

D. Extraction 91

Chapter 91 Oardic

"Huh?" Vale was speechless after hearing Chad's words.

He felt that his brain stopped functioning after failing to immediately understand what he was saying... However, Lisa and Aubrey's complicated gaze jolted him...

"W-wait... That's not true. How did the rumors go that way?" Vale wanted to explain but the door of the classroom suddenly opened.

It was Professor Stella Harwin.

Aside from teaching the Elementary Spirit Law, she also teaches the language subject, Oardic and Soineti.

"I should be your professor in Fundamentals of Magic Zone but since we have a new professor in the Academy, we have decided to let her take that subject and I'll be teaching you this Language Subject instead." Professor Harwin explained.

Vale sighed at her sudden arrival. He can only sit properly as he greeted the Professor together with his classmates.

Professor Harwin didn't take their attendance but she glanced at them for a moment to confirm that everyone is present.

However, Vale was sure that Stella had looked at him for a brief moment before she shifted her gaze.

He wasn't sure if he was being paranoid but it seems that his duel against Wilfred was also heard by this Professor. She probably heard that it's all about Leonore as well.

He wouldn't be surprised if she heard this rumor.

Vale took a deep breath as he calmed his mind. There was no point worrying about this as it would just affect his studies...

After a few moments, Vale listened attentively in the class.

Oardic, or the so-called Magic Language, is something that is very important to him. Almost all the rituals of the Dark Arts need to use this language to activate.

Furthermore, it's also important for another reason...

"Does anyone here knows which Arcane Path uses Oardic in most of their spells? Of course, the Darkness Path is not included... Raise your hands."

Professor Stella Harwin asked her students.

A few of them raised their hands and Stella randomly called for one.

"I heard that the Holy Arts Faction uses Oardic... There is also the Mystic Path but I've never met any of them before. I only heard that they use Oardic in most cases." Felicia answered.

Stella nodded at her but her answer wasn't enough.

"While the Holy Arts Faction or those practitioners of the Radiant Path uses Oardic, it was only in the latter years of their development. Most of their Spells and Rituals were still using Eigina... It is an ancient language rumored to be used by the angels. This means that even if they can't use Oardic, it's not a big problem for them. " Stella explained attracting everyone's attention.

This is their first time hearing about the angels being related to the magic language. So most of them were shocked after hearing this.

They may have vaguely heard about the Eigina before but none of them connected it to the angels depicted by many churches.

"In any case, you're right about the Mystic Arts. However, there is two more Arcane Path. Which Faction uses the Oardic Language, who can give it a try?" The Professor asked.

She called out a couple more students but unfortunately, they weren't able to guess.

It wasn't the Summoning Arts Faction, the Elemental Arts Faction, or Beast Arts Faction...

The Elemental Arts Faction may have a few uses in Oardic Language, but it wouldn't be a big deal for them even if they can no longer use the said language.

With a few remaining factions on the choices, Professor Harwin decided to reveal the answer.

"One of them has a very popular Arcane Academy among the commoners so maybe this is why you weren't able to guess easily. Anyway, that is the Combat Arts Faction. Their academy may be the weakest in ranking but it's simply because of their low requirement. They just keep accepting anyone with a bit of skill." Stella explained while looking down at that academy.

Vale and the others finally understood as they gently nodded in realization.

The Combat Arts may not sound like an Arcane Path but their practitioners are actually numerous. After all, this Arcane Academy that promotes combat arts would teach Sword Art, Blade Art, Spear Art, and even Palm and Fist Art!

They weren't simple techniques that can be learned by any normal soldier or warrior. They were Arcane Arts that are difficult to learn unless you possess a talent for the specific branch of Combat Art.

Nevertheless, because of the wide range of Combat Arts, it was no wonder that there were still plenty of people that can be accepted into this academy.

However, because they were focusing on quantity instead of quality, the practitioners of this Arcane Path weren't that impressive...

"So it's the Combat Art Academy..." Chad muttered. This Academy is indeed not popular among nobles, rich families, or those who wanted to look rich.

"How are they even using Oardic in their Combat Arts? They aren't casting spells, right?" Lisa asked innocently.

To be honest, Vale also wanted to ask this question since he didn't study the other Arcane Paths.

Professor Harwin smiled as she knows that Lisa doesn't have a background in mysticism so she felt that it was normal that she ask this question.

"That's correct, Lisa. They won't be casting spells similar to what we do when we activate our Dark Spells. However, they still use Oardic in their Chants. These chants may be incapable of harming other people but they can improve their power with these chants."

"Is it the Enchantment that I've heard of before?" Lisa clarified.

"That's correct."

Noticing that Lisa was no longer going to ask questions, Carmen raised her hand.

"What's the other Academy, Professor Harwin?"

Professor Harwin didn't put up the suspense as she immediately answered.

"It's the Alchemy Arts Faction... Their Arcane Path uses Oardic most of the time."

"Ah? Does the Alchemist use Oardic to chant as well? What kind of Spell or Ritual are they doing anyway? I thought they were only focused on controlling their flames and learning how to refine pills and concoct potions." Carmen asked curiously.

"Indeed... That is also what I've heard. It's quite surprising."

"I've never seen the Alchemists in our family use Oardic at all."

The students started expressing their doubts since most of them have Alchemists in their homes. They have met them plenty of times but they've never heard them use Oardic or even use spells at all.

Professor Stella Harwin smiled as he expected this reaction from them.

Nevertheless, she doesn't have plans of explaining it to them since their class isn't all about that.

She just continued teaching them how to read Oardic until it was time for the next class.

Chapter 92 Arithmetic

The next class was Intermediate Arithmetic.

It was taught by an old professor with a distinctive long white beard and bald head. When he went to the class, he immediately started teaching after introducing himself.

Perhaps he was already too old, he was no longer interested in knowing the names of his students.

Nevertheless, they didn't mind this attitude since this is still the Academy of the Dark Arts. This place is full of eccentric people so it's not surprising to have a strange Professor.

Anyway, Vale realized that Intermediate Arithmetic has similarities to Algebra for freshmen students in Junior High School if he compares it to his previous life.

It was basic for him so he felt a bit bored in this class.

While all of his classmates were seriously listening and taking notes from time to time, his mind started wandering off as he entered his Phantasm State.

With the current range of his magic zone, he was able to sense the Class 1, Class 3, and Class 4 that wasn't too far from their room.

