

## **LOA Nobody 201**

### Chapter 201 A dead man's chances

Since professor Thaddeus let those who passed his test go early, currently Rio, Rebecca and Amelia were going towards the canteen to get something to eat.

It's not that the professor went easy on us, it's just that he knew that while trying to endure the pressure at the end, everyone had spent all their energy, so he didn't want to push us too hard. And let us go so we can just get some rest and our mana back, before the next class starts.

"How did you do it?"

Rebecca said, while looking at the duo ignoring her and focusing on their food like some hungry wolves, who saw food for the first time in dead winter, had the urge to slap their heads and take their plates away.

"Do what?" Rio replied, as he swapped Amelia's hand away which was trying to sneak up to steal the sweets. Amelia looked at him with pleading eyes, to which he just smiled and ate that sweet in front of her. Instantly her eyes turned aggrieved and angry but she couldn't do anything. It was already too late.

"The test, how did you managed to withstand the pressure like it was nothing. Which technique did you use?" Rebecca said, while dragging her plate a little away from a certain foodie's range.

Rio knew someone was gonna ask this question, after all, no one had seen him use Rebound Art before today. He only got it during the dungeon attack, and after that he was gone from everyone's eyes, so none knew nothing.

"Ohh that, it's a new defensive technique I found somewhere, since I had one before."

"Where'd you get it?" Rebecca inquired further.

"A dungeon. Someone else had it, but He gave it to me as a gift." Rio said with a smile.

Hearing that Amelia shook her head, while Rebecca said "Meaning you just stole it, didn't you?"

"What stole it? We made a deal and he lost." Rio said, trying to defend himself. After all, Virgil Graves, the man who had Rebound Art in the novel, was after his life and Rio tried to make a deal to let him go if he parted ways with the technique.

Obviously, Virgil did what any villain would do in that situation - ignored the nice incentive that lets him live.

Stupid move.

So in the end, the technique still ended up in Rio's hands and Virgil's hands, well they were chopped off.

"Yeah yeah." Rebecca ignored the topic since she was just curious about it. She didn't want to probe for further details, so she started to focus on eating her food.

The academy canteen gave free food to every student, any time. Obviously if they pay for it with some Merit Points, the taste somehow increases a little. Same as the canteen of the dorms, if one doesn't like the dishes on the menu and wants to eat something else, they can order for themselves with Merit Points.

The next class was going to be about theory parts, which was divided in 2 parts, for the first part the instructor was going to teach everyone about the history of the world and every major catastrophe that has come till now. Second part was based on the current state of the world, and knowledge about the monsters, dungeons and towers.

The major incidents of the past were getting so much focus and attention, because no one knew when an event would reoccur or if a similar tricky dungeon would pop up again in some part of the world.

Like just after Emergence, people took the appearance of Towers lightly, and simply thought of them as empty buildings where they can trap the monsters at first, but then some centuries later, Towers which were already filled with different monsters and creatures appeared one by one, and the world paid its price for ignoring them.

Same was the case with different or difficult dungeons. Most people didn't like to talk about the failed raids of dungeons or towers, where many people died. Stronger awakeners would gather and solve that dungeon and normal people would forget about that incident all together. But no one knows, when a similar dungeon if that world will appear again, no one knows when monsters or creatures of that dungeon might appear on some floor of a tower.

This is why the World Association focuses on everything, good - bad, failed - successful, everything that the world has gone through till now, is important and a must to know by the new generation, so they can be better prepared for the unknown future.

Though many people still take it lightly even after so many years, but this knowledge is the only thing that plays a huge role in the survival of everyone when Phase 3 of Emergence starts - THE INVASION.

"Let's go, we'll be late for the class." Rebecca said, glancing at the time.

"Who do you think will come to teach us next?" Amelia asked, looking at Rio.

"What, why're you looking at me? How would I know that?" Rio said, as he went to pay for the bill.

(Girls really don't pay, no matter which world you go to huh.)

Amelia and Rebecca looked at him with the expression that said, 'Seriously'..

"Well, but if I had to guess it should be professor Quinlan Tempus. I'm not sure" Rio said, after thinking for a bit.

"Teacher Qin's gonna teach us." Rebecca said, excitedly after hearing Rio mention the name of her childhood history teacher.

"Well, he's been part of the World Association for a while, and he started teaching last year, so maybe he'll have a chance." Rio said, remembering the plot of the novel and his changes.

According to the original novel, the professor who was about to teach the class A-3, was a halfling called Caelum Arishem.

But that man was killed during the Warzy attack two years ago.

So there was no way he could come alive again to teach the protagonist. Other than him, there were only a few who were as knowledgeable and famous as him, so Rio could only take a guess in that regard.

He named Quinlan, simply because he and Caelum were related to each other.

When Quinlan Tempus first joined the Zenith Academy, he worked under Caelum as an assistant professor for two years. So there was a chance that heavens or fate or whatever, would put Quinlan in the empty position, so he can teach our dear protagonist everything the dead guy was supposed to teach.

Professor Caelum was a genius when it came to Dungeon Theory. And given a little bit more time he would've published his own research data book which was his life's work, after meeting and exchanging some points with the protagonist.

That book collected data from as early as the first dungeon outbreak to the current momentary peace. This book would then make records everywhere and inspire many other genius brains to come up with several other theories in the regards of dungeons and monsters origin. Thus giving mortals another edge and improvement in their fights against monsters.

Obviously once the professor got so famous, he also gave some credit to our protagonist who helped him with the last piece of the puzzle, making him a genius and a smart savior in the world's eyes.

But sadly, Caelum was killed before the plot started, and his research was lost after his death.

Now if there's someone who wants to keep the plot the same as in the novel, the only option would be to give all that research in the hands of another person, who would then pass it all to the protagonist.

Professor Caelum had no family or friends, and was a total weeb, who only focused on finishing his research. The man only joined the World Association, because the Association promised to fund his research. Thus the only time he got out of his room was for the class and then he was back as a shut in.

In this case, the only one he came in contact with was his assistant professors and the students. And between both of these choices, the assistant professor Quinlan is the one who is connected to the characters more.

[Thus the chances that he has the diary of his deceased mentor, and is just waiting to pass that on to the protagonist are much higher. Then to introducing a whole new character who wasn't even mentioned in the novel.]

'Yupp. I'm just worried that if Leon got his hands on that book, and Apollo decided to chime in as usual and finish the research. Then because \_.

[Quinlan's a villain. He wouldn't share the results with anyone willingly. So somehow all the credit would end up on Leon's name.] System said, surprised by the sudden theory Rio thought of.

'Yes. There might be mentions of the dead professor here and there. But under the influence of Leon's halo and Apollo's minions, the credit would mostly be taken over by Leon.' Rio said and started thinking.

If Leon got that big of a reputation boost, then dealing with him was going to be much harder. Even for him.

[Why don't you release the research first. You know it already.]

'I can't. I only know the end result and the answer. If I want to convince the whole world of that theory I'd need his research which has examples, logs, details, suggestions and records of everything from the past.'

'What I have is like a simple formula. I know it is right, but I don't know how or why.'

[Well, you can't do anything. Let's just wait and see. We can plan accordingly after that.] System said, trying to make its host relax a little.

'Damn it. Damn those Warzy motherfuckers. Bastards ruined everything.'

"Brother, did you pay already? Or are you planning to stay there and wash the dishes instead?" Amelia said jokingly, after seeing Rio just standing still.

"I'm coming."

Chapter 202 What about the memory crystals

"Man theory classes after lunch sucks." Rio said, as he washed his face, after being caught sleeping in the class.

"Can you stop complaining and be faster? We're late." Takashi said, as he was kicked out too.

"Come on. What's the rush? Let's go get a coffee first. Or you're gonna fall asleep again." Rio said, as he started moving towards the vending machine, which are placed on every floor of the academy.

"No. I'm leaving. You're wasting our time." Takashi said in a hurry, while trying to catch up to Rio. "And I didn't fall asleep. It was only because I was trying to wake you up that I'm kicked out too."

"Did I ask you to wake me up?" Rio said and looked at him with a serious expression "Not my problem if you got a habit of butting your nose in others business."

Takashi noticed the difference in tone, but he still defended "Classes are a sacred place. I can't just let you disrespect them like that."

Rio patted his shoulders and said -"You know if it was some other noble kid, and you disturbed them while resting, next day instead of class, you'll be sitting in the infirmary. So be careful of what you say and do next, kay Baldy." Rio said, and pulled Takashi's hand and swiped his watch on the vending machine.

While Takashi was surprised, a 'Ding' sound was heard in his watch, with a notification of - 'Payment successful.'

"Thanks for the coffee." Rio said and started walking away. Leaving Takashi glancing at his watch and the remaining Merit Points for a while.

[That was harsh.]

"Fuck off. I'm not a nice newbie, so don't spout nonsense on every chance you get. Have some dignity as a system."

Rio said, and before the system could make fun of him for being a bully, it was shot down again.

[He's your room partner.]

"And a character who'll be killed in the first event."

[Won't you save him?] Systems asked.

"And why would I do that? He's from Neisah. A devout believer of Gods and their graciousness. Even if I save him, he's of no use to me."

[But saving him can get you some points.]

