

D. Extraction 541

Chapter 541 Broken

It didn't take long before Eustace and Constance's identity spread to other factions and even the churches in the city.

Well, they had become quite popular over the past two weeks. After all, this mysterious couple who had saved the city were expected to receive some form of reward and honor, but they had chosen to disappear without seeking any recognition.

Many people viewed them as selfless heroes who simply wanted to help others.

"Your Excellency, we have located the two individuals who subdued the Evil Entity we suspected to be the Gluttony. Their names are Eustace and Constance. They are both in the city, and we have confirmed that one of them is registered in the Arcanist Guild while the other remains aloof and seldom ventures outside." An acolyte, clad in a long gray robe, reported.

The acolyte was addressing the blind Archbishop who had arrived from the capital.

"So they were indeed staying here. Since Eustace is a Summoner, I must meet with him. There's still a small chance that he's the Masked Devil Incarnate as well." The Archbishop remarked as he conjured his staff seemingly out of thin air. He then gazed at the statue of the Fortune Goddess as if he could see it and silently offered a prayer.

After a short and silent prayer, he spoke.

"Inform me of their current location immediately..." He abruptly instructed the acolyte.

Meanwhile, Eustace had just returned to the hotel room and found Constance engrossed in several books.

The books primarily focused on Arcane Spells, Formation Arts, and the Medicine Field. Despite her ability to absorb information at an accelerated pace, there was still an abundance of knowledge to acquire, especially for someone like her who had been confined in the Mystic Tower for centuries. At that moment, Constance was immersed in a book entitled "The Lich Manual."

Eustace wasn't certain whether the book pertained to controlling a Lich or if it was intended for the education of a Lich. Nevertheless, he interrupted her reading.

"Constance, something has occurred outside." Eustace began, proceeding to explain the events that transpired and the invitation he had received from the Order of the Enlightened Threads.

"What? You declined? That's a free bath in the Arcane Spring, you know? I thought it no longer existed. So, they were actually monopolized by the 12 Paths..." Constance muttered in astonishment upon hearing Eustace's explanation.

"Is it that significant?" Eustace inquired. He also heard about the Arcane Spring during the Academy Competition.

It was one of the rewards given to first-place winners of some contests. He knew that it was quite precious for young Arcanists, but he didn't expect that even Constance would be interested in it.

Constance looked at Eustace in surprise, and seeing that Eustace seemed truly clueless about it, she listed the important benefits that the Arcane Spring could provide.

The first was the rejuvenation and revitalization of spiritual energy. For Summoners, it could help with the cleansing and purification of the Summoner's Aura, so it would be a lot easier for a Summoner to attract stronger Familiars.

Then, it could also help with the enhancement of their affinity. Whether it was an affinity with Flying Creatures, Elemental Creatures, or Mystical Beings, this affinity would increase with the help of the Arcane Spring.

Of course, there was also a chance to increase the capacity of Spell Lights. Many people had said that if you bathed on the Arcane Spring multiple times, the number of times you could use your spells would slightly increase.

Lastly, bathing in the Arcane Spring could potentially lead to enlightenment or even revelation through spiritual communion with the spring's energies.

"That sounds impressive. How do you know all of this?" Eustace muttered.

"Hmph... That's the combined knowledge of past and present. It would be best if you read more books. Your academy had focused too much on the Darkness Path. They should've taught you about the other paths as well."

Eustace could only nod and thank the Tower Master for informing him about the Arcane Spring.

"Are you sure you're not going to accept it? I don't really mind if you join their group." Constance said as she looked at Eustace carefully.

"I'm fine. You still have to continue teaching me how to master my Divinity."

"That's true. It probably won't be too late if you join them in a few more years."

The two continued chatting for a while about their plans in the city. Eustace was planning to accept a few more missions in the Arcanist Guild, while Constance was planning to acquire a few items for herself, so she needed to go out and look around the market.

"Mhmm? You have some guests, Eustace." Constance said as she smiled mysteriously.

Eustace also felt the presence of the people outside the hotel without even activating his Magic Zone. His ESP Spell had already informed him about a few Magic Zones passing through their room.

"Is it the Archbishop... Ahh..."

Suddenly, the space around Eustace and Constance twisted. It was a familiar scene when the Archbishop met the Masked Devil Incarnate.

However, this time, Eustace wasn't planning to wear the Devil's Face and waited for the Archbishop to arrive.

Thud.

As soon the old man stepped out of the space crack he created, he looked at the two people in the room and seemed to be a bit surprised about Eustace and Constance's reaction.

"Interesting... I normally get attacked whenever I do this with strangers. If not, they'll be looking at me with fear and have their guards up. However, you two seemed calm, as if my presence doesn't threaten you at all."

The Archbishop suddenly commented as he observed the two's aura. He had created a strong defense to ensure that his "movement" would not be interrupted. However, it seemed that it was unnecessary.

It felt as if they were looking at a show and weren't threatened by his method of arrival.

"Mhmm... Was that Rift Walk? Space Fold? No... Perhaps that's a Spatial Warp? I didn't expect an Archbishop to carelessly use a Broken Arcana." Constance suddenly remarked while looking at the Archbishop blindfold!

Eustace was immediately stunned after hearing this.

Chapter 542 A Mistake

"What?"

Eustace was taken aback by the revelation that the Archbishop possessed an Arcana!

Despite Constance's assertion that it was damaged, Eustace couldn't help but be intrigued by it. He harbored a desire to examine whether his System could extract it.

'I'd probably get something awesome, right? Perhaps something other than Divinity?' Eustace mused.

Similarly, upon Constance's identification of the Arcana, the Archbishop was visibly alarmed.

Apart from the Pontiff and a select few high-ranking officials of the Church, no one should have been aware of his possession of an Arcana, particularly a Damaged Arcana.

"You!" The Archbishop exclaimed, swiftly regaining his composure.

He promptly erected a barrier within the room, fearing that the conversation and the commotion might attract unwanted attention. The revelation of his possession of such a valuable object could lead to chaos among various organizations. His status would be of little use against individuals driven to frenzy.

They would certainly do their best to obtain this item from him! It means that moving outside alone would no longer be possible.

Whom~

After casting the barrier, he resolved to launch an attack on the two, as no one should be privy to this secret.

Leveraging his status as an Archbishop, he intended to claim that these individuals had been possessed by devils. It should be quite easy for him to do that, especially with what had happened recently. He could just say that the Evil Spirit had transferred to them!

