

D. Extraction 491

Chapter 491 Spawn of Darkness

Shops and stores crumbled as the mysterious creature and the Vale's Ghost Hands tried to overpower each other.

The surrounding structures crumbled to rubble as the area transformed into a chaotic battlefield.

'Ahh... This is not good... However, where are the other Arcanists? Can't they see that a student is being harassed here? Why is no one helping?' Vale couldn't help but complain as he glanced at the location of the other Arcanists who were just watching.

By using his Divine Sense, he could easily sense the Arcanists that were within his 30-meter radius.

Martial Arts Practitioner with 5 filled Spell Lights.

Martial Arts Practitioner with 5 filled Spell Lights.

Mystic Arts Practitioner with 7 filled Spell Lights.

Mystic Arts Practitioner with 8 filled Spell Lights.

Elemental Arts Practitioner with 8 filled Spell Lights.

Beast Arts Practitioner with 4 filled Spell Lights.

Beast Arts Practitioner with 3 filled Spell Lights.

Rune Arts Practitioner with 5 filled Spell Lights.

With just a simple and quick scan of his surroundings, Vale immediately found eight Arcanists! They seemed to be watching in awe, or perhaps they were waiting for something to happen. Nevertheless, they certainly don't have any plans to interfere with the battle.

Perhaps, they heard how the creature called for his name, so they decided to stay out of it.

Vale also observed Clare and the others inside his Magic Zone and confirmed that they weren't making their moves.

'Whatever... I'll deal with this alone.' Vale silently thought as he looked for a place where he could bring the creature to interrogate.

The people on the streets and the other owners of the shops didn't deserve to suffer. Some of them were already injured, and the damage in the surroundings was just getting bigger.

"I'll torture you!" The mysterious humanoid creature spoke once again as Vale controlled his Ghost Hands to continue suppressing it.

However, it proved to be difficult since the creature had a high affinity to the Darkness Attribute.

It continued to struggle and even shattered one of the three Ghost Hands!

It actually bit one of the Ghost Hands and sucked it until it was gone!

"You can do that?" Vale was surprised. He didn't expect such a method to exist. Nevertheless, Vale didn't stop using his Ghost Hands.

Using his Spirit Vision, he realized that the being was already full from eating one of his Ghost Hands. The only problem was that it seemed to be using the power of his Ghost Hand to amplify its strength!

"What a glutton..." Vale muttered as he realized that it only took a few seconds to digest the Ghost Hand it had eaten.

Seeing that it was about to eat another Ghost Hand, Vale controlled it to shrink and used the two Ghost Hands with extreme precision to turn the creature into a punching bag.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

As the battle intensified, the people unfortunate enough to be caught in the crossfire scattered in fear, seeking shelter from the chaos unleashed by Vale and his formidable boxing Ghost Hands. The streets became a scene of mayhem, with debris flying through the air and bystanders scrambling to safety.

"Ahhh..."

Vale felt bad about the destruction happening on the streets.

As he looked around, he soon found a plaza with a huge pile of wood gathered at the center.

It seems that there will be a huge bonfire later this night. However, Vale had to use the plaza for now.

Whoosh~

With a wave of his hand, he used his remaining two Ghost Hands to drag the creature away from the busy streets.

Boom!

The mysterious humanoid creature was thrown into the pile. However, Vale realized that it was slowly getting stronger and stronger. Just now, Vale tried to use his Darkness Manipulation to cut away its power to wield the Dark Energy. He was hoping that with the Darkness Manipulation, the creature would weaken.

However, Vale failed to take control of the Darkness around his enemy!

His Darkness Manipulation Spell was already Level 7 or at the early stage of the Advanced Realm! Vale couldn't help but be surprised.

'Interesting... Is this creature a spawn of Darkness?' Vale thought to himself as he considered leveling up the Spell.

However, he immediately stopped as he recalled that leveling up Spells above the Advanced Realm would strain his body since he would do it through a cheat system and not through hard work.

Instead, he decided to get an aid with his Mystical Item. As he thought of pulling up one of his Summoning Scrolls to test the creature, he heard it speak once again.

"Give me your body!" The creature growled as he shattered the wood pile scattered around him.

"You want to possess me? Dream on!" Vale found this exchange quite laughable as he suspected that this creature could feel his Incorruptible Body. After all, that was quite an alluring physique. It would explain why the creature wanted to possess him.

With a firm decision, Vale activated the three scrolls he had been carrying.

He poured his energy into them, unleashing a surge of power that left him astonished. The scrolls absorbed a significant portion of his energy, leaving him with less than half of his original reserves.

"Whoa~" Vale exclaimed. He didn't expect such a huge amount of energy to be needed for those scrolls.

"Just for three summons, my energy was left with less than half of my original energy. These scrolls really pack a punch..."

Despite the energy depletion, a smile crept across Vale's face as he watched the ground where the scrolls had landed. In a flurry of dark magic, three imposing figures emerged from the depths below. The ground cracked and split open, revealing three Skeleton Knights mounted on horseback.

The skeletal warriors exuded an aura of menace, their eye sockets glowing with red flames that danced with an eerie intensity.

They were armed with swords and shields, ready to engage in battle at Vale's command. The sight of these fearsome creatures sent shivers down the spines of onlookers, but to Vale, their presence was exhilarating.

Chapter 492 Dual Arts Practitioner

The sudden appearance of the Skeleton Knights was surprisingly appreciated by many onlookers. Some of them started gathering around the plaza to look at the Skeleton Knights.

They became more interested in the battle instead of fleeing away from the scene!

"A moving skeleton! Father, look!"

"Don't look at them in their eyes."

"Whoa~ I didn't expect him to be a necromancer. He looks handsome..."

"I think Dark Arts isn't that awful. I also want to be capable of summoning such creatures."

"You'd probably die if you tried entering their academy. Don't waste your life."

"But still, those Skeleton Knights look really strong. I heard only Second Class Necromancers could summon them."

"I think we should step back. It's getting colder here."

Vale heard all of their carefree comments, but he had no time to mind them as he felt that his opponent was slowly getting stronger.

With a wave of his hand, he directed the Skeleton Knights to join the fray. Together with the Ghost Hands, they fought against the mysterious undead.

As the knights moved, the ground beneath their skeletal hooves trembled. They charged toward the mysterious humanoid creature, followed by an aura of death..

At this point, some of the police officers had finally arrived and arranged a few Formation Nodes to protect the normal people from the aura of death. After all, non-practitioners would be harmed by such an energy. They might not die, but they would be incapacitated if they get exposed for a prolonged period.

