

## D. Extraction 481

### Chapter 481 Pressure

As Vale slowly awakened from his slumber, he felt the warmth of the morning sun gently caressing his face.

Blinking away the remnants of sleep, he rose from his bed and proceeded to freshen up, preparing for the day ahead. Donning his neatly pressed uniform, he reflected on the events that transpired the previous day, when he successfully conquered the Ascension Tower.

As soon as he came out of the Tower, he found himself immersed in a flurry of responsibilities as he received the First-Place reward and fielded numerous inquiries about his experiences within the Tower.

However, amidst the chaos, Headmaster Jean and Royal Mage Odessa proved to be invaluable allies. They skillfully averted the onslaught of questions from Arcanists representing various factions and organizations, ensuring that Vale was not overwhelmed.

Following the intense ordeal, Vale was escorted to the infirmary for a thorough check-up to ensure his well-being.

Before that, he entrusted the five dragon scales to Headmaster Jean, a decision witnessed by all.

Vale expressed his desire for the scales to be either transformed into a valuable item for a Dark Magician or to be converted into currency. As soon as this was announced, the attention of the crowd swiftly shifted to Headmaster Jean, granting Vale the freedom to continue his own journey.

That was an idea that Vale came up with on the spot.

Even if the Arcanists needed the dragon scales or not, they would certainly try their best to obtain it because of its rarity.

In the midst of the commotion, Vale received a message from Headmaster Jean through telepathy, informing him that his shadow's return would take place in the next two days.

Needless to say, excitement coursed through his veins as he eagerly awaited his freedom from the shackles of the Dark Arts Faction.

Clink...

As Vale opened his room, he was greeted by Maya Featherstar.

"Vale! Congratulations! I heard that you have a meeting with Royal Mage Odessa and the Third Princess this morning. Is that true?" She inquired, her eyes filled with admiration.

At this point, she no longer cares how she underperforms compared to Vale in this competition. Even if her family would get mad at her for failing to have a better result than Vale, she wouldn't mind it at all.

Currently, she could only admire Vale for his historic achievement. She was already happy to witness it in person.

Behind Maya, Vale spotted his other friends, Philip and the rest of their group, eagerly awaiting his response.

Vale smiled at their presence, grateful for their support. "Yes, it seems they want to know more about my experiences inside the Tower..." He replied with a helpless smile on his face.

He already expected this to happen, but he couldn't help but feel lazy for this.

Seeing Vale's indifference to being in the same room with the two popular ladies or girls, Philip couldn't resist teasing Vale, a mischievous glint in his eyes.

"Oh, I don't think so. I believe Lady Odessa will try to recruit you to her Mage Tower... Perhaps even the Third Princess will request your service as her Personal Shadow Knight..." he playfully suggested.

"Perhaps you can even have a romantic relationship with the Princess..."

"Ahh! Is he going to become a higher-ranked noble?!"

Luna and Crystal couldn't help but comment.

"There's no way that will happen."

Vale chuckled, appreciating the lighthearted banter.

"Alright, I'll go now. Let's meet up later." Vale said.

"Of course! We'll celebrate your achievement. We don't have any more competition for the day, so we're free." Maya replied.

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Vale now stood before Royal Mage Odessa and Princess Ceres, and he couldn't help but take a moment to appreciate their presence.

Odessa exuded an air of authority and elegance. She seemed to be in her late twenties, marked by her striking beauty and regal grace. Her royal mage's robe, adorned with intricate rune patterns, further emphasized her status as a Royal Mage.

Princess Ceres, on the other hand, possessed long blond hair and fair, delicate skin. Clad in attire befitting her position as the third princess of the kingdom, she exuded a charm, akin to that of a beautiful doll.

They seemed to be genuine noble figures of the kingdom.

Vale couldn't help but admire their appearances before extending his greetings.

As Vale approached them, he confirmed that there were only two of them waiting for him, just as Philip had mentioned. Odessa wasted no time in congratulating him once again.

"It was late, but congratulations, Vale. I don't want to make this long, so I will make this quick for you."

Odessa paused for a moment to see Vale's reaction before continuing. "Many individuals from various factions expressed their desire to be present in this briefing, including representatives from the Untainted Sentinels, Illustrious Liquidators, Lore Hunters, Prime Wisemen, and Faith Guardians. Would you be comfortable with their presence?" She inquired.

Vale pondered the question briefly before nodding in agreement. "Well, I suppose they will come seeking answers from me as well. As long as they don't overwhelm me or resort to any spells that invade my privacy or manipulate my thoughts, I see no issue with their presence..." He replied.

A warm smile graced Odessa's face as she reassured him. "Rest assured, Vale. As long as I am here, they will not be able to employ any spells that compromise your well-being or violate your boundaries." She said with confidence.

Since the Royal Mage was the one who said this, Vale wouldn't doubt that.

With Odessa's assurance, Vale nodded appreciatively.

In a swift motion, Odessa snapped her fingers, causing the barrier in the room to dissipate, granting entry to the representatives of the organizations she had mentioned.

Vale then felt the presence of some powerful individuals outside the room even if he didn't use his Phantasm State... They weren't using their Spells against him but were certainly showing their might to appear more intimidating.

As the ten individuals stepped inside the room, Vale couldn't help but sense the weight of their presence.

'So, it seems they want to remind me of my place.'

Vale mused as it indeed felt as though they were subtly reminding him of his position, a mere student.

Taking a moment to collect his thoughts, Vale contemplated how best to respond to their actions.

After careful consideration, he decided to maintain a composed demeanor and chose not to display any visible reaction.

Instead, a mysterious smile graced his lips as he greeted them.

## Chapter 482 Failed Vessel

As the barrier dissipated, the representatives of the different organizations swiftly entered their Special State, activating their Magic Zones to sense Vale's presence.

Within each organization, two individuals had been chosen to participate in this meeting. While they had been explicitly instructed not to take any direct action against Vale, they understood that exerting some pressure through their Magic Zones was within acceptable bounds.

Clyde, a member of the Illustrious Liquidators, immediately detected something peculiar about Vale. His Mystic State's Magic Zone seemed to rebound off Vale, preventing Clyde from gaining a clear insight into his true nature.

'Impressive... This young man must have come across something remarkable within the Tower other than the Dragon Scales he had shown to us... Not bad.' Clyde mused silently.

Similar thoughts echoed within the minds of the other representatives as they struggled to comprehend Vale's enigmatic presence.

Though they did not feel any immediate danger emanating from Vale, it was as if they were gazing upon a being that transcended the boundaries of their understanding. Vale seemed to defy

categorization, leaving them with the unsettling sensation of encountering an unfamiliar entity rather than a fellow Arcanist.