With this in mind, he wasted no time initiating his Spell Fusion. He was ready to eliminate them.

However, he was still too slow! He made a mistake in using a Spell Fusion that takes some time to activate!

"Hey! That's dangerous! Stop that." Eustace's voice suddenly interjected as the Archbishop prepared to channel his energy through his Staff to empower his Spell.

Casting Spell Fusion without the Staff would make it longer and weaker after all.

'What?' The Archbishop frowned as he felt something wrong.

It was then that he realized he was no longer holding his Staff!

Furthermore, his blindfold had been removed and was now in the possession of the young man.

"When did you---"

He was momentarily unable to move as he tried recalling what had happened. His Magic Zone was obviously working, and his belt's Holy Force Field should be active!

It means that he should know whether a spell had hit him or not! Lastly, his heightened sense of surroundings as a blind person should be unmatched! He shouldn't have missed Eustace's ability to steal!

"How did you do that?" The Archbishop asked coldly. He wasn't panicking, but he was certainly not in a good mood as his Holy Aura started thickening and slowly suppressing the two.

"Oh? I'm not expecting that as well. I didn't know taking items from an Archbishop was easy. You didn't guard against that? They're not even Soulbound..." Eustace remarked while inspecting the items. He was indeed astonished at the effectiveness of his Traceless Shift against the elderly man.

This time, it was Constance's turn to be surprised. She was always on her guard the moment the Archbishop had torn a space within their room that was supposedly protected by her Formation Art.

Although the Formation Art was hastily made by her, she was surprised by how it was not broken when the Archbishop used his Arcana to arrive here.

It only shows how this old man had incredible control over the Arcana despite being broken. There was no way she would underestimate him with her current weakened state.

She then shifted her gaze to the items Eustace was holding.

'This guy is really too mysterious. I don't think that by just having a Celestial Physique, you can already obtain such a cheat-like spell. What was even that Spell? It's definitely not a normal one.'

Constance mused as she recalled some unique Spells with similar abilities, like Swipe of the Wind, Borrow's Grace, Plunder's Touch, and Uncalled Snatch. However, none of them seemed to be capable of going unnoticed by the old man's defenses.

"Then it must be a Spirit Art I'm unaware of." She muttered while looking at Eustace curiously.

Then, at this time, the Archbishop made his move! He was no longer holding back!

"Holy Smite!"

The Archbishop shouted in fury as he began to invoke two more Holy Arts! They were Sacred Spear and Sacred Fire.

Three Holy Spells at once!

Boom!

A brilliant beam of sacred light erupted from his fingertips, forming intricate patterns in the air before converging on Eustace.

The Sacred Spear also manifested above Eustace and was waiting for its descent. As for the Sacred Fire, it headed towards Constance to ensure she would not be able to save her partner!

Eustace, realizing the force behind these spells, swiftly opened his Grimoire, calling upon the power within to summon his Savage Murlocs.

The two Murlocks would probably die, but they were certainly a decent meat shield.

Then, the room was suddenly filled with frenzied screeches and splashes as the Savage Murlocs surged forth, their primal ferocity unleashed.

Eek!

Their life was short, but these creatures were merely a ploy to buy time.

As the Archbishop's Spells hit the tough meat shields he summoned, Constance also blocked the Sacred Fire aimed at her.

Then, she simply continued observing from the sidelines, patiently awaiting an opportune moment.

Eustace seized the opening as he activated his Shadow Mutilation Spell, casting an invisible mark on the Archbishop.

The latter knew he was hit by something, but he couldn't guess what it was as he didn't feel any threat or pain from the Spell.

However, he knew that unknown spells were dangerous.

Crash~

Without any hesitation, he flew outside the room by crashing through the window... He needed more space as there might be a need to escape or recuperate.

Because the Archbishop came out of the barrier he arranged, their battle was soon discovered by the people on the streets.

Several screams from the crowd were heard as they thought that an old man was thrown from the third floor of the building.

However, the three had ignored the people below them. Then, Eustace looked at the Archbishop from his room.

"You made it easier for me..." He muttered with a mysterious smile.

Chapter 543 Grasp

As the Archbishop escaped from the building, Eustace secretly unleashed his Shadow Soldier.

During this time, the Archbishop was hovering in the air, oblivious to the shadow he cast on the ground. Eustace saw this as a chance to get rid of the intruder and possibly extract some valuable information from him. He blended his Shadow Soldier with the crowd below, and the Archbishop mistook it for another Arcanist within his Magic Zone.

"Come... Heretics of the Order of Fatality. Show me what you've got!" The Archbishop bellowed, making sure everyone on the street could hear him.

"What? Did he say the Order of Fatality?!"

"Yes! They're Cultists!"

"Look... Those two must be the heroes who killed the Evil Entity. Why did the Archbishop call them Heretics?"

"There must be a misunderstanding."

"No, I think that those two got possessed and are now serving the Cult."

"Impossible... The Archbishop can purify them if that's the case. They must be genuine cult members."

The people on the street began to gossip and spread rumors based on what they heard.

"Hmph! You think that slandering us will make us back off? Keep dreaming!" Eustace retorted as he commanded his Shadow Soldier to strike the Archbishop's shadow!

"Ahhh!"

The moment the Shadow Soldier plunged its dark blade into the Archbishop's shadow, the Archbishop coughed up blood as he felt his vital organ being punctured!

Eustace smirked as he saw the Archbishop's expression of pain and shock.

'Shadow Mutilation is really the best assassination Spell.' Eustace mused as he continued observing the surroundings. After all, he knew that the Archbishop should not be alone this time.

Unfortunately, as he thought of ending the battle, something unexpected happened.

The Archbishop swiftly recovered and glared at Eustace with a furious look.

"You dare to use such a vile and dark magic on me? You are truly a heretic and a blasphemer! I will show you the wrath of the Holy Light!" The Archbishop then chanted a spell and summoned a floating radiant sword in his hand. At the same time he did this, his Holy Energy also suppressed the Shadow Soldier and dissipated into nothingness.

He then waved his hand, commanding the radiant sword to pierce Eustace.

Whoosh~

A wave of holy energy sliced through the air, alarming even the crowd below them.

Eustace wanted to dodge, but he suddenly felt a strong binding spell on his feet!

It seemed that the remnant Holy Energy in the room had been controlled and became a binding spell under the Archbishop's command!

Luckily, it wasn't too strong, so he only needed to channel his brute force to escape.

Bam!