He was simply bored that's why he was doing this. He wasn't looking for anything and just want to pass the time. However, before he could retract his Phantasm State, he realized that someone entered his Magic Zone with an incredible fluctuation of energy.

The man's spirit is several times stronger than him!

'Not good...'

Vale immediately canceled his Phantasm State... Although it's extremely difficult to sense someone who was using their Phantasm State, it is not an impossible thing to do especially inside this Academy filled with excellent Practitioners of the Dark Arts.

He probably wouldn't get scolded for spreading his magic zone since this is normal in the Academy but he still didn't want to be discovered by that incredibly strong man.

'Ahh...' Vale suddenly froze as he felt that he was locked on by someone. Even though he's no longer in his Phantasm State, his unique physique tells him that he's currently inside a magic zone.

Then, someone suddenly spoke directly in his mind! Thankfully, it came from a familiar voice.

"Vale... Visit my office after your class... I have to discuss something with you about your duel against Wilfred."

The voice came from the Headmaster!

Vale was shocked not because of the mysterious voice that was sent directly to his head but the fact that the Headmaster decided to get himself involved in a duel between two first-year students!

'Did I make a bad decision agreeing to Wilfred in the duel?' Vale thought as he can't help but worry about this matter.

Before he could even reply, he felt that the connection was already cut off.

Vale could only sigh as he felt uncomfortable all of a sudden.

His mind raced as he started thinking that the Headmaster might even ask him to lose deliberately to ensure that the prestige of the Moontomb Family wouldn't be stained because of his willful actions.

Deliberately lose? That would be a terrible and he didn't want that to happen...

Nevertheless, if he was compensated properly, he probably would have to think twice. After all, now that he thinks about it, the Moontomb Family probably has senior students here in the Academy.

There might be 8th-year, 9th-year, or even 10th-year students.

What would he do if these seniors find trouble with him?

Vale shook his head.

He wasn't that afraid... However, he feels like it would be too troublesome if people started causing trouble for him because of the duel on Sunday.

'Ugh... Whatever... The Headmaster might even support me. I'll think about what to do after talking with him.' Vale thought as he calmed his mind.

As he looked around him, he realized that Professor Russel Ravinie was squinting his eyes while looking at him.

Some of his classmates were also looking at him.

"Ahem... I've been staring at you for a while now and noticed that you weren't focusing in class." The professor said with a stern voice as a few people behind him suppressed their laughs.

Vale helplessly smiled as he decided not to defend himself. He acted like he was embarrassed as he shifted his gaze to the blackboard.

Well, he was indeed not paying attention but he only needed a glance to know the topic of the class. It was integer arithmetic and simplifying equations...

This is too simple for him. Nevertheless, he's not Neil so he decided not to boast.

"Very well. Since I can tell you've realized your mistake, I can let it go if you solve this problem..."

As soon as they heard this, many of his classmates started gloating at him.

Well, since he has the highest Spirit Strand and was capable of killing an Evil Creature, seeing him fail in this normal class would make them happy even if they don't really hate Vale.

Seeing someone who was on top suddenly fall to the bottom feels quite pleasant for them for some reason.

'Hehe... Now you're in trouble... I wonder how you'll embarrass yourself.' Neil couldn't stop grinning as he can already imagine how Vale would fail to solve the arithmetic problem.

Although they have high Spirits or Intelligence, it doesn't mean that they could easily have logical thinking, and problem-solving skills, or recall all the equations that were just taught to them.

In other words, even if Vale has 25 Spirit Strands, it doesn't guarantee that he's capable of solving a problem that he had only seen for the first time.

Furthermore, Vale wasn't even listening so he shouldn't know the subject well.

A few students also glanced at Leonore because of this.

'Heh... Look at this guy who wanted to fight Wilfred for you, he's about to be humiliated.'

'Your suitor is in trouble, aren't you going to help him?'

'I wonder if you will still look at him in favor if he failed this.'

Leonore may not have heard their thoughts but she can easily tell what's in their mind just by staring at her.

She can only shake her head as she can't control their imagination.

Soon, Professor Ravinie wrote a problem on the blackboard for Vale to solve.

His classmates looked at the arithmetic problem and just after reading half of it, they were already dizzy as they could not follow.

Obviously, the old professor made it a lot harder to embarrass Vale! This old man didn't even teach them how to solve this complicated problem!

Chapter 93 Exams

Vale also knows that this old man is causing trouble for him.

Nevertheless, he immediately understood why. The old professor is from Ravinie Family, someone who was close to the Moontomb Family.

If he heard about his match against Wilfred, then this person might be targeting him on purpose.

'Seriously... This is getting more ridiculous...' Vale wryly smiled as he stood up and wrote the answer on the board.

While he was writing, most of his classmates weren't even looking at his answers.

Instead, they were looking at their Professor to see his reaction. They would easily know whether Vale made a mistake or not depending on his reaction.

Chad, Lisa, and Aubrey wanted to help Vale but they were also unsure about the subject. They can only glare at Neil and the others who were giggling at the back of the classroom.

"Eh?" Chad suddenly realize that something was off.

Their old professor was looking at Vale as if he was seeing a ghost. At this point, everyone in the class had also noticed that their professor isn't acting as they have expected.

"Y-you already studied this before?" Professor Ravinie asked after Vale finished answering the question on the board.

It may not be a difficult arithmetic problem, but for first-year students like them, they should need a few weeks of study to solve it.

From his words, everyone already realized that Vale provided the correct answer.

They looked at the blackboard once more but they still can't understand the formula he used to solve the problem.

They can't even properly interpret the numbers on the board.

"Is he actually a genius?"

"You're overthinking it. He just studied in advance."

"Are you telling me that he's not listening because he already knows this subject?"

"Hmph... He definitely hired a tutor. Anyone can answer that if they studied early."

Vale didn't feel happy after giving the right answer. After all, the words of his classmates were making him uncomfortable.

He wanted to berate them for talking like that about him but his friend already chimed in.

"Stop being jealous... Ahem... Vale, is that really the correct answer? Why is our professor so stunned?" Chad asked the latter part in a soft voice.

Before Vale could answer, someone behind him already spoke.

"Do you even need to ask? He didn't expect that the student who wasn't listening to his class was able to answer a problem he hadn't taught yet... Of course, he was stunned." Aubrey answered matter-of-factly.