'It can also lead to some unexpected changes in the plotlines.' Rio said as he shook his head "I can get points through millions of methods, but if I start acting like a hero saving everybody. Then should I die when the world ends in the later stages."

[But \_ ]

"No buts. The plot is already ruined enough. I shouldn't change stuff which gives me no profit but only trouble." Rio said, while thinking about all the bigger plotlines related to Neisah and their beliefs.

[Look at you acting like a villain, and not just a thief.]

"It's not about being a villain. Handling Leon is already hard since Apollo decided to boost his growth. Since Leon is now 'C- rank' then the opponents who will come to face him would be high ranked too. The difficulties and challenges he'll face will be tough too." Rio said as in a matter of fact tone.

[So you think the first event would be more deadly than in the novel.]

"Of course, otherwise Leon won't have much of a challenge."

[You should know that Apollo only boosted his rank this time. Instead of training him in various skills and arts alongside too. That's why Leon could reach 'C- rank' this early.]

"Doesn't matter. The theory remains, the more powerful Leon is, the more powerful enemies will come to kill him." Rio said "The event would be total chaos. And in between all that chaos, I need to protect Amy, Becca, Ayla, and my next pair of villains."

[What about Saisha? Will you let her be?] System asked, as it noticed Rio didn't mention her name in the list.

Hearing her name again brought some stupid feelings again, but he buried them again as he said "She's a heroine, she can save herself."

[So you plan to avoid her. Is that it?] System said, as it read Rio's mind.

"Saisha had no contact with Rio until the first semester exams in the novel. I'm just following the plotlines." Rio said.



Seeing Shweta as Saisha was something he didn't expect in this world. But since she was here, he could just deal with it accordingly.

The relationship between them was ended by her when she left him back on earth, his wait over the years had only brought him pain and disappointment. So instead of seeing her daily and opening up all those wounds again, he decided to ignore them, and her altogether.

He was moving on from his past in Arcadia over the years and he could still do it - 'How hard can it be?'

[So you aren't curious about why she left you or why she's here. Maybe the memory crystal has all those answers. You can confront her face to face and finally find your closure. Isn't that what you always wanted? To hear her explanation.]

"That was my naivety. After thinking about it all night yesterday, I've come to realize something."

[Oh and what is it?]

"That now it doesn't matter why she left me or why she did what she did back on earth. My life on earth is gone. And that's it. Now even if Saisha and Shweta are one soul, they aren't necessarily the same."

[Meaning.. ]

"Just like Amelia and Ria. They're the same, yet not at the same time. Their lives are different, their stories, experiences and origins are different. Like Amelia has her whole own family here. She has her friends, partners and connections here. She isn't just my sister Ria anymore.

Maybe the same is the case with Saisha, she isn't Shweta anymore. She has her own family, future and destiny here."

Rio declared "I'm not going to use those crystals and ruin their current lives, just for my curiosity."

[Even the crystal of Ria? That would mean she would never remember your earth life. She would never remember you.]

"She doesn't have to. Amelia doesn't need to be reminded of the painful things from the earth anymore. Since knowing them won't change what happened back there.

Plus I don't want to break the happy family that she has here. It would be unfair to both Amy and Artemis." Rio said remembering the doting mother of his here.

"Just like how I couldn't accept them as my family after retaining my memories. Maybe she won't either. It would be hurtful to her. As for Saisha \_ "

[I understand.] System replied, as it understood all his emotions and thoughts. (He's still scared to face her it seems.) System thought.

[So what's next?]

"What next, FUCK YOU for wasting my time system." Rio said, as he remembered he was supposed to go to class again after washing his face. "Stupid AI, dragging me in convos, so it won't feel alone in my head." He hurriedly said, while gulping down the last of the coffee and started moving towards the classroom again.

'How in the hell did my conversation go from talking about Baldy, to my life choices? This useless system.'

(Don't blame me, you stupid host.)

"According to the records monsters can be categorized through many different ways - based on their origin, their powers, race, intelligence or threat level etc and etc.

Since it's your first class, we'll start with the very basics of the background history. Types of monsters based on their - "

"Can I enter, professor?" Rio said, as he interrupted the class.

Professor, who was teaching the class, turned to look at Rio and nodded his head. Getting permission, Rio entered the class under the surprised expressions of everyone.

Rio sat on the table and saw Takashi, who simply pulled himself a little further from his seat. 'Fucking kids.'

[Hahaha now he won't talk to you for a few days. Unless you speak first Umhaha] system said, trying to control its laughter, looking at Takashi acting like a bullied, upset teenager.

'This is why I hate idiots. Well peace at last I guess.' Rio thought and ignored him. Not like he came to the academy to make friends with anyone anyway. Especially the believers from Neisah and extras.

Ignoring him, Rio sat on his chair. He looked at the note which suddenly appeared on his desk "It's been nearly twenty minutes. I get that you know it all, but be a little serious will you?"

Rio just smiled after reading it, there was no need to guess who sent the note. He was checking up on his books when another note popped up on his table. "Also where's my coffee?"

'This girl. Something's really wrong with her. Why didn't she pick on Ria's habits of being simple and considerate.' Rio said, and ignored another letter which appeared there.

He didn't even need to see what was written inside, as he could guess, it was probably a threat, that since he didn't buy her coffee, he should buy her something else after the class.

'Just one day, and half my points are gone just because of her. Should I ask the principal to give me my old points back.' Rio thought, after looking at his wristwatch.

"Miss Amelia and Mr Rio, if the discussion is over between you, can you focus on the lecture again." Quinlan, who noticed the use of Amy's spatial magic, spoke up.

"Now where was I? Types of monsters based on their origin. Anyone wanna speak up and answer it."

#### Chapter 203 All about monsters

"There are two types of monsters based on their origin. First ones, those who appear from dungeons, towers, spatial cracks or gates etc. Basically those who don't belong to Arcadia. Monsters no one has ever seen before, monsters who are new and we know nothing about, are in this category." Quinlan said, as he waved his hands and the projection screen turned on, displaying the images of several monsters like Goblins, Orcs, Trolls, Minotaur, Harpies, Kobolds, Mormon. Banshees etc.

"Second type, are those who were residents of Arcadia even before the Emergence. Now those beasts were mere animals in the past, but after going through several mutations over the centuries, even those harmless animals have become much more dangerous." The projection changed and this time images of several new monsters started appearing like Three eyed raven, Frostbite wolf, Clawer, Embermoth, Toxin Rhino, Abyssal shark, Lava hedgehog etc.

"Teacher, are you sure these monsters were harmless animals back then, they look so scary." One of the students said, as he looked at the projection of a lava hedgehog, which shoots darts made of lava from his body in every direction.

Quinlan smiled hearing the question, but then he pressed a button on the remote and images of a normal hedgehog appeared on the screen. Kl

With a little kid poking it with a stick and throwing stones at it.

".. " The students who asked the question earlier, looked at both the animals and he was surprised by the difference. 'Was this little palm sized animal, the ancestor of the ferocious Grade 2 Lava Hedgehog, which killed anyone who came near him.'

"Seeing this you can imagine the growth even these low level animals had after the Emergence." Quinlan said and started to go into details about some monsters and showing some other examples.

"This is how the difference between the monsters was done in the past. Over the years, when people from other races started appearing in Arcadia, this division couldn't be used anymore. The appearance of new races like Elves, Dwarves, Druids, Fairies and others couldn't be termed as monsters, as these races had become our allies in the fight against the other monsters.

So people started to term monsters based on intelligence. Those who were mindless creatures were called monsters or beasts, while others who became our allies were given the titles of their races and were not placed in any category."

"But soon enough the theory of intelligence also started to fail, as everyone realized monsters from high level dungeons or mutated beasts had started to gain intelligence and could think or plan for themselves. After this discovery the threat of such monsters increased and a new division was created, those who could mutate or those who couldn't."

"Ever since then, after many such incidents and discoveries, the current system which we use to classify monsters was created - Grading system.

Now monsters are classified in grades. From grade 1 to grade 5. Grade 1 being the lowest level and grade 5 being the most dangerous ones.

Since monsters couldn't awaken or bind with the world system, so we can never truly know their real power compared to the awakening levels. But after so many centuries of fighting, we have a general idea of their strength compared to us, but nothing certain. So one should always be careful about all monsters and not look down on them due to their rank Or grade."

Quinlan was speaking as the words started to appear on the whiteboard behind him. The pen seemed to float behind him. Obviously some could see that the pen wasn't floating but was actually held by some slim threads and was moving through them.

'His control over threads is awesome.' Rio thought, as he knew how hard a feat the perfect balance needed for doing that was. His blessing related to threads was already level 2 and he had mastered it even more, yet even he couldn't control them like that yet.

[He has the blood of Arachne in him. It's normal that he'll have more control over weaving threads as it's his bloodline ability and not an external blessing or skill.] System said, trying to fight him with facts.

Quinlan was a Halfling, part human - part spider. His appearance wasn't anything special. He wore a normal suit and trousers which covered most of his physiology, and he wouldn't look any different from a normal human from a distance. His skin was a little pale compared to normal humans. His shoulder length black hair which looked slim and styled in a straight form. The only striking feature was his eyes,

which seemed to shine in the darkness. They also bear an uncanny resemblance to those of a spider, with multifaceted irises that shimmer with an otherworldly, hypnotic quality. Those eyes grant him an almost preternatural perception of the world, allowing him to see intricate details and subtle nuances that often escape others.