The Radiant Sword hit the room and destroyed the place. The wall and part of the ceiling collapsed while the floor had also started crumbling!

The Spell was so potent that even Constance had to escape from the attack.

"Ugh..." Eustace grunted as he barely dodged the attack. Then, he felt a burning sensation on his arm.

He looked and saw a deep wound that was bleeding profusely. He realized that the Archbishop's sword was too strong!

He quickly poured a few bottles of healing potion on it to quickly recover.

"Don't look surprised. That Archbishop is using his own life force. Look at him." Constance suddenly commented as she gestured for Eustace to look at the old man.

Indeed, as soon as he saw that the old man had aged a lot and had grown more white hair, Eustace realized that Constance was telling the truth. The Archbishop was using his own life to attack him!

'This old man had gone insane...' Eustace thought as he knew he had to be careful. A crazed man who had nothing to lose was definitely the most dangerous opponent.

Eustace then activated his Shadow Soldier Spell once again and targeted the shadow near the Archbishop's shadow.

He wanted to be secretive about it. However, this time, the Archbishop had already noticed his action and was about to destroy this soldier with his Holy Aura.

'Not this time...' Eustace was quick and decided to use his other ability, the Shadow Shift.

This was still part of the Shadow Soldier Spell, but it could only be used once the Spell Model had transformed to its Advanced Realm state.

Anyway, with this Shadow Shift Spell, he could swap places with his Shadow Soldier at any time, creating confusion and deception.

As soon as he activated his Shadow Shift, he switched positions with his Shadow Soldier.

It happened so quickly that the Archbishop was caught off guard and felt another stab in his chest. He groaned and tried to suppress the pain by using a Healing Spell.

'So he can really attack my shadow... I didn't see it wrong just now. What kind of ability is this? No, this guy is not a Summoner!' The Archbishop finally realized Eustace's secret as he planned to run away.

At this time, he had no way of protecting his shadow from Eustace's attacks. He could heal his injuries and survive some fatal attacks, but he couldn't do it for a long time.

He wasn't prepared for it at all!

He didn't have unlimited Holy Energy, and once he got exhausted, Eustace's next strike on his shadow would be fatal.

"I'll come back and---" The Archbishop didn't finish his words as Eustace had already appeared behind him and grabbed his neck.

"Y-you can fly at such speed?!"

The Archbishop was surprised, and the crowd below also gasped in shock. They didn't expect that the Archbishop would be in such a position!

As the Archbishop circulated his internal energy to resist Eustace's hold, he suddenly felt his strength weakened!

Then, he heard Eustace whisper in his ear. "Now, let's see what secrets you are hiding."

At this time, Eustace didn't hesitate to use his Extraction System. Furthermore, he focused on extracting the fragments of the old man's memory!

The Archbishop struggled and screamed, but it was futile.

Eustace had him in his grasp.

Chapter 544 Interrupted

The Extraction wasn't without pain, as Eustace didn't slow it down. He wanted the Extraction to be quick, and he even used a bit of his Divinity to ensure that he would have a bountiful harvest.

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Intelligence +0.25]

[Extraction Successful. Memory Fragment.]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Intelligence +0.25]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Agility +0.25]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Agility +0.25]

[Extraction Successful. Energy +40, Vitality +0.25]

[Extraction Successful. Complete Spell Light +1?]

[Extraction Successful...]

The System's Extraction hadn't ended yet, but Eustace had already begun to see the Archbishop's past, motives and plans, allies and enemies.

"This guy..."

He was shocked by what he learned. He couldn't believe it. The Archbishop was not a complete human at all!

Aside from learning that this Archbishop was also looking for Dark Magicians to be eliminated because of the ongoing Faction War, he also learned a huge secret of the Church of the Fortune Goddess.

"Humonculus Project? Artificial Human?"

Eustace almost loosened his grasp as this revelation was completely out of his expectations. However, he recalled how he had to end this Archbishop's life.

He couldn't let this old man return to his organization.

He doesn't care if his reputation goes awry. He didn't mind becoming a criminal with this identity since he was simply in disguise.

He might have to make some changes to his current plans, but he didn't mind doing it. In any case, he also wanted to take everything from this powerful Arcanist.

After all, even though the Archbishop was an artificial human, his Spell Lights and power were genuine.

"Whew~ That's a lot of information..."

As Eustace finished his Extraction on the Archbishop, he sensed that the old man was on the verge of death.

He was about to deliver the final strike and extract his corpse, when he felt a surge of Arcane energy behind him.

He turned and saw several angry Arcanists rushing towards him. They had witnessed his attack on the Archbishop and were enraged.

They launched twelve different Spells at him, each one more powerful than the last.

He didn't plan on taking all of them, so he had no choice but to run! He immediately threw the Archbishop in hopes of dividing their forces before he descended to the crowded streets and activated his Lightspeed Spell.

"Constance, we have to go! Now!" Eustace shouted to his partner, who was still fighting with another Arcanist.

She had been protecting him over the last minute while he was extracting the Archbishop. Thanks to her, he peacefully received the memories of the old man.

"I'll follow..."

She nodded and quickly dispatched her opponent with a swift kick. She then ran towards Eustace, dodging the Spells that were flying at them.

"Ahhh!"

"Help! Please! Stop attacking!"

"Run! Keep running!"

To their surprise, the Arcanists didn't stop attacking even after they blended into the crowd! This resulted in the injuries of the ordinary citizens!

Apparently, only two Priests went to the injured Archbishop.

Furthermore, he felt the presence of a dozen more Arcanists on the ground, aiming their spells at them!

"Damn it, they're too vicious..." Eustace grunted as he knew that these Arcanists didn't care about the innocent people's lives!

With this in mind, he jumped to the edge of the rooftop as Constance followed behind.

This way, the crowd would not get affected by the spells thrown at them.

Eustace looked down and saw a crowd of people on the street, watching the spectacle in the sky.

He also saw his Shadow Soldier, who had been left behind when he used his Shadow Shift. He had an idea.

"Follow me!" He said as he jumped off the roof, grabbing Constance's hand.

After some time, he activated his Shadow Shift again and swapped places with his Shadow Soldier...

Eustace used it as a portal to escape!

The Arcanists who were chasing them were stunned. They saw Eustace and Constance disappear and turn into a Shadow Soldier, who was momentarily motionless in the air.

They didn't know what to do.

They had lost their target, and their leader was on the verge of death!

The two Holy Knights in the group could only cast a purification spell to kill the Shadow Soldier, which was already descending to the ground.