"Gahaha! Give me more of them!" The mysterious humanoid creature suddenly exclaimed as if he was waiting for Vale to do this. Then, he bravely charged towards the Skeleton Knights while also tracking the movements of the Ghost Hands!

Clang! Clang!

The clash of steel rang out through the plaza as the Skeleton Knights engaged with the steel-like body of their enemy. The Skeleton Knights' movements were swift, but to everyone's surprise, the creature wasn't being harmed by the swords of the Skeleton Knights!

He even used his steel-like arms to block the swords!

"Something's off..." Vale frowned as he immediately used his Spirit Vision. He couldn't understand why this creature was getting stronger at such an incredible speed.

After some time, he finally noticed something.

'What's that?' Vale was a bit confused as he found a few threads of Arcane Energy connected to the creature!

Vale then allowed the Skeleton Knights to hold back the enemy as he continued tracing the sources of Arcane Energy Threads.

The Skeleton Knights fought with incredible strength and speed, but they didn't have a decent fighting style.

They mostly rely on their brute force and the aura of darkness that was fueling them. Their swords slashed through the air, leaving trails of faint black flames in their wake.

The creature's defenses were put to the test as the Skeleton Knights launched coordinated attacks, their skeletal steeds galloping with fierce strength.

Boom!

Once again, the mysterious creature managed to devour the Ghost Hand, assisting the Skeleton Knights. Vale then promptly canceled the remaining Ghost Hand and let the Skeleton Knights deal with the enemy.

He was too focused on following the threads connected to this creature.

As the battle raged on, each swing of Skeleton Knight's sword was getting less and less effective against the enemy.

The plaza became a battleground, the sounds of combat echoing through the surrounding buildings.

However, Vale's focus finally paid off, and he found the source of the threads of Arcane Energy! He wasn't sure about its purpose, but it was connected to a group of hooded figures that was about 340 meters away from them!

'So far?! Can their Magic Zone reach this distance as well?' Vale was shocked as he could tell that his limit was only 400 meters.

It was very surprising that they were able to do this.

After calming down, Vale carefully observed the group and realized that they were capable of blocking his Divine Sense and Spirit Vision. He couldn't identify them or their Arcane Path.

It was probably related to their Mystical Item or Formation Art that was hiding their presence.

Nevertheless, he realized that the thread was actually providing power to the mysterious creature! He had to do something about them. However, if he defeated the creature now, those hooded figures might escape, and they would go unpunished. Vale didn't like that.

As he was considering his next move, a voice resonated in his mind.

"Clovis, I can tell that your enemy right now is a Failed Vessel. Did you offend someone in the Dark Arts Faction?"

It was a beautiful voice, and Vale recognized her immediately. It definitely belonged to Teresa!

Vale was momentarily taken aback by the unexpected communication, but he swiftly gathered his composure and responded using his own telepathic abilities.

"Failed Vessel? What's that? And I'm not Clovis, Miss Teresa." Vale promptly replied while thinking about the Failed Vessel. He wasn't sure, but he immediately connected it to the existence of Evanescent Vessel.

"Anyway, I may have unintentionally offended a couple of individuals from the Dark Arts Faction. But regardless, why aren't you and your allies lending a hand?" He asked.

Teresa didn't immediately answer... She took a few moments to observe the battle of the Skeleton Knights against the Failed Vessel before replying.

"That creature is cursed and a powerful one at that. If we intervene carelessly, we risk falling victim to the curse as well. Furthermore, its sole target is you. If you were to perish here, the Failed Vessel would move on and leave the city."

"What?!" Vale blurted out incredulously, "So, you're just going to let me die here?"

He couldn't understand why the Untainted Sentinels of the Holy Arts Faction couldn't simply purify the curse! Are they too weak against a Failed Vessel's curse?!

Sensing Vale's anger and confusion, Teresa quickly reassured him. "Don't worry, I won't allow you to die. I'll come to your aid if you're in grave danger. However, there are other factors preventing our direct involvement. I'm only revealing this to you because I know you're Clovis, and you possess abilities in both Holy and Dark Arts."

Vale's anger flared further, and he snapped back. "What? Are you out of your mind? How could I possibly possess Holy Arts abilities?"

Deep down, though, he felt a sense of nervousness creeping in.

Chapter 493 Suppressed

Teresa chuckled as she responded to Vale with confidence.

"Don't play ignorant. We are aware that you are a Dual Arts Practitioner, likely a Half-Spirit or something similar. You have abilities in both Holy and Dark Arts, whether you fully embrace them or not. Anyway, your Skeleton Knights are about to be defeated. So you better make your move."

As she said this, the three Skeleton Knights had indeed crumbled into many pieces as the Failed Vessel sucked out their energy!

This Failed Vessel had indeed come prepared!

"Alright, I'll deal with this. However, this guy didn't come here alone. He's being supported by hidden individuals located at an abandoned building on the eastern gate's side. Just take care of them if you don't want to help me directly." Vale said as he shifted his focus to the Failed Vessel.

In the meantime, Teresa was a bit surprised as she immediately shared the information with Clare.

Together, they swiftly used their movement Spells and arrived at a distance where they could use their Magic Zone to inspect the area.

"Ahh... It's true." Teresa muttered after realizing that there was something off with the abandoned house.

Well, they couldn't really see the individuals that Vale was referring to. However, they could easily tell that there was a Formation Art placed in the area, and it could be hiding the people that Vale mentioned.

"How did he notice them?" Clare asked as she put on her Magic Artifacts. She was ready to enter the place and arrest the people hiding there.

"It doesn't matter. We have to secure Clovis later and bring him to our Faction. All questions will be answered if he's with us... You have to help me convince him later. It would be a pity if he dies later once he leaves the city." Teresa muttered as she also started preparing her Artifacts.

"Why don't you just tell him that the Dark Arts Faction is about to be destroyed? That way, he'll know that we don't have a bad intention and were only trying to save him." Clare asked.

"If we were to disclose this information to him now, there's a possibility that he would immediately return to the Academy, given his current loyalty. However, once the Headmaster has been eliminated, we can be certain that Vale's shadow will have returned to him. At that point, he will be able to make a fair and unbiased decision." Teresa explained, which only made Clare gently nod.

Clare didn't think too deeply about it, so Teresa's explanation made her realize how crafty her partner was.

"Well, that's good. I know he will embrace his identity as Clovis once again." Clare said with a laugh as she vanished from her spot and appeared in front of the abandoned house.

In the meantime, Vale finally took over the battle against the Failed Vessel.

"Hey, before I kill you, let me know your name..." Vale said as he approached the Failed Vessel slowly. At this time, it already finished devouring the essence of the Skeleton Knights and had gotten a lot stronger.

