

SPELLCRAFT 241

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 241: Strike Back

Using the tactic of deactivating the barrier anytime she wanted to launch a heavy Light-Attribute Spell; recovering her Mana if she ran out, and even ensuring there was enough time to cast big guns; Ana successfully beat the Demons.

It sapped a lot of her physical and mental energy, but the girl managed to pull through. Without the aid of the Automatons providing defense and support, she couldn't see herself remotely winning.

"Haa... haa..." The girl heaved in relief.

Everyone was happy—though secretly surprised—that Anabelle had nearly single-handedly saved them all. The seniors had no choice but to feel ashamed of themselves; the Elites realized they didn't deserve their title.

Still, no one could complain. It was the opposite, in fact.

The group thanked Anabelle. Miraculously no one had died, and it was all thanks to the petite lady's efforts.

"W-what now?" Her loyal cluster of girls asked an exasperated Ana.

While recovering her energy, she took a while before responding. In between fighting and listening to Jared's recordings, Ana had been entrusted with the responsibility of manning her female counterparts.

As if that wasn't worse, she now had a mission.

Her next goal, given to her by Jared, was to make her way to the Middle-Class Boys Dorm alongside the group of deadweight girls behind her.

And so, Ana swiftly proceeded to do so, albeit reluctantly.

The journey was arduous, but the group pulled through.

They had to engage a few times, but so far, they remained undetected by any major forces. Though, this was mainly due to the sacrifice of Jared's Automatons.

Out of the initial five Automatons, only two were left. The rest performed sacrificial duties of buying time for them or distracting the Shadows near their path.

Ana realized her forces were wearing thin, and the group of girls with her were either too frightened or too weak to do any good—maybe even both. Still...

Still, her eyes gleamed with determination. She wasn't going to give up!

Jared was fighting, trying his hardest—same with Edward! She also had to do her best.

'I can do this... no, I WILL!'

With that steely resolve etched into her heart, she continued her march.

—But... danger loomed once more...

UNAVOIDABLE DANGER!

I dashed quickly, estimating to cross paths with Anabelle within a few minutes. I used my time to calculate my next step.

All things considered, things were going fairly easy—at least, better than expected.

It felt cruel to think that way, but it was genuine. In fact, I even stifled a sigh of relief so it wouldn't be too insensitive to those who had died.

'That doesn't change how I feel, though...'

Those who had seen war would understand my logic—especially one against Demons.

In the first instance, the monsters we had been encountering were just about as strong as the average Shadow Demon. Warriors or Veterans were on a completely different level.

Then we had Captains, Commanders, Generals, and then... Demon Lords! I shuddered at the thought of the latter.

'I can probably handle a Captain as I am now... a Commander would be pushing it. I'm not sure I could win... maybe I can buy some time...'

And that was a big MAYBE.

The problem was if the opponent was a Demon Lord. There was no doubt I'd lose.

'I highly doubt that, though...'

In the first instance, the Shadows that appeared were too weak. A Demon Lord could do way better. Also, there was the fact that the Lord of Shadows—Noir Seat of the Demon Council—was Kahn.

Kahn wasn't the kind to do such a thing. Well, he was, but... I was certain he wouldn't go this far.

'Did someone else become Demon Lord in his place?'

I also found that highly doubtful. Last I checked no one came even close to Kahn's power. Shadows—no, Demons generally—got more powerful as they aged and took in more Miasma and Soul Essence. At least, according to what I knew...

'... And I know plenty...'

During the war, we killed any even remotely close to his level. Only one of his commanders was left alive, and it was the weakest one. Kahn was still in his prime the last time I saw him. He could easily live for a thousand years more before choosing to retire.

He would have also grown stronger during that time.

There was no way he could create Shadows as weak as this... there was no way he would be leading this invasion.

'I suppose I have to settle for someone else. Maybe his commander? What was his name again?'

In any case, I needed to get to the root of things. No, it was best to get the teachers involved.

'Where are they, though?'

For now, I could only speculate, but I had something in the works.

'I'm close... I can sense my Automatons, and...!!!'

My eyes bulged as I sensed a lot of Shadows converge in a certain location. It was most like Ana's since my Automatons were meant to be guarding her.

'What's with this number? There are like a hundred... WHY?!'

They came from two directions and, judging from their speed, it was like they were running toward something in a hurry... or fleeing!

It couldn't be the latter, could it?

I didn't have the luxury to even contemplate the rationale of their actions. Only one thing mattered now.

'A hundred, uh? It'll be tough if I conserve resources. I guess I can't help it.'

There were lots of tricks I had up my sleeves, but revealing my hand so early in the game left a bad taste in my mouth. There was a chance the enemy was simply probing us by sending such a weak attack force.

If I wanted to gauge someone's strength, I would also employ the same tactic. But since these were Shadow Demons, I probably didn't have much to worry about. I was probably overthinking things.

'It doesn't hurt to be careful, so I'll do it moderately... Alright!'

I prepared the Mana around me and charged at full speed, readying a Spell I had only tried in my head.

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Chapter 242: Blitz

>VWOOOOSSSHHH!!!<

My body tingled with excitement as I practically vanished in the darkness thanks to my speed.

At my current pace, I would reach Anabelle before she died, and probably before anyone else she had with her.

With a wild smile on my face—pleading internally that I made it in time—I rushed to the rescue of a comrade.

Anabelle's body grew weak as she sensed the converging figures of darkness. Her consciousness nearly gave out in fear, but willpower kept her at the very brink.