After some time, Eustace and Constance emerged from the shadow in a dark alley, far away from the scene.

They were safe, for now. They breathed a sigh of relief and checked their wounds. They were both injured, but not seriously.

They had survived an encounter with the Archbishop and escaped from the horde of Holy Arts Practitioners.

"Are you okay?" Eustace asked Constance, who was bandaging her arm. She nodded and smiled.

"Yeah, I'm fine. My recorded Spells are just too potent... I really have to find a weaker one to use in this type of situation." Constance replied as each of her current recorded spells consumed more than 15 to 20 percent of her energy.

They were too overkill when dealing with some third-rate Arcanists.

"Right... I didn't expect you'd make that Archbishop helpless after being grabbed. That was amazing." She added while patting Eustace's shoulder.

"It was nothing. It was thanks to my control of Divinity. You did great, too... I had the time to read his memories because you blocked those Arcanists." He said, feeling a warm sensation in his chest. He didn't expect that he would actually need such a partner.

They looked into each other's eyes and felt a connection.

They leaned closer and were about to kiss when they heard a loud noise.

They turned and saw a group of armed men in blue and black uniforms. They had guns and badges.

Eustace and Constance don't know, but these people are agents of the Arcane Bureau, the secret organization that monitors and controls all Arcane activities in the world... Not just the kingdom!

"Freeze! You're under arrest for the murder of the Archbishop and the use of illegal magic!"

Chapter 545 Continuation

"Halt!"

One of the armed men yelled, aiming his gun at them.

Eustace and Constance looked at each other. They knew they were in a tight spot.

They used their Magic Zone to scan these people, and they realized that they were not from the Police force, the Arcanist Guild, or the Faction's Order...

These people had normal guns, but not runic ones. However, they could not be underestimated. Eustace could sense that their bullets were dangerous, as these people had excellent control over their Arcane Energy. He could feel that they were transferring most of their energy to their guns!

He knew that his Spell Dispersion would be useless against their enhanced bullets. He had to either avoid or block their bullets.

With a plan in his mind, Eustace activated his Dark Spell.

Moonlight Specter!

As soon as this Fusion Spell was cast, the outline of two Specters appeared in front of Eustace and Constance.

Seeing that they were not willing to surrender, the leader of the armed men gave the order to shoot.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

By then, the Specters had fully formed and caught all the bullets.

"I knew it... He's not a Summoner! He's a Dark Magician! That's a Moonlight Specter!"

"Switch your bullets! There's no moonlight yet! That Specter is not at its peak!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The armed men quickly changed their magazines as they knew how to deal with spirits or specters.

Eustace and Constance didn't waste any time. They had no grudge against these people, and they seemed to be good people as they were simply trying to arrest the culprit who had killed the "kind and benevolent" Archbishop.

Killing them here wouldn't feel good for their conscience.

"Let's go... We'll leave these Specters to deal with them." Eustace whispered as he held Constance's hands and activated his Lightspeed Spell, followed by his Levitation Spell.

"You're not getting away!" The armed men shouted as they tried to catch up with them. But they were stopped by the Moonlight Specters.

Numerous dark tendrils followed by a chilling aura halted their movements. These Specters were incredibly menacing as they started their assault against the armed men.

In the meantime, as Eustace and Constance began to float, Eustace scowled and activated his fourth spell! It was hard to maintain four spells at once, but he could do it for a short while.

Spell Dispersion!

As soon as he cast this, six tracking spells that were secretly targeting them were destroyed!

"Did you think I wouldn't see them?" Eustace sneered at the figures hiding in the darkness as he escaped with Constance.

They flew over the rooftops, heading towards a safe place.

It took quite some time as they hoped they had shaken off their pursuers. They didn't know who these people were, but they were certainly from a large organization that was most likely connected to the government since they were allowed to wield guns.

Well, Arcanists may hold Mystical Artifacts, but guns or other firearms are prohibited unless they obtain permission to do so.

It didn't take long before they reached a secluded and safe place. It was an abandoned warehouse on the outskirts of the city.

After making sure that no one had followed them, they landed and entered through a broken window. They closed it behind them, and Constance created a Formation Art around through her Divinity...

They finally felt a bit safer inside.

"I think we should leave this city..." Constance suggested. Kirkham City should be a place with few Arcanists around. However, for some reason, a lot of them had gathered here as if they were all waiting for them.

"That's what I'm thinking. Let me just check if we have all the supplies we need." Eustace said, considering that the next city near them would take four days to travel to. After all, the steam-powered train hadn't reached this part of the kingdom. They could only use carriages to travel in such a long distance.

Constance then watched Eustace check their equipment and supplies with Yvaine's help.

Thanks to the Dark Spirit carrying a treasure chest in Eustace's shadow, they were able to store some things inside, which was very convenient.

Furthermore, they will be carrying some supplies as well, so they should have plenty.

They had enough food, water, and medicine for a few days. They also had some books, maps, and documents that they had collected from their missions.

"Stay here... I'll be buying some potions in the market." Eustace suddenly said as his face and voice changed. After that, he stored his Grimoire inside his Shadow and wore a different garb to complete his disguise.

"That's a seamless transition. Can you teach that to me?" Constance commented as she curiously looked at Eustace's face.

"Not yet... In any case, I think you have to get some disguise..." Eustace replied.

"I'm fine. I just need to change the color of my hair. Find something in the market for me."

"Got it." Eustace gently nodded as he left the warehouse.

Since he was wary of those armed men and worried about Constance being left alone, Eustace made sure to finish his errand quickly.

It only took him less than half an hour before he was able to return. He failed to find a dye to color Constance's hair, but surprisingly, there were plenty of wigs being sold, so he decided to find a long black hair for Constance.

Eustace then wanted to leave the city immediately, but Constance held his hand and gestured for him to rest.

"You may not feel tired because of your physique, but you must sit down first..." Constance said.

Eustace could only nod as he sat down on a chair and relaxed.

They had been through a lot today. He indeed needed some rest, even for a short period.

They looked at each other and smiled.

Eustace felt glad that he had someone to talk to and was not alone in this journey.

Once again, Eustace felt something in his heart as they leaned closer and kissed, feeling a surge of emotion. They forgot about their troubles for a moment.

Chapter 546 The Mission

In a small house in the city, the Torrent Squad was gathered. Some of them were playing cards, one was polishing his weapon, some others were lounging around, while a young lady in their group was sipping her tea in a corner.