However, this creature was still not as strong as the Dragon he killed before. He was just a bit tricky to deal with since Dark Arts doesn't work effectively.

"Kehehe... So you don't remember me, Vale! You already forgot about me after you killed me a few years ago?! I will get my revenge today! I'll take your soul and make you live inside a frog's body!" The Failed Vessel spoke with a chilling laugh.

At the same time, Vale somehow saw a familiar face overlapping the Failed Vessel's face.

"Wilfred? Is that you?"

Memories of a young student who had met an unfortunate end at his hands resurfaced in his mind.

Vale felt a bit of pity for this guy since he had most likely done it because of the influence of the Headmaster.

Vale could only think that Jean had probably used his shadow that time, so he didn't think too much of killing a young student!

"That Headmaster is indeed quite devious."

However, despite any feelings of pity, Vale understood that he had no choice but to eliminate Wilfred, who had become a mere Failed Vessel.

After all, he had no desire to live trapped inside the body of a frog.

With this decision in mind, Vale summoned Yvaine, his Dark Spirit. As soon as she materialized, the surrounding area grew colder, and her mere presence sent a shiver down the spines of onlookers.

"Is that an Evil Spirit?!"

"How terrifying... We should leave this place."

"Indeed, let's not get caught up in their battle."

"Move away! It's becoming dangerous!"

The spectators quickly assessed the situation and started to retreat. While the prospect of witnessing a battle between Arcanists might have seemed entertaining under normal circumstances, the potential risks of getting caught in the crossfire or being affected by random curses or spells made them think twice.

Meanwhile, Vale remained focused on the task at hand.

He deliberately refrained from using his powerful Mystical Items such as the Stormbringer, Devil's Face, or Devil's Dagger, as well as his recognizable Celestial Arts.

After all, his other identities would be revealed, and his Celestial Arts would also be questioned by many. These were his trump cards, and he wouldn't use them unless necessary.

The presence of onlookers limited his options, but anyway, he already thought of a plan to deal with this without revealing too much to the public and individuals like Clyde and the others.

"Haha! Good timing! She's mine!" Wilfred shouted in delight, undeterred by the appearance of the Dark Spirit.

However, Vale simply smirked as soon as he saw the Failed Vessel charging forward "Heh... Do you really think you can devour her? Dream on!"

Vale said as he commanded Yvaine to suppress the Failed Vessel.

Yvaine didn't waste any time as she unleashed her formidable powers. It was as if she had been waiting for this moment for a long time.

Dark tendrils emerged from the ground, snaking their way toward the Failed Vessel, seeking to entangle and restrict its movements.

Then, the air around them grew colder as a chilling aura enveloped the battlefield, further suppressing the Failed Vessel's mobility.

Chapter 494 Interference

"Do you think this will stop me?!" Wilfred, the Failed Vessel, said in a deep voice. Perhaps because of how he managed to deal with the Ghost Hands and Skeleton Knights, he still felt confident even when facing a Dark Spirit.

Wilfred tried tearing apart the dark tendrils that were suppressing him, but even after doing this a few times, he realized it would simply replace the dark tendrils as they kept holding him into a kneeling position.

"Aahhh!"

As the Failed Vessel struggled against the dark tendrils, Vale advanced slowly, his gaze fixed upon his kneeling Failed Vessel.

As if Yvaine realized what Vale wanted to happen, she extracted some of Failed Vessel's energy to replenish her strength.

Then, she strengthened her control over the dark tendrils!

"You! What did you do?!" Wilfred asked in horror after feeling the sudden loss of energy.

Thud!

In an instant, Wilfred lost his strength as the dark tendrils reached his head.

With its head bowed to the ground, Wilfred could not hide the fear and desperation in its eyes.

"Mhmm... Is that all you have, Wilfred?" Vale asked as he continued approaching him.

Although Vale was confident, he decided to take a caution and stopped a few feet away from Wilfred.

He felt that even in its weakened state, the Failed Vessel could still unleash dangerous attacks... probably.

Vale had to remain vigilant since he could still see the two threads of Arcane Energy that were helping Wilfred get stronger.

'Yvaine... Did you take his energy? How was it?' Vale asked, using his unique connection with the Dark Spirit.

'It's not good. The soul and the body don't match well. However, I can feel that he had a strong connection to darkness... He probably possessed a body with an incredible affinity to darkness.' Yvaine replied after analyzing the energy she took from the Failed Vessel.

'So it was like that...'

'Don't touch him carelessly. He's feigning his weakness. He definitely has a lot of strength left.' Yvaine reminded.

'Yes. I noticed it too... The threads of Arcane Energy are still providing him with a lot of energy.' Vale replied as he remained on his spot while looking down on Wilfred.

In his mind, he was also wondering why Clare and Teresa were taking a lot of time to deal with the source Arcane Energy Threads.

At this time, the onlookers also started calming down as they realized that they weren't the Dark Spirit's target.

"Is everything alright?"

"Why are the police and special guards taking so much time to arrive here?"

"There must be similar incidents in other parts of the city."

"The guards they sent here were not even arcanists and only wielding runic weapons. They'll just die if they tried controlling the situation."

"That's true. In any case, the situation was already settled by that Necromancer. He's probably a student from the Dark Arts Academy."

Vale smiled after hearing this as he could tell that the Arcanists from various organizations had already arrived. However, for some reason, they weren't thinking of interfering as if they had been instructed to do so.

Teresa already hinted at this, so he wasn't too surprised.

Anyway, Vale summoned his Spectral Hands as his Ghost Hand Spell was still on cooldown...

As soon as the Spectral Hands appeared, the surrounding area's dark energy grew thicker. This was because this spell was truly an offensive Dark Spell, unlike the Ghost Hand Spell, which was considered a Support-Type Spell.

Vale decided to extract Wilfred since he could no longer wait for Clare and Teresa's help.

In an instant, the Spectral Hands grabbed Wilfred's head.

"If you're thinking that you'll get another opportunity, you've made a mistake. Your tactic of feigning weakness is stupid." Vale muttered as he looked at his system.

[Combat Power: 505,000]

As soon as he saw Wilfred's combat power, he realized that the man was indeed still quite strong. He probably had several Dark Spells he hadn't used yet.

However, he would no longer have an opportunity to use them because of his arrogant behavior. He shouldn't have allowed himself to get captured by Yvaine so easily.

Vale sighed as he triggered the Extraction System.

[Spiritual Being has been discovered. Would you like to start the extraction?]

'Oh? He's not a human... Interesting.' Vale commented as he gave permission for the extraction.