In the later form of the story, when Quinlan finally shows his motivations and fights with Leon as a villain, he shows his real form. With several arms growing out of his back, and multiple eyes that span across his whole face.

[Image is in comment section and in discord server.]

Quinlan was just like Bernhardt in terms of motivation. But with a more sad background and crazy personality. While Bernhardt belonged to the perverted young master type category, Quinlan was a much more twisted villain.

His parents were part of an adventurer team, and in one of their dungeon raids they came across a sleeping arachne. Thinking they would slay it easily and get rich with rewards, they overestimated themselves and decided to fight it. They almost succeeded too but call it plot or heaven's will, their luck ended and one thing left to another, in the end Quinlan's mother was the only one to come out of that dungeon alive. With a grown out stomach carrying a fetus which later gave birth to Quinlan.

She hated Quinlan since birth and almost had him go through all kinds of domestic abuse storylines the author could come up with, slowly turning an innocent kid into the dangerous villain he becomes later on.

If you're wondering what's his similarity with Bernhardt, that's the obsession these two had over Rebecca.

Yupp, as the first main heroine of the novel, Rebecca doesn't just bring the endless support of the royal family, she also brings all sorts of villains and troubles for the protagonist to solve and shine.

The routines of the hero saving beauty keep playing in the academy, and Leon gets Becca in his happy harem team.

Quinlan, who's been secretly fawning over the princess ever since he first became her teacher during her childhood, obviously couldn't stand the sight of the protagonist, and plots behind the scenes to kill him.

But in the novel, Quinlan is just another newly appointed professor, and has no contact with the class of A-3. So he could only try to manipulate others and try to kill Leon when he's outside the academy.

To counter Quinlan's bloodline ability of weaving threads, Leon also gets the blessing of threads from both Skuld and Apollo. Thus Leon not only humiliates Quinlan in his strongest field, but also challenges him in a duel and defeats him too. The routine repeats itself over time, and Leon ends up killing him finally and getting both the rewards and the rich lady.

But now Quinlan is the teacher of class A-3, and there's a chance he also has the book from the previous professor Caelum, which is a chance waiting for the protagonist to take.

Rio was thinking if he'd have to personally deal with this professor, how should he do it. Should he fight him head on like Leon or should he just hire someone or blackmail some other professor to do it for him.

[Can you stop thinking about killing someone, I'm afraid you'll lose control like yesterday.] System said, as it felt the killing intent rising in its host's mind again.

Rio controlled himself and focused back on class. He just decided to think about this matter on a later date when he was calm and wasn't in a state of a powder can waiting to go kaboom. He was still feeling frustrated over Shweta's unexpected arrival in this story.

Professor Quinlan had finished writing about the monsters on the whiteboard and was explaining about them. But since Rio already knew about them so he just got lost in his thoughts again.

Grade 1 monsters - mindless monsters. Less dangerous alone. But that's why they're always living in herds or groups. Power ranging from rank F to rank E based on the monster type and its abilities.

Grade 2 monsters - some intelligence but still only enough to follow normal animals' instinct behavior. Also live in herds, power level of rank D to rank B based on the monster type and its bloodline abilities.

[Exceptions to grade 1 & grade 2 monsters are possible, due to various reasons such as mutation, some upgrades or lucky opportunities, bloodlines, racial traits etc.)

Grade 3 monster - Power level similar till limit rank awakeners. Starts gaining intelligence and starts to plot and plan. Plays the role of a leader among the herd of other monsters.

Grade 4 monster - Power level similar to limit S rank or SS level. Depends upon monster type and its abilities. Likes to live alone, rarely in pairs or groups.

Grade 5 monster - Power level similar to SS rank. Depends on the monster type and its abilities. Likes to live alone as a ruler. Have their own domains.

– Mutated monsters start gaining intelligence even early and categorizing them is always hard.

-- Grading is only done as a basis, real threat level classification of monsters is based on all the cases of similar monsters happened in the past.

— SSS rank or Zephyr rank monsters are very very rare to be seen. They've been sealed in high tower floors. And never appeared in any outside dungeon or anywhere else. [Though there is always a chance that some SS rank monster can mutate and rank up in his strength. Thus even they're always dealt instantly whenever they appear.]

--- Monsters classes and levels can also be seen through monster cores, after they're killed. These cores are also called life stones, which holds their life energies, and helps them channel mana, aura and other energies smoothly. [Eating or refining monster core won't increase anyone's mana, it will mainly increase one's control over it. Unless the level difference between the eater and the monster is too big.]

Chapter 204 Another girl from my past, seriously?

"Ayla, are you free this evening?" Rio asked, as they were all walking back to the dorms after their classes for today were finished.

"No, I need to go and look for professor Saltzman. I had some doubts about the recipes you gave me last time." Ayla said, as she explained.



Reindolf Saltzman, a great alchemist and another professor at Zenith academy, also Ayla's mentor in the ways of alchemy.

After seeing that Ayla's talents in alchemy weren't showing any signs of improvement in the early years, Rio decided to change some stuff and asked Artemis to prepare another teacher to help her in learning.

He also suggested the name of Reindolf to Artemis. Reindolf at that time was just another run of the mill alchemist in the Haven city Alchemist Association. Believing in his lies and being supportive as always, Artemis agreed to the request, and thus Ayla, who was supposed to only meet her mentor after coming to the academy, met him years ago and also became his student without any hardships.

Since back then Reindolf was nowhere near as famous as he is now, it wasn't hard for him to accept Ayla as his student. After all he couldn't just refuse the request from the Blake Family without having any backing himself. This also helped in boosting his reputation and he even managed to get the attention of World Association a little early than the . So it wasn't a bad deal for him.

But even though Ayla's talent slightly improved with the constant guidance of her father and Reindolf, but she was still just average and nowhere near the level of a genius alchemist heroine. Maybe it was because she lacked the motivation and drive to learn, or maybe it was because she didn't feel the need to be so dedicated in mastering anything.

It was only after Rio's demise in the Draugr Depths dungeon, that she forced herself into her lab and focused only on learning and mastering the books of potions and techniques Rio gave her on her birthday.

He didn't know her thinking and motivations behind doing that, maybe she felt indebted to him for saving her father's life, and wanted to prove that he didn't choose wrong and finish what she promised him. Or maybe she just needed a trigger of tragedy to awaken her talent genes.

But it was only when Rio returned from the dungeon that he learned that the snotty crybaby he left behind was gone, and had now grown into a genius alchemy star of the Alchemist Association.

"Actually you don't have to work so hard on the potion about EMMSY, I've already learned it. So you can just take it easy and focus on your studies or other things." Rio said, making Ayla surprised.

Looking at Rio's serious expression, Ayla asked "For real. Why don't you just teach me then? I already almost got it, I was just confused about the final parts." Saying this Ayla's usual calmness was gone, and she had an excited expression as she started asking about her doubts "The book said to burn the Aurangy medicine and mix it with Morishas, but aren't these two opposite of each other and reduce each other's effects, thus failing the whole process and potion. I even tried doing that separately and creating a mix of them alone but \_ "

"Ayla stop \_ " Rio said, hearing her constant doubts and theories. "It's no big deal, you can just learn and experiment in your free time. I just wanted to say, there's no need to work hard on it. Okay."

Ayla nodded her head hearing his words. "You really don't need it now? " She asked again to confirm her doubts.

"Yes, I don't need it. So just focus on something else. Try learning the technique you chose from the library. Or anything else you want." Rio said, as he reached the dorms.

Knowing the potion was for curing the aftereffects of EMMSY, she had been working hard on creating it perfectly, yet failed to do so till now. Even though it had been more than 2 weeks now. This was also expected by Rio, after all even though he had given her the recipes he copied from the 's knowledge, he himself didn't know anything about the process or making it. And this one was much more complicated than the Pura Corpus potion. And needed much more complex herbs and medicines, with delicate control and knowledge of everything. After all, how can a potion of the middle stages, be made so early so easily?

That's why he didn't rush her, and was willing to wait, but with Shweta's dreams haunting him from a few days back, getting impatient he just bought the potion from the system and it. Now he doesn't need the potion so Ayla can just focus on other things and techniques.

"By the way, I didn't ask you about your room partner. Who is it?" Rio said, as he remembered about the change in the .

"Oh it's her." Ayla said, as she pointed towards a girl coming into their direction.

'Fucking hell' Rio cursed as he saw Saisha walking towards the dorms, followed by two other elven girls.

"Wait, you're living with the Elven princess?" Amelia asked as she recognized the girl too. And Ayla nodded her head in agreement.

"What's so special about it? You're living with a princess too." Rebecca said, as she noticed Amelia's surprised expression.

"Hehehe" Amelia smiled at her remark. And asked Ayla " How is she? Is she arrogant and stupid like other elves?"

"She's actually nice. She's calm, pretty and smart too. Though she doesn't talk much so I don't know much about her yet." Ayla said, as she remembered her meeting with her roommate from yesterday.