They had spotted maybe two or three Shadows move together—never exceeding six in the same group—earlier. But now, it seemed like they were at least a hundred. This concerned Ana... no, it frightened her.

Those numbers were well beyond her means. She was barely struggling to move as she was. She was fighting bravely for her life and those she led, but...

Everyone had a breaking point—hers was arriving, surely. No, it probably had.

Slick sweat clung to her skin as her shaky body slowly ceased movement.

The Shadows grew closer, as though ready to swallow her whole. Ana didn't check, but the girls behind her had also halted as a result of the intense pressure.

Many had even passed out!

She couldn't possibly lead anyone in their condition. She couldn't bring herself to abandon any of them either. It wasn't out of the kindness of her heart—though that may have been part—but because her body completely refused to listen to her.

With what seemed to be a thousand needles piercing her body, the bloodlust was too much for her to handle. The Automaton that hovered around her had already begun converging close to her now.

Ana wasn't certain what they planned on doing, but she was certain they wouldn't be able to keep a hundred of the terrifying beings at bay. Sweat fell, fear swelled, and the petite girl had now become completely immobile.

Ana was certain now... only death awaited.

'I'm sorry... Jared, Edward, Mom, Dad... Sir Lewis Griffith. I... I couldn't do it in the end. I wasn't... good enough...'

Her long-held dream flashed before her eyes. The image of her friends and family appeared. And—even though she didn't exactly know what he looked like—Lewis Griffith appeared within her thoughts.

"—na!" A somewhat distant thought tried to call her, but Ana was too certain of death to make out the sound.

The Shadows converged in their legions, nearly colliding with her group.

"—nabelle!!!" The voice called out again—this time it was closer.

Death descended like a curtain, and a wave of malevolence shrouded what little light remained of the dim moon.

"—ANABELLE!!!"

The moment the girl heard the voice for the third time, so many things happened all at once that only one word could describe it—OVERWHELMING!

'J-Jared?!' Ana's thoughts rang, but before she could completely process anything, golden glimmers of light appeared all around her.

Not even a second later, the bright glimmers turned into bursts of energy—shooting out like a beam.

The darkness that enveloped her cleared, and before Ana realized it, she was standing within a barrier of some sort.

It had a golden ambiance, and it seemed to be bursting with so much power that almost anyone would consider it unreal. Ana felt the intensity—the warmth of the barrier. It was constructed with light; a highly concentrated one for that matter.

Before she could completely observe the gold dome that covered her and the rest of the girls, her eyes caught something—no, someone—just up ahead.

It was a young boy with yellowish-golden hair and a bright expression on his face. He was covered in an absurd amount of Mana that seemed to converge atop his fingertips which were raised to the sky.

A highly concentrated spark of great intensity that cackled with yellow electricity and burst with light stood aloft on his index finger.

He stood by his lonesome, unfazed by the hundred Shadows who were now baring their darkened fangs at him.

A confident smile cracked on his face, and the moment Ana saw it, she knew the moment of salvation had arrived.

His clothes fluttered with the wind and more Mana converged, yet his unfazed expression remained.

'J-Jared! You're here...!'

The look in his eyes told her "Yeah, I am..."

But that wasn't all they said. Within a mere fraction of a second, Ana could decipher one final meaning hidden within his two retinas.

"Enjoy the show!"

With that, Ana's tensed muscles relaxed... and she did as her instincts told her—she watched from within the haven that her friend made—as the Demons would get obliterated.

'I'm a bit reluctant to do this, but... whatever.'

I was also quite excited to see its effects—so motivated that I even quickened my pace unconsciously and arrived at the scene on time. No one had been hurt.

Quickly using Spellcraft, I shielded Ana and the rest of her deadweight acquaintances.

Yes! I said that!

Once that was done, I gathered all the Mana I could muster and sent them to the tip of my index finger—making them as concentrated as possible.

Demons were weak against Light Magic the most, but I wasn't too adept at it that I could use Advanced Magic based off that Attribute. To do something of that scale, I had to combine it with a Spell I was very specialized in.

Lightning!

Combing Light Magic and Lightning wasn't difficult, making the usually blue color of electricity emit a golden—near yellow complexion.

Lightning crackled, and illumination swelled.

I could see the Shadow Demons shrink back in fear, but it was too late.

"This is the end..."

I was about to use a powerful Spell... one that specialized in Area-Of Effect damage.

"[Blitz]"

>BZZZZTTTTZZZZ!!!<

>KRRRIIIUUUUMMMM!!!<

The air itself rumbled and illumination covered the whole area.

The little orb I had atop my finger freely flew in the direction of my adversaries with light speed, and then exploded once it reached their midst.

The Shadow Demons were too slow to react—too weak to resist. The spark of judgment descended upon them and turned the creatures into nothing but dust.

>BOOOOOOUMMMMMMM!!!<

[A/N]

ATTENTION TO ALL READERS!!!

I have a new book called Rise Of Evil Santa.

Please endeavor to check it out, read it, and add it to your library.

I promise it'll be worth your while.

I'll be Mass Releasing on Spellcraft once the new book gains 1k Collections. Don't miss out!!!

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Chapter 243: Puzzlement

As is trite, Spells are classified into categories; Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Peak, and Transcendent.

Each of these categories is divided into Tiers—the Lower up to the Highest Tier. There exist Middle Tier and High Tier levels between the two.

However, for every general rule, there is always an exception.

The same is true for Spells, and Magic as a whole.