[Extraction Successful. Energy +100, Strength +0.5, Agility +0.3, Intelligence +0.7, Fiend Essence +400]

"What? Four hundred points?" Vale's eyes widened as he saw the Fiend Essence being extracted.

He didn't have a lot of chances to extract Fiend Essence. The last time he had a chance was from the mystical being, where he got his Echo Saber and the Memory Fragment containing the Barbaric Saber Technique.

"Aaargghhh! What did you do to me?!" Wilfred shouted as he felt his body suddenly weakening. Luckily, he still had a connection to the people secretly supporting him, so he was able to survive.

Vale simply smiled and didn't answer his question. Instead, he continued extracting him using his Spectral Hands.

[Extraction Successful. Energy +100, Strength +0.4, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.6, Fiend Essence +300]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +100, Strength +0.3, Agility +0.1, Intelligence +0.5, Fiend Essence +200]

After his third extraction, Vale's Spirit Vision finally noticed the disappearance of the Arcane Energy Threads.

While Vale maintained his hold on the Failed Vessel, Clyde, a member of the Order of the Illustrious Liquidators, observed the scene with keen interest.

His attention was particularly drawn to Yvaine, the formidable Dark Spirit that Vale had summoned. The strength and power emanating from her were awe-inspiring. He was even comparing this Dark Spirit to some Elders of their Faction.

"Mysterious indeed..." Clyde muttered to himself as his gaze shifted from Yvaine to the weakened Failed Vessel.

Despite its feeble state, Clyde knew that the creature could still pose a threat... Though its demise seemed imminent.

However, Clyde's curiosity about Vale was the highest...

He believed that by saving the Failed Vessel, he might gain valuable insights and information about the enigmatic young man. The prospect of unraveling Vale's secrets fueled his excitement.

With a sly smile, Clyde activated his most potent spell.

"Reality Shift."

Chapter 495 Real Intention

As soon as Clyde triggered the Reality Shift Spell, the air around him shimmered and distorted as the Spell took effect.

This Spell allowed Clyde to manipulate the fabric of reality itself, bending it to his will.

As the Reality Shift unfolded, the boundaries of the plaza seemed to blur, and a mysterious Arcane Energy filled the air. Reality itself trembled under the influence of Clyde's Spell, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and unpredictability.

Then, Clyde's eyes gleamed with purple light as he prepared to intervene in the battle... As soon as he noticed that Vale was about to deal a final blow to the Failed Vessel, Clyde released the Spell.

Whom~

In an instant, the Failed Vessel vanished, replaced by another unsuspecting child who had been observing the battle from the sidelines.

"W-what's going on?"

Confusion and shock washed over Vale as he quickly ordered Yvaine to cease her assault, canceling his own Spectral Hands Spell.

"How did you get here?" Vale asked the child, who suddenly started to cry. He also searched the surrounding area for traces of the Failed Vessel but he couldn't find them.

Then, Vale heard the father of the child desperately searching for his son amidst the commotion.

As Vale processed the situation, he realized the sinister nature of the switch that had taken place. The Failed Vessel had been replaced by an innocent person, someone he had nearly killed!

Since no one knew who had switched the position of the child and the Failed Vessel, and the onlookers cast wary glances in his direction, their suspicions evident.

They even started whispering as they questioned whether it was deliberate or not.

Feeling the weight of their judgment, Vale knew he had no choice but to swiftly depart from the plaza. Though he also wanted to get some answers, he recognized the urgency of the situation and chose to delay his investigations for the time being.

"What a day... If not for my shadow being returned, I'll probably consider this as the worst day ever." Vale muttered to himself.

Originally intending to visit a shop for item appraisal, Vale's desire had waned, and he instead returned to his hotel room.

However, awaiting him was a member of the Order of the Evanescent Vessel. He had blond hair and quite a remarkably tall figure.

He was a familiar face as he recalled him being together on the airship he boarded to arrive at this city.

"Vale! You're finally back! I've been waiting for you. Do you have the creation ring? Headmaster Jean should've returned your shadow by now. You can give the Ring to me, and I'll send it to the Headmaster."

The man appeared amiable and carefree, but despite the seemingly innocuous nature of their encounter, Vale couldn't shake the feeling that something was amiss.

His instincts told him to proceed with caution, urging him to delve deeper into the true intentions of this member of the Order. With his Advanced Realm ESP Spell, there was no way he would ignore this feeling.

Vale's smile faltered as he heard the Vessel's words. "I did feel a sense of completeness in my body. That should confirm that my shadow had returned, as the Headmaster informed me..." He replied.

The man nodded in understanding. "That's good to hear. I had suspected as much when my technique failed to detect a person with a missing shadow. Now, I must retrieve the Creation Ring. The Headmaster has just departed, I may still be able to catch up with him and deliver it."

Vale took a seat and began rummaging through his small bag. "Please give me a moment to find it. In the meantime, can you shed some light on what transpired at the Academy? Why did the Headmaster leave us behind?" He inquired.

"It appears that, once again, someone attempted to rob the Academy. Most likely, it was the Secret Organization that has shown great interest in our Armory as of late... They probably brought a lot of people this time." The man replied.

Vale simply nodded at this, as he believed that the Academy could handle such a problem. He then handed over the Creation Ring to the Vessel.

The man's eyes sparkled with excitement upon seeing the Ring, and he immediately utilized his inspection spells to confirm its authenticity and power.

After a brief moment of inspection, the man spoke. "Indeed, this is the very Creation Ring that the Headmaster has been searching for. Since you have been cooperative, allow me to give you a warning. Anyone who does not have their shadow marked or taken by the Headmaster or the Vice-Headmaster will no longer be able to return to the Academy. This means that you are no longer considered part of the Academy."

Vale narrowed his eyes as he absorbed this revelation. His composure didn't falter as he confronted the man.

"What exactly are you trying to say?" He questioned.

In response, the man let out a sinister laugh, his true intentions becoming evident. He seemed to have gained the confidence he needed as soon as he got the Ring.

"It means that you are no longer necessary. We are on the verge of acquiring more practitioners from the Malefic Branch, and your help here has proven their usefulness... We'll probably see a lot of them enrolling in the next Academic Year."

Before Vale could react, four figures emerged from the shadows, revealing themselves to be allies of the man.

"Are you smiling?" The blond man suddenly questioned, surprised to see Vale wearing a smile despite the dire situation.

Although the others also found it peculiar, none of them hesitated in their intent to kill him.

Their primary objective was to eliminate Vale to ensure the demise of the Creation Ring's owner. They suspected that the Ring may have become bound to Vale after being entrusted to him by the Tower Master.