Clare and Teresa, representing the Untainted Sentinels, shared this sentiment.

'Is he really Clovis? He feels a lot different. As you know, the Dark Arts Practitioners aren't great at illusion or disguise.' Clare said to Teresa using Telepathy.

'That's true... But did you forget how we considered him a Half-Spirit? If he was really a spawn of a powerful Arcanist and a Spirit from another realm, then it's not impossible if he gets to practice two Arcane Paths at the same time.'

'But that's—'

'I think it's possible...' Teresa interjected before Clare could finish her words.

Teresa then smiled mysteriously and added... 'Can't you feel it? He's not simply resisting our Magic Zone's pressure. He's bouncing them off. It's similar to a trait of a Spiritual Being.'

The others also have their own speculations, but they soon stop using their Magic Zone after hearing Odessa clearing her throat.

Then, Odessa's voice cut through the silence, commanding their attention.

She invited them to take a seat, signaling the beginning of the meeting.

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In the meantime, while Vale was wondering why no one from the Dark Arts Faction had attended, Headmaster Jean was on his way to a secret location near the Roaring Summit.

At this time, he had already taken action regarding the five Dragon Scales that was passed unto him by Vale.

Four of them had been sold to factions and organizations that had been valuable allies to the Faction. These recipients included the Alchemist Arts Faction, the Beast Arts Faction, the Raycraft Mining Guild, and the White Fang Company.

The Raycraft Mining Guild, known for their expertise in rare ores, had been a consistent supplier of valuable materials to the Dark Arts Faction.

They may be an organization created by non-arcanists but because of their leader's incredible business capabilities, they were able to get bigger in the mining industry and earned the protection of the Dark Arts Faction.

On the other hand, the White Fang Company, a renowned mercenary band, had provided crucial assistance in handling missions that were deemed too simple for the powerful Evanescent Vessels.

Such missions were best left to mercenaries to avoid unnecessary attention from the Vessels, who preferred to act only when absolutely necessary. The recent incidents involving Philip's kidnapping and Maya's encounter with the Masked Moguls served as examples of situations where the Vessels were mobilized.

"Sir, are you going to fulfill Vale's request?" One of the Evanescent Vessels standing beside Headmaster Jean inquire.

Jean, accompanied by three other Vessels, was preparing to visit Wilfred, a Failed Vessel that they had intercepted.

Jean nodded in response to the question, confirming his intention to fulfill Vale's request.

"Well, that's why I have kept one of the scales. I don't need to hold onto it for myself, as I possess something even more valuable. However, I would appreciate your opinion on how we should utilize it..." He replied while playing around with his black cane.

The Vessel took a moment to ponder the question before offering a suggestion.

"Considering Vale's desire for an item suitable for a Dark Magician, we could potentially fashion the scale into a Curse Medium or perhaps even a Dark Arts Formation Node. Should I consult Sir Isaac Vermont for his expertise on the matter?"

Jean's interest was piqued by the suggestion.

"Ah, Isaac? That's a splendid idea. He undoubtedly possesses the knowledge to help us in this matter. Please, send him a message..." He agreed, recognizing the value of involving Isaac in the decision-making process.

The dragon scale was not a common item after all. Furthermore, Isaac was a high-rank Alchemist himself, so as long as he wasn't busy, Jean believed that Isaac would cooperate.

"I will send a telegram... I'm sure he'll be excited working on such a legendary item." The Vessel said as he looked ahead.

The group finally arrived at the secret location where Wilfred, the Failed Vessel, was being detained...

"What is the meaning of this, Sir Jean?! Why did you prevent me from exacting my vengeance?" Wilfred's voice reverberated through the secluded forest as soon as he laid eyes on the familiar figure.

Unrestrained by any physical bindings, he stood concealed within a Formation Art, effectively masking his presence from the prying eyes of the people in the Roaring City.

Attempting to diffuse the volatile situation, Jean responded calmly.

"Wilfred, just calm yourself. Your bloodlust is overwhelming. Do you truly wish to be captured by the vigilant Sentinels?" He questioned, his voice laced with genuine concern... or at the very least, that was what he was trying to show to a member of the Moontomb Clan.

After all, he wasn't sure if a member of the Moontomb Clan was watching Wilfred.

Indignant, Wilfred retorted, "Of course not! I have found a way to conceal my presence. I have nothing to fear."

Jean sighed, realizing how foolish this Failed Vessel was.

## Chapter 483 Under Attack

"Merely hiding your presence is not enough. Odessa and the skilled experts from various Orders would not be so easily deceived. We must exercise caution. Wait until the end of the day, and once I have returned Vale's shadow to him, you will have the opportunity to target him. Choose your

moment wisely, perhaps in the midst of the bustling city streets." Jean said as he explained the situation.

'I can't believe they spent a lot of money to get his soul back, but they're just sending him to death once again.' Jean silently thought as he recalled how he earned a lot of money after Vale ended Wilfred's life.

After some time, Wilfred's anger gradually subsided as he met Jean's gaze... With a simple nod, he sat crosslegged at the Formation Circle and closed his eyes.

Seeing how Wilfred acted, Jean couldn't help but smile as he decided to inspect this young man.

Dark Aura appeared around him, and they slowly went into Wilfred's body.

'Oh~ So it was like that. No wonder he's confident. He actually obtained a Demihuman's body.' Jean thought as he continued observing Wilfred's body.

'But as expected of a failure, his soul was being rejected. He's not compatible at all. If not for the Moontomb Clan's special seal, he would barely last a week inside this body. That's also probably the reason why he was hurrying to see Vale.' Jean concluded, observing the young man.

He then shifted his attention to Vessels, who had intercepted Wilfred.

"Good work... Your job will be completed once I return Vale's shadow. Wilfred can act on his own. If he gets captured, it's no longer related to us. Don't bother saving him. Even if the Moontomb Clan asks, just tell them that it was my decision."

The Vessel nodded in understanding, as they also didn't wish to get accused of causing trouble in the city where a royal family member was staying.

After this matter was settled, Jean returned to the Roaring Summit, hoping that Vale's meeting with Odessa and the others had ended.

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Vermont Academy.

After completing her duties in the Library, Lisa Grayback wasted no time and hurried to the Training Hall.

While on her duty, she started sensing that she was on the verge of a breakthrough.

As a student of the Essential Corruption Branch, she had recently begun taking a special drug designed to acclimate her body to the power of corruption. This was a normal practice for students in her Branch, as the power of corruption had the potential to affect the skin, flesh, and bones of those who were not suited for it.

Even for selected students like Lisa, taking medication was necessary.