There are certain Spells that do not belong in the cadres of ranking. They can be used depending on how much Mana a user has, and their proficiency with it. As a result, these Spells are considered very versatile. It is said that many highly regarded Spells are simply offshoots of the exceptions.

The Spell [Shock] is a good example. It's powerful enough to stun someone at the hands of an amateur, but a true monster could use it to entirely fry multiple foes at once.

But, [Shock] has a weakness. It's the range.

Unless there is conductivity or a medium of transfer, the discharge remains at a very limited range. To solve that, I made my version.

Of course, by adding Light Attribute to the mix, the Spell evolved once more. It increased in speed and destruction—the ultimate Lightning Spell I have at my disposal... [Blitz].

And sure enough, against targets like Shadow Demons... it's crazy effective!

>BOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

The sparks of light and electricity created a blinding wave of illumination that would stun anyone even if they watched from a distance.

'Ah, the problem with this Spell is that it's too flashy...'

But that also served as an advantage.

If the Shadow Demons knew what was good for them, they wouldn't dare come this way. From their rapid movements, it seemed like they were running from something—so that meant they could feel fear... or at least an instinctual drive similar to that emotion.

>SHUUUUUUU!!!<

"Well, that's all settled... whew." I heaved a sigh of relief.

The sight before me screamed of destruction.

Remnant portions of lightning still crackled, and the ground had a big gaping hole around it. It wasn't very deep, but the smoke that proceeded from it told me plenty about how heated it would be.

'I should probably cast a chill Spell so Ana and the rest can leave their isolated spot and traverse the grounds... even though it's all dust and rubble now...'

Ana and company were at the center of the explosion, so naturally, they would need to bypass the heated ground to reach me. I disabled the golden dome that surrounded them and the earth platform around them that remained unscathed by my assault.

'I'm just glad the barrier held out. It was hurriedly made, after all...'

With that in mind, I used a mild ice Spell to make the heat vanish and rescued the damsels in distress—though I was only really interested in one of them.

At this point, I was exhausted.

Not physically or mentally, even though those were already beginning to pile up. I meant emotionally.

Ana gushed so much when I saved her, and now she was bubbling with so much excitement. It was impossible to tell that this was the same girl that was close to death mere moments ago.

Her face was bright pink and her eyes sparkled while gazing fixedly at me. It seemed she expected a little something from me, but I had no intention of doing more than I had already done.

A little "I'm glad you're safe. Truly." Was all I could cough up, but even that seemed to be enough to satisfy the girl. Fortunately, that was all it took.

The other girls thanked me as a matter of course, and I roused those who had fainted with my Magic. I didn't blame them for collapsing under such pressure.

Miasma had quite the adverse effects on regular beings—though these Shadows only had a very tiny amount.

'Since Miasma is said to be a collation of negative energy or corruption, I suppose most living beings would reject it.'

Naïve people like Ana were even more susceptible to the stuff. I looked at her and she stared longingly at me, genuinely relieved I was with her now. The look on her face told me that she believed I could do anything.

I nearly gulped under all that pressure. The situation was overwhelming for me too; you know? I was just playing things by ear at this point.

'I'm just glad she's alright, though...' My smile broadened as I stared at the cute little thing more.

"Ah, I knew you were the one responsible for that light!" A voice suddenly sounded.

It came from above, so I sharply raised my head to see the newcomer.

Sure enough, it was Kuzon!

"Oh, h-hey! How long have you been here?" I replied, a bit stunned.

I couldn't even sense him before he spoke.

"Ah, I just arrived... though I saw what you did back there. I'm surprised. Decimating over a hundred of those things with a single Spell... that's impressive!" The golden-haired boy said as he landed.

I nearly scoffed at his praise.

The fact that this guy was here meant he probably killed off the Demons invading his Dorm and decided to take a view around.

"What are you doing out here?" I asked him, just in case.

"Well, I was looking for you."

"Me?"

I was a little confused now.

"Yeah. I didn't want you to die."

"Oh...?"

"I thought you could use some help, since these guys are... you know..."

"I-I see..."

"But, hey, it turns out they were nothing for you. That's my bad."

"A-ah, I see..."

"Yeah..."

The air got a bit awkward between Kuzon and me. Why wouldn't it?

So, while I was busting my ass trying to help people, this guy was just hovering around the Academy, looking for me?

'This Kuzon character is really sketchy...'

But, before I could even get another word out—or even finish processing my inner deliberations—another major interruption came our way.

"Heyyyyyy!!!"

This time it was a girl... wearing some sort of black bodysuit?!

I stared in amazement and puzzlement as the oddly familiar figure descended close to us and recognized her immediately.

It was Ciara Epilson!

'What the heck is she doing here?'

Now I was utterly confused.

But, before I could ask her anything or even render my greetings, she raised her hand and gave me a bit of an 'extremely energetic' expression. The next words she uttered completely shattered my sense of reason.

"Hey, where's Jerry?"

[A/N]

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Chapter 244: Intellectual Brilliance

'E--ehhh?'

I was very confused at the moment.

Kuzon showing up out of nowhere, and now Ciara Epilson. Both had causal reactions, and the latter said something I never expected.

"Where's Jerry?"

I nearly screamed, but controlled myself instead.

Even after spotting the disaster going on in school, how could these students act this way? I knew they weren't normal, but...

'And what's with that outfit?' My eyes sharply stared at the enchanted clothing she had on.

The black bodysuit was made quite shabbily--I could tell an amateur was the one who designed it. However, the power it held was the real deal.

'Did she make it herself? She's quite skilled then...'