Their previous plan was to bail out Wilfred and kill Vale after. Once they do that, they will simply put all the blame on Wilfred, who has gone missing.

However, their plan hit a snag when Wilfred mysteriously vanished from their sight, seemingly saved by an unknown individual.

"Heart Grasp"

The four assailants unleashed their collective power, invoking the Tier 2 Dark Spell.

Chapter 496 Extractions

The Heart Grasp Spell was a curse-type spell designed to strike directly at the heart of the target.

With all four casting the spell simultaneously, they were all confident that Vale didn't have countermeasures as he had yet to consume his third Darkness Possession potion.

Furthermore, they already knew about the Malefic Branch Spells, the Spell Dispersion and the Incorruptible Body. According to the information they received, Vale's achievement with these spells shouldn't have reached the Intermediate Realm yet.

With that in consideration, Vale would be incapable of resisting four curse spells simultaneously.

The blond man was also confident that Vale would die at this point since he should be vulnerable to this attack.

The curses hit Vale at the same time, and they heard two cracking sounds. It seemed that the spells shattered his defenses as well.

The ambushers were confident that Vale would have perished by now. However, upon inspecting Vale's body using their Phantasm State, they were taken aback to discover that his life force still persisted. The spell meant to destroy his heart had failed to claim his life.

Confusion filled the air as the ambushers tried to comprehend what had just transpired.

"W-what?" One of them stammered as he considered whether Vale had five hearts.

"He must have received some kind of protective spell from the Tower. Let's try again." Another suggested, refusing to believe that Vale could employ the same trick multiple times.

Unable to cast the Tier 2 Heart Grasp spell due to its cooldown, the ambushers opted for different deadly curse spells instead.

They unleashed "Heart Blade," "Brain Burst," "Soul Curse," and "Flesh Rot," targeting Vale's physical body.

But just as they launched their assault, Vale's voice rang out, uttering the words of a spell.

"Spell Dispersion..." He calmly invoked.

The four curse spells were instantly dismantled. The blond man, who had been contemplating his own escape after obtaining the Creation Ring, was also unable to activate his Shadow Steps.

A cold glint settled on Vale's eyes as he declared, "No one will leave this room."

He then summoned Yvaine, his Dark Spirit, and simultaneously activated his Water Domain Spell, a spell he extracted from Aersus.

The combined effects of Spell Dispersion and the pressure emanating from the Water Domain disrupted the ambushers' movements despite not being near a body of water. Well, they may not be in a nearby lake or body of water, but they are still in a humid area.

Yvaine immediately made her move and summoned dark tendrils to suppress each enemy in turn.

"I'm running low on energy. Let me take some from them." Yvaine said, and she didn't even wait for Vale's reply before taking some of their strength.

Vale didn't mind her actions as he understood that if he allowed these five individuals enough time, they would likely call upon another entity to possess their bodies—an ability the Vessels excelled at.

He didn't feel satisfied just yet, so Vale activated his Evil Eye, a spell capable of inflicting mental harm on its target.

"I'm not sure how effective this is, but I hope you guys won't go insane..." Vale muttered.

As the spell struck the Vessels, their already vulnerable bodies weakened, causing them to kneel to the ground.

"Vale! You're going to die here!"

But the battle was far from over, as Vale watched them use their remaining strength to activate their Mystical Artifacts.

Uncertain about the power of the necklaces they wore, Vale knew he had to act swiftly. He employed his Lightspeed Spell, striking each of them in the sternum with precision, rendering them unconscious.

"You shouldn't give me that kind of warning..." Vale muttered as he quickly took the necklaces they were wearing.

The battle seemed too easy, but it was because he managed to stop them from using their possession ability. Once they've gotten possessed by another Entity, Vale would not be sure if he could win against them so easily.

Furthermore, despite knowing that he has Spell Dispersion, they trusted that it wouldn't be strong enough to dispel Tier 2 Dark Spells.

Vale wasn't sure if they had problems in their heads, but they seemed to have underestimated him too much.

They don't even have some decent backup plans in case they fail to kill him using their Heart Grasp Spell.

With a sigh, Vale scanned the surroundings and confirmed that there were no other Arcanists watching them. It was thanks to the Formation Art they arranged before attacking him.

"The Barrier Formation should last for a few more minutes. I can still interrogate them." Vale muttered... However, before that, he decided to extract all of them.

Since they are all Dark Arts Practitioners, they must have some decent Spells in their bodies.

[Living Human has been discovered. Would you like to start the extraction?]

"Yes..."

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Create: Shadow Soldier Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Heart Grasp Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Create: Shadow Soldier Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Create: Shadow Soldier Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

As soon as Vale got his third incomplete Spell Model of the Create: Shadow Soldier Spell, he immediately felt that something had changed in his body... It was a bit painful, and dark energy had even started leaking out of his body. However, he was able to endure it and he returned to normal after.

Even without checking his attribute panel, he knew that he advanced his Level 7 Create: Shadow Soldier to Level 8!

As for the content of the Memory Fragments, it contained information regarding the Evanescent Vessels or the method of having their bodies possessed.

This also includes some information related to the Creation Ring and their plans to do with it.

After consolidating these memories, he finally turned his attention to the blond man. Vale took the Creation Ring in his hands before he started his extraction.

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Light Absorption Spell Model, Complete Terror Grasp Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

Chapter 497 Free Arcanist

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Strength +0.2, Agility +0.2, Intelligence +0.5, Incomplete Spell Light, Complete Light Absorption Spell Model, Complete Terror Grasp Spell Model, Memory Fragment]

[Error Found...]

[No Fear Stream Spell found.]

[Terror Grasp Spell: Fusion Spell of Spectral Hands and Fear Stream Spell was deleted.]

[Extraction Successful. Complete Darkness Manipulation Spell Model]

"Ahh..." Vale didn't have the time to celebrate when he realized that the Terror Grasp Spell could not be stored in his Spell Light.

It was such a pity since he heard about the Terror Grasp Spell from his seniors. This Spell Fusion summons multiple spectral hands that could cover its target and infuse fear into their mind, making them experience their worst nightmares and panic.

Furthermore, this Spell could not be avoided as long as you're inside the Magic Zone of the caster.

Nevertheless, Vale felt still happy that he got another Darkness Manipulation Spell Model. It may not be enough to level it up, but he believed that one more similar Spell Model would be enough to advance it.

Then, Vale received the memories of the blond man. The man was called Keith, and he was from the 9th Squad of Order of the Evanescent Vessels. His task was to give the Dragon Scale to Isaac Vermont and have it crafted as a Dark Magic Weapon. Vale would then be the receiver of this item as per the Headmaster's request.