Indeed, the old professor was surprised by Vale's intelligence.

Nevertheless, he wasn't too disappointed that Vale was able to answer. After all, Vale only needed to study for about a few weeks or a month to solve the arithmetic problem he provided.

After reassessing Vale's intelligence, the Old Professor spoke.

"It's a good thing that you've studied ahead of time. However, you still need to focus on our class since it will be a bad habit if you ignore the professor speaking in front."

"I understand, Professor..." Vale answered with a tired voice as he just wanted it to be over.

Unfortunately, the Professor isn't done yet.

"However, if you really feel bored in our class, just get a perfect score in our monthly assessment and I'll recommend you to take the Class Advancement Exam. If you pass that exam, then you don't have to attend this class anymore." Professor Russel Ravinie added.

Vale, Lisa, and a few unaware students were shocked after hearing this.

"We can do that?" Vale softly muttered in disbelief. He didn't expect that the Academy would have such consideration.

"Yes... However, you have to pass the first monthly assessment with a perfect score. In addition to that, if you fail the Advancement Exam, you have to be my assistant for the rest of the academic year."

Vale's eyes lit up after hearing this.

It was the same for the others. Most of them didn't mind being an assistant if they failed.

Unfortunately, the requirement is quite tricky to achieve. None of them here have the confidence to say that they'll perfect the first assessment.

Nevertheless, there are still some of them who weren't excited about it.

Failing the exam is actually a huge problem for them. Being an assistant to the professor may sound really cool but there is no contribution point that can be earned from doing that. You'll just become the Professor's errand boy and will only receive a thank you at the end.

"That's very interesting, Professor. I will do my best to perfect the assessment. However, is there also a way to advance our Academic Year?" Vale suddenly asked a very unusual question and shocked his classmates once more.

Not even a week had passed since the start of the class but Vale is already thinking of jumping into another Academic Year!

"Vale, aren't you a bit excited? I know you have 25 Spirit Strands but I assure you that you still need to learn plenty of things." Neil suddenly said as he could no longer keep it in.

The others had the same thought as they nodded their heads in agreement.

Even Chad was looking at Vale curiously.

'I wonder what he's planning...' Chad muttered inwardly as he felt that Vale isn't just talking nonsense. There must be a reason why he was asking that.

Professor Russel Ravinie also took a moment before he was able to answer.

"Are you referring to the Acceleration Exam? That can be done after the fourth year when you've chosen your branch. If you've shown excellence in your fourth year and even entered the Elite Rankings. Even the Headmaster might help you Accelerate."

"Acceleration Exam..." Vale softly repeated as he gently nodded. "Thank you, Professor. I was simply curious since you mention that I can skip a subject. So I just thought that I might be able to skip a whole academic class as well."

Vale explained with a smile.

Professor Ravinie shook his head as he replied.

"I understand, I suggest not thinking too much about it. I'm telling this to all of you. You'll just be disappointed if you try to aim for the Acceleration Exam. Just study at your own pace and learn how your other seniors did it. Don't rush with your studies."

"Yes, Professor!"

All the students answered as the class finally continued normally.

Unlike Oardic and Soineti Class which has two hours, this Intermediate Arithmetic only has an hour so it was over quite quickly.

After 30 minutes break, it was the Fundamentals of the Magic Zone.

Vale thought that this class would be more theoretical but to his surprise, the Professor that has arrived brought 3 assistants with her as they went to the gymnasium.

Chapter 94 Magic Zone

In the hallway leading to the classrooms of the first-year students, four people were chatting while walking to their next class.

"Professor Charlotte, have you heard about the first years trying to have a duel for this girl from the Roland Family? One of them is in Class 2, have you heard of it?" A male student wearing a coat bearing seven eight-angled stars on its chest spoke with a hint of exhilaration in his voice.

"Hahaha... They probably have pathetic Dark Spells but they still wanted to have a duel. What a bunch of interesting first years..." Another male student with the same number of eight-angled stars spoke. He knows very well that all first years only have 2 Dark Spells. If they really decided to fight, he believes that it would be over in less than 10 seconds since they would either lack a support spell, a defensive spell, or an offensive spell.

Furthermore, the duration of Phantasm State should be quite boring.

They would also have to pay for using the Arena. It was basically a waste of time and money.

"Hmm... I think that our batch was also hot-blooded in our first three years in the Academy. We only calmed down in our fourth year after realizing how difficult this path was." A black-haired female student chimed in.

To be honest, she also wanted to be like Leonore... An outstanding female student that many would fight for. She couldn't help but imagine Leonore's feelings right now.

She's probably feeling so excited and proud right now since there are men who are willing to fight for her.

Professor Charlotte heard of this as well since Wilfred Moontomb's background isn't simple. In the first-year class, aside from Maya Featherstar, there are 4 other students marked by the Headmaster.

All the news about these five students can be easily learned within their faculty.

"Stop talking about them... We're here." Professor Charlotte spoke as she stopped at the door of the First-Year Class 2's room.

As soon as she entered, she swiftly glanced at everyone to confirm that they are all present. She was then followed by her four assistants in the classroom.

Even without looking at these three, she knows that they were looking for Vale and Leonore... They have never met these two but they were interested in their love triangle since Wilfred Moontomb is involved.

"Good morning, professor." One of the students greeted which was followed by the rest of the class.

"I'm Professor Charlotte Vermont... You can call me Professor Charlotte since my father is also teaching here." Charlotte said as she introduced herself.

She has short black hair and fair supple skin. She looks to be in her twenties and seemed younger than Professor Shirley and Stella.

"This is only my second year of teaching in the Academy but I assure you that I'll be able to teach you all the basics and allow you to freely control your magic zone in just six months. The rest of the class would be full of activities that you'll enjoy."

Her words immediately caught everyone's attention. After all, Professor Charlotte indeed looks quite young. Some of them know that the Arcane Studies takes a very long time so it's normal to have older teachers.

Nevertheless, after being reminded that she should only be teaching the Fundamentals of the Magic Zone, they easily accepted her words as they look forward to the day they master their Magic Zone.

"You may be curious why I've brought three assistant students with me... Since this is our first class, I want to bring you all to the gymnasium to do a small activity. Right, we would normally do this weekly so we can slowly see your progress in your control. Follow me."