Hearing her words Amelia just clicked her tongue and said "Anyway if she troubles you or tries to bully you, just tell me. I'll teach her a lesson."

"Woah, what got you so spirited? Did she do anything wrong?" Rebecca asked as she saw Amelia just glaring at Saisha's leaving back.

"Naah, I just don't like her." Amelia said, while glancing at Rio, who was walking side by side with them, but silent.

Unlike what she thought, Rio wasn't silent, he was busy conversing with the system who fucking does nothing to warn him of changes in the plot.

'System, you fucker. Aren't you supposed to warn me of changes in the plot, or give me points for everything that is different from the novel.' Rio asked angrily.

[Yes host]

'Then why the hell, I didn't see any notification of Saisha's plotline change. Or Ayla being her roommate.' Rio said. "If Saisha isn't living with that girl from the novel, how can the event of that drug accident happen?"

[There's something wrong with her host. The point system I have is self running, comparing everything with the original novel's plot and giving you points. But just like you and your sister, she's outside the plot too. There's nothing to compare as the characters are totally changed and replaced. You won't get anything for them and it's hard for me to monitor them. I already explained it to you the last time when we talked about Amelia's awakening.] System said clearly explaining it's side.

So I won't get any notifications or rewards from her too huh.'

[It's not that serious. You'll get their rewards every time their own special plots start, or you make major changes to them. yourself. Until then they're our blind spots.]

System had already explained all these things when he changed the plot during Amelia's awakening, and when later goddess Gauri (Kali) directly made Amelia her avatar, instead of giving her a simple blessing like Nyx.

But he didn't expect Saisha to fall into that category too. Amelia was basically always near him, or he always had someone else who was near her, so he wasn't much worried. But Saisha is an important character in the novel, so if he couldn't know her changes it would be troublesome for him.

'Let's just hope your 'bastard Being' doesn't send someone else here.' Rio said in a silent tone, hoping no one else from his past died and reincarnated here.

His words of prayer had just finished when he heard someone speaking behind him "Excuse me, can I talk to you for a moment?"

The voice was cold and emotionless, like a recording made on a machine, yet at the same time it sounded so clear and smooth.

Rio turned to look back and was surprised to see another heroine standing there - Katherine Winston. He was surprised as to why the cold ice girl came to talk to him here, instead of challenging him in the training grounds like he thought so. "Yeah, what happened?" He said.

"I saw you using transformation magic yesterday in Miss Freya's class. Can you teach me that?" Katherine said without stopping, her face still showing that same expression.

She waited to hear Rio's answer, yet after seeing him dazed out, she thought he wasn't willing to teach her so she continued saying "You don't need to teach me everything, just guide me for a bit. I've tried learning it myself for a while, but I didn't understand\_"

Katherine was saying her thoughts and doubts, but Rio wasn't listening to her voice. Because the more he listened the more he felt it sounded familiar. So so familiar. It only took him a moment again to realize whose voice it sounded like.

'System'

[...]

'Please say that I'm wrong, and it's not what I think it is?'

[I'm sorry host. But it seems we just found another anomaly.] System spoke in a mechanical tone, dropping its previous personality of the girl it chose from his mind.

Chapter 205 Katherine or Kajal - the system's voice

'System'

[...]

'Please say that I'm wrong, and it's not what I think it is?'

[I'm sorry host. But it seems we just found another anomaly.] System spoke in a mechanical tone, dropping its previous personality of the girl it chose from his mind.

Seeing that Rio didn't respond to her request, Katherine asked again "Can you help me with that or \_?"

"Ohh sorry, I was thinking of something else. Yeah I'll help you tomorrow. Is that okay?" Rio said, as he tried to smile.

"That's fine. I'll meet you tomorrow then." Katherine said and left without turning back or showing any expression of smile or gratitude.

"She's really icy huh." Amelia said, as she came near her brother.

"Don't joke around. I'm leaving. I have something to do. I'll see you girls at dinner." Rio said and left for his dorms, without waiting for their response.

Takashi didn't come with him, and he didn't speak to him again after that talk he had in the morning. Rio didn't care about that and started walking towards his room. He had too many things to think about again.

"She sounds just like you, System. Wanna tell me why?" Rio asked, once he was alone and back in his room.

[I told you, I just copied a personality from your mind, I don't know anything.] System said in defense.

"Then who is she? What is she doing here? And most importantly, why don't I remember her?" Rio asked the questions he had, ever since he talked with Katherine.

[How would I know if you forgot some of your memories? She was in your head before.]

'What do you mean before?'

[Rio, I didn't know.] System said apologetically, as it realized it spoke out without thinking.

Hearing the system's answer, the bad premonition in Rio's head rose high. "Just shut up and tell me, what did you mean she was in my head before?"

Knowing there was no other option, the system started explaining. [When you took the healing potion to heal your brain after awakening, your brain was healed but some of your memories were gone. Even when I tried to look for the memories of this girl in your mind again, I couldn't find anything.]

After choosing the personality of a random girl from his mind after the merging, the system wanted to know all about this girl and checked his memories, but surprisingly all of the memories related to that girl were sealed and it couldn't find anything.

'So you're telling me, that stupid fucking potion given by your stupid fucking being erased my memories. Is that what it means to heal my brain?'

[It didn't erase them. Your mind was already hiding those memories subconsciously, trying to bury them so you won't remember anything.] System said and continued explaining [Even before you took the potion you couldn't remember anything about this girl and asked me about it, remember. It's just after drinking the potion the seal your brain subconsciously placed on these memories became stronger and they were totally locked. Even from me.]

'What bullshit are you spouting? Why would I hide my memories subconsciously? I even remembered all about Ria and Shweta, and these two were painful enough for me to hold on, so why would I forget her.' Rio said, not believing anything the system said.

He remembered that the system first chose the personality of Ria, then Shweta's, and then when he finally gave it a last chance, it just picked a random girl from his mind. At that time, he thought it was someone he saw somewhere, or from some tv or movie show, as there was no lack of girls with cheerful personalities in those things.

But hearing the system's words now and meeting Katherine who was speaking in the same voice as the system in front of him, albeit lacking in emotion. He was sure it wasn't just a random girl or any character from a movie or a tv show.

It was someone important to him. He could feel it, a familiar feeling in his head, yet he couldn't remember exactly what it was? According to the system, She was someone whom he remembered even after he came to this new world albeit barely. Yet he couldn't understand why he would try to forget her in the first place.

What did the system mean when it said I subconsciously buried her memories, and the potion completely sealed them. And why didn't that 'bastard of a being' say anything about side effects like these.

"Can I get those memories back?" Rio asked, as he needed to know this answer the most. Someone from his past was standing in front of him, and yet he had no idea who it was, or what his relationship with her was?

"Use whatever method or potion you have, buy it and give it to me." Rio said, urging the system. He didn't care about points anymore, if he learned anything from Amelia and Saisha's case, and the gifts from 'the being' - he was sure this girl was important to him, important enough for 'That Being' to reincarnate her in Arcadia.

'So who was she? A friend, family, or some enemy' Rio thought, as he tried hard to remember, yet got nothing.

When he tried to use his blessings to clear his mind and try again, a fucking headache started to pain him and stopping all his efforts.

Giving up on trying to search for answers himself, he then glanced at the gift section, to see if some new memory crystal popped up, which could give him some kind of hint about his relationship with her, yet there was nothing.

He needed to know about her, not just for himself, but also because she was now living as Katherine Winston, the 2nd main heroine of the beginning stages. Even if she doesn't have her memories of earth, as system said she had now become another anomaly in the plotline.

Since she isn't the pure character of anymore, could he be sure that her personality is the same as Katherine described in the ?

What if she has the knowledge of the too? What if she knows the plot and is trying to follow it or ruin it for her own gains? What if she's the one who popped up in arcadia 8 years ago, when system had to shut off as a response.



It would be too troublesome in any of the above cases.

"Can you help me or not?" Rio said, as he noticed, system was being silent.

[I don't know, host. The memories were locked by your own subconscious, so it's only upto you to get them back. No outside potion or pill can help you.]

"What do you mean upto me? If it was up to me, I wouldn't even forget them, or remember them now when clearly I'm trying very hard to do so?" Rio said in annoyance, as the more he tried to remember her, the worse his headache became.

[It just means some part of your subconscious thinks you aren't ready for it, host. There's no need to force it, maybe you'll remember it in some dream one day, or when any similar event happens again...]

"Or when I hit my head on a wall, or fall down the stairs, it isn't amnesia, you stupid AI. And nor is it a bollywood drama." Rio cursed the system as it gave a useless suggestion.

"What else did I forget? Is there anything else you're not telling me? Or something that your 'the great being' said to you. But you're too busy sitting on your ass and watching drama to speak up." Rio said, feeling a little annoyed at the constant new changes that were happening around him.

'First Amelia, then Saisha, and now Katherine - three important characters and supporters of the protagonist. And now they're swapped with my sister, my ex-girlfriend, and God knows who this new girl is.

What the fuck is wrong with this 'Being' and this plot. Why're all important characters getting swapped out? What next Ali getting here as Leon and Nashi as Ditail?

[There's nothing else that you forgot, host. You remember everything else besides her.]