And the effects of the suit were good too. I could tell, seeing that I was quite interested in that field.

"Hey, didn't you hear me? I said where's--"

The girl must have either failed to notice my surprised expression, or simply didn't care. She just pressed me for an answer.

'Huu, I'm done trying to figure these guys out...!' I gave up internally, spotting Kuzon simply smiling beside me.

"I left him with the others in a secure place. We're heading there right now. Want to come along?"

"Where?" Her reaction was sharp.

'What's with this girl and Jerry?' I eyed her suspiciously.

Normally, I would start considering if she was an enemy, but I couldn't draw that conclusion. Firstly, I didn't sense any ill will from the girl. Plus, even if she wanted to cause us harm, why would she be interested in someone like Jerry?

"I don't think I can trust you enough to divulge that."

Silence prevailed amid us, and I could somewhat sense some discomfort well up in the vicinity.

Frankly, I was mildly intimidated.

"Uh? What do you mean by that?" Her voice contained a hint of annoyance and she seemed to be impatient.

'What's with her?'

The Ciara Epilson I met at the Oasis was so easygoing, yet this time she was acting strangely. I wondered if she was being manipulated by someone since she wasn't acting like her usual self.

It could also be that the girl in front of me was an imposter, but who could replicate the amount of pressure she was currently generating?

Besides, I wasn't sensing any motive from her actions. Just what could be going on in her head?

"I think what Jared is trying to say is that it's pretty suspicious how you appeared out of nowhere and brought up the topic of Jerry's whereabouts." Kuzon suddenly interrupted our deadlock.

My gaze, and what I sensed to be Ciara's, tilted in his direction.

"I mean, it's odd that you're out here in the first place, and also wearing that peculiar outfit, don't you think?"

'Um, it's also pretty sus that you're here too, Kuzon.' I thought to myself, but agreed with the rest of Kuzon's assessment.

"W--what are you trying to say? There's nothing suspicious about taking a night stroll!" Ciara snapped, looking so flustered that hues of pink clouded her cheeks.

'Why is she acting up? Is she really hiding something? She could be the enemy!'

By asking about someone of little relevance like Jerry, Ciara could cause us to drop our guard concerning her true target. She was actually quite smart if that was the case.

'This girl...!' My gaze intensified on her as many countermeasures began forming in my head on how to deal with the situation.

Suddenly, I felt a warm touch on my shoulder. I turned in the direction of the hand's owner, and it was Kuzon.

He had a meaningful smile on his face that seemed to read the words "Trust me."

'What is he...? Has he figured her out?'

Was I overreacting? Was the tension making me imagine things?

"Well, I don't mean you're suspicious, Ciara. What I'm trying to imply is that your actions are. You've seen the black creatures lurking around, right? It's reasonable to say that this campus is in a state of unrest. Your actions, your outfit, and your question make you somewhat odd, don't you think?"

I was surprised by Kuzon's logic and the oratory skills he displayed to make them known.

"H--hey, you don't have to go that far. I was just curious, no big deal. Besides, how can you suspect a student of something like sabotage?" Ciara's voice lacked composure.

Kuzon had the upper hand in the conversation now. So much so, that I was amazed.

"Well, it's past curfew and you're on your own. That's already breaking the rules of Ainzlark Academy, right? Care to give a reason for that? Do you have an alibi? A valid rationale? Then why do you want to see Jerry?"

His flurry of questions made Ciara's flushed cheeks take on a brighter form of red.

"W--w--whaat are you shaying!?" Her words lacked coherence at this point.

'Aren't you the same, though, Kuzon?' My thoughts trailed as I stared at the confident young man.

He was equally guilty of breaking the rules--not that it mattered now that there was an emergency--yet he managed to twist the facts to his advantage. Ciara didn't even have any defense or counterarguments to give.

"I mean, I'm guilty of the same thing. I snuck out of the Dorms too..." He added, making me wonder why he threw away his advantage.

"E--EXACTLY! We're equally guilty of the same thing!" Ciara seemed satisfied that Kuzon lost his high ground.

But...

... This made Kuzon and I smile at the same time.

"Well, that's true. This is why I'm cooperating with Jared as he evacuates these people to the base. If you did the same, there would be no issue, right?"

I realized what he did!

By abandoning his high moral ground, he stood on the same level as Ciara and appealed to her as a sympathetic figure. Since she had a stubborn personality, it was optimal for him to rely on mutual appeal and benefits.

With this, Ciara would be bound by the concept of the collective and have no choice but to play along.

If she failed to comply, even she would realize that her actions were unreasonable.

'Such an impressive strategy...' I stared at Kuzon with surprise.

I had thought he had great powers and talents in Magic, but who would have thought he was this skilled in intellect as well.

'Could he also be a...?!'

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Chapter 245: Alliance

I couldn't rule out the possibility!

Kuzon had all it took; the brawn, brain, and personality. No matter the angle at which I considered things, he was much more mature for his age.

Sure, there were exceptional people in this world, but this was too much.

'I could simply be overreacting, but... I can't rule out the possibility.'

I had been humbled by many incidents in my life—both the past and present ones—and came to realize that I wasn't 'special'. I was inept in my past life, and I never possessed a talent for Magic even after reincarnating.

Sure, I was brilliant academically, but there were many like me.

Ana was a prime example. She both possessed smarts and an immense talent for Magic. She was special... unlike me.

Which was why I couldn't rule out the possibility that I wasn't the only one who reincarnated. There had to be others! I refused to be conceited and think I was some 'Chosen One'.

'I've never been that... so...'