The drug not only helped them master the power of corruption but also aided in strengthening their physique and enhancing their control over Darkness Possession. This was why the students of this Branch were known to be capable of resisting the madness brought by the Possession.

After spending several hours in the Training Hall, Lisa couldn't contain her excitement any longer. "I did it!"

She exclaimed joyfully, confirming that she had gained another Spell Light!

With a total of 8 Spell Lights, 3 of which were currently blank without any spells recorded, Lisa's progress was impressive for a fourth-year student.

Once she had calmed down, Lisa decided to celebrate her achievement with her friends from the Branch. Emily, a classmate from previous years, and Kayla, a student from Class 4 during the last year, joined her. They gathered at the cafeteria as usual.

As Lisa shared her accomplishment, Emily softly asked "You now have three free Spell Lights. Are you considering recording a high-level Dark Spell?"

Kayla, munching on the cold pudding served to them, chimed in... "Oh, are you thinking of a Spell that requires two Spell Lights? That's quite daring. I've heard they can be quite expensive. Do you have enough contribution points?"

She asked while taking another spoon of pudding. She could probably eat eight servings of this, but she was trying to control herself as she still had to eat dinner later. She heard that there would be a beef stew and lamb steak, so she had to leave some space in her stomach for later.

Suppressing her excitement, Lisa smiled at her friends and nodded.

"I currently have 7 contribution points, and with the discount I received for working diligently in the library without any absences for two whole years, I can purchase a spell worth ten contribution points."

Her answer was met with admiration as they didn't think that it was possible like that. Of course, the two of them had also received benefits from the clubs they entered, but it wasn't related to Contribution Points. They could be mystical items, knowledge, permission to leave the Academy, guidance from the Top Professors, or even special connections to the organizations working for the Dark Arts Faction.

As their celebration continued, an unexpected turn of events suddenly disrupted the joyous atmosphere. The once serene halls of the Academy began to tremble violently, sending shockwaves of fear through the students and staff.

Then, a dangerous aura permeated the air, causing their hearts to race and adrenaline to surge. Many of them didn't know where this danger was coming from.

Amidst the chaos, a 10th-year student who happened to be in the cafeteria shouted in alarm...

"It's a Holy Smite! No, something even more powerful than that! We're under attack!"

The realization of the imminent danger sent a wave of panic to some new students.

"Calm down! We are inside the Academy! We'll be safe!" An Assistant Professor suddenly said as he felt embarrassed that he had to be woken up by the 10th-year student.

The students, now on high alert, could feel the impact of the Holy Spell striking the Academy. Fortunately, the past events related to the attack of the Secret Organization had led to the reinforcement of the Academy's Formation Barrier, providing some level of protection against the assault.

However, the onslaught did not cease there.

A Mystic Spell followed suit, known as Reality Shift, which twisted and strained the Barrier, threatening to dismantle the painstaking work of the specialized Evanescent Vessel Division responsible for its creation.

Amidst the chaos, two Squad Leaders of the Vessel faction finally arrived at the gates of the Academy, bearing witness to the dire situation unfolding outside.

#### Chapter 484 Vessel's Possession

As the two squad leaders arrived at the gates of Vermont Academy, their eyes widened in astonishment and concern.

Before them, a group of floating Arcanists hovered ominously in the air, their numbers reaching a staggering three hundred or even more. The sight was deeply unsettling as the squad leaders realized the magnitude of the threat they faced.

But the danger extended far beyond the academy grounds. Casting their gaze toward the town and the dockyard, the squad leaders were met with a horrifying sight. The enemy forces had launched a coordinated attack, with over a thousand adversaries converging upon the vulnerable areas.

The town nearby was already on fire. The dockyard was also under attack and was currently being defended by another squad of the Order of the Evanescent Vessels. The steel factories and other buildings outside the Academy were also being broken down by the enemies.

The sheer scale of the assault stunned them for a moment as they comprehended the severity of the situation.

Yet, despite the overwhelming odds and the looming chaos, the two squad leaders didn't lose their hope.

Instead of succumbing to fear, they started to analyze the situation calmly and even wondered how it happened so fast.

They were a bit confused by the situation.

How had the enemy managed to infiltrate so stealthily? Their arrival had gone completely undetected by the Academy's alarms, Order's scouts, the scattered ghosts, and other guards stationed outside.

They couldn't help but think that there was a traitor that allowed them to bypass through their defenses. However, that was very unlikely, considering how they implemented their security after the recent attacks of the Secret Organization, including the Thunder Emperor's attempt to cause trouble.

Nevertheless, it wasn't the time to think about how they got here. They immediately realized the Arcane Paths of the Arcanists who were trying to break their barrier.

They were Holy Arts Practitioners, Mystic Arts Practitioners, and Combat Arts Practitioners, who were all equipped with the new Rune Arts that were meant to deal with Dark Magic!

A sense of foreboding settled upon the squad leaders as they exchanged a knowing glance.

"So we are back to war..." One of them muttered, his voice heavy with the weight of the realization.



It became clear that this was not a mere skirmish or a random act of aggression. It was a deliberate and calculated declaration of war, not only against Vermont Academy but against the entire Darkness Path.

At this moment, the squad leaders understood the weight of their role. They were not just defenders of the Academy but guardians of the Darkness Path itself.

The students here are all valuable assets of the Faction. The fate of the students or the future of the Dark Arts Faction was at stake.

"We still have five minutes before the barrier collapses..."

One of them commented.

Then, they turned their attention back to the Academy. At this time, all the Combat Professors, the members of their Squads, and various guards hired by the Academy could be seen.

They even noticed some higher-year students getting ready to fight.

However, the squad leaders knew that the safety of the students and professors was their utmost priority.

They couldn't allow them to be caught in the crossfire of this brutal conflict. Well, the Professors might be able to survive, but there must be some people who would guide the students.

There were only about 40 Professors in the Academy and about a thousand students.

One of the squad leaders finally spoke, his voice could be heard by everyone.

"The professors will lead all the students out of the Academy. Use the emergency Formation Circle that the Headmaster prepared. We are at war now... Consider the Treaty of Keslore null and void. All members of the Evanescent Vessels will remain here and fulfill their calling." He announced with a firm tone.

Suddenly, his palm began to gather a massive amount of Dark Aura. The squad leader seemed to be showing off his formidable presence as he made his intentions clear.

This also seemed to be a signal for the others.

The members of the Vessels understood what they were about to do.

This was the moment they had prepared for since joining the Order. They were about to become true Vessels themselves.

They were ready to be possessed by a powerful being from the Shadow Realm! It was completely different from the beings they had summoned to possess their bodies before.

It would be a one-time possession!

This time, there would be no hope of turning back to their humanity.