"Denise? Are you still troubled by what happened?" Leonel, the Torrent Squad's leader, asked their squad's youngest member.

"N-no. I'm just thinking about our next mission. We're going to the Ruri Kingdom, right?" Denise quickly replied as she tried to avoid the topic.

She was indeed disturbed by the previous incident in the city since she knew that Eustace and Constance were not heretics as the Archbishop had claimed.

Lotus didn't say anything to her, but Denise could tell that she was hiding something.

'Is that guy really Vale? Ugh... I should have followed them.' Denise thought as she felt the need to learn a Sound Transmission Spell to be able to communicate secretly with someone.

"Don't worry about the Ruri Kingdom. We won't be going to their cities. We just have to visit the Vampire's Castle." Leonel said as he remembered the mission they had taken.

Apparently, Kirkham City was the nearest city to the Vampire's Castle, which was at the border of the Ruri Kingdom. It was only three days away from them if they traveled by carriage.

Of course, this mission was not a request from the Millton Kingdom but from the Ruri Kingdom's Arcanist Guild. They were the only ones who could issue a permit to pass through the border gate after all.

It seemed that they had a lot of problems in their kingdom, so they hired the Arcanist Guild of the Millton Kingdom to explore the Vampire Castle and possibly kill the creatures living inside.

"We only know that several squads of Third-Class Arcanists have been wiped out there. Even though we'll be joining other Squads, we have to be cautious..." Denise warned.

The next morning, the Torrent Squad gathered with eight other Arcanist Squads at the city gate.

They were all ready to depart for the Ruri Kingdom to explore Vampire's Castle. Four of the Squads were from Kirkham City, while the other four were from Marsden City, one of the closest cities in the kingdom. They had arrived the night before and stayed at a nearby inn.

The leader of the Kirkham City's Squads was a middle-aged man named Roland. He was a Second-Class Arcanist of the Mystic Path and a veteran of many missions.

He greeted Leonel and the other leaders warmly and introduced the other squads who had joined the mission.

They were the Blaze Fan Squad, the Justice Hammer Squad, and the Revenant Squad.

Including the Torrent Squad, four squads would represent their city.

Furthermore, only the Blaze Fan Squad was actually composed of one type of Arcanist. They were all Fire Elementalists, unlike the other squads that were composed of different kinds of Arcanists.

"Do you know that person?" Leonel asked Roland and gestured to a gentleman who seemed to be of a noble descent.

"Of course. You have to watch your words when talking to that man." Roland said as he started to share what he knew about the man.

Apparently, it was the leader of the Marsden City's Squad. He was a young man named Drake. He was a First-Class Arcanist, but he was arrogant and ambitious.

He looked down on the other Squads and barely acknowledged them.

As Roland said this, they heard Drake introduce his city's squads with a smug tone.

They were the Ash Squad, the Tormentor Squad, the Pulsating Heart Squad, and the Shadow Knight Squad.

They were all wearing some sort of uniform to identify themselves, unlike the Arcanists from Kirkham City, who had their own sets of equipment.

"They're nobles?" Denise asked in a soft voice.

"Most likely... I wonder if these people have enough experience." Leonel commented as he felt that these Arcanists seemed to care more about their appearance.

Anyway, the squads working for Drake seemed eager to prove themselves as their gazes seemed to taunt them.

Nevertheless, Denise and the others did not feel a sense of rivalry with these people.

Well, at the very least, they just didn't like their attitude and their arrogance. They decided to ignore them and focus on their mission.

After a few encouraging words from the Guildmaster, they soon boarded their carriages and set off to cross the border.

The journey was long and tedious. They had to pass through several checkpoints and small villages along the way.

They also had to deal with the occasional Evil Creatures that attacked them.

Well, there are plenty of cases where the corpses weren't being cremated or sealed, especially if the corpse came from a small village. So it wasn't that surprising.

What these village people would usually do was throw away these corpses to be deliberately possessed and also become some sort of a guard against bandits. After all, Evil Creatures or those possessed corpses wouldn't normally leave the area where they were "revived" unless they were triggered.

During this time, the squads would fight together and defend each other, but they also competed and showed off their abilities.

The Marsden City's Squads always tried to outdo the Kirkham City's Squads.

Leonel didn't complain as this was also a method to gauge each other's strength to prepare for the subjugation of the Vampire's Castle.

Finally, they reached their first resting area, a small village on a nearby lake.

Only a few people had entered the village to greet the village chief before they decided to take a break and have some food and drinks outside.

They also wanted to get to know each other better and exchange some information and tips, so they immediately set up their tents in a circular formation.

The Torrent Squad stayed together with the squads from Kirkham City.

They already saw each other's faces in the city, so it wasn't difficult befriending them.

It was only Denise who had to be introduced as she was very new in the city.

Denise frowned as she chatted with the other Arcanists of the city.

'It's quite peaceful... I don't like this...'

Suddenly, she felt foreboding and immediately ordered Lotus to look around.

After that, she continued chatting with the others. She didn't want to worry the others since she wasn't sure of the danger yet.

As Lotus searched for the possible danger, she learned that the Blaze Fan Squad was led by a hot-headed man named Roy, who loved fire and explosions but still didn't possess a Fire Spirit. Furthermore, Leonel revealed that Roy had a crush on the Revenant Squad's leader, a calm and elegant woman named Elsa, who was an Aura Master.

It was quite a joyful atmosphere as they gathered together...

But as they continued chatting, Denise discovered something suspicious. Apparently, two members of the Justice Hammer Squad were just recruited yesterday!

Chapter 547 Early Encounter

'Did they hastily recruit someone just to fill the numbers? Isn't that a bit too dangerous?' Denise mused as she knew that this mission was completely different from other tasks that could be found in the city.

The battle they might face requires high-level coordination to combine their attacks against a single entity or what they suspected as a vampire. Making such coordinated attacks with new people was not easy.

'Well, it's their squad that will suffer. I just hope we won't get implicated.' She mused as she listened to the others' discussion.

As they continued chatting, Denise realized that the Justice Hammer squad had a member who was a former member of the Order of Fatality.

His name was Kai, and he was a young man with brown hair and green eyes. He had a mysterious and aloof personality, and he rarely spoke. He had left the cult a few years ago and joined the Justice Hammer Squad. He had a unique physique that made him a decent practitioner of Combat Arts. He became an Aura Master who could wield almost any type of weapon, and the Spell Models he got from the Order were all destroyed by the Arcanist Guild to ensure that he would not fall into madness.