"Any idea what makes her so special? You must have seen something in her to choose her personality right." Rio asked, looking to get at least a hint.

Hearing his question, system thought for a second, thinking if it should answer him or not. But then it decided to speak truly.

[She was your friend. Best friend kinda friend.]

"Wha \_ "

[I've seen memories in which you, Shweta and her, had all been together. You seemed happy and relaxed. And \_]

"And what?" Rio asked, as he couldn't understand why he would ever try to forget who was once his best friend. He even remembered that bastard Nashi, and Ali and everyone else. Then why her? Why did he forget her?

[I think she loved you, host.]

"Say WHATTT?" Rio said as he stood up from his bed with a shocked expression. "Are you sure she loved me, cause I'm pretty sure that's something I'd remember."

[It's the truth host. She used to call you SK.]

'Those are just the initials of my name. what's special about that.'

[SK didn't mean Shiva Kumar. It meant Shiva and Kajal.]

[That was her name by the way - Kajal Malhotra.]

'Fucking hell'

The more he learned about this mysterious girl from the system, the more confused he became. He clearly remembered everything after Shweta left him, and nobody, no one ever came to meet him once when he left the city and moved out. When he was in prison?

If she loved him, where did she go? Where was she when he needed her at his lowest? When Ria was gone, when Shweta left him, where was she?

'Did something happen to her. Did she die like Ria? Is that why I chose to forget her?

But that shouldn't be possible. I remember Ria and Nashi, and both of them were dead too.'

All these constant new variables in his plans started to anger him, as it reminded him of the last time things started to get out of his control like this - that damned dungeon incident.

His headache started to reach his peak, as the system took out a potion from the inventory for him, but before he could drink it, it got crushed as he clenched his hands unconsciously.

"WHO THE HELL is she?"

Rio screamed as the pain in his head reached his limit, and he lost his control. A blast of dark mana, like one he released in the dungeon, the day the top guilds found him, was let out.

—KABOOM—

## Chapter 206 Lucius Delirium & Shani's blessing

"So, Rio Raven Blake. Where should we start?" A man in his 30's asked Rio after seeing him enter the room. The man had long black hair tied in a ponytail, he was wearing glasses that covered his eyes. Wearing a modern but plain suit that made him look stylish yet official. A warm smile is always present on his face that makes others feel relaxed and calm.

Yet looking at his smiling face, Rio just an irritated expression, as he cursed his luck for being stuck here. The man was someone he just wanted to avoid, a villain in the 's beginning stages, Lucius Delirium.

The student counselor for the Zenith Academy. Since everyone studying here had the potential to be the future pillars of support for the whole world, the World Association also paid attention to their mental health and psychological state. Since the disturbed state of mind would either hinder the growth of that student, or there's a chance that they may be led astray by some Evil or Stray God, or other evil organizations. So to properly nurture them in all aspects, the counseling was also given to students for free.

Due to the constant competition, battles or bullying - many students often need this to clear their mind and calm down. Though no one wants to share their secrets, but if things get out of hand, the choice doesn't remain in a student's hands, and the academy would force them to go through this process.

This was the case with Rio. After his initial burst at the library, he was given a week's time to report for a session with Lucius. But after he created another mess in his dorms yesterday, he was forced to go through therapy earlier.

Yesterday, after learning that his mind was messed up after drinking a potion that was supposed to heal him. Or that he lost some of his memories, and that all his plans would be ruined since a new mysterious girl hijacked the body of a famous heroine in the , and he had no idea what to do with her - he lost his control over his mana, which resulted in a blast of darkness that lost control.

Good thing was that the system erected a barrier in his room at the same time, so the damage of that spell didn't destroy the nearby rooms or the entire floor. But still such a burst of violent mana, attracted the attention of dorm staff and this incident was reported to others.

"I was just practicing a new spell, and lost my control for a moment."

Rio said to them, but seeing the condition of his room which was totally a mess with a cracked floor and walls, broken windows, furniture which was eroded and normal stuff which directly turned into cinders and flew in air - even a blind guy could tell it wasn't a basic spell, but since the damage wasn't that big and no one was hurt anyway, they couldn't punish him.

But he was still shouted at a little. As for his punishment, he was asked to pay for the repairs himself, and report to his therapy as soon as possible after his classes finish.

"Well, let's start with the introduction shall we? My name is Lucius Delirium. I'm a grade 2 professor at the Zenith academy, tasked with teaching everyone all about psychology and behavioral instincts. Other than that, I'm also responsible for the counseling of the students who need my help."

"I don't need your help, it was just a little mistake on my mana control due to my recent rank up."

"Ahh that could be a reason. After all, I've heard you were only rank D during the entrance ceremony, yet just after a month and now you're at rank C+, it's a big leap so I'm sure it would be hard to control yourself right."

"I was originally rank C, this isn't a leap, it's just me getting back to where I was."

"That's also true. Tell me, how do you feel about that? About your rank ups, are you happy?"

"Who wouldn't be?" Instead of answering, Rio questioned back.

Lucius nodded his head, and said "So what do you plan to do now that you have your old strength and rank back? I heard it was quite a big commotion in that dungeon, and many of your friends left you back then to escape from the dungeon. What do you feel about them?"

"It's just a survival instinct of theirs. You teach that, don't you?" Rio replied back, as he remembered other than counseling, Lucius also takes a special class where he teaches students about the behavioral pattern and habits or nature of mortals and monsters alike.

"So you aren't angry at them?" Lucius asked.

"Would you believe me if I said no." Rio replied, and watched as Lucius started to write something in his diary.

"I heard you used mana in the canteen on your day one against another student. Miss Freya also said this was the second time you lost control over your mana and the blessings. This time you nearly destroyed a building where you live. You know your actions could have hurt many students living or practicing nearby."

"Yet they didn't. I had it under control."

"The elven student whom you attacked last time, is still resting in his room. The mental strain on his mind is too big to be called under control." Lucius said, showing him a photo of Jaesin, who took a two day leave from the classes, despite being fully healed by the potions.

"That's just the side effect of that blessing. I can't change it." Rio said, shrugging his shoulders.

"Can you tell me a little about that blessing?" Lucius asked curiously.

"Asking someone for their skills, techniques and blessings is not allowed in the therapy sessions. That's the rule, so no. I can't tell you." Rio replied, pointing towards the memo of rules lying on the table.

Ignoring his answer, Lucius still continued "I've talked to Jaesin, and he said at that moment he felt hatred and pain in his mind. And he remembered everything about the painful things in his life. So I'd suppose it's similar to some kind of mental attack skill."

"..."

Hearing his theories Rio kept silent, as there was no need for him to explain anything about his blessings to anyone. Especially one as important and powerful as Gaze of Hatred.

Gaze of Hatred, a blessing given by the God Shani from Hindu Pantheon. Shani is known as the God of Karma and Justice. Tasked with maintaining balance and giving out retribution.

The blessing enables the user to channel their intense emotions, particularly their feelings of hatred and resentment, and project them directly onto another person through their gaze. When invoked, the target is engulfed by a relentless surge of hatred, forced to confront every hateful act they've committed and every moment of hatred they've ever experienced, all at once. It's a deeply emotional and distressing experience.

This blessing is the lowest level of Shani's ultimate power, called 'Eyes of Karma'. Shani's divine eyes can see through the past, present and future of anyone who meets his eyes, and their acts, thoughts and karmic consequences of their actions.

Shani's powers can give rewards and can also bring retribution. It can give blessings of luck, bringing people good fortune, and it can also curse people with bad luck often referred as Sadhesati, which lasts for years.

Shani's extraordinary powers makes him one of the most feared deities in the Hindu pantheon. Even other gods and celestial beings approach him with caution, as they understand the impartiality of his judgment.

In the original , Shani's blessing was introduced in the academy, as Valtor Shade, the rival of the protagonist, had this.

But Rio received it three years ago, on a dungeon raid. He had to create an event similar to one Valtor had to go through in the novel. In which Valtor saved one of Shani's innocent followers, and punished everyone else who were wrongly about to kill him. Rio mimicked all the details and even took it up a notch, by saving a whole bunch of Shani's followers instead of just one guy. Same as written, Shani was happy with his act, and gave him the blessing.

Obviously mastering this blessing is quite trickier, as he was needed to constantly use it, which could also put a strain on his own emotions - so he let it be for time being. It was only during that dungeon event and after his time being trapped there, that he could use this often.

Since Valtor was Leon's rival in all of the academy's scenarios, obviously he had his own trump cards and skills which could challenge the protagonist. This blessing was one of them. Leon, who had just awakened recently, and was still sensitive about the humiliation he lived through for 6 years as a cripple, once affected by this blessing, would be forced to live through all those hateful scenes all over again.

Obviously Apollo would try to help his chosen every time, but given Shani's history with Sun Gods, the blessing of Shani would unlock it's next level and become even more potent because of that, making Leon suffer even more.

Though this made Valtor seem like a villain in other people's and readers' eyes, but from his point of view using an attack that works best on your opponent is the right choice.

Plus this blessing would always give Valtor a chance to fight Leon on equal terms, and sometimes even get an upper hand. – So how can Rio, who knew the novel, let go of something so nice. So he decided to take it too.

How would Leon feel when he would have to fight two people who had a blessing which was a bane for him.