Addressing Professor Cyrus and Professor Mark, the older leader, who had a larger frame, issued clear instructions.

"Professor Cyrus, please lead the students out of the Academy using the secret Mass Shadow Gate Circle. Professor Mark, in the absence of the Headmaster and Vice Headmaster, you will handle the Defense Formation Circles and activate all the traps once the last barrier is breached. Professor

Zara, please take care of the Armory... Headmaster Jean mentioned that you can handle it. Lastly, please inform Professor Drake to release all the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Variants and for the Necromancers to summon all of their Undead at once. We will take charge of the defense."

After finishing his instructions, he also started preparing for the ritual.

The attackers had chosen their moment wisely, targeting the Academy when key figures such as the Headmaster were absent.

The professors glanced at each other and could only nod in agreement. There was no time to argue about their tasks and that their involvement in the battle might hinder rather than aid the Vessels in their crucial jobs.

With the instructions given, the members of the Order of the Evanescent Vessels initiated the ritual.

Crack... Crack... Crack...

The darkness barrier was already starting to crush, so they had to hurry. At this time, the people outside couldn't see what was going on within the Academy grounds.

They could only see a vast black dome covering the Academy. It means that it was a perfect time to complete their ritual.

Soon, a thick aura of darkness covered the entire Academy as the Vessels channeled their energy.

They were summoning the strongest beings they could connect within the Shadow Realm to possess their bodies.

"Captain Cleo... This might be the last time we'll fight together." The older squad leader said.

"Then let's make it something that will be remembered by all the Factions who dared to attack us. We'll spill a river of blood, Captain Reed."

The two leaders said as they accepted the possession...

## Chapter 485 Infiltration

The entities that the Vessels could call would depend on their affinity with the Shadow Realm or any other Realms, so they would have different beings that would possess them.

"Hahaha!"

As Cleo felt the overwhelming power coming into his body, he couldn't help but laugh.

Reed, who was beside Cleo, noticed this as well...

"You're a daredevil! Did you call the remnant spirit of the Shadow Emperor?!" He shouted in shock. Although they were ready to die, they should at least call an entity that would not just go on a rampage. If he really called for an entity he couldn't handle, the students might be hurt in the process!

Anyway, it would still take a few seconds more before the two of them lose control over their bodies. So, at this time, they could still hold a conversation.

"Of course not! My body will explode if I dare do that... I just called for the strongest I can connect with. The Moonlight Reaper!" Cleo said, followed by a chuckle.

"Great! I called for the Ninth Shadow Guardian! I hope they'll work together." Reed said as he looked at Cleo.

Cleo did the same, as this would be the last time they'd see each other. Once they were possessed, there was no turning back.

Reed was the first one to lose consciousness as the possession reached 50%.

Cleo then glanced at the members of his squads. Some of them were still desperately fighting inside the dockyard. They were lucky that a couple of airships there had combat abilities that were helping them resist the assault.

As soon as he felt that his mind was about to collapse, he looked one last time at the enemies ahead and prayed to the Embodiment of the Darkness silently.

Crash!

A part of the black dome had soon cracked open, and the aura of the squad leaders' possession was felt by the enemies... Even the ones fighting in the dockyard felt the heavy atmosphere brought by the possession and realized that their leaders had made a decision to become a full Vessel.

Whom~

In a surge of ethereal energy, the summoning was completed. Everyone, including the fleeing students, realized that a grand battle was about to start.

The other members of the Vessels also felt a powerful presence merge with their own consciousness, granting them heightened abilities and transforming their physical forms. They also completed the possession and became full Vessels. However, the ones they called to possess them weren't as strong as the Moonlight Reaper and the Shadow Guardian.

Nevertheless, their eyes glowed with an otherworldly light as they became powerful vessels for these shadow entities...

The once-human members of the Order now stood as otherworldly beings, their appearances altered by the essence of the entities they had summoned.

Most of them grew larger and became shrouded with darkness. Their strength and agility increased exponentially, and they radiated an aura that belonged to either death or darkness.

Some of the leaders of the assault group who were tasked to destroy the Academy couldn't help but realize that their job here would still be deadly even without the presence of the Headmaster and the Vice Headmaster of the Academy.

The members of the Evanescent Vessel didn't hold back at all as they all decided to use their lives to protect the students of the Academy.

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At this time, the Contribution Points Exchange Hall was silent. There were no other people aside from Manager Faith.

After sensing the situation outside, she could tell that the Academy wouldn't last for long... Perhaps the Vessel would take a lot of lives, but if the Dark Arts Faction's reinforcements didn't arrive in time, it would really be the end of the Academy.

"So this is still happening... I guess this is inevitable..." She muttered.

She was blind but perceptive, so she immediately knew what was happening. Anyway, she was a staff member known for her role in the Contribution Points Exchange Hall.

She may not always be inside the Exchange Hall, but whenever she was present, students often sought her advice on how to best utilize their Contribution Points, making her a source of guidance and mystery.

Even Vale had a fair share of encounters with her and found her really mysterious, considering how she could scare Dark Spirits.

'Mhmm... I should have enough time.'

Manager Faith muttered and remained remarkably composed even at the sudden attack on the Academy.

She quickly realized that this was a completely different situation than the previous attacks in the Academy.

Without wasting a moment, Manager Faith activated a Magic Circle, a powerful enchantment that would safeguard the valuable items stored within the Treasury Vault of the Exchange Hall. Her movements were swift, indicating that she had already prepared for this.

Whom~

It only took her less than a minute before she swiftly sealed away the precious herbs, rare ores, scrolls, mystical items, and any alchemical materials of significance into a minuscule ring.

She then carefully secured the ring, attaching it to her necklace as a pendant. This was her own decision to keep these treasures close and protected.

As she intended to leave the Academy alongside the students in the secret chamber where the Mass Shadow Gate Circle was located, Manager Faith paused at the doorway leading to the hallway.

Her heightened senses detected a presence that eluded others. Though her sightless eyes saw nothing, her perception pierced the arcane spells of concealment.

"Incredible..." She murmured, her voice carrying an air of both surprise and authority. She didn't seem afraid as she addressed the people hiding in front of her.

"I didn't expect to find the Third Guardian of the Transformation Arts Faction and the Second-in-Command of the Prime Wisemen lurking here, aiming to steal our treasures. Shouldn't you be aiding your forces outside? The Vessels mean business. They would certainly kill those Shamans and Priests."

Her words echoed through the hall, revealing her skill that went beyond her apparent disability.

After a brief pause, a weathered voice echoed through the air, accompanied by the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Just as I anticipated for a genuine Half-Spirit... It seems the tales circulating about you were far from the truth..."

Chapter 486 Manager Faith

Manager Faith exuded an air of calmness as she sensed the approaching enemy.