Leonel and the others were certainly surprised and curious about Kai. They wondered what kind of life he lived while he was still part of the Order of Fatality. It seemed to be an interesting topic.

They wanted to ask him, but they didn't want to offend him or cause trouble. After all, they had all just met today, and it was not appropriate to just talk about his past.

Meanwhile, the Marsden City's Squads sat not too far from the Revenant Squad.

It appears that Elsa, the leader of the Revenant Squad, had a connection with the leader of the Pulsating Heart Squad named Zoe...

Suddenly, Denise heard Lotus' voice echoing inside her head.

After a gentle nod, she immediately informed Leonel of the situation.

"There were twelve creatures emitting bloodlust approaching from that direction..." Denise warned.

"Evil Creatures?" Leonel asked.

"I don't think so... My Dark Spirit did not mention." Denise replied.

"Got it. Let me handle this." Leonel said as he immediately warned the rest of the squad members, including the others.

"What? Are you sure about that?" Drake felt offended as it appeared that Leonel was telling them that they didn't have proper detection abilities and failed to detect the approaching enemies.

"Yes... They're still not inside our Magic Zone, so we won't be able to sense their presence yet. However, it shouldn't take long before you notice them as well. I don't have the time to argue. Our squad will take care of them." Leonel said, and before Drake could even reply, the Torrent Squad already left, which was followed by the Fire Elementalists of the Blaze Fan Squad.

As Denise and the squad reached the enemies, they discovered that they were not Evil Creatures!

"Variants?!" Denise was stunned as she hadn't anticipated these beings would show up here!

They were products of Dark Alchemy and knew that they required some sort of maintenance. They couldn't just stumble here.

As a Dark Alchemist herself, she was sure that she was not wrong.

"Leonel! They are Tier 2 Variants and they have a Dark Stone in their bodies that enables them to use Dark Spells. They are immune to weak Spells and physical attacks, so we need to use combination spells." Denise quickly informed.

Leonel appreciated her for the information. With this in consideration, everyone quickly devised a plan.

They decided to split into two teams. One team would distract the Variants and lure them into a trap, while the other team would ambush them and launch a powerful attack.

Leonel's Torrent Squad would lure the Variants, while Roy's Blaze Fan Squad would lead the second team.

Leonel used his Mystica Arts to create illusions, while Thorne used noises that attracted the Variants' attention.

Denise and the others also showed themselves as they pretended to be scared and ran away from them, leading them to the place where Roy's Squad was preparing their Tier 2 Spells.

'Since they're all Fire Elementalists, they should have enough firepower.' Denise mused.

The Variants, who had their mouths stitched, followed them, thinking they were easy prey.

They didn't notice the hidden Formation Art that was hastily set up by the Blaze Fan Squad.

As soon as all the twelve Variants entered the circle, they immediately activated the Formation. The Formation was only a type of buff, but it was very useful for Fire Elementalists. After all, this circle weakens the resistance of the target against fire!

Soon, several Fire Spells were thrown at them...

Boom! Boom! Boom!

As Leonel's squad turned around, they saw the Variants get caught on fire.

The area was filled with fire and smoke, and some Variants were blown away by the force of the explosion from the Fire Spells.

Some of them were killed instantly, while others were wounded and burned. They tried to escape, but they were blocked by the debris and rubble and the Spells from the Torrent Squad.

'It seems easy...' Denise mused as she saw how they trapped the Variants so easily...

Nevertheless, she continued helping them clean up the Variants.

The Variants were hit with numerous Spells from several Arcane Paths. They were torn apart by the rocks, wind blades, mystic hands, and ghost hands...

"It's done... I can't feel their presence anymore. However, is it normal for them to appear here?" Leonel muttered.

"Not really. They had decent fighting capabilities because of their durability, but they were just laborers of Dark Alchemists. I can only guess that there's a Dark Alchemist nearby." Denise replied.

The smoke dissipated at the small crater they had made.

They were hoping to find the remains of the Variants, but to their shock, a black entity that looked nothing like a human was lying at the bottom of the crater and wasn't giving off any energy.

As they used their Magic Zones to scan the area again, the entity abruptly opened its red eyes!

"W-what is—"

"Argh... I'm paralyzed!"

"Is it a Restriction Spell?"

All the fourteen Arcanists were immobilized! And that wasn't all, a sinister force began to spread as they all trembled in terror. What they had encountered was a creature that was beyond their level!

'This is bad... We're doomed.' Leonel thought in his mind, but as he felt his life slipping away, a heavenly lightning bolt suddenly descended on the creature.

Chapter 548 Bet

Boom!

A loud blast shook the whole forest. Even the people in the nearby lake felt the ground quake as they looked at the origin of the strike.

"Is that from the Torrent Squad?" Drake rose up in shock as he realized that the force behind that lightning strike was not ordinary. It was surely from a potent spell, a ritual, or a Mystical Artifact.

The other leaders of the squads felt the same. They wanted to follow the two squads as they were curious about what was happening.

But the leader of the Justice Hammer Squad stopped them.

His name was Troy, and behind him was Roland, the official from Kirkham City's Arcanist Guild.

"Sir Drake, please calm down. They can deal with the situation. It's better to stay here and rest. If we get attacked again, we will need your help, so you have to save your strength." Roland said as he tried to ease the tension.

Fortunately, Drake heeded the veteran Arcanist as he decided to sit down.

'That lightning is familiar... Could it be from the Masked Devil Incarnate?' Drake silently thought as he felt a thrill in his veins. It seemed that the Masked Devil had escaped from the Millton Kingdom and was causing trouble in the Ruri Kingdom!

Meanwhile, the Torrent Squad and the Blaze Fan Squad had been flung away by the sheer force that came from the heavenly lightning.

Thankfully, the force was concentrated on the mysterious black entity that had appeared out of nowhere... and whatever it was, it seemed that it had perished from that powerful lightning strike as if the heavens had rejected that creature itself.

"Wow~ I thought we were done for. Is everyone alright?!" Leonel yelled as his Mystic State had already worn off.

He wouldn't be able to enter his Magic Zone for the next 9 minutes. It was the same for the others but with different durations.

They could only rely on their Mystical Artifacts at this point.

"We're fine..."

"I'm okay."

"I'm good too."

"I managed to hold on to this trunk so I wasn't tossed away."

The members started regrouping, giving relief to Leonel and Roy.

"Where did that lightning come from? Was it you, Leonel?" Roy asked after confirming that all their members were safe.

