than before!

Ceres saw this as an opportunity as she managed to land a devastating blow... It was a palm strike on the Ape's belly!

As the creature fell and shattered into thousands of light particles, Avery took a deep breath before reaching into his Grimoire once more, summoning a white sword...

The blade gleamed with ethereal light as Avery waved it a few times to get a feeling of it.

"So you can summon a weapon like the others..." Ceres commented.

"You have to be careful... I will try not to kill you, but you might receive a few cuts from this sword." Avery warned.

"Ha! Bring it on!" Ceres chuckled as she taunted her opponent.

As the duel entered its final phase, Ceres and Avery engaged in intense close combat. Ceres relied on her fist techniques with the power of her Sanctify and Radiance spells, channeling holy energy to enhance her attacks.

However, Avery proved to be a formidable opponent, swiftly countering Ceres' assaults with skillful parries and precise strikes of his sword.