With that said, the whole class followed the professor and her assistants.

During this time, everyone noticed that the three assistants were always looking at them as if they were looking for someone.

Along the way to the gym, one of the assistants could no longer hold it in as he asked one of the students in a very soft voice...

Soon, this student looked at Leonore and Vale before whispering back to the assistant. Vale didn't miss this so he immediately realized what was going on.

'I really have to beat up Wilfred. Even if the Headmaster wanted me to lose for him, I'll only do it if the price is right.' Vale promised himself as he continued walking like he didn't notice anything.

As they entered the gymnasium, they notice a circular stone platform at the very center.

It seems to be a normal platform but Vale noticed some engravings on this stone. If he wasn't mistaken, those engravings are Oardic.

Since Oardic is used for magic-related things, this stone platform is surely not simple.

As expected, after Professor Charlotte stood on top of it, she immediately started the class by showing them something interesting.

"Stay where you are and watch what I'm about to do."

As soon as she finished speaking, an illusory wave of light appeared around her. She had just created a dome made of illusory shadow and it covers the whole gymnasium for a moment before shrinking to the size of a 10-meter range dome.

It was a magnificent sight for them as they look at their professor with interest.

They wanted to know what was going on.

Seeing that she caught everyone's attention, Professor Charlotte smiled as she finally spoke.

"This 20-meter radius illusory dome is my magic zone... You can't see other people's magic zone but if you're standing on this stone platform, the imbued magic on it will activate and display your magic zone for everyone to see."

"Can we try it as well, Professor?" Chad immediately asked. This is everyone's question in their mind so they waited for her answer.

"Of course. You've seen what I just did a moment ago. It is the simplest way to control your Magic Zone. It doesn't have a fancy name but it's called the Second Phase."

Chapter 95 Second Phase

'Shrinking the Magic Zone is called the Second Phase? It's already a real technique?' Vale thought amusedly as he looked at the reaction of his classmates.

To his surprise, they were actually amazed by the fact that Professor Charlotte managed to shrink the size of her magic zone!

"This... I thought it was normal to do that after a few months of practice... Even Denise made it seem that way... Did I misunderstand her or something?" Vale was unable to properly understand what was going on as he observed everyone's reaction.

"Professor, does it have a specific requirement before we can control the size of our Magic Zone? I mean, can someone like me with 4 Spirit Strands do such a thing?" Reid Baldry, one of the students who only have 4 Spirit Strands, spoke on behalf of others who also have a low Spirit Strand.

"Of course... Even if you only have 3 Spirit Strands, it's completely possible to shrink the size of your Magic Zone. It's even easier to do it while you have low Spirit Strands and you might only need a month to master it. After all, if you only learned how to control your Magic Zone after passing the 20 Spirit Strand mark, it will be more difficult for you and you might need 3 or 4 months to do it."

The students nodded in understanding as they unconsciously look at Vale. They believe that all of them would probably learn how to use the Second Phase of their Magic Zone faster than him!

Vale noticed their gazes once more but he was already used to it.

'Since I have 25 Spirit Strands, they were probably thinking that I'll take half a year before I can learn the technique.' Vale inwardly sneered as he would certainly give them another surprise.

"Alright, the three assistants I've brought with me will be assisting you with your control before you try to step into the platform... Right, if you manage to at least shrink your magic zone by a meter before the end of our class, I will give you a reward." Professor Charlotte said as she tried to encourage her students.

This is what she did in other classes but obviously, none of them was able to do it easily. Not even Maya or Wilfred in Class 1 were able to shrink their Magic Zone.

Those two outstanding students would probably need a week or two to accomplish that.

Needless to say, Professor Charlotte has confidence that no one would receive the reward she prepared.

"Look at this wooden amulet. It may seem like an item you can find in some street stalls but this is a Mystical Item that each of you would want to have."

As she spoke, she showed the wooden amulet that has an Oardic Character engraved on it which means "Protector" in Soineti.

"It's a defensive artifact?" Neil asked curiously.

He wasn't sure why they would need a defensive artifact. They were inside the Academy and they were only first-year students! It means that they won't normally be exposed in battles unless they're already in the fourth year.

The previous class with Professor Lucius was a rare one since he simply wanted to make the class a bit exciting and showed the Evil Creature.

Battling isn't a common occurrence since they're still 13 or 14 years old.

The others have the same thought as Neil so they can't help but look at their professor with anticipating eyes.

"That's right... This amulet protects the wearer... However, it's a protection from prolonged Phantasm State..."

Except for Lisa, everyone's eyes lit up after hearing this.

"Professor, that amulet can help us ignore the duration of Phantasm State?" Leonore asked with interest. She was also in disbelief since even in their family, she had never heard that something like this exist at all.

"T-that's awesome! Professor, can I buy that instead? I'm willing to pay the price!"

"Fifty Thousand Zen! I'm willing to pay that much, Professor!"

"Stop it, guys... We need to follow the rules. If we get to shrink our Magic Zone by a meter, we can get that amulet."

"Right... I'm sure that the price of that item is over 50 thousand zen..."

"Professor Charlotte, what if there is more than one of us who accomplished it? Ahem, I think one meter is quite a low requirement. I'm sure some of us can do it." Blair bluffed but he certainly had a good question.

Professor Charlotte smiled as she can tell that her plan was a success. Her students had taken the bait and they'll surely work harder. As a relatively new professor, she needed a good result so she can stay in the Academy.

If rewards like these can help her improve her yearly assessment, then she didn't mind forking out this Mystical Item that only their Vermont Clan possess.

"I won't be easy. As you all know, the duration of your Phantasm State is limited by your physique... If you try to exceed the limit of your physique, then there will be a side effect that you wouldn't want to have. In short, you have a limited time of practice as well" Professor Charlotte said as she looked at everyone.

Then, as she noticed Lisa, one of the marked students of the first year, she immediately corrected herself.

She turned her gaze to Leonore before speaking out of concern.

"Ahem... Leonore, in case someone doesn't know what will happen if you ignore the duration of your Phantasm State, can you tell me what would happen?"

Leonore jolted as she didn't expect to be called out so suddenly.

Nevertheless, this question was easy so she swiftly answered.

"There is indeed a side effect... If you exceed the limit of your body and tried to maintain your Phantasm State, you will sustain internal injuries. Your organs will start to fail and the Darkness

will start to reject you. The latter is the worse. Once the Darkness rejected your body, it would be the end of your Arcane Path..."