"No way... If I had the power to unleash that, I would take the mission to capture the Masked Devil Incarnate." Leonel remarked as he shook his head.

But the crowd went quiet as soon as they heard that.

"Masked Devil Incarnate..." Roy mumbled. Everyone had the same thought as they remembered the news of how this person could summon lightning, a feat that only the Grand Storm Knights of the Church of the Eminence of the Sea could pull off with the help of their special Artifacts.

All of them started wondering if the Masked Devil Incarnate was behind the lightning strike.

Almost at the same time, they started to look around them.

They wondered if that person was nearby or if he was watching them.

They couldn't help but think if he was their ally or their enemy.

"There's no point thinking about it. We were saved from that mysterious entity. We have to rethink if we're going to continue our journey." Leonel suddenly said.

"We should continue... Let's just be more careful and not offend anyone until we reach the Vampire's Castle." Roy said, considering that the payment for this mission was incredible. They won't have to find another job for the next year if they succeed.

Leonel then looked at his members, and seeing that they were eager to continue, he could only shrug as he led the way back to their campsite.

As soon as the two squads came back to the campsite, they were instantly interrogated by Drake and the others.

Roy then explained what had happened, and similar to what they had thought, the others also suspected that it could be the Masked Devil Incarnate.

Although there could be others as well, the lightning they could unleash wasn't as powerful as the ones unleashed by the Masked Devil.

Meanwhile, while they were discussing what had occurred, a man wearing a trench coat returned to his seat around the Justice Hammer's Squad.

He had come from the forest where the Torrent Squad and the Blaze Fan Squad had gone.

After a couple of hours of rest, Drake, who seemed to have drunk a bit, suddenly shouted to get everyone's attention.

He stood up at the center of the campsite and looked at everyone.

He had a smug and confident expression on his face before he spoke to everyone, but he mainly addressed the Kirkham City's Squads.

"Listen up, everyone. I have an announcement to make. As you all know, we are here for the same mission. We are here to explore the Vampire's Castle and kill the creature inside. But I have a proposal for you. A bet, if you will..."

As he said this, he looked at Leonel as he knew his squad should be the strongest.

Seeing his frowning expression, Dark continued.

"How about we make this mission more interesting and fun? Let's add some stakes and rewards... This way, we can see who is the best and who is the worst..."

The veteran Arcanist Roland didn't seem to hate the idea, and he even chuckled after hearing this. It seemed as if he was amused by the young Arcanists of this generation.

"What kind of bet is this?" He asked.

"Well, how about we compete and see who can reach the castle first, who can kill the most enemies, and who can slay the vampire? We can also put some money on the line and see who can win it all... This way, we'll know the inferior squads. How about it? Are you ready, or are you scared?" Drake taunted with a loud and arrogant voice.

He looked around and saw the reactions of the other Squads. He saw some of them were interested and excited, some of them were annoyed and offended, and some of them were indifferent and bored. He smiled and continued.

"Of course, I know that some of you may not want to participate in this challenge. You may think that it's too risky, too childish, or too pointless. You may think it's better to cooperate and collaborate rather than compete with my squad.. or say that completing the mission is more important than winning the bet. And that's fine. You have the right to think that way."

He then paused for a moment before he added his last words to taunt them.

"However, that's not what's in your mind. I know you are afraid that you'll embarrass yourselves and your Squads... Because you'll prove that you're nothing but weaklings and losers? Well, if you're not afraid, then accept my challenge!"

Chapter 549 Challenged

Most of the Arcanists from Kirkham City were fairly young, especially the members of the Blaze Fan Squad. These Fire Elementalists were also impulsive, so they readily accepted the challenge.

However, Roy still had a condition as he also had to think about the whole mission.

"Alright! My squad will take the challenge. If your squad managed to contribute the most to the Vampire Castle's subjugation, we can give you the money that you want or an item that we can offer. However, if your squad fails to dominate the subjugation mission, then you have to give us the Eagle Eyes Spell Model!" Roy said with a grin on his face.

"What? You guys are Elementalists... Why would you need a Beast Art's Tier 2 Spell?" Drake scowled as he couldn't comprehend why they would want the Spell Model of his family.

"It's not important... We would do whatever we want on that Spell Model. You can also request something from us." Roy said.

"I think they wanted to trade it, Drake... Don't agree to the bet. The Eagle Eyes Spell Model is only exclusive to your family. You can't just use it as a bet without the consent of your family." One of Drake's squad members quickly said to remind the hot-headed young man.

After remembering that it was the property of his family, Drake softly nodded as he looked at Roy.

"I won't be betting my family's exclusive spell. It was only for our family and those who pledged loyalty to us. If you wanted to have that, you have to give us something of equal value." Drake said.

Of course, Roy doesn't have a valuable item since he wouldn't be doing missions here if he did. He couldn't just give his life for that, after all.

As he thought of just backing out of the bet, he suddenly noticed the young man from the Justice Hammer Squad. This young man was the new recruit of the squad, and he seldom talked to them.

He stood up all of a sudden and looked at Drake.

"Are you sure that if we can give an item with equal value, you'd bet on that Eagle Eye Spell Model?"

The young man's voice was calm and clear. He looked at Drake with a piercing gaze.

He had a mysterious and confident aura, and everyone couldn't help but glance in his direction as soon as he spoke.

This young man had a trench coat that covered his body and a hat that covered his face. He had a ring that sparkled with darkness and a cane that adults would normally use.

Of course, he was Kyle, or at this time, Clovis Skye, the new recruit of the Justice Hammer Squad.

He was recruited to the squad with Constance, who had changed her name to Pearl for the time being.

After a few manipulations, they joined the Justice Hammer Squad to leave Kirkham City and evade the people who had been searching for them.

They had also joined the mission to the Vampire's Castle to find out more about the creature that lived there since Kyle couldn't restrain his curiosity after all.

Anyway, he had just completed his extraction from the dark entity he had killed using the Divine Lightning's Call.

Aside from expecting some energy and attributes, he had obtained an item from it. Of course, he won't be using this item to make a trade, but he was planning to use the ring he was wearing.

Drake squinted his eyes as he noticed that Clovis' outfit wasn't even that expensive. He could tell from his appearance that he wasn't that rich, so he couldn't help but doubt what he said.

"Can you really bring out an item of equal value? If not, you should not waste our time."

Clovis smiled as he took off his hat and revealed his face. He had blond hair and blue eyes. He had a handsome and charming appearance.