Chapter 207 Therapy - just what I need

Shani, the God of karma and justice, was the son of Sun God Surya and goddess of shadows Chhaya. The blessing of hatred was a power he unlocked moments after his birth.

When he was born, instead of seeing celebration and receiving the love of his family, the infant godson came across the displeased expression of his father.

Shani was born with a dark complexion which was stark opposite of Surya's luminous radiance.

Shani's appearance raised doubts in Surya's mind and he refused to accept that his son would be born with such dark features. He even doubted his wife's character and accused her of Infidelity.

Young Shani, born with exceptional intelligence and awareness, keenly felt the rejection and humiliation directed at him and his mother. Overwhelmed by anger and hatred toward his father for the unjust accusations and rejection, he glared at Surya from his mother's embrace. Awakening his first innate power born from hate - Gaze of Hatred.

As Shani's eyes met those of Surya, an unbelievable transformation occurred. The once radiant sun, symbolizing warmth and light, was suddenly eclipsed by darkness. Surya's golden brilliance faded, and the sun's surface became as dark as Shani's own complexion. This was the first punishment God of karma had given out. And just this was enough to scare every other God, not to mess with Shani.

Shani had always been impartial in his job, and even after coming to Arcadia, instead of following others into battle for supremacy and showing off, he stayed behind and adjusted himself to his old job. For him



giving out punishments and rewarding people for good karma was important, which world he was in, didn't matter.

One could say, he was a very workaholic God.

Gaze of hatred, a blessing, though seemingly powerful, which could affect the target's mentality and give him severe pain, also had some drawbacks and limitations. The biggest one being, this blessing could only be used by channeling the emotions of the user as fuel. Thus using it often may affect the emotional state of the user itself.

As they say, one can't understand pain and suffering, if they don't go through those feelings themselves. Same was the case with this blessing.

To use the gaze of hatred, one must also feel an intense amount of hatred or resentment himself. The blessing simply heightens those emotions and projects them to the target, drowning them into the negativity.

There's also the fact that once invoked, controlling this blessing was hard, and it may also affect innocent individuals nearby, spreading fear and infamy among the populace. Thus leading the target to suffer the fate of being ostracized.

Shani also suffered through this fate in both the myths and the original . Since due to the curse he received from his wife, he couldn't even control his powers and anyone who met his gaze would be punished by bad karma, making him live alone even in the group of other gods.

It was only after Valtor became too famous in the 's future, and helped Shani lift the curse that he could be free again.

Seeing Rio lost in his thoughts, and not paying attention to him, Lucius furrowed his brow, but the smile on his face still didn't disappear even for a second.

"Look I understand that after what you've been through, it is hard for you to be okay. And that's why we're here. A talent like yours would be wasted if you can't control yourself." Lucius showed genuine concern as he addressed Rio's struggles.

"Hmm"

Seeing his worried expression, Rio just chuckled and didn't say anything. It was almost funny how perfectly this guy could mimic the emotions of normal people.

Yes, mimic. Lucius himself didn't feel anything at all. Delirium heir was born apathetic. He didn't feel any emotions and whatever little he did, he never showed them or cared for them. This whole therapy thing that he does, it's just for his research, in trying to understand others, and pretend to be like them. It was all just an act he puts on, so he won't feel left out.

Even in the , until the moment he died, Lucius only managed to feel two emotions - attraction for professor Freya, and annoyance for Leon.

"I see that you can still smile, which means you're not completely a lost cause. So we can work on your other emotions over time. But for that I'll need your help. I can't do anything, if you don't say anything and just stay silent like this." Lucius said, trying to show that expressions that looked like he was just a concerned professor trying his best to help the student.

Rio considered Lucius's request, while trying to suppress the urge to laugh and praise him for his acting skills. Which obviously surpassed his own. "What do you want to know?" he finally asked.

Seeing that he was finally willing to cooperate, Lucius decided to ask him about his past. The core of his trauma. "For starters, let's start it with where it all started. Two years ago, you got trapped in a dungeon and had to go through a very traumatic experience to survive alone. Why don't you tell me about that. What you did? What you felt? What you promised yourself to do if you came out?

There are so many questions, feel free to answer whichever you like."

Rio closed his eyes. He could still remember everything that happened back then as clear as day. He could even hear the voices and whispers of everyone else as they ran leaving him behind.

'Hold on, I'll get help.'

'Run faster damn it'

'What a monster. It's good that you got too arrogant this time.'

'Your death would be my way to power. I'll defeat everyone and win my way back.'

'Just die, and accompany my brother in the halls of hell.'

'Forgive me. It was the only option.'

Rio opened his eyes, as he tried to calm his emotions. After suffering the major blows to himself and his plans again and again, his control over his emotions was getting better and better. Though his anger was rising each time, but he could still control himself.

"Are you going to answer?" Lucius asked again as he noticed the subtle change in Rio's aura.

"I'll answer. In the time I was in the dungeon" Rio began "I'd basically hunt or hide. Hunt monsters I could kill, hide from those whom I couldn't. It was just me trying to survive."

"As for feelings I felt at that time, anger would be the one emotion that comes to mind. Disappointment too. But there's nothing I can do about that." Rio admitted and Lucius nodded his head, without probing any further for details.

"Thinking about what I'd do once I come out huh" Rio said and thought for a second, and then he nodded his head with a smile and continued "I plan to collect some debts."

Lucius stopped writing his notes and looked at Rio. He wanted to ask about the debt he mentioned as he felt a little wrong about those words, but he had a feeling Rio won't answer. Yet he still asked, hoping to at least see his facial reaction this time. "What kind of debt?"

"That would be personal, so I'd keep it silent for now." Rio said with a cruel smile plastered across his face.

"I heard you haven't met any of your old friends or classmates yet. Is there a reason you're alienating them? What do you feel about them?" Lucius asked, changing the topic.

"You know, you're just like him." Rio said instead of answering his question. He started to smile to hide the feeling of anger that started to rise inside him, when he started to see similarities between this guy and the one he met on earth for therapy.

"Like who?" Lucius asked, tilting his head in confusion.

"William Harper. Someone I read about in a book." Rio said as he tapped his hand on the table and looked at Lucius "Are you curious about what's similar between you two?"

"I'm curious about that, yes." Lucius said honestly.

Rio smiled and answered "He didn't know anything about how to help anyone. So he'd just keep asking useless questions to his customers, trying out different things and scenarios until someone realized their own mistake or found an answer."

His words confused Lucius and made him furrowed his brows in anger. "I'm just trying to help." He said again.

"But you don't really know how, do you? After all, you don't understand what it feels like." Rio said with a meaningful expression and knowing look on his face.

Seeing the confident look and that expression that just screamed 'I know what you're hiding' - Lucius felt weird for a moment. He thought someone finally figured out about his illness, that his act he put on failed in front of this boy.

'Does he know that I can't feel any emotions?' Lucius couldn't help but think that.

Ignoring the confused look on Lucius's face, Rio smiled and stood up to leave. "Well, I'll tell you about that guy next time. It's time for my class. See you tomorrow professor."

'This is gonna take a while.' Lucius thought, as he looked at Rio's leaving back and glanced at his notes, he couldn't help but jot down one final observation: "He's different. More session and supervision required for further progress."

## Chapter 208 Mystique Weapons & The Sword Spirit

"Just choose a partner and spar between yourself. I want to see you fighting until your opponent's down on the ground or your stamina falls down by more than half. Take this spar seriously, and don't just play around like it's a game." Thaddeus said, as he sat upon the chair placed in the middle. "You can decide upon the method of your spar and rules. Just don't stop until I say so." He finished his words and closed his eyes, ignoring everyone.

Currently only 8 students who managed to pass his test at that time were standing there. The rest of the class was practicing on the side with assistant professors in charge of them.

Rio, who just came out of his therapy sessions glanced at Amelia, who just dragged Rebecca and went to a corner.

'Who wants to get beaten for no point?' She thought as she gave him a final look.

[How about you fight with the protagonist. Let's see which skills Apollo chose to teach him, and which he saved for later, just so he can rank him up higher.] System said enthusiastically. It even felt if it should issue a quest at this time, with some little reward.

(Well let's just do it.)

[Quest issued]

[- Defeat Leon in a fight and break his pride.

Quest Reward - 10000 points.]

Rio who looked at the system's lousy quest and even more lousy reward, directly refused it without saying anything and closed the panel.

'This stupid AI. I hope next upgrade will give you some brain to think.'

[But.. ]

When system started to speak in its defense, Rio just muted it, and told it to go and sleep. This was going to be his first quest, doesn't the system know that the first quest should always start with a nice reward or some unique gift.

'10000 points. I already got enough points and don't know where to spend them.'

What is it if it's not stupid. He was also looking forward to his first quest. And look at this disappointment.

Rio sighed and started to move towards Valtor, there was no need for him to fight Leon this early for useless show off.

He was a nice villain, who wanted the hero to live his days of glory for a while. Leon is getting praise and comments from everyone, so let him be and enjoy all this.

After all, the higher he flies now, the deeper the wound would be when he chops his wings later and makes him fall down.

'Enjoy your first few months. We'll fight in the first sem exams, where I get to crush you in front of the whole academy.'