"Rejection by the Darkness?" Lisa repeated as she seem to understand what Leonore wanted to say but at the same time, it was confusing her as well.

"In other words, you will no longer be protected by the Eternal Darkness... If that happens, your body can be taken by Evil Spirit even if you're still living..."

Chapter 96 Try

'So it was like that...' Vale nodded solemnly as he finally realized what the side effect of overextending Phantasm State was!

Denise had mentioned to him about this side effect before and he also read this in the book.

However, it wasn't mentioned specifically what side effect it was. He only knows that it's certainly not good for the Practitioner of the Darkness Arcane Path.

He didn't expect that the side effects would be too severe if he ignored the limits of his body.

'Internal injuries can still be cured by the current level of Alchemy according to the books I've read. However, being possessed by an Evil Spirit isn't something a mere student like us can deal with.' Vale thought as he couldn't help but recall the Evanescent Vessels of the Dark Arts Faction.

Based on what he knows, the Vessels are extremely powerful because they allow "something" to possess their bodies. Not even the Untainted Sentinels of the Holy Arts Faction or the Lore Hunters of the Elemental Arts Faction can deal with them if they became a "vessel".

This was according to his Master.

Perhaps, only those at their levels can actually resist the power of the Evil Spirit...

"Now, is everyone interested in this amulet? I will be able to provide as many as needed as long as you reach the requirement I'm asking for. Before the end of this class, you should step on this platform and show us how you shrink your Magic Zone by a meter."

"Yes, Professor!"

"We will do our best."

The students answered with enthusiasm as they immediately gathered at the assistants brought by the Professor. These assistants have been waiting for them to teach them how it was done and the tricks they used to do it.

"Very well, we still have over an hour to do this so take your time." Professor Charlotte said with a smile.

Their class is from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM. Since only 15 minutes had passed, they should have had a decent amount of time to learn the basics. As for being able to act on it, that would be hard to tell.

As Professor Charlotte allowed her assistants to teach the students, she sat on the stone platform and watched everyone.

Her Phantasm State remained active as she observes everyone's bodies.

She's not using a specific technique to scan the bodies of her student. It was a simple benefit of having a strong Magic Zone. It allows her to observe anything that is inside her zone...

"Hmmm?" Suddenly she noticed that she was unable to properly inspect three of her students.

It was Lisa, Vale, and Dalton...

She knows Lisa since she's one of the five marked students by the Headmaster among the first-year students. This kid was quite special since she consumed the Darkness Possession Potion almost without any side effects. It was very compatible with her and it feels like she may even survive the potion even if she consumed it when she was six years old. Anyway, as Professor, she knows that it wasn't as simple as that but the Headmaster didn't say anything more than that.

As for Vale, she knows that he's very special since he has 25 Spirit Strands which is unheard of in all the 13 or 14 years old in all Arcane Paths. She even thought that Vale should be one of the marked students but surprisingly, the Headmaster only smiled teasingly when she suggested it to him.

Lastly, Dalton Stranway who seems very ordinary in terms of looks, only knows that the Stranway family was previously a prestigious family until the king was replaced by the current ruler.

'I wonder what's special among these kids... Not even my Magic Zone can see through their Darkness Energy. Is it an artifact? Are they using a defensive Dark Spell right now? Ahhh... perhaps it's their physique?'

Professor Charlotte's eyes lit up after reaching this thought.

A special physique is something very special and needed to be studied carefully. After all, they didn't have many volunteers with special physiques so their knowledge about it is extremely limited.

'If Lesley is still here, she'll definitely take interest in them if I tell her about this... Unfortunately, she already left. I wonder when she'll visit me.'

Vale didn't know that Charlotte was already having some dangerous thoughts. If he knows what she's thinking, he'll probably try his best to get out of the Academy.

Time quickly passed and after 15 minutes, everyone already knows what they should do in order to shrink their Magic Zone.

They have about an hour to complete their task for today and receive the mystical amulet that only the Vermont Clan can create.

About 10 minutes before the class is over, Professor Charlotte came forward and spoke with her gentle voice.

"Alright, is there any volunteer? The platform is ready. You can just step up and try it. To start with it, show us the original size of your Magic Zone. Then, in my command, you have to shrink it by a meter in less than 30 seconds..."

After saying this, she looked at everyone only to realize that no one except Vale was looking at her. All of them are either looking at the ground or still focusing on their task.

Well, she expected such a reaction since she knows that they have failed. The task she has provided is quite impossible to accomplish in just an hour... Although she already limited it to a meter size, it's still difficult. After all, she knows that the duration of their Phantasm State isn't that long in the first place.

It means that they won't have enough time to practice controlling their Magic Zone.

Furthermore, during their first time learning their magic zone, they would be more inclined to play around with their Dark Spells instead of their magic zone itself.

In short, she knows that she can save this amulet worth 80,000 zen today.

Thump...

"Eh?" Professor Charlotte looked at Vale incredulously after seeing him step forward.

"A-are you going to try it?" She had a sudden bad premonition after seeing this student confidently walk at the stone platform.

Chapter 97 Physique

"Yes... I'm going to try it, Professor." Vale answered with a smile as everyone looked at him with mixed feelings.

"You can do it, Vale! Just don't rush on it." Chad suddenly said as if he really believes that he can accomplish this task.

For some reason, Vale's circle of friends were looking at him with envy as they believe that he'll get the amulet this time. On the other hand, some were looking down on him since they believed that Vale just wanted to try experiencing the stone platform.

Well, seeing their magic zone manifest with their naked eyes is quite an interesting experience after all.

'Hmph... Let's see if Leonore will still look at you favorably if you fail.' Neil couldn't help but think of this as he glanced at Leonore who seemed to be hoping that Vale would succeed.

Neil shifted his glance with a bitter heart as he waited for Vale to fail.

Although he doesn't like Leonore since he already has someone in his heart, it just doesn't sit well with him that an outstanding girl like her would like Vale who didn't come from a notable family compared to him who had a decently influential family and he's also good looking.

"Alright... You can go ahead and try, Vale. You might feel a bit of resistance since you're standing on the platform but it's fine. The Platform is still a mystical item but you can just ignore that bit of resistance... You can show your magic zone whenever you're ready."