The possibility became more visible as I stared at Kuzon and he returned the gaze. Something about him... seemed awfully familiar. I was familiar with his last name, though. Perhaps that had something to do with my connection with him.

There was also the unusual interest he seemed to display regarding me. It was a bit creepy, but... maybe he also sensed something? Could it be some sort of bond between reincarnators?

There was so much I didn't know.

'Kuzon Midas, eh? I need to do some research after this...'

For now, though, more pressing issues required my attention.

"F—fine! Whatever!" Ciara gave in to the pressure, thankfully.

With that, she decided to come with us to the Middle-Class Boys' dorms. With a sigh of relief, we resumed our journey.

Kuzon and Ana smoldered me with their conversations and Ciara nonchalantly moved to keep up with our pace. Despite the dire situation at hand, there was no sign of tension in the area.

'Am I the one who is overthinking things?' I couldn't help asking myself.

My friends often told me that I read too much meaning to things at times. Maybe they were right, but... this wasn't something I could afford to be negligent with.

It bothered me that these top guns were casually strolling the campus. I understood they were strong, but... if they left their dorms, who would protect the rest of the students?

I asked Kuzon, and managed to ask Ciara too.

"I killed all of mine. Then, I alerted everyone and told them the situation before leaving." The former retorted.

"I killed the ones in my path and went for the Lower Class Dorm to—erm, never mind. I killed the ones in my way, that's all."

It exasperated me to the point of lashing out at the two of them. I was older than them both, so the urge to reprimand them for their carelessness nearly took over, but I controlled myself.

Besides, after considering the fact that Kuzon could also be a reincarnator like me, I decided to tread carefully with him.

'I hope those Dorms are okay...'

Sure, other members of the Elite Ten were among the Upper-Class Dorms, but considering I could probably match up to Rank 3 among them in raw power, I didn't have much faith in them.

'Hopefully, it ends up well. For now, I should take everyone to the Middle-Class Dorm. We'll mobilize from there and decide the next step...'

That was all I could do at the moment.

It was a relief to see so many students packed in the Middle-Class Boys' Dorm.

I wasn't simply referring to the ones I left behind, but also the other students that had arrived. Initially, Kuzon and Ciara's actions made me doubt that things would go according to plan, but it seemed they were able to pull through nonetheless.

'Looks like I underestimated the Upper Class... or maybe those two simply got rid of most of the enemies around...'

My strategy was to have every student converge at a single spot. By helping the Middle-Class students, I made everyone gather there. Once the Upper-Class students figured out the situation, I figured they would make a similar move and attempt to rescue the other Class Members—or at least, investigate.

Ultimately, our actions would synchronize, and we would meet at the boys' dormitory.

Once we arrived and exchanged greetings, I personally showed Jerry to Ciara. To my surprise, Ciara didn't seem to show any interest in the boy. She gazed coldly at my respectable senior, causing even me to feel sorry for the guy.

After a very emphasized "Hmph!" she left us and rallied with her Upper-Class comrades.

I was left even more confused than before.

"What's her deal?" I asked the quite sober Jerry.

"I... have no idea." He mumbled.

Apparently, he was used to this sort of treatment from her.

Still, not taking a few discrepancies into account, everything had worked out so far.

It would be easier to mobilize everyone at that point. My goal wasn't to simply weather the enemy's assault, but to figure out a way out of it.

'Being together means we're a better target... that works to the opponent's advantage. But this also means we're a joint front. It'll be easier to fight properly with enough hands.

One problem existed, though. It was an issue that often sprouted when there were many people in a single location—conflict of interests.

"What should we do now?"

"I'm scared..."

"We don't need to worry now that the Upper-Class members are here..."

"The Rankers..."

"But, those things... even Sir Fabian would struggle if they came at him in multiple folds, right?"

"I... you shouldn't say that!"

The unease could be clearly felt around us, but those of us with power and capabilities ignored the pointless ramblings of the masses and held a secluded meeting of our own.

With so many groups together—all scared and anxious—it was obvious we needed to figure out a way to unify the students... and fast!

As a result, our little strategy meeting was established.

The participants consisted of the Rankers, and representatives from each class... apart from the Elites, of course.

I represented the Lower Class.

A boy named Roy Lesryio—the Rank 1 of his Class' Elite Ten—represented the Middle Class.

Kuzon represented the Upper Class.

No one objected to this arrangement, even though both Kuzon and I were First Years.

And so, the meeting began in earnest.

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Chapter 246: Strategy [Pt 1]

I felt tons of stares converge on me even as I sat at the lounge amid the other students present.

This was an emergency meeting to decide the actions we would take concerning the Demons that currently swarmed our campus. Of course, given the state of unrest among everyone, only a few were chosen to participate.

—The best of the best.

Of course, the Rankers were included; as well as those who could be counted on among everyone else.

I was unanimously chosen by everyone in my Class, so it was clear who the Lower Class Representative would be. As for the Middle Class, their strongest—the Rank one of their Elite Ten—took their place.

The most problematic choice was the Upper Class. Since the Rankers were all Upper-Class members, one would think they didn't require anyone else from their section, however...

'The Rankers are a distinct body not really bound by 'Class'.'

Of course, this was only in theory.

The issue of choosing a representative was resolved easily when Kuzon said he wanted it. No one argued with him.

'Why?' I wondered.

Maybe because he took care of a lot of Shadows by himself. But, according to him, there were no witnesses. Plus, after alerting everyone and explaining the situation, he ventured out to find me.