Without a hint of fear, she materialized a walking cane and held it firmly with both hands, poised for action.

With a resounding thud, the cane struck the floor, and in an instant, ethereal spirits materialized around her.

These were not the typical spirits of the deceased that necromancers or ritualists could summon, but rather, they appeared to be Spirit Warriors. They were powerful entities emanating icy energy.

More than a dozen of these formidable warriors surrounded Manager Faith, their presence heightening the tension in the room. Their spectral forms exuded an aura of death itself!

Suddenly, the door of the hall transformed into a human figure. It was certainly the third guardian of the Transformation Arts Faction.

He stepped forward and addressed Manager Faith.

"Madam Faith, there is no need for you to resort to such measures. We are not here to harm you. In fact, if anything, it is the Dark Arts Faction that poses a greater danger to you. They are the ones who will probably put you on the experiment table and not us. Our purpose is simply to claim the treasures you have hidden. Once we have done so, we will allow you to leave unharmed." He said with a calm voice while looking at the Spirit Warriors warily.

"Indeed... You should know the two of us and what we are capable of. This isn't a bad deal." The old man from the Prime Wisemen said as his clothes started glowing with Runic Symbols.

Manager Faith's expression remained unchanged as she listened to their words. With a cold smile, she responded.

"Yes. I heard about the two of you... But all I know is that you both hail from prominent families within your respective factions. Mr. Paterson and Mr. Wigram."

She heard about the Paterson Family since they are one of the three main families of the Transformation Arts Faction. Similarly, the Wigram Family was renowned as the strongest family in the Rune Arts Faction. As a matter of fact, the Sommerhalder Family, to which Neil belonged, operated under the guidance of the Wigram Family.

"If you believe that you're both capable enough, then by all means, attempt to claim the treasures." Manager Faith taunted the two, her words laced with confidence.

With an understanding that diplomacy had reached its limits, the two men sighed in resignation and started releasing their spells.

Mr. Paterson underwent a remarkable transformation, morphing into a fearsome werewolf with razor-sharp claws and menacing fangs!

Awoooo!

The werewolf then started lunging toward Manager Faith with ferocious intent! He was brimming with power and seemed like a real beast of the Moonlight Realm!

Simultaneously, Mr. Wigram unleashed his Rune Arts, tapping into their potent capabilities that were specifically crafted to combat entities of the Spirit Race. Arcane symbols glowed on his clothing as he launched his assault.

"Sir Paterson, be careful... Don't destroy her mystical items, or we'll lose all the treasures." Mr Wigram reminded.

On the other hand, Faith remained undeterred as she tapped the floor once, signaling her Spirit Warriors to engage in battle.

The spectral warriors surged forward, clashing with their opponents in a flurry of icy breaths and strikes. Furthermore, Faith enveloped herself in a pulsating wave of Spirit Energy, enhancing her own defenses.

The room became a battleground as spells and ferocious attacks from the werewolf started... It was then followed by several shattering sounds of the Rune Arts being dismantled by Faith's pulsating wave of energy...

Graaahh!

The werewolf reaped a part of a couple of Spirit Warriors, but his claws and hands started getting frostbite! It appeared as if the real attacks of the Spirit Warriors would come after their death!

Manager Faith didn't stop at this as she moved with a grace that belied her blindness, evading the flying Rune Symbols that were trying to seal her body.

She could certainly tell that the Rune Arts were more dangerous.

Her cane then became an extension of her being, deflecting attacks and launching counterblows with surprising agility. Furthermore, as she was moving too quickly, she started moving like a real ghosts as continued using her movement technique.

Then, at this time, the werewolf form of Mr. Paterson unleashed devastating blows, his claws tearing through the air with incredible speed, and it didn't take that long before all the Spirit Warriors were killed.

Although Manager Faith's Spirit Warriors fought back fiercely, their icy energy wasn't enough to deal with an old Arcanist.

Nevertheless, they still served as a formidable defense against the savage werewolf.

Faith had bought enough time to release one of the seals in her body!

Just with a wave of her hand, another set of the Spirit Warriors appeared...

"This is a lot more annoying than I thought." Mr. Wigram muttered as he couldn't help but complain at their current situation.

If Faith wasn't holding the storage ring and wasn't a Half-Spirit, this battle would've ended already. However, Half-Spirits were difficult to overwhelm in terms of Spirit Strands. They could also see the weakness of Spells a lot easier than normal Arcanists.

Then, they also don't get affected by mind spells, so most of his Rune Arts weren't suited against her. He could only think of four Rune Arts that could be effective against Faith.

However, when those Runic Attacks were about to hit her, Spirit Warriors would suddenly appear and take the hit instead.

"Fine... Let's see how many Spirit Warriors you can summon!" Mr. Wigram said.

His Rune Arts proved to be a formidable challenge for the Spirit Warriors. Some intricate symbols were suddenly etched into the floor, ceiling, walls, and shelves of the hall.

These runes disrupted the Spirit Warriors' spectral forms, causing momentary instability.

This allowed Paterson to easily kill them with a few bites and kicks...

However, at this time, Manager Faith finally managed to remove all the seals that she temporarily put to herself in order not to cause trouble to the students in the Academy!

#### Chapter 487 Corruption

While Manager Faith was handling the two main forces of this raid against the Vermont Academy, the Vessels outside had started their battles against the enemies.

As Reed and Cleo stood side by side, their transformed beings radiated the power of the Shadow Realm. It was heavy and more prominent than the Dark Energy that the enemies were familiar with.

The Moonlight Reaper and the Ninth Shadow Guardian had merged with the two's physical forms, granting them extraordinary abilities and an aura that struck fear into the hearts of their enemies.

They no longer looked like humans in their current state.

Before them stood a formidable assembly of Arcanists from the Mystic Arts Faction, the Holy Arts Faction, and the Combat Arts Faction. The surrounding air felt chaotic with the clash of energy...

Boom!

With another Massive Holy Smite, the Black Dome protecting the Academy had finally collapsed!

With a swift movement, Cleo, or the Moonlight Reaper, unleashed a torrent of lunar beams emanating from his scythe-like weapon.

These beams sliced through the air, striking down multiple Arcanists with precise accuracy!

That's right, it broke through layers of barriers and killed several Arcanists in this surprise attack!

Probably because of the Dome's explosion, the Arcanists from the Mystic Arts Faction found themselves disoriented as their spells were disrupted, almost unable to withstand the lunar beams.

Meanwhile, Reed, now infused with the power of the Ninth Shadow Guardian, commanded dark tendrils that lashed out with blinding speed.

Pah! Pah!