Vale nodded at the instruction as he maintained his gaze on the platform. He wanted to properly see how the magical platform will show his magic zone...

After taking a deep breath, he entered his Phantasm State.

At the same time, the stone platform detected this and indeed felt a bit heavy and cold but it was bearable.

'As expected, the platform is delayed by a few seconds... In that case...'

Realizing that the platform can't instantly show the range of his magic zone, he swiftly controlled it to only cover 17 meters. He certainly can't reveal his real Magic Zone or Wilfred might refuse to continue the duel.

Anyway, since Wilfred and Zeno have 9 meters in range, then it shouldn't be that surprising to show 17 meters since he has 25 Spirit Strands.

'This should be enough...'

Soon, the illusory shadow which was equivalent to his magic zone started spreading outward and stopped at the distance that Vale had set up 17 meters.

"T-that's... What was his range, professor?" Aubrey immediately asked as she realized that Vale's Magic Zone wasn't something that can be ignored.

She initially thought that they have the same range because they were almost in the same position during the battle against the Evil Creature.

She thought his range was also around 10 meters! However, she was actually wrong!

"..."

The three assistants, who were previously making fun of Vale since he dared to get into a duel while only in his first year, found themselves speechless after seeing the range that Vale had just shown.

They may have a higher range right now but that is because they were already in their sixth year. They already have more experience and couldn't compare to the first-year students. However, they realized that they were only better than Vale by a few meters!

'Is this the benefit of having a higher Spirit Strand?' One of them couldn't help but lament after realizing the difference in their talents.

Neil almost choked after seeing this as well...

'How is this possible?!'

Professor Charlotte Vermont immediately calmed herself as she answered Leonore's question. "It's 17 meters."

Her voice was soft but everyone heard it very clearly.

She then shifted her gaze back to Vale as she showed a satisfied smile.

"That's very impressive, Vale. However, since it is a bit too big, it will be harder to shrink it. After all, your physique will be receiving the burden if you deliberately suppress your Aura. It's not something you can easily learn—"

She wanted to explain to Vale how difficult it is and how he shouldn't be discouraged even if he fails.

However, she hadn't even finished speaking when Vale's magic zone trembled as it started shrinking!

"Ahhh! He's doing it!"

"H-how can it be so easy?!"

"Are we just dumb or he's just too good?"

"How come our difference appears so big?"

"He should start in the higher year..."

Vale's classmates reacted differently as soon as they saw the magic zone displayed by the stone platform started shrinking.

As soon as it stopped, they can already tell that Vale had succeeded. He didn't simply shrink the magic zone by a meter but by over 3 meters!

This was an incredible performance and even Professor Charlotte has to admit that. She can still recall how it took her a couple of months before she was even able to control her magic zone so smoothly like how Vale did it.

"Professor, did I pass?" Vale asked but he wasn't simply looking at the Professor. He was also eyeing his classmates who were previously doubting his capabilities.

"Yes... You pass. How did you do it? Do you have a special physique that works really well with your control over your magic zone?"

Professor Charlotte was really curious about this since it was just too unbelievable.

She can only think of three possible ways how Vale did it so easily.

First, Vale must've learned how to do it already since he's simply a genius. He must've consumed the Darkness Possession Potion at an early age and was able to practice for a longer time than the others.

Next, Vale was probably hiding a Mystical Item that she can't detect that allows him to control his Magic Zone like a real expert. However, that is very unlikely to happen since the Secret Order should've reported this to them if Vale entered the Academy with such a high-level Mystical Artifact.

Lastly, Vale probably has a unique physique that makes it easy for him to bear the burden of shrinking his Magic Zone!

'You're right, Professor. It seems to be a benefit brought by my unique physique.' Vale answered in his mind.

He also realized this fact today after Professor Charlotte mentioned how having a special physique can help him finish this task.

Of course, he decided to not say this openly since his Incorruptible Body can't be revealed to the public yet.

Chapter 98 Amulet

"Professor, I'm not sure as well. I must be lucky since the assistants were very good at teaching." Vale answered with a smile.

Of course, that was an obvious lie since he didn't even properly listen to the three.

"..."

The three assistants looked dumbfounded as they were sure that they can't bring out someone's talent with just a few words.

They know that Vale was using them to block Professor Charlotte's further interrogation!

The Professor knows this as well as she just accepted his reason for now.

"Very well... Congratulations, you deserve this reward. With this Protector Amulet on you, even if you exceed the limit of your Phantasm State, you won't easily receive the backlash."

"Thank you, Professor. Can you tell me how long will it extend my duration?" Vale asked curiously as he took the amulet from the professor.

It indeed looks simple but as soon as he touched it, he realized that it was quite heavy. It seems to be about a kilogram in weight even though it was only made of a piece of wood.

'This is quite heavy...' Vale commented inwardly.

"The duration depends on the wearer. However, it should be about 25% of your original duration..."

Vale immediately calculated.

Since his normal Phantasm State can last up to 20 minutes, it means that he has 5 more minutes with this amulet with him!

"This is awesome... If I have another amulet will the effect stack?" Vale immediately asked.

"..."

Professor Charlotte was a bit surprised by Vale's sudden question. Of all of the people that received this amulet, he was the only one who had asked such a question.

Most of the time, they would ask how to take care of it and ensure that the amulet remains in its top condition.

Perhaps it was because Vale was unaware that this item rarely appears, he was already thinking of getting more of them after realizing its effects.

Anyway, she still answered since the other students were also listening.

"The amulet won't work with other similar amulets so you don't have to possess more of them.

"I understand, professor."

With that said Vale returned to his position while fiddling with the amulet on his hands.

"Are there other volunteers?" Professor Charlotte asked.

After a few seconds, no one stepped forward.

"The assistants will remain here until the end of class. You can continue with your practice and try the stone platform so you can see your Magic Zone manifest."

With that said, she decided to leave the gym with a heavy heart.

That was an amulet that costs 80,000 zen!

Her yearly salary wouldn't be enough to cover her loss! If she wants to earn back her money, she has to do some missions assigned by the Academy. It would even be better if her research already bore fruit so she can earn plenty of money.

"Alright... You can all line up and try the stone platform..." One of the male assistants said as he saw the students not doing anything. He thought that they were just shy and doesn't want to be the first to step up.

However, the female assistant realized that it wasn't that...