I didn't think he was lying since he had no real motive to, so I simply assumed something else caused everyone's refusal to comment on him being chosen.

And so, while the staff—Aloe Vida—whom I resurrected handled the students alongside other surviving Dorm Masters of the Upper Class, one of them decided to join our meeting as the adult.

Of course, at this point, he was impotent in authority since he must have guessed that everyone gathered at the meeting could mop the floor with him—except the Middle-Class Elite.

With such pressing matters that concerned everyone, I expected people to be more focused on that—not my face.

I received a particularly fierce glare from Richard Novo—the one I one-sidedly beat during the Exchange. Whenever I looked in his direction, though, he whimpered and looked away like a scared bunny.

"I believe we should address the most important matter first." Fabian broke the silence with his deep, commanding tone.

The boy—Fabian Lestrome—had the aura of a Prince of the Eastern Kingdom. His ambiance was cool and collected, but I understood that he was simply putting on a front.

Still, his mask was quite impressive.

'That's a prince for you...'

"These Shadows... they're somehow similar to the Demons we know from the vague collations of history. They've somehow infiltrated the Academy, have spread themselves throughout the campus... and no adult seems to be present."

Of course, there were a few adults, but everyone must have known what the boy meant.

'Adults that count. Adults that are strong!'

Dorm Masters were powerful in their own right, but they simply couldn't be compared with lecturers. Rankers could defeat any Dorm Master, so the fact that the number of the Elite students outstripped the staff spoke volumes of the much-needed manpower.

Five Dorm Masters were currently present.

Two from each Upper-Class Dorm, and Aloe whom I resurrected. Based on utility, the latter was the most important.

Not only had I increased her Mana Core Grade to rival—most likely even surpass—the other Masters, but she could use Light Magic. That made her an asset.

Of course, no one among those seated was aware of this yet. Rushing into the series of conversations that were occurring would not be the wisest choice. I simply had to wait for an opening.

"The Staff are currently having the Academy Review. It's located somewhere on Campus, but even we don't know where. We can't access it as well..." The Upper-Class Dorm Master explained.

Once he told us everything he knew, it checked out as to how we weren't able to get assistance from our Lecturers and trustworthy staff.

'I see... that's a smart move...'

Obviously, this was the work of a mole. Capitalizing on Neron's disappearance and the schedule of the meeting was a wise plan. But, this only made me all the more convinced about their intentions.

"Is there no way to reach out to them?" Fabian asked, his voice slightly trembling for a millisecond.

"N—no... not that I know of."

The Dorm Master must have felt pained to be useless since he bit his lip bitterly and hung his head in a shameful manner. Being unable to help his wards definitely made him frustrated.

"Sigh... so, that's how it is." Fabian addressed everyone.

From the way he spoke, he must have already had this conversation with the Dorm Master earlier. His recent actions were simply to show everyone the current predicament.

"We need to lay out a good strategy, accounting for the fact that help isn't coming. According to Mister Garliad, the meeting takes up a lot of time. Also, we can't expect to be safe if we're not prepared for a way to protect ourselves from those... 'things'."

There was a short moment of silence in the room.

"Now, since we've mentioned the problems, let's deliberate on the way forward." Fabian's calm voice reached everyone with a meaningful tone.

It was time for opinions.

"I believe we should make use of this place as a stronghold and hold out until the lecturers are done with their meeting."

Naturally, the most ignorant and stupid one spoke first.

"Think about it... we have a much better chance of sticking together. Why don't we establish a perimeter and create an absolute defense against those Shadows? T-that way..."

This sounded like a decent plan. In fact, many simpletons would love this strategy. The concept of safety in a monolith was appealing. However... giving in to that temptation would be a fatal mistake.

'Especially considering the circumstances...'

However, as expected, many people lauded the young man's suggestions. He belonged to the lower echelon of the Rankers, but apparently, his words were very wise.

I sighed internally.

'This is a mistake.'

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Chapter 247: Strategy [Pt 2]

I could think of at least three reasons why that was a ridiculous plan, but I maintained my calm and kept listening in patience.

"That sounds like an excellent plan."

"Yeah. If we take turns, we won't be exhausted."

"And if they get too close, we can launch an offensive to whittle down their numbers from our strategic positions."

Many praised the plan, but the more experienced Dorm Master gave an expression that seemed grave. It was clear that he knew a flaw or two in their reasoning.

"I don't think that's such a good plan." He finally spoke up.

I smiled, wondering how far he would be able to convince them. My eyes also went to Kuzon, wondering why he wasn't speaking.

'Surely, he must have realized what the issues are...'

The boy was probably waiting for his chance—like me—or he didn't care. Something told me it was the latter.

"What's the problem with the plan, Mister Garliad?" Fabian made the mistake of exposing his ignorance.

"W-well, I really don't think a defensive strategy will work out well..."

The man went further to explain his reasoning.

According to him, very few of the students actually had good defensive abilities that could halt the Demons... and they couldn't maintain it for hours.

Shadow Demons could bypass poorly made barriers—and not many people had the precision to create dense barriers. The few who could achieve that would have their hands full already.

Also, no barrier had infinite durability. It would eventually wear down. The more Shadow Demons gathered, the greater the damage. There was the suggestion of swapping out at intervals to restore strength, but one had to wonder how feasible that would be.

To achieve that, we would need at least two batches of Magic Users—at the barest minimum!

'And that's pushing it...'

A squad needed to cover the whole building would have to consist of about ten Magic Users of skilled caliber. Since the barrier would have to be spread out, and we would need to consider the damage dealt—the math was crazy.