However, the sudden attack on the Academy made them unable to stick to their plans. They had to make some changes to their original plans.

Vale would no longer receive any special admission and had to be eliminated.

This special admission should allow Vale to enter the Academy even without his shadow partly taken. However, only the Headmaster could give this, and it would take a large amount of energy to accomplish. Since Jean would have to fight against the invaders of their Academy, he could not be weakened at this moment.

"So it was like that..." Vale muttered as he understood the plans they made. Furthermore, he also learned that the other Dark Arts Academy students had already been evacuated since the invaders of the Academy were most likely the Holy Arts Factions and their allies.

In short, he was now all alone in the Roaring City. Not only was he targeted by the Vessels, but he might also be targeted by other organizations.

"Now... What should I do?" Vale muttered as he didn't expect that just like that, he was already free. He was no longer bound to attend the Academy.

Furthermore, he was already quite strong and could certainly live however he wanted.

Vale was momentarily lost as he initially thought that he would still have to visit the Academy one last time to say goodbye to his friends.

He would certainly miss Chad, Lisa, and the others, including his club friends.

Vale sighed and took the things that the unconscious Vessels had brought with them.

He grabbed their Magic Cloaks, Daggers, and the Dragon Scale that was supposed to be sent to Isaac...

Then, he cast his Beast Shapeshift Spell. His body shrank and twisted, changing into a mischievous Imp!

Leathery wings sprouted from his back, and his skin transformed to a deep crimson hue. Yvaine, having grown accustomed to Vale's transformations, observed silently as he underwent this change.

"You can hide now, Yvaine. Thanks for your help." Vale said, using their telepathy after he finished his transformation.

Once Yvaine vanished from sight, Vale utilized one of the Imp's Spells known as Nightfall's Embrace.

This Spell unleashed a surge of shadow energy and released a substantial amount of Imp Essence into the surrounding area. The vulnerable Vessels, unable to defend themselves, were swiftly obliterated upon contact with the Spell.

The room fell apart, and the formation nodes that were blocking the energy broke down.

Boom!

The burst of Arcane Aura caught the attention of many people, including the Arcanists from different Orders.

After a few moments, an Imp emerged from the hotel building where the chaos had unfolded.

"Aahh! Run!"

"There's a demon!"

"He killed the people in the hotel!"

"Hurry! Call the police!"

"It's escaping!"

"It's flying away! Someone catch that thing!"

Panic ensued among the crowd on the streets, who had heard the explosion and witnessed the Imp's flight.

Despite the panic and commotion caused by his transformation into an Imp, Vale paid no mind to the cries of the crowd and swiftly flew away, aiming to distance himself from the pursuing Arcanists.

The reason he did this was to ensure that the blame for the death of the Vessels would be directed to the mysterious red Imp that had appeared in the Hotel and not to Vale Chambers.

After all, although he could just change his identity, he didn't like the idea of tarnishing his name.

Anyway, he had no intention of leaving the city in his Imp form. He still had other things to do in this city, and he felt it would be safer to do it with another identity.

Once he found a secure location, he promptly concealed himself and transformed back into his human form.

In addition to changing his clothes, he employed his Human Shapeshift Spell to assume the appearance of Eustace, a Summoning Arts Practitioner, while carrying his Grimoire with him.

This was an identity he had used quite some time ago aside from his identity as Clovis, a Holy Arts Practitioner.

"Now I can finally visit a mystical artifact shop in this guise..." Vale murmured to himself as he made his way towards a nearby establishment.

Assured that he was no longer being followed, he felt a sense of confidence. The only concern that lingered in his mind was whether someone could still sense Yvaine's presence nearby.

Meanwhile, Royal Mage Odessa reached the location where the Crimson Imp had made its appearance and supposedly eliminated the Vessels.

As she surveyed the aftermath, a sense of bewilderment washed over her.

"What's the meaning of this? How could a lowly Imp be responsible for the demise of five Evanescent Vessels?" Odessa murmured, her voice tinged with utter confusion.

Chapter 498 Lucky Sprite Shop

Karl, the new store clerk of the Lucky Sprite Shop, stood behind the counter, slightly disheartened by the lack of customers today.

The bustling business they had experienced during the early days of the Twelve Academies Competition seemed to have dwindled, leaving the shop quiet and empty.

As he glanced at the shelves stocked with an assortment of magic scrolls, Karl couldn't help but sigh.

"Today has been slow, even though we just received new stocks of magic scrolls..." Karl muttered, his voice filled with a tinge of disappointment.

The Lucky Sprite Shop was renowned for its Beast Summoning Scrolls, which were in high demand among the Arcanists visiting Roaring City. The shop had managed to establish connections with skilled Beast Crafters, enabling them to procure high and low-quality scrolls.

They were able to serve those rich and poor Arcanists with their wide range of selections.

Furthermore, two entire shelves were dedicated to displaying the array of Beast Arts-related scrolls, while other shelves held scroll-making materials and alchemy dry ingredients. Of course, their shop also carried a limited selection of Arcane Weapons, which were stored away due to their negative effects.

He may have a talent in Beast Arts but he hadn't had a chance to receive a Beast Totem. Because of that, he couldn't enter the Titan's Will and use his Magic Zone.

'This sucks... How will I earn my 5,000 zen like this.' Karl muttered as this was his only way to receive a Beast Totem, he had to purchase it in the black market. Since he was already a bit too old for the Academy, he could only try to become a rogue Arcanist.

Just as Karl was beginning to lose hope, the tinkling sound of the bell hanging on the door broke the silence.

Cling~ Cling~

A customer had finally arrived. Karl's eyes lit up as he saw a teenager enter the shop, clutching a grimoire. The young man possessed a striking appearance, with short red hair and a flawless complexion.

'A Summoner and he also looks like a noble... I'll finally earn something for today.' Karl mused silently to himself.

Putting on a friendly smile, he greeted the customer, allowing him to explore the shelves without interruption.

Karl knew from experience that customers often preferred to browse before approaching the counter. He didn't mind waiting since noble customers would normally spend huge sums of money.

After some time, the young man finally spoke up, his voice polite yet curious. "Do you also purchase Magic Items? I have a few things here that I wanted to sell."

Realizing that the customer had come to sell rather than buy, Karl wryly smiled but nodded nonetheless. "While we don't purchase all Magic Items, we can appraise them and offer you a fair price. If we can't buy them here, I'll be happy to recommend another shop."

The young man seemed pleased with Karl's response and promptly retrieved five Magic Items from his belongings. They were three Formation Nodes, an Amulet, and a Crystal.