"I need my rank 1 room back after all." Rio muttered and kept walking.

But stopped when a girl appeared in his way and stood in between.

"Do you want to spar?" Katherine said, with her usual dead body types cold expression.

Rio looked at her face for some time, trying to see if he could remember anything about her, yet got nothing, but the mild warnings of a headache. So he let it be.

"Sure." Rio said, as he just decided to train with her instead. Maybe it was because he saw Valtor and Leon talking to each other. Or maybe because he remembered that he had already promised her this yesterday.

There was also a chance that he'd unlock her gift if he got into contact with her. Just because it hasn't been issued yet, didn't mean it won't be. There was only one gift left now, and Rio had a feeling ot was Katherine's memory crystal. He just didn't know what were the conditions to unlock it.

Because while Saisha's gift was issued by system the moment he saw her, Amelia's gift was given much later. So Katherine's conditions could be similar or somewhst different, he wasn't sure.

"Let's go over there." Rio said while pointing towards an empty corner.

The use of spells and blessings wasn't allowed, as the professor only wanted to see our physical strength and techniques we learned before coming to academy.

Rio watched as he saw Katherine move towards the table where several wooden swords and other wooden weapons were placed. She picked up a sword and came to a side. Rip looked at several weapons, thinking about which one to choose. In the end he looked at Katherine and after thinking something, picked up a long staff. And came to face her.

Katherine squinted her eyes seeing him pick a staff. Everyone knew he weilded a sword, as his achievements were widely spread in Arcadia.

The one who created his own sword art at the age of 15. Or the one who mastered the sword technique made by the Sword Saint. Or the one who had the epiphany after looking at the 13th Spirit's Strike.

These were all feats that basically everyone in the academy and Schilla knew. Even in the academy his name was written in the history pillars, since he had an epiphany after seeing the Sword strike Marks left by the previous wielders of Mystique sword.

[[[[[Mystique Weapons - Special weapons whose origin still remain unknown even after a 1000 years. These weapons have their own will, and no one could wield them without getting the approval of the weapon spirit. In entire Arcadia, there are around 36 Mystique weapons, which had been found until now. And only 21 of them had recognized their owner. Rest of the 15 weapons had been lying dormant waiting for their destined master.

These weapons appeared after the first tower filled with monsters appeared. These were all weapons thrown in the world and had been scattered throughout the planet. Every 25 years the weapons which still haven't recognized their owner yet, would release an attack of their previous wielder, leaving the mark of their presence behind on the world. This is like a call from the weapon spirits to their master, and a chance to see if anyone worthy has been born in the new generation.

No one who isn't worthy can touch or wield these weapons, and would be killed by the weapon spirit if they forcefully tried to bind them. This is why the remaining 15 weapons had been open for the whole world to see, yet no one worthy for them had been found.

Everyone in Arcadia tries to go and try their luck, but until now only 21 of such weapons had found their owners yet.

If an owner of the Mystique Weapon dies, its weapon spirit would then remain ownerless for the next 25 years, and then start to look for a new owner like the previous progress, or choose to go dormant. These weapons can't be passed down through generations or given away or sold. Unless of course the weapon spirit found someone worthy enough, and chose to follow him after your death.

Duke Agnus Blake had been chosen by the Mystique Sword called Shade. That's why he was given the title of 'Owner of Shade and 'Sword Saint'.

And Rio, his son had gained an epiphany after seeing the mark left behind by the 13th Mystique Weapon, which was another sword spirit.



This meant that after Rio reached Limit Rank, he'd have a chance to take part in the trial set by the weapon spirit, and could become it's new owner if he cleared it.

— The weapon spirits would first choose the qualifications of the person, and if he's been recognized, then he would have a chance to enter the trial and challenge it. One needs to be atleast a limit rank awakener to challenge the trials set by the Mystique weapons. ]]]]

A thought that Rio was looking down at her or wasn't taking her seriously came to Katherine's mind, but she just ignored it as it didn't matter to her. She just needed to learn what she lacked, and that's all.

"Let's start." She said, as she prepared her stance, and prepared to attack him.

Yet when she swung her sword at him, he just pointed his finger at her. Before his finger touched the sword, Katherine saw thin lines started to appear on the sword, and when Rio slightly ticked on the sword's tip, the entire sword got cut in several pieces, which started to slid down & fell to the ground.

"... "

Katherine just stared at her hand which only held the broken wooden hilt with confused eyes, and when she looked up, she saw a staff pointing at her neck - "Game Over"

Amelia who was fighting with Rebecca nearby glaced at her brother and smiled, while Rebecca just clicked her tongue and muttered - "Show off."

## Chapter 209 Another Spar

"Professor said to take this seriously." Rio said, as he withdrew his staff.

Katherine closed his eyes, throwing all thoughts aside and took two steps back. She went and picked another sword and prepared to fight seriously this time. She coated her sword in aura, making it more sturdy, so that his tricks don't cut it easily like last time.

Instead of saying anything they both charged at each other, swinging their weapons at each other.

While fighting with Katherine, Rio kept his focus on the other battles too. Currently Amelia and Rebecca were against each other. Leon was fighting with Valtor, while Amaya was fighting with Alaric.

From the corner of his eyes, he kept looking at all the techniques and skills all of them used. He wanted to compare their progress with what was written in the . For now he only knew little about Leon, Rebecca and Amelia.

He hadn't even met with Alaric and Valtor even once yet.

This academy was the first time Alaric appeared openly, because he would always be hunted and attacked whenever he was found outside.

Being the hybrid of vampire and werewolf bloodline, his existence alone was a taboo to both races. He was an unclaimed prized trophy that could salivate any random vampire and werewolf walking around.

How this guy survived all this time without any backing, Rio could only blame it on the plot armor and 's setting.

Valtor was simply a training maniac since his childhood. So Rio didn't especially look for him himself.

Amaya on the other hand, though Rio had seen her multiple times at social events or at royal banquets, he never took the initiative to be friends with her too. Because of her descriptions in the , which never stopped praising her for the genius brain she possessed.

According to the descriptions in the novel, if Rio had to list out the smartest characters from beginning to the end, Amaya Stormswill would obviously be ranked in the top 10.

Don't think top 10 is lousy, and she's nothing much. One should know there were several hundreds of named characters in the novel, many villains, heroines and villainesses. And the time she appeared was still only till the middle stages of the novel story.

After that, she was killed by Amelia's hands. Yet her ranking is still there. Which should be enough to say about her.

Rio didn't want to appear in front of her, and give her some clues or doubts, plus he didn't like the vibe she gives off. So he avoided her till now.

Amelia and Rebecca, well he knew about them pretty well, but he still wasn't sure how much the past two years had changed both of them. Like now Amelia's relationship with Goddess Gauri isn't good, and she doesn't like her or respect her, as much as she did in the novel. Rebecca too, she doesn't stick around with Alfred much, and she doesn't avoid Bernhardt now. Same was the case with their fighting abilities and skills, both of them are stronger then they were in the novel. With new Trump cards and new skills to back them up.

Seeing that Rio wasn't even paying attention to her, Katherine started swinging her sword in even more fervor, yet every time she thought she found an opening and could hit him, he would just dodge it or use that weird trick where her sword would get stuck in place, giving him enough time to move out of the attack's range.

Katherine flared his mana, turning the area around her frosty. Feeling the sudden decrease in temperature, Rio glanced at Katherine and saw she was creating daggers made of ice.

"Take this seriously." She said, as she started to send them hurling towards his direction.

Since the professor didn't set any rules and they didn't discuss it before starting the spar, anything and everything was free to use.

Seeing the daggers that came towards him, Rio just dodged and moved out of the way. The ones he couldn't avoid, he just used the threads to change their direction a little, to set them off course.

"Don't use mana. Let's fight using aura." Rio said and stopped using his blessings. Dispersing the invisible threads he created all around him, Rio felt a surge of mana back into his body. It felt refreshing.

Katherine didn't say anything in response, and canceled her spell too. She coated her sword with aura, giving it a little silvery glow, before swinging at his neck.

They fought for a moment but the results were still obvious. Rio, who had reached the level of aura manifestation, had created his own shadow made of aura who went forward to fight in his place while he assisted from behind. Katherine was only at the level of aura formation, and could only use the aura to coat the weapons and give her some physical boost, facing the aura manifestation which seemed to swallow all her attacks, chipping away at her aura each time they clashed, she gave up on this useless battle too.

In the Aura Manifestation stage one can move their aura to manifest it into a form or an avatar of their choice and personality. Just like awakening an element it depends on luck and is random. For most it is in their own form or in the form of animals.

For Rio his aura form was simply the manifestation of his shadow.

With his high control over darkness, shadows became a thing he could play around with easily. After making a form of aura with the shadow, he used a secret method created by a villain in the later stages of the novel, to bind a blessing to the non-living avatar.

For this he chose the skill of one of the seven sins, Beelzebub's Devour. He had received this blessing after he managed to attract the attention of Den of Devils and entered the towers of hell for the first time 2 years ago.

As the name suggests, with this blessing he could Devour anything and everything. This blessing was also the reason he could survive in the dungeon when he was first trapped there.