That meant we needed at least twenty highly capable Magic Users. Those in the meeting were thirteen. Counting the other four staff not present, that left a deficit of three more roles to fill.

Of course, some top-tier people could be recommended, but even among those present, I doubted many people could use Magic as delicate and precise as the target for an extended period.

Ultimately, we were short on hands.

The idea of even launching assaults on the enemy while maintaining defense was laughable.

That would mean deactivating a portion of the difficult barrier—which would be a hassle on its own. But, that wasn't the half of it.

Almost anything the students could throw at the Shadow Demons would be ineffective. Pure Mana hurt them, same as how Miasma was harmful to regular folks, but many students—Rankers included—didn't know how to effectively use pure Mana.

At least, not to the point of being potent enough to deal lethal damage to the enemy!

The few who were adept at that, and could actually hurt the Demons would be required to tend to defense.

Sure, there were a few exceptional people here, but they weren't perfect.

Kuzon's defense was made of threads, and couldn't cover too wide a span. Plus, they wouldn't be dense enough for the Demons to keep out if he tried to widen the range.

I could also tell that Ciara was more offense based than the opposite. It would have helped if there were Magic Users who specialized in defense like back in the day, but with no major threats happening in the Empire, people were more interested in trending Magic fields.

Who could blame them, though? They simply chose the best career paths for themselves.

'Ah, I even forgot that some of the people here are Martial Artists... a barrier is out of their field of expertise.' My eyes trailed to the Third Seat of the Rankers—a Martial Artist. He appeared cautious and collected, so even he must have been aware of his uselessness in the proposed plan.

'We need a strategy that actually utilizes all the resources we have.'

I had one in mind, but I wasn't in the position to mention it yet. I simply had to wait for some time.

"I—I see..." Fabian mumbled after the Dorm Master explained his limited prediction concerning the proposed plan.

He had a few holes, but the man was mostly on point. He hadn't stated some crucial elements—reasons why we shouldn't even dream of remaining on the defensive—but he did well in establishing his points.

'We should operate with the assumption that help isn't coming. Wouldn't the enemy have ensured that we wouldn't be helped until they achieve their objective?'

That was common sense, no?

"Any other suggestions?"

Someone—another idiot—recommended the plan of going on the offensive and crushing them with our numbers.

'They outnumber us, though.' I wanted to snap at him, but withdrew my thoughts.

Sure, some of us would fare well, but... we wouldn't be able to ensure the safety of the weak. Those capable in combat would only attract more foes. Ultimately, the weak would be left defenseless and picked off until they perished.

I wasn't averse to sacrifices, but they had to be meaningful. There was no point in making more people die than necessary. That was the very definition of incompetence—of waste!

Ultimately, with this general logic, that plan was scraped too.

It seemed Fabian wasn't smart enough to figure out a solution—or was too shaken to think properly—since he asked for another suggestion.

A dead calm enveloped the room. Until—

>VWOOOSSHHHH<

Several flying mechanisms drew close to the Middle-Class building we were all staying at.

Most of us—except the incompetent Middle-Class Elite—noticed the flying things before they entered the building. Some of us noticed before that, as I saw Kuzon smiling at me.

"W-what is that?!" A majority sprang up and took defensive stances.

'You mean 'those', blockheads.' I grinned, happy that what I was expecting had arrived.

My golden moment was at hand, and I wasn't going to waste it.

After all, the approaching figures were...

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Chapter 248: Impeccable Suggestion

The fast-approaching figures were, of course, my Automatons.

They whooshed and glided through the air with ease, entering the building through the windows that were opened for ventilation.

>VWUUUMMM!!<

The Rankers were already prepared for an assault, and I could see the students cowering in fear. The staff readies their Magic, and for a moment, unrest reigned.

Only I, Kuzon, and Ciara remained seated.

"Calm yourselves. They're with me." My voice interrupted the violent tone of Fabian and the others who were ready to cut down the cloaked bats that began appearing.

They sharply turned at me in surprise. I could see disbelief lurking in their eyes as about a dozen Automatons flocked around me where I sat. I smiled, nodding my head slowly to dissuade their suspicions.

"What's going on here? What are those?" Fabian barked, losing his composure for a moment.

I noticed one of his hands shaking, but he quickly brought it under control.

'So, this much is enough to frighten them, uh? How effective will they be against the Demons?'

I sighed and rose from my seat.

I had the eyes of everyone on me, just as planned.

Even the students and staff that weren't invited to our little meeting now gave curious stares in my direction.

"They're my Automatons. I sent them out earlier. It looks like they're back..." I explained, looking at the surprised expression of the people surrounding me.

They must have been incredibly surprised that I could do such a thing.

"Now, then, there's no time... so I'll explain something to you all."

I could feel silence permeating the room. Using this opportunity, I activated Sound Amplification Spell, making sure everyone in the building could hear me.

"Defense isn't an option in this conflict, neither is blind assault. Our best shot is coordinating our efforts to achieve the most optimal result."

At this point, I had completely abandoned anything that would cause my audience to view me as a child. My face was hardened with seriousness, and I ensured my eyes displayed a glint of authority. Plus, I made sure to exude a confident aura.

If I flopped now, there was a chance they would go along with a dumb plan.

"I suggest we attack the Demons in units, whittle down their forces and deal distracting blows at several coordinates. We'll bolster both defensive and offensive maneuvers, but... that is only a means to an end."

Shock. Absolute shock was shown on their faces as I addressed the issue the way only a veteran would speak.