Each strike found its mark, incapacitating opponents with a paralyzing touch. The Arcanists from the Holy Arts Faction, known for their radiant spells, found their light extinguished as Reed's darkness engulfed them.

Although the Holy Arts worked well against any Spells related to darkness, the difference in power must still be considered.

"Mass Rejuvenation!"

One of the leaders of the Holy Knights had finally finished casting a spell and cured his companions of the confusion brought by the explosion of the Dome.

However, the other Vessels didn't stop from attacking.

The members of the Order, who had also become Vessels for powerful entities, fought alongside Reed and Clea.

They unleashed very unusual attacks that contained the Dark Energy and an otherworldly energy that the enemies weren't prepared for.

Some of them threw curses and some conjured dark items like chains and swords...

However, what made it more difficult for the Holy Knights and Priests was the fact that the overwhelming energy of their opponents made their spells less effective!

"Attack!" One of the Holy Knights shouted as he signaled the Shamans and Runecasters to release their Spells.

Boom! Boom!

Various spells collided in mid-air, creating explosions that rocked the battlefield.

Arcane shields shimmered and shattered under the relentless assault, while the clash of weapons reverberated through the air.

Despite the overwhelming numbers of their opponents, Reed and Cleo fought with tenaciousness. They were both overwhelmingly powerful as they dominated their surrounding area.

It wasn't planned, but the Moonlight Reaper and Shadow Guardian seemed to have great synergy. It was evident as they seamlessly coordinated their attacks, exploiting weaknesses and protecting each other in the heat of battle.

They may no longer have the minds of the two Squad Leaders, but they were still bound by the two to follow their last order--to protect the Academy from the invaders.

The Arcanists from the three factions started having trouble.

They suddenly found themselves on the defensive.

Some of the Holy Knights, Mystic Magicians, and Runecaster in front started hesitating. Fear crept into their eyes as they witnessed the sheer power and ferocity of their opponents.

"Knight Morris, we received a signal from Sir Paterson to destroy the Academy! The treasures and others are no longer important! They will find a way not to get caught by the destruction!"

As the Holy Knight leading the assault to the Academy was contemplating how to suppress the Vessels, he heard a report from one of their secret messengers hiding on the battlefield.

His eyes immediately lit up with excitement as he raised his arm and summoned his Light Spirit!

The Light Spirit could be considered similar to the Elemental Spirits.

However, they do not have a humanoid form, unlike the Elemental Spirits. They seem just like an Orb of Light that could communicate with their summoner.

Whom~



Suddenly, a brilliant light emanated from the battlefield, capturing the attention of everyone present. The Vessels, mistaking it for an attack, swiftly responded by conjuring their defenses and launching counterattacks towards the source of the luminosity.

However, this radiant display was not an offensive move but rather a signal for the hidden Exorcist Division of the Untainted Sentinels!

Their real purpose was to confront the final line of defense within the Vermont Academy. They shouldn't be appearing just yet.

After all, it was common knowledge that the land surrounding the Academy was once a domain of the dead. However, the Dark Arts Faction suppressed them and sealed them in various places in the Magical Fortress, now the Vermont Academy.

Knight Morris, faced with the unexpected strength of the Vessels, made the decision to unveil the Exorcist Division.

The Vessels had to be exorcised, and the dark possession that was slowly affecting their Arcanists had to be halted.

'This place had madness everywhere... As expected, only those with Darkness Possession can last longer in this pathetic Academy. We've only been here for a few minutes, and we're already being corrupted...' Knight Morris complained as he didn't expect that a Holy Knight like him would be troubled by the Academy's corruption.

"Proceed at once!" Morris commanded, his voice resonating with urgency. He knew there was no need to explain the task to the Exorcists; they were well aware of their mission.

The fifty or so Exorcists, brimming with power, understood that their primary targets were the Possessed Dark Magicians. With a collective prayer that reverberated like a solemn hymn, a surge of immense Light Energy enveloped the entire Academy, specifically targeting the otherworldly beings that had taken possession of the Dark Magicians.

#### Chapter 488 Evacuation

The Exorcists channeled their energy to a Magic Circle that amplified their prayers...

Their prayers also started getting louder, resonating with a distinct holy energy that sought to purge the dark influence of the possessed Dark Magicians.

One by one, the Possessed Dark Magicians or Vessels found themselves assailed by the Exorcists' sacred power.

The beings within them writhed and contorted, their hold weakening as the exorcism took effect. However, they weren't the elites of the Order of the Evanescent Vessels if a simple exorcism would render them incapacitated.

The beings from the Shadow Realm fought with everything they had since there was no way they would allow themselves to just return to their Realm without benefiting. They had to at least take the shadows of their enemies!

Whom~

As if they had planned their next move, the possessed Vessels started sucking in the shadows of all the Arcanists around!

Most of the Holy Knights in front lost their shadows, but those in the back managed to cast some Rune Arts to stop their shadows from being taken away...

Holy Knight Morris didn't expect that their shadows would be taken. Furthermore, even if they had no idea what the Vessels would do to it, they knew that it was not a good idea to give their shadows to these Dark Magicians, who are experts in curses.

"Strengthen the exorcism!" One of the leaders of the Exorcist Division shouted as he realized that their vanguard had their shadows taken.

There were no visible effects at the moment, but they had to get those shadows back!

The Exorcists, guided by their unwavering faith, pressed forward. They started spending all of their energy to separate the Vessels from their unholy entanglement with the beings of the Shadow Realm.

As the exorcism ritual continued, the Academy itself seemed to pulsate with light and dark energy. The spiritual barriers that had once confined the Exorcist Division shattered, allowing their collective power to flow freely and unhindered.

The entities from the Shadow Realm fought desperately to maintain their grip on their hosts, unleashing dark tendrils and gathering more shadows in an effort to resist the purification power of the exorcists.

However, their efforts proved futile against the overwhelming might of the Exorcist Division.

Gradually, the hold of darkness weakened, and the spirits within the Possessed Dark Magicians began to dissipate.

However, the situation took an unexpected turn when Professor Gale Evans suddenly appeared.

"Mhmm... So this is the Exorcist Division. They've really come prepared this time."

Her figure materialized above the main building of the Academy, her silver hair flowing gracefully and her blue eyes piercing through the chaos. Clad in a white robe, she wore a gold necklace with a purple gem pendant, a symbol of her authority as the strongest Corruption Weaver in the Academy as of this time.

"Since the evacuation isn't done yet, you guys should continue fighting here..."

Gale muttered after observing the situation closely.

She noted that even the hiding Necromancers were unable to summon their Undead due to the overwhelming purification power of the Exorcists. It was clear that the enemies had prepared extensively for this battle.