Due to the less amounts of edible food he could find in that failed world, he would've been dead from various reasons, had it not been for this blessing.

So when he started to lose his mana fighting zombies, and knew he wouldn't be able to hold on for long using his aura or pure physical strength, in desperation he chose to use this method to create a clone, and managed to recreate it after failing for a dozen times over several months.

After creating an aura avatar with the blessing of Devour attached to it, the clone did half his job and fought in his place. The aura avatar could devour anything it ate and turn it into aura and make the avatar stronger. And when Rio canceled his aura and dispersed the manifestation, he could get back part

of the remaining aura energy from the clone. Filling up his aura reserves again, and sometimes even boosting his strength.

This method was a bad move, and Rio didn't want to do it, as he had other plans for the skill of gluttony. But he had no choice.

He originally wanted to get the blessings from all the seven sins and merge them to create something new and powerful..

Yet after binding the skill with his aura avatar using the secret method, he lost the blessing himself. This was the price he had to pay for in return.

So even if his aura manifestation was much stronger than everybody else, to Rio he suffered a huge loss in this regard. As in his eyes, he got a mid stupid clone instead of getting a godly skill.

Obviously he only felt regret till a few days ago, after the system came online and he saw the skills name in the shop function, Rio just bought the skill again from the system. Though his previous mastery was all gone and he would have to start from scratch again, but this was already enough for him.

After seeing that beating Rio using aura was no use, Katherine threw away her sword and decided to use pure physical strength. There was no thinking that a girl is physically weaker than boys, because everything changed after awakening and physical strength too got enhanced with each rank up and level.

Though seeing Rio's mastery over aura, it was also clear that she'll lose this way too, but she still wanted to try and see the difference between them.

With that she moved towards Rio with her fists clenched tightly and making a boxing type stance. Rio smiled and threw his staff away too.

They circled each other, fists raised and bodies poised for action. Katherine lunged first, her punches quick and precise. But Rio's reflexes were unparalleled. He dodged her strikes effortlessly, responding with a series of light slaps that seemed to not hurt but were more humiliating.

Katherine moved again, launching a swift jab toward Rio's face. He deftly ducked, her fist grazing the air above him. With a fluid motion, Rio retaliated, delivering a lightning-fast kick to Katherine's side.

Katherine grunted in pain but didn't back down. She responded with a series of punches and kicks, aiming for Rio's stomach. He skillfully blocked and evaded her attacks, his movements fluid and controlled leaving no opening for her to attack.

Their movements were a blur of speed and agility. Katherine's determination was evident, as she even began to use her aura unknowingly to boost her speed, but the difference between them was too big. Katherine was only at D rank while Rio was at C+ , four minor ranks higher than her.

With a spinning kick, he swept Katherine off her feet, sending her crashing to the ground. She grunted in defeat as the air rushed out of her lungs.

"It's over." Rio said, looking at the time. He stood over her, extending a hand to help her up. "You were good," he acknowledged.

Her forehead filled with sweat, adding a touch of beauty to her smooth skin, almost making it shine in the sunlight, yet Rio stood there with his hand stretched, not looking at her.

Katherine accepted his hand, "But not enough to hit you even once," she admitted, a mix of frustration and respect in her eyes.

She knew her strength well, that's why she knew how strong the boy in front of her would have to be for him to handle her so easily.

Rio looked around and saw that the other spars had ended some time ago and currently all the other 6 students were looking at him with different expressions. Some with awe and admiration, some confused and curious, and some hungry.

Huh hungry

Rio looked at Amelia and saw him looking at him with eyes that seemed angry yet her expression pitiful.

"Looks like my points are going to be wasted again." He thought, already knowing that he gotta pay for dinner again.

## Chapter 210 Potions and Angel

"Did you have to play around that much?" Amelia said, as they all walked towards the canteen. Who made her hungry after wasting her energy for all this time.

"I didn't though. The professor said not to stop right. Plus she wasn't bad." Rio said, trying to shirk himself of this blame.

"He's right. We all saw it, she was good at it. Her ranking's not a lie." Ayla said.

By the time when their spar ended, the training for other students had ended too. So some of those who still had some little energy left, came to the side of toppers to see their 'training'.

Obviously the other students still need to go through their one hour of special training treatment once the next class is over. But Now they were free too.

"What good, he's always happy to beat us black and blue in minutes, instead of playing around for hours." Amelia said while glaring at Rio. Then she turned to look at her best friend and her eyes turned soft, just like a little rabbit. Her eyes showed worry as she placed her hand on Rebecca's shoulder and said "I'm telling you Becca this guy is just cruel to us two, and calm to every other girl. And you still want to marry him."

Hearing her words, Rebecca almost choked on her food, as she coughed and drank the glass of water in a hurry. After calming down, she glared at Amelia with fierce eyes, with a face that was getting red in a blush every moment.

Her angry expression only made Amelia smile, as she just wiped her mouth, patted her hands and stood up to leave, before Becca could attack her or say something in return.

Rebecca glanced at Rio, who was ignoring both of them and was only focusing on his food.

One day Rebecca just casually asked Amelia about Rio, about what he likes or doesn't, or what he does and doesn't when he's at home. During the topic Rebecca also mentioned that her mother still wanted to continue the talks of their marriage once they finished their studies at academy.

Though at that time Amelia told everything to her friend and seriously tried to help her. But from the next day, all that just became a joke for Amelia to tease Rebecca with.

'There was a saying about secret's and a woman's stomach in my previous life, that's really what happened here too.'

Rio thought, as he swiped his watch to pay for the bill and leave.

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In the evening,

"Where'd you get all these?" Ayla asked in a loud tone, as she glanced at the bunch of pill recipes, Rio handed her over.

She just read the recipes for the first two pills, and she was surprised, where he got them. After all, the pill she saw is said to give agility boost to anyone after drinking it. And the next one was to increase one's strength for some time after drinking it.

Obviously their effects weren't much high, and didn't last long. And it was also written that they were only effective for awakeners under limit rank. But what was surprising, was that they didn't had any side effects after the pill's effective duration was over.

There are many such pills in the market, but they all come with some kinds of side effects. Some would harm your muscles, or simulate your blood and mana too much, resulting in some hidden injuries or some were even addictive and people couldn't drink them too often. But this pill didn't have none of those effects. Once the effects were over, you could use the next one once your body stabilizes and it wouldn't leave any scuffle behind. And the most important thing, was that all the ingredients this recipe mentioned were just some normal herbs, that could be found easily.



"I got them from the dungeon last time, and after translating some singular books. You can try to understand them for now. I'll ask Esme to deliver all the necessary ingredients later." Rio informed her as he walked along.

These recipes weren't from the plot or from some singular books, these were all some cheap products of the system shop. It cost him around 10000 points for the original recipe, and another 15000 points for perfecting it and replacing the original ingredients with those which could be found in Arcadia and were in large quantities.

When he first saw the price of 10000, he happily bought all kinds of potion recipes. But after he read them himself for fun, he learned that some of the herbs mentioned in the process, were something he never even heard the names of. And after discussing it with system, the useless AI just showed him the panel of medicinal herbs and the price he'd have to pay to buy them.

Meaning every time he needed to create those potions, he'd need to buy ingredients himself using his points or look for something with similar effects himself.

So after blaming the system for cheating and fighting with it for awhile, system reluctantly agreed to change the recipes it's host bought to make their ingredients suitable for Arcadia.

(Obviously Rio was looking for the item section of other worlds and there was a tag in the shop too. But how could he agree to his own mistake. So he just blamed the system for cheating him.)

These were potions Rio planned to produce in large quantities and sell them to general public, through his company. Since these potions only worked on mortal rank awakeners, which obviously are the most numbers of awakeners - the business and profit he could get from them could help him a lot. Not to mention the reach and reputation boost he could get through his company.

Ohh didn't tell you did I, there's a new company in the industry of potion business called 'Angel', which is registered under the name of Rio Blake.

After the Blake family first released the potion of Pura Corpus 8 years ago, their potion had taken the world by storm, and the potion's success and effects made the company the sole ruler of the entire market.

After all, no matter how many awakeners there are in Arcadia, the number of unawakened people present, is still the highest and increasing everyday. This is why a potion which could help someone in cleansing the impurities and sensing the mana before awakening, became way too famous way too easily.

After that potion's news calmed down in a year and two by a little, the same company announced another potion called 'Potion of Celestial Cleansing'. A potion used in medicinal baths, which could help someone in improving the harmony of their five senses and also in awakening aura.

First a potion for helping people awaken mana, and then a potion for helping people awaken aura - both of these were huge successes and brought tremendous profits for the Blake family. Making its name and reputation known throughout Arcadia.

Then on Rio's 13th birthday, Artemis changed the company's ownership, and registered him as the new owner. Obviously it was just in name, as he was just a kid then, and he didn't need to do anything or manage it himself.

Artemis managed the company's affairs and did everything to make it sit on top of the whole industry.

A year before Rio joined the academy, meaning when he was 14, he decided to change the company's name, and make it a brand separate from the logo of a noble or rich family's business.

The image of Blake family which provided those godly potions to public, even almost free to the people of Damascus, was way too high and positive, and going with that momentum Rio changed the company's name to ANGEL, which everyone accepted while singing praise and praise.