Karl's eyes widened as he evaluated the appearance of the items. "These are remarkable, sir! I may not be an Arcanist but I felt the atmosphere turning heavy... Please allow me to call for our shop's appraiser. These items are beyond me."

The young man nodded as he already expected this to happen after noticing that Karl was not an Arcanist.

Karl then excused himself for a moment and hurriedly went to the back of the shop, where the elderly and wise Mystic Arts Practitioner, could be found.

"Sir Emory," Karl called out respectfully, "I have a customer with some valuable Magic Items for appraisal. Your expertise would be greatly appreciated."

The old man, with his long white beard and calm demeanor, nodded in response. He followed Karl to the front of the shop, his steps slow but purposeful.

Sir Emory was known for his mastery of Appraisal Spells, as well as possessing a collection of Mystical Items that aided him in assessing magical artifacts.

He probably has the best appraisal abilities in the city if the Orders of various Factions aren't included.

As Sir Emory approached the counter, his eyes scanned the items laid out before him. He didn't even bother looking at the customer.

With a gentle touch, he began to invoke his Appraisal Spells, delving into the essence of each Magic Item to unlock their secrets. The shop fell silent as everyone awaited Sir Emory's findings.

After a few moments of deep concentration, Sir Emory's face lit up with understanding.

"Three Wind Vortex Defense Formation Nodes, Amulet of Swift Steps, and Crystal of Elemental Shield."

Emory muttered as he revealed the names of each item. After some consideration, he put a value on them.

The three Wind Vortex Defense Formation Nodes' value was estimated to be around 7,500 zen each. The Amulet of Swift Steps and the Crystal of Elemental Shield were recognized as Noble Rank High-Grade items, each with minor side effects, and he estimated their combined worth to be 18,000 zen.

Karl and the young man listened attentively. Karl was already breathing heavily since these prices were incredibly high for him. Overall, the items in front of him were worth 40,500!

He was only dealing with Scrolls in Mortal Ranks after all.

"These are decent Royal Rank Items... We can't purchase them all. At most, we can pay you 20,000 zen but the rest would be items here that you may be interested." Emory said as he looked at Karl.

"I will let you handle the negotiation..."

"Yes, Sir Emory..." Karl said while holding his necklace. This necklace could save him from spells or pressure coming from Arcanists. So he didn't mind negotiating alone.

With that, Sir Emory returned to his quiet corner of the shop, leaving Karl and the young man to proceed with the transaction.

"Twenty thousand zen and items from this shop worth 20,500 zen don't sound bad. But I'm not sure if you have items that I'm looking for." The young man muttered.

"Our humble shop may appear small, but we hold a respectable reputation in these parts, Sir." The store clerk remarked, a warm smile gracing his lips. "May I inquire as to how I should address you? My name is Karl..."

"I am Eustace Skye..." The young man replied, his voice carrying an air of confidence.

Chapter 499 Complete Transaction

'He probably can't use the items effectively, so he's selling it...' Karl commented in his mind before he proceeded to showcase the prized possessions of their store to Eustace.

They were the highest quality Beast Summoning Scrolls.

Although they were only classified as High-Grade Mortal Rank Items, they were still incredibly useful.

These scrolls had the remarkable ability to summon 10 powerful Beasts.

Depending on the specific summoning scroll, these creatures could serve as 10 Beast Scouts for reconnaissance, 10 Ferocious Beasts capable of fearlessly attacking targets even at the cost of their own lives, or 10 Clone Beasts skilled in carrying the scent and aura of their summoner, effectively functioning as decoys.

"Oh... I had no idea such things existed." Eustace whispered, genuinely impressed by their capabilities.

Moreover, he discovered that these scrolls were reasonably priced, making them even more enticing. Eustace contemplated that there might come a time when he would require such scrolls. Given their efficiency and low energy requirements for activation, even a first-year student at the Academy could utilize them effectively. However, he decided to postpone his decision and instead turned to Karl with inquiries about other items available.

In any case, it had been some time when he could freely do something like this so he might as well take his time.

Furthermore, his Human Shapeshift could already last as long as his Phantasm State.

'Ahh...'

After reaching this thought, Eustace had an idea and asked Karl.

"Do you have an item that I can use to conceal my identity?"

Recognizing Eustace's interest, Karl smiled knowingly. "I see you have plans to venture into the Black Market. We do have an item that I can recommend, one that is highly sought after by the market's inhabitants." With a swift motion, Karl retrieved a small box from a drawer behind the counter.

"This particular item has a fixed price of 5,000 zen." Karl stated, presenting it to Eustace.

Eustace found it amusing that Karl immediately assumed he would use it to visit the Black Market. Anyway, he didn't mind this misunderstanding as his curiosity was piqued.

"What exactly is this item?" He asked.

"It is a necklace designed to conceal one's true voice and alter one's facial appearance, allowing for a disguise. However, it does not affect the wearer's physical attributes. What's good about this is that its negative effects would only appear if you wear this for more than six hours... It's itchiness in your eyes that could last for six days. It's not a big deal since it can be easily avoided. Lastly, it has a low maintenance cost as well. You only have to expose it to the sun for a few hours once a month. If it's winter and there's no sun, you have to return it inside this box and seal it." Karl explained.

Seeing that Eustace was listening attentively, he continued.

"If you have intentions of engaging in potentially dubious transactions within the Black Market, it is advisable to participate in their auctions. This way, your identity remains protected by a few layers."

A glimmer of interest flickered in Eustace's eyes as he absorbed this information. The necklace wasn't absurd, so he already liked it. As for the auction, he wasn't too sure, but he might as well check it out.

"There's an auction within the Black Market?" He asked, his curiosity growing.

"Yes, indeed. There is only one auction held in the heart of the Black Market. If you have yet to experience it... well, let's just say it's quite an experience... It's a bit difficult to contact their middleman though." Karl hinted with a mischievous smile.

Eustace caught onto Karl's implications immediately. It became obvious that Karl, not being an Arcanist, faced his own challenges and sought alternative means to earn a livelihood.

Eustace smiled and decided to extend a gesture of goodwill. "I don't have much cash on me since you haven't paid me yet, but perhaps this potion would be of value..." Eustace said, revealing a vial of potion from his belongings.

The Energy Potion held little significance to Eustace, making it an easy exchange.

Karl's eyes brightened with appreciation as he accepted the potion without requiring an appraisal. Karl was happy since it would help him build his savings, bringing him closer to acquiring the coveted Beast Totem for his journey as a Rogue Arcanist.

"Thank you for your generosity..." Karl expressed gratefully. "You may have heard that the Black Market is situated beneath the city's largest tavern. However, the entrance fee there is overpriced. Sir Emory informed me that you can gain access through the Gold Club."