'Their confidence was hit by Vale's display of Magic Zone... They don't want to be the next student to show their magic zone as they'll obviously be compared to that monstrous guy...'

As she thought of this, she decided to step on the platform and spoke kindly.

"Everyone, I will show you how it's done once more. Don't be too shy and just try this stone platform..."

With this said, she entered her Phantasm State and showed her 20-meter magic zone to everyone. She was hoping that they'll forget their insecurities in their magic zone and just enjoy the free time that was given to them by the professor.

Luckily, her efforts paid off as the students started forgetting Vale's impressive performance. They tried the stone platform at the center of the gymnasium as they showed various ranges of magic zone...

According to Vale's estimate, six meters was the shortest range while 11 meters was the highest one which was created by Dalton.

"Vale, can I inspect the amulet for a bit?" Chad Bulmung whispered as soon as everyone's attention was placed on the stone platform.

Vale simply nodded and tossed the amulet to Chad.

The latter was surprised at the weight of the amulet as he looked at it in disbelief...

"Did you just put it in your pocket? Aren't you afraid that it will rip it off?"

"It's fine. Our Academy's uniform is made of the best materials you can find in the region." Vale answered.

He didn't really know what the uniform was made of but he can guess that it should be made of a decent fabric.

Aubrey also joined in and inspected the amulets after noticing Vale and Chad's actions.

After inspecting the amulet for a while, the two were satisfied as they returned the amulet to Vale. They appear as if they can't bear to part with it so Vale couldn't help but feel amused by their reaction.

Soon, the class was over, and they returned to their classroom.

It was finally the Physical and Health Education Class...

Similar to everyone's expectation, they have a strong or physically fit professor in this class... He may not be that tall but everyone can tell how this middle-aged man took really good care of his physique.

"I'm Professor Vern Raycraft... You might be wondering why Spellcasters like you needed a strong physique when you can do things easily with a simple wave of your hand..." Professor Raycraft paused to look at everyone's faces.

Seeing that they are all attentively listening, he continued.

"I'm telling all of you that this class is very important. If you want to build a strong foundation to reach the highest stage of the Darkness Arcane Path, you must listen to me and take care of your body."

Professor Raycraft then started teaching about the subject of his class for the next two hours. Unlike the other classes that immediately went into an activity, this professor decided to just bring out his textbooks and start teaching them about their physical bodies!

Chapter 99 Sinister Plan

The last class of the day was finally over.

As everyone was thinking of going to their club or looking for a suitable club, Vale has to excuse himself to visit the Headmaster's Office.

Knock. Knock.

Vale was about to introduce himself after knocking on the door but the knob suddenly tilted as a familiar voice came to his ears.

"Get in."

It was the Headmaster's voice and Vale couldn't guess whether he was in a good mood or not.

"Headmaster, you've called for me?" Vale asked as he looked at the mysterious Headmaster seated behind an expensive wooden table at the center of the room.

"Yes... Before we get to the topic, I heard from Professor Charlotte that your Magic Zone only reaches 17 meters... That was odd, I'm sure that you reached me when I was still standing about 50 meters away from you." Headmaster Jean spoke amusedly. He didn't seem angry that he gave false information to his professor and was simply curious why he did that.

Vale didn't expect this sudden question so he wasn't able to answer immediately. All his thoughts were related to his duel against Wilfred and how the headmaster is related to that...

"Err... I just thought that I can't reveal my real limits... I learned it from Master Heinz." Vale said as he can only blame his master. Anyway, he's not here so the headmaster wouldn't be able to ask the old man.

"He mentioned to you not to show off?" Headmaster Jean asked curiously.

"That's correct, Professor. I'm only following his words." Vale answered. Anyway, his master indeed mentioned that it was better not to reveal all his capabilities in case he had to fight someone in the academy.

He didn't specifically mention not doing it with a professor.

"Fine... Let's leave it at that. In any case, it is going to be traumatic for your classmates if you reveal your real limits... I didn't think that the Malefic Branch that your Master was trying to accomplish would produce such an incredible result. If all the other products or perhaps disciples of this branch would have the same skill as you, it might really become an official branch of the Faction..."

"I understand... However, Master Heinz mentioned that it is still incomplete."

"Of course it's incomplete. If the new Branch is only limited to the improvement of your Magic Zone and possesses weird Dark Spells, it wouldn't be enough to be compared with the other branches. Even if we put a specialization in the Academy, no one would want to study it. You'll probably need 8 to 10 more years before the Faction can accept this new branch and let the Academy teach it to the Dark Arts Practitioner." Headmaster Jean calmly explained.

Vale could only nod as he wasn't really thinking of it. He only wanted to see the limits of the Malefic Branch since if he had to be honest, he felt that it was very suitable for him and also very convenient when fighting against Spellcasters.

"Very well. I called you here to discuss your duel against Wilfred. Are you planning to kill him?" The Headmaster asked.

Vale almost choked after hearing this question.

"Kill him?" Vale never had the thought of doing so. At most, he thought of beating him up.

"Wait, can I really kill him?" Vale changed his question as he solemnly looked at the Headmaster.

The man was obviously glad after hearing Vale's determination.

Headmaster Jean tapped his desk a couple of times out of habit before answering with his gentlest voice.

"You can destroy his body... I only need his soul."

Vale felt a chill after hearing this. The Headmaster is giving him a go signal to not only defeat Wilfred in the battle but also kill him!

Needless to say, the Headmaster can only get Wilfred's soul if Vale managed to successfully kill him.

This was unexpected! He even thought that the Headmaster would reprimand him for fighting against the Moontomb Family!

This Headmaster is indeed evil! As expected of the Dark Arts Academy!

'I think I'm getting involved in something extremely dangerous... Is it related to the first generation families?' He mused.

Vale then asked a few more questions to the Headmaster before he went out of the office.

His face was filled with determination as he pocketed the Mystical Artifact loaned to him by the Headmaster.

Over the next few days, the first-year students started getting used to their new life inside the academy.

During this time, they also found their Student Clubs and started getting to know a few senior students thanks to the network brought by being a member of the club.

Furthermore, the name of the students who were living in the Seven Pillars Garden started spreading throughout the whole first year.

This actually confused Vale for a moment since he didn't think that it was important.

Apparently, not anyone can occupy a room in this area so Vale finally understood why his place looks a bit special. Not even some nobles can get a room in the Seven Pillars Garden.