He showed his ring and revealed his item. It was the Doombringer Ring, a rare and powerful Mystical Artifact. It was assessed to be comparable to a Sovereign Rank item.

It had the ability to amplify the user's Dark Spells and literally bring doom to the targeted people or area.

He couldn't use this item before, but after weeks of training, he was already able to control a bit of his Divinity and was able to wear this dangerous item without suffering from the madness it would normally give to its wearer.

Clovis then smiled and spoke to Drake with a confident and playful tone.

"Of course, I'm sure. I have an item that is worth more than your Eagle Eyes Spell Model. It's the Doombringer Ring, a Sovereign Rank Mystical Artifact. It's a ring that can bring chaos and destruction to a person or even a targeted area. I can show its might later or you can hire an Appraiser to look at it."

As soon as he said this, everyone was shocked as Sovereign Rank Artifacts were items that are considered heirlooms and wouldn't normally be carried along in your journey but kept hidden until they had to face a crisis.

After all, items like these don't have huge durability. Every time they were used, they would start to deteriorate, and fixing them was considered impossible.

"Sovereign Rank?" Drake muttered as even with his family's wealth, he wouldn't be allowed to carry such a precious item.

"Yes... It's a ring that can make you a famous Arcanist or a killer. It's a ring that can change your fate depending on how you use it... I'm willing to bet on this challenge. Do you dare to accept it?" Clovis replied confidently.

Clovis then looked around and saw the reactions of the other Squads. He saw some of them were shocked and amazed, and some of them were intrigued and tempted. However, he noticed that Denise seemed wary and cautious.

Anyway, Clovis just smiled and waited for their answers.

This time, it was Drake who was unable to speak.

Chapter 550 The Castle

Drake's friend quickly tried to dissuade him from taking the bet. However, Drake was the one who had initiated the betting. Moreover, he also fancied the idea of owning the Doombringer Ring.

Finally, he looked at Clovis and agreed to the challenge.

"Fine... Since you can use that ring, I suppose I can use it too. I accept the bet. Don't damage that ring. I will also have an appraiser to verify it later. If you're cheating, you'll pay a heavy price." Drake said as his first worry was whether he could use the ring or not.

However, seeing that Clovis could wear it without any problems, he believed he also had the capability to wield it.

"Good... Everyone heard it, and I hope you won't back out..." Clovis replied with a smile. He didn't mind not having a contract since if Drake dared to act ignorant later, he would forcefully take his Spell Model instead.

Apparently, Clovis was really curious about the Eagle Eye Spell. After all, he had heard that this Spell could bypass the Magic Zone's limit. You could see something even if it was beyond your Magic Zone's range. He found this ability very fascinating, and he also hoped to find a way to overcome his Magic Zone. This Spell might give him some inspiration in this matter.

After this long event, their journey went on for a few more days until they reached the area near the Vampire's Castle.

"Is that the rumored Vampire's Castle?" Denise muttered as she looked at the castle ahead of them. She couldn't help but feel chill just from seeing it.

It was the same for the others as they immediately halted on their steps.

The castle was a dark and gloomy sight.

It was perched on top of a mountain, surrounded by thick and stormy clouds. It was made of black stone, with tall towers and sharp spires. It had no open windows, no doors, no signs of life.

It seemed as if it came out of a book where it had only shadows, secrets, and horrors. It was a place of death, fear, and evil.

The Arcanists felt a chill in their bones as they gazed at the castle.

Furthermore, as if the beings in the castle had noticed their arrival, they felt an invisible pressure in their minds as they sensed the threat of the castle.

Roland, the veteran Arcanist, knew that he had to do something about it.

He gathered his energy and used a spell to wake everyone.

"Do not stare at the castle for too long. Enter your Special State if necessary and block the invisible pressure that attacks your mind. If we're really dealing with Vampires, then they would sense your fears, and you wouldn't want that to happen."

Roland spoke aloud as he tried to help the people behind him.

However, it only alleviated their feelings for a brief moment.

They still felt a dread in their hearts as they approached the castle. They saw flashes of lightning and heard rumbles of thunder from time to time.

It was as if nature itself was warning them from getting closer to the Vampire Castle.

"I wonder what kind of creatures are living inside the haunted castle..." Roy couldn't help but mumble as he tried to calm his heart.

"Indeed... Who would live in such a gloomy place?"

"Well, they could be Dark Magicians... or even Dark Alchemists doing some hideous experiments."

"As long as we could survive the mission..."

The Arcanists started talking among themselves to calm their nerves while they also stayed vigilant now that they were in the enemy's territory.

"Let's stop here to prepare." Drake suddenly said, which everyone unanimously agreed on.

They prepared their set of equipment and tools that they might need in the battle inside.

They checked potions, pills, or any consumables that might help them...

Soon, they discussed their strategies.

Even if they were competing for the position of having the most contribution to this mission, they still had to form some plans.

The first thing they had to do was to recon the castle using their familiars, summons, or anything they could use as long as they didn't physically enter the castle.

After all, they didn't know what they would encounter... Even Roland warned them that it could be a trap to weaken the forces of the Arcanist Guild in the Kingdom.

With this in mind, they have to be extra careful.

Soon, several summoned creatures, spirits, and mystical Artifacts were used to explore the castle.

"Ha! We have the most scouts..." Drake said with a smirk as he saw the creatures getting in from the cracks of the blocked window and the slightly open door of the castle.

With more scouts, they would find more information within the castle.

Apparently, the Ash Squad and Tormentor Squad had Summoners in their ranks, so they were able to send their rats inside. There were dozens of them inside by now.

The Pulsating Heart Squad and Shadow Knight Squad were able to summon some Ghosts to scout for them. Their number also exceeded a dozen.

Meanwhile, the Squads from Kirkham City, had simple methods.

The Blaze Fan Squad had simply used their Mystical Artifacts to scan the castle. They were all Fire Elementalists and quite limited in their Spells after all.

The Revenant Squad and the Torrent Squad, on the other hand, had Shamans on their side, so they were able to do a ritual to summon a scout for them. At the very least, the survivability of these summons would be higher than those of rats or ghosts.

Lastly, the Justice Hammer Squad relied on Pearl, a mysterious female Psychic who had simply controlled a nearby lizard to scout the place.

Then, they waited for their scouts to return and report their findings.

At this time, they hoped to find some clues and information about the castle and the creatures that could be living inside.

"If there's really a vampire, I hope that it can't go outside..." Roland muttered as he recalled the information he got about these mystical beings.