With a wave of her hand, Gale unleashed an invisible spell upon the Exorcists.

Surprisingly, this spell remained unaffected by the sacred energy being released by the Exorcists. Instead, it directly targeted a dozen of them, leaving them in a dazed state, as if lost in a daydream. Their prayers faltered, causing the purification process to weaken.

In a matter of seconds, the effect spread throughout the entire Exorcist Division, rendering them incapacitated.

Whom~

The sudden halt of the exorcism disrupted the flow of energy in the surroundings, causing a small shockwave to happen.

It barely took a minute, and Gale's intervention stopped the Exorcists' progress of exorcising the entities of the Shadow Realm!

This allowed the possessed Vessels to regain control of their powers, renewing their assault against the Holy Knights.

The first ones to regain their control were the Moonlight Reaper and the Shadow Guardian.

Boom!

The change in the flow of the battlefield was immediate as one of the Holy Knights, who had raised his shield in defense, was sent flying by the force of a charging Shadow Guardian.

It seems that Reed, or the Ninth Shadow Guardian, was really angered by the Exorcists.

"How?!"

"Sir Hogan was thrown away?!"

"This is bad. If Sir Hogan failed to defend against that, how can we survive?!"

"We should work together!"

Many of the Holy Knights in front immediately panicked and expressed their concern.

Even the Shamans, Priests, and Runecasters behind were shocked as the Holy Knights were not expected to be easily overpowered like that...

Holy Knight Morris was also shocked at first, but he immediately noticed something.

"Not good! Those who lost their shadows, move to our rear!"

It didn't take him that long to realize that the previous disappearance of their shadows was related to their weakened state.

Luckily, not everyone had lost their shadows. The Holy Knights immediately understood what was happening and acted according to the command of their leader.

Simultaneously, the Necromancers within the Academy seized the opportunity and finally summoned their undead minions.

From the ground, an army of zombies, skeleton warriors, skeleton knights, hell hounds, vengeful spirits, and other abominations emerged, ready to wreak havoc upon the battlefield.

"That's how it should be..." Gale remarked, smiling contentedly as she noticed that the other possessed Vessels started recovering from the purification. Thanks to her intervention and the Necromancer's move, their once-twisted expressions morphed into relief as they regained control of their hosts.

However, she knew that this wasn't enough to stop the imminent destruction of the Academy.

If the reinforcements of the Dark Arts Faction failed to arrive in time, she had no doubt that the Vessels would die here and Vermont Academy would be gone.

"Well, that's not my concern. I've done my part." Professor Gale Evans muttered as she looked at the center of the Academy, where the students were gathered. Then, as soon as she noticed that the other professors started transporting them to another location, she shifted her gaze to where Manager Faith and the two other Master Arcanists were fighting.

"Just a little longer, Miss Faith. The evacuation is almost done." Gale telepathically said to the mysterious Half-Spirit fighting for the Vermont Academy.

#### Chapter 489 Shadow's Return

In the meantime, while this was all happening at Vermont Academy, Vale had just finished his meeting with the representatives of the various factions or organizations.

He also received an invitation from Odessa to enter her Mage Tower... Of course, Vale didn't immediately reject her. He simply informed her that he would think about it. After all, he was surrounded by many Arcanists, and he would feel a lot better rejecting her once he returned to the Academy.

Although he knew he was strong, there were still many Mystical Artifacts he wasn't aware of.

"Whew~"

'Those gazes from Clare and Teresa were quite disturbing. Did they realize I'm Clovis?' Vale thought to himself as he slowly went back to their hotel and met with the others.

If possible, he also wanted to visit the city and see if there are some good appraisers there. He had so many items needed to be appraised after all. Although he could probably do it in the Academy, he was already excited to get some of the items appraised or even convert them into money.

"Ahhh... I should probably sell those that I don't need to Lisa and the others." Vale muttered as he recalled his friends in the Academy.

Since Maya and others also got some rewards from their placement rankings, Vale shouldn't worry about them. Furthermore, they already have some incredible families supporting them, unlike some of his friends in the Academy.

The high-grade Spirit Pearls, the amulet of Swift Steps, the crystal of elemental shield, the ancient Rune Scroll, and even the Formation Nodes weren't really something useful to him anymore. If he would make a guess, the mystical artifacts were only at the low-grade Noble Rank items.

At his current strength, he would need at least a low-grade Royal Rank item to satisfy himself.

As soon as he returned to his hotel, he could no longer find Maya and the others. He then went to the dining hall and confirmed that they were all there waiting for him to show up.

After they finished eating, Maya and Crystal decided to visit the duel tournament of the 8th-year students that was being held in another location since the Coliseum was still undergoing repairs. On the other hand, Philip and Luna planned to watch the Spectacles of Talent of the 10th-year students.

They invited Vale to come with them, but he felt that he would just disturb Philip's plan, so he just said that he had other things to do.

As for Maya and Crystal's invitation, Vale decided to reject them as well since it might get awkward with those two.

In the end, Vale went out alone. At this time, he already asked Yvaine to take out some items he was planning to be appraised.

As he walked through the bustling streets of the Roaring City, he hadn't even found the place he was looking for when he felt something off.

He couldn't shake the feeling that he was being watched. The constant gaze of unseen eyes was noticed by his ESP Spell's passive effect.

Without a moment's hesitation, he activated his Phantasm State, entering a heightened state of awareness, and expanded his Magic Zone to better sense the presence of others.

"Let's see..." Vale muttered as he walked to the hawkers selling various street foods. He didn't want to alert the people who were observing him.

Within his expanded Magic Zone, Vale could feel the presence of numerous Arcanists, but it was the attention of eight particular individuals that caught his focus.

"Ahhh..."

He recognized them. They were Clare, Teresa, Clyde, and others he had encountered in Odessa's room. They seemed to be observing him from a distance of about 180 meters.

He wasn't sure what they were planning, but it didn't matter to him. They had gravely underestimated the power and range of his Magic Zone.

"But... What should I do to them? Don't they have anything better to do?" Vale muttered to himself, slightly annoyed by their persistent surveillance. He doesn't even know if he should reveal the fact that his Magic Zone exceeds 180 meters.

After a few moments, he decided to ignore their presence for the time being. He continued his search for the Mystical Artifact Shop, a place where he hoped to find an appraiser who could assist him.

After asking a few people around, Vale finally stumbled upon the shop he had been seeking.

He immediately approached the entrance, ready to enter and pay for the services of their Appraisers.

However, just as he was about to step inside, a distinct and unsettling aura caught his attention. His Magic Zone sensed another being that was observing him...

It was a sinister presence, unlike anything he had previously encountered. This aura did not emanate from an Arcanist, making it all the more unsettling.