After learning that Vale is actually in this dormitory, they couldn't help but reassess their evaluation of him.

It appears that he wasn't simply a lucky noble from the countryside... He must possess a level of influence in the Academy if he was able to enter the Seven Pillars Garden!

Nevertheless, the most surprising news that Vale has heard was perhaps Lisa's achievement. She finally entered her Phantasm State on Saturday morning giving them pleasant news before they started their class in the afternoon of that day.

She even has a 10-meter range Magic Zone at the very start so it alerted some of the students who were sons and daughters of some small noble families.

They were itching to teach Lisa a lesson. They wanted to remind her not to show off in front of the class but unfortunately for them, Aubrey was able to suppress them as soon as she learned their plans.

As for the History Class and the Essential Dark Spell on this day, Vale found it very enlightening.

This is true, especially for the Millton Kingdom History Class.

The book Vale read in Heinz's laboratory is all about the Darkness Arcane Path so he really lacks common knowledge outside.

The history or outside knowledge that he knows are the things that 'Kyle' has heard in the streets of Melthorn City and the vague history he learned in his primary school.

On the next day, it was finally Sunday... It was the date of his duel against Wilfred Moontomb!

Chapter 100 Duel (1)

Vale's duel against Wilfred attracted all the first-year students of the Academy.

Of course, there were some second-year students as well since their classrooms weren't too far from the first-years. They heard about the duel that the first-years were talking about so they decided to look around since it was Sunday anyway.

There's nothing much to do at the moment... The clubs don't have any activities at this time since they have just finished the recruitment week.

"Vale... I have a special dagger here that was laced with poison... The poison isn't deadly but it can weaken Wilfred a lot. What do you think?" Zeno Roquemont whispered as he saw Vale going out of the dormitory.

"Are you serious?" Vale couldn't help but ask. It was so unexpected for Vale since he thought that Zeno is a prideful man that wouldn't use such an underhanded trick to win against an opponent.

"Of course... It's not like weapons are prohibited in your battle. He might even be thinking of using a hidden weapon."

"..."

Vale shook his head as he realized that Zeno was being serious.

"Although using weapons isn't prohibited, we are still Practitioners of the Darkness Arcane Path... We need to use the Dark Arts or we would be shamed by the audience watching us..." Vale answered.

"Tch... So you really care about the audience—Ahh! I get it. You want to look good for that girl... Was it Leonore Roland? I understand. I understand." Zeno even repeated his words as he looked at Vale with a knowing smile on his face.

Once again, Vale was speechless at this reaction so he decided to just leave and see whether the arena is all set and ready.

Over the past few days, he had checked all the arenas in the Academy as a member of the Battle Arena Committee.

He learned how the arena is organized by the committee.

Since there was a practice match this morning, the Arena should've been a mess and needed an hour or two of cleaning before Vale and Wilfred could use it.

As soon as he arrived half an hour before the allotted time, he confirmed that the arena is indeed ready to be used.

To his surprise, some of his classmates had even arrived so early!

Aubrey and Lisa were already looking for a good seat in the arena so they can watch the duel with a good view.

He wanted to greet them for a moment but he suddenly heard a familiar voice calling for him.

"Vale, it is still early. Come to the clubroom for a moment." Nadine Sherris spoke.

She's not only his senior in the Academy but she's also the secretary of the club he joined.

Vale couldn't help but stare at her for a few seconds seeing how gorgeous she looks.

She's not wearing her uniform but a modest dress that flows from top to bottom and has a V-neck that delicately reveals a fancy dress she had worn below it.

This is not a common dress that Vale would see in Melthorn City. Nevertheless, he knows that this type of dress is certainly worn by nobles of this country.

"Alright... I'm coming." Vale answered as he followed Nadine to the Clubroom.

There were other members inside the club and as expected, these members would be the ones managing his duel against Wilfred.

Since his duel is only with another first-year student, there is no need for the Professors or the Academy Official to be involved in the battle.

Everyone believes that the students in the higher years are more than enough to handle this matter.

"Vale... I'll be the referee in your duel. I won't favor you so you have to be careful. Kekeke." Another student wearing his referee uniform spoke in a lively manner after seeing Vale enter the room.

"Senior Grover... So you were the one who got assigned." Vale's eyes lit up after seeing this eight-year student of the Battle Arena Committee...

This guy rarely comes to the club and will only come once Nadine called for him to officiate a battle.

"Hehe... Make sure not to cheat in this duel since the Corner Judges were also experts. Furthermore, Leonore wouldn't like it if you get caught."

"..."

Vale can only nod as he greeted the other senior students who will be organizing his duel.

They talk about the rules of the duel one more time before he decided to leave.

"Alright... I will leave now. If some people notice that I'm having a meeting with the duel organizers, they might think I'm planning to cheat on my opponent." Vale said as he calmly went to the door to leave the clubroom.

However, before he could leave, Nadine asked him solemnly...

"Vale, I'm not sure about the real reason for this duel. I only heard the rumors. However, did this guy you're about to fight committed something so grave that he deserves to die?"

Vale froze as soon as he heard this question. He didn't expect such a sudden question!

It was as if Nadine knows that he was planning to kill Wilfred in this duel!

'Did he read my thoughts? Am I too obvious? I'm sure I didn't release my killing intent just now.' Vale's mind suddenly raced as he tried to recall his past actions.

However, he can't think of anything that would reveal his plan. Unless the Headmaster had also informed this woman about his plan, she shouldn't be aware of it!

After collecting his thoughts, Vale answered.

"I do not know him well so I can't really judge a person. Whether a person deserves to die or not isn't up to me to decide." Vale answered.

After this, Vale left the Clubroom as he waited for the start of the duel.

In just a few minutes, the arena is already filled with people and to his surprise, even some seniors in the higher years have arrived to watch the duel!

As he stepped onto the dueling platform, he looked at Wilfred Moontomb on the other side. He's also wearing his uniform since at the moment, this uniform is probably the only one in their possession that can withstand some low-level spells.

Wilfred's voice then resounded throughout the whole arena.

"Vale, I heard that you obtained the Protector Amulet from Professor Charlotte Vermont. Isn't it considered cheating if you possess such a high-level mystical artifact in this type of duel?! This duel would be meaningless if we'll compete with such high-level artifacts, won't you agree?"