"The main objective will be to spearhead an assault to the heart of the enemy's strategy—the Lecturer's meeting hall."

The whole reason these Demons were wreaking havoc was due to the absence of our competent staff. Once they lost hold of that advantage, their plans were as good as dead.

"We should focus on finding their Hall and alert them of the threat, not just waiting for them to conclude their Academy Review."

Of course, this posed its own share of problems, but... it was the most optimal solution.

"W—what the hell are you talking about?"

"Find it? Didn't you hear Mister Garliad? Even the Dorm Masters don't know the location."

"How would we even be able to find something so confidential? Especially in this chaos?!"

I knew they would say something like that.

"That's why I sent these Automatons earlier. They were twenty-one of them in total, but only twelve made it back, it seems."

By having some act as decoys and using the others to achieve the task I entrusted to them, this was the expected result. In essence, I expected this outcome. The twelve Automatons were the only ones I needed, to begin with.

"W—what would those things do?"

"I didn't say I was done..." I glared at Richard Novo's flustered face and he squeaked before falling silent.

Everyone—with the exception of a few people—was flustered and scared. In times of emergencies, being confronted with the unknown, humans were very vulnerable—especially mentally.

I was going to capitalize on that.

"These Automatons were imbued with image-capturing Magic. I used them to survey the whole Campus while placing them under camouflage. The few that didn't return served as decoys in case the other ones would be found out, and so here we are."

Gasps permeated the room. Some were of amazement, while others reeked of disbelief.

"Y—you did all that? When...?" Fabian asked, now looking shell-shocked.

I had a good grasp of the prince's personality. He had great pride in his abilities, but he was too sheltered growing up. Experiencing this form of despair would be the first for him. And those emotions were probably too much for him to control.

'The more special you think you are, the greater the trauma you experience when met with despondency...' I recalled my personal experience.

The prince still had an image to depict, though, so he was trying to pull himself and everyone together. His inquisition toward me contained a tinge of bitterness that stemmed from the fact that my actions were something he couldn't have come up with.

"A while back. On my way to rescue Ana, to be precise. I've been preparing them for a while since it takes quite a while to produce so many Automatons at once..." I lied.

His suspicious gaze lessened.

"I figured it would be good to get a good lay of the campus grounds to understand the geography better. Plus, we would be able to pinpoint the areas that are more saturated with the Shadows..."

'... And also to figure out their objective'

"A—ah, I see..." Fabian managed to murmur.

He couldn't hide his surprise from me. In fact, it wasn't just him. Even the staff, Garliad was amazed.

'I knew this would happen. It's why I told Aloe and the girls not to mention the fact that I used Resurrection Magic.'

There were things people wouldn't be able to understand, so unless it was necessary, I would rather contain some information.

The only ones who were not too flustered were Kuzon and Ciara. As expected, those two were unique people... for different reasons.

"As expected, you had something up your sleeves..."

Kuzon was incredibly smart.

"So, those were the things I was sensing in the air. I figured it was the Academy's defenses."

Ciara was extremely sharp.

These two were my ace... the trump cards of Ainzlark.

And me? I was the wild card...

The Joker!

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Chapter 249: Prelude To The Counterattack [Pt 1]

"You say we should split into regiments and attack them from many angles, but wouldn't that reduce our firepower?" A question was thrown at me.

"No. The Shadows are incredibly sensitive to the level of threat posed to them. The only reason they haven't attacked this place is probably because they're gathering enough forces to storm this building at once."

Once that occurred, we would have no choice but to remain on the defensive.

"So, you're saying they want to exterminate us in one fell swoop?" Garliad asked.

"No. I doubt that."

Surprise permeated the room.

"While that is a good possibility, I don't believe this is the most efficient way to do it. In the first place, many Demons are storming the Campus, but they're spread out in different areas. If their goal was to kill us all, they would have sent more forces to our Dorms and wiped us out."

The Dorm Master gulped, and then muttered, "That's true..."

"Their objective is simply to stall us, or kill us if necessary. They must have specified purposes located at several points in the Academy. Once you view the footage, you'll understand."

I had taken the liberty of monitoring some recordings, but I hadn't gotten the full layout myself. Still, I could already tell the line by which things were going.

"They're attacking important places, most likely to obtain things that can only be found in Ainzlark Academy. This invasion is too large scale to be for mere slaughter, and too small scale to be war. It's in-between." I retorted.

"You mean... like reconnaissance?!" Garliad exclaimed.

I nodded.

"T—then... our information, technology, artifacts... I see now..." The older man mumbled as he scratched his head.

The other students didn't seem to understand his seemingly incoherent mumblings.

"What is it, Mister Garliad?" Fabian asked, showing both curiosity and unease.

"I—It's preparation... for a war!"

"WHAT?!" Multiple students echoed out.

"They're laying siege upon this place to gather information. If I'm right, they'll strike specific places like the library, research buildings, and Forbidden Zones."

Of course, most of this was speculation, but the man was right on point.

"There's no doubt about it... the Demons are starting something..." He murmured.

'Well, I wouldn't go as far as to say that, but... it's probably best to let him think what he wants for now.' I smiled wryly.

"B—but, if they're attacking all those places, and at this period when we're vulnerable, doesn't that mean—"

"Yes. We have a mole. It's most likely among the staff, but let's leave that for later. Our immediate priority is to get out of this situation. Of course, that means we can't let the enemy complete their objectives."

There was a stifling silence in the air, but I continued regardless.

"If they do, we don't know what it could spell for the Eastern Empire