'Demonic Being? No, it doesn't seem right. It feels like an Undead, but it's different.'

Perplexed and on high alert, Vale suddenly felt a strange sense of familiarity with this eerie presence. Although he didn't recognize the source of this aura, there was something about the being that triggered a flicker of recognition deep within Vale's mind.

Suddenly, he heard the Headmaster's voice inside his head.

"Vale, something happened in the Academy. I have to go back early. I've already returned your shadow. However, I need one item in exchange."

"Ahh... Headmaster Jean? Where are you? What's the item you needed?" Vale asked.

"I'm already far away. I can only communicate with you thanks to your shadow. However, once I return this shadow, we won't be able to hold a conversation anymore. I will use another person if I have to send you a message." Headmaster Jean replied.

"As for the item I needed, it's a ring. To be exact, I need the Creation Ring on the tenth floor. Did you get it from the Tower Master?"

Vale immediately nodded at this question. "I have it with me. However, I was told by the Tower Master that I needed it to stop the Abyss Realm's invasion."

"It's fine. The Abyss Realm's invasion is not a bad thing for us. The other Arcane Paths will deal with it. You don't have to help them."

Vale didn't hesitate to agree on this since he just wanted to get his shadow back.

"Alright, how do I give you the Creation Ring?" Vale asked, but as he was focusing on his conversation with the Headmaster, several screams were heard as the mysterious undead entity he noticed a while ago started charging at him!

This undead creature with a strange aura caused panic in the crowded streets, killing anyone who got in its way!

#### Chapter 490 Complete Vale

"Headmaster, I think someone is targeting me! It seemed like an entity from another realm." Vale added, not even waiting for the Headmaster's reply.

He wasn't sure if this entity was sent by another Faction or if it was sent by the Cult or the Order of Fatality.

Just in case, he wanted to ask the Headmaster for some advice.

Headmaster Jean's response was concise yet filled with certainty. "Just escape if you can't deal with it. Anyway, I will return your shadow now. Someone from the Vessels will pick up the Creation Ring." Jean advised before their mental connection abruptly severed.

"Ahh~"

Moments later, Vale felt a peculiar sensation coursing through his body. It was as if something within him had shifted, and he could sense the return of his shadow.

The impact of its restoration was far more profound than he had anticipated. The world around him seemed clearer, his strength magnified, and an overwhelming surge of dark energy flowed through his veins.

"Whoa..."

Perplexed by this unexpected transformation, Vale couldn't help but marvel at the incredible sensation. He felt as though Headmaster Jean had not merely returned a small piece of his shadow, but rather rejuvenated him with a newfound vitality and energy that transcended his expectations.

Furthermore, the connection between himself and Yvaine, his Dark Spirit, had also deepened, further enhancing his ability to sense her presence...

However, amidst this euphoria, Vale's heightened senses detected the presence of several Unknown Entities now fixated on him.

The mysterious undead charging at him wasn't comparable to the presence of these entities at all.

The sudden attention only added to the unusual phenomenon surrounding his circumstances.

"What just happened?" Vale mused, caught off guard by the satisfying sensation brought by his shadow.

"I guess that's just how it feels to be complete once again..." Vale muttered as he couldn't really think of another reason.

After all, he wasn't just a complete human. Instead, he can be said to be a completed Half-Celestial.

Vale couldn't help but smile after reaching this thought. Despite the overwhelming wave of emotions, he truly found solace in the fact that his shadow had finally been restored.

Nevertheless, this newfound sensation, combined with his altered perspective on the Vermont Academy, brought clarity to his memories.

Now that his shadow was back, he realized that the students in the Academy were truly being conditioned to the unfair classes and distribution of contribution points. They were also being trained to accept what the Academy was and not aim to change or improve its system.

"Now that I think about it, I killed Wilfred when I was first-year, and aside from his close friends or relatives, no one was really bothered by it. It feels as if our emotions are being controlled to a certain degree." Vale muttered under his breath as he recalled the past.

"Furthermore, there were higher year students from Dark Alchemy and Essential Corruption who had become some living abomination through failed experiments, but many lower years weren't bothered and still thinking of choosing this path."

Vale also recalled how he just accepted Professor Gale's advances and stopped pursuing that matter after some time. Now that he thinks about it, he has almost forgotten about this matter!

Vale couldn't help but think that the Headmaster had probably used his piece of shadow to control his emotions and not go against the Professors of the Academy.

One by one, Vale recalled many things in the Academy that should have been unacceptable but became a normal or common matter to them.

Vale sighed as his memories became clearer.

Of course, he didn't blame the Academy as well, considering how this method helped the students easily accept the presence of ghosts, undead, and abominations in their surroundings.

After all, the Vermont Academy accepts students at a very young age. Perhaps, this method of taking their shadow was also a way to protect them from madness brought by the study of darkness.

Grahhh!

As Vale was thinking about whether he should still return to the Academy to meet his friends, he suddenly heard a roar aiming to incapacitate him!

"Hmph!" Vale didn't summon his Arcane Armor, as he simply released his Dark Energy to protect himself.

The mysterious undead being had finally closed in on him.

"Weird... How did this thing reach me here? Are there no guards around here?" Vale muttered as he found it ridiculous how this creature managed to just enter the central part of the city and cause chaos.

It seemed quite impossible that it could enter so easily. Furthermore, why were Clare and the others not bothered and just watching him intently?

"This... Did they send this guy to test me?" Vale's eyes widened as he felt that he realized what was going on.

Seeing that he was about to be attacked, Vale made his move.

"If you're looking for death, fine, come at me!" He declared defiantly.

Among his many Spells, he decided to show his Ghost Hands...

He wasn't sure what Clare and others were planning, but he could guess that it was to measure his strength as an Arcanist, or perhaps they wanted to see his hidden Dark Spells.

"Die! Vale! Die!"

Vale was momentarily shocked as soon as he heard the voice that seemed to have come from the depths of hell!

Nevertheless, he swiftly activated his Lightspeed and maneuvered to create distance between himself and the relentless undead creature.

Then, Vale relied solely on his three floating Ghost Hands to confront the relentless onslaught of the mysterious undead creature.

"You... Who are you?!" Vale asked as his Ghost Hands stopped the enemy's advance.

It seems that he was really targeted this time. He needs to know the mastermind behind this!

However, the creature didn't have plans to answer, so Vale continued using his Ghost Hands. He decided to just rely on this Spell for now since he didn't want to satisfy Clare and the others. He didn't want them to see his Spells at all!

Vale's Ghost Hands expanded and struck the creature with destructive force. However, it seemed that he did it too much as their spectral touch tore through buildings, shattering glass windows and leaving a trail of destruction in their wake.