"Gold Club?" Eustace asked.

"Ahem... It's a fancy brothel for nobles. If you inform them that you are to sell valuable items in the Black Market, they will check them for you and if they are indeed items of high quality, you will have free access to the Black Market and your identity will be a lot safer. All cities with Gold Clubs should have this same function."

"It's impressive you have access to such information..." Eustace commented.

"Of course... I've been serving a few Arcanists before. Ahem... Now that it's settled, I can give you 12 scrolls with 4 of each type that we have, including this necklace. I will also add three Blank Scrolls." Karl said.

"I don't need Blank Scrolls... I can't make scrolls." Eustace immediately said.

Karl smiled at this.

"It's not quite as you think. These scrolls are actually designed to store and preserve your Arcane Energy." Karl clarified, eager to dispel any misconceptions.

"Typically, we offer these as complimentary gifts to our customers when they make substantial purchases. However, we haven't had many customers in the past few days, so you can simply have them. Consider it a gesture from the store... All I have to do is to refrain from giving away freebies to future customers." Karl explained with a lighthearted chuckle.

"Is that so?"

Eustace nodded in appreciation...

They soon completed the transaction as Eustace gained 20 thousand zen and the items he got from the store.

With a final exchange of gratitude, Eustace wore the Altering Necklace he just bought and bid farewell to Karl.

Upon stepping out, he immediately became aware of the extensive mobilization of people scouring the city in search of the elusive Crimson Imp.

Chapter 500 Ancient Ritual

In the serene white room on the tenth floor of the Mystic Soul Tower, silence enveloped the space.

Constance, a woman in her twenties, captivated the room with her striking blue hair and piercing blue eyes. She stood there, silently gazing into a crystal ball that was projecting the Arcanists' attempts to conquer the challenges of the third floor.

As the Tower Master of the Mystic Soul Tower, Constance held immense power and influence within its walls. However, her mind was preoccupied with her own agenda.

With a flicker of excitement in her eyes, she shifted her attention to an orb of light, or the Divine Crystal, that contained a trace of Divinity. Given to her by Vale, she eagerly anticipated the moment when she could assimilate it.

She told Vale that she would use it to create a body for her and to advance her research related to immortality. However, she had actually already learned the secret to immortality. She just decided not to tell it to Vale. After all, the secret would involve the Mystic Soul Tower.

If Vale learned about it, he might demand to use the power of the Tower as well.

"Mhmm... Is he not done yet?" Constance muttered as she turned her gaze back to the crystal ball.

Having spent considerable time in preparation, Constance was ready to set her plan in motion. Once the current Arcanist within the Tower was expelled, she would seal the Tower, preventing anyone else from entering.

She knew this would cause a stir and commotion outside, but it was a necessary sacrifice to harness the Tower's potent energy and create a physical form for herself.

In any case, she was confident that the powerful Arcanists outside wouldn't dare to mess with the Tower for a short period of time.

"Ah, this one should be defeated on the fifth floor..." Constance muttered, her gaze fixed on the crystal projection of the ongoing struggle on the third floor.

With the skills that the man was showing, the fifth floor would certainly be their limit.

As expected, Constance didn't have to wait long before the current Arcanist was defeated and expelled from the Tower.

This was her moment to use the Tower for her own.

Immediately, she activated one of her abilities as the Tower Master, sealing the Mystic Soul Tower before the next Arcanist could step foot inside.

"Good..." As soon as she noticed that no one was able to get in, Constance smiled in relief as she began the ritual.

In the meantime, the sudden closure of the Tower alarmed those gathered outside.

"Senior, I can't enter the Tower with this key." The perplexed seventh-year student from the Holy Arts Academy exclaimed while standing at the entrance.

He couldn't help but wonder if the key he had been given had been sabotaged.

Confused by the sudden claim of the student, an official outside the Tower approached and inquired about the situation.

As soon as he realized that the key didn't work, it immediately alarmed him.

It didn't take long before the word spread to everyone in the surroundings. The audience became interested in the unfolding commotion as their minds were abuzz with speculation about the cause of the delay.

Constance took a brief moment to focus her mind before she embarked on a profound and intricate ritual within her chamber.

Her eyes gleamed with eagerness, for she was about to undertake a special ceremony that would grant her the coveted physical form she had long desired.

The first step of the ritual required the Divine Crystal, the source of Divinity that provides an extension to a mortal's life. Holding it in her hands, she channeled her arcane energy into the crystal, allowing its divine essence to intertwine with her own.

Then, the crystal pulsed with a radiant glow, resonating with the energy of the Mystic Soul Tower.

Next, Constance retrieved an ancient tome, bound in worn leather and inscribed with cryptic symbols. This tome held the secrets of the Tower, passed down through generations of Tower Masters. It could also be considered the core of the Tower.

With careful movements, she opened the book to the designated pages, revealing a detailed diagram of a certain ritual.

To enhance the potency of the ritual, Constance had also gathered rare and exotic ingredients. She carefully arranged a circle of enchanted crystals, each imbued with a specific elemental essence.

'If I'm going to obtain a new body, I need to make sure that I can wield all the elements this time.' Constance silently thought.

The crystals shimmered with vibrant hues, representing the fundamental forces of nature. Placing them in a circular position around the ritual space, she created a harmonious balance of elemental energies.

In the center of the circle, Constance positioned a silver chalice, intricately etched with ancient symbols. This chalice symbolized the vessel through which her spiritual essence would be transferred into the physical realm.

Within the chalice, she poured a mixture of rare herbs and potent elixirs, carefully measured and prepared for this pivotal moment.

With the preparations complete, Constance closed her eyes, centering her focus and harnessing the power of the Mystic Soul Tower.

She began to chant ancient incantations, the words flowing from her lips like a melodic hymn.

"By the Mystic Soul Tower's might and grace, I seek a form, a tangible embrace. From spirit bound, I now aspire, To manifest in flesh, my heart's desire..."

... As I speak these words, let realms align, Flesh and spirit, forever entwined. From this chalice, my spirit shall flow, Physical form, now let it show..."

The vibrations of her voice resonated with the very essence of the Tower, amplifying the ritual's potency.

As she chanted, the enchanted crystals surrounding her began to emit a soft, ethereal glow. The energy within the room intensified, swirling in intricate patterns, as if responding to Constance's invocation. Arcane symbols etched into the walls of the chamber glowed with a vibrant luminosity, further enhancing the mystical atmosphere.

This time, she knew that she already succeeded since this was the most difficult step.

'We will meet again soon, Vale... I'm sure you'll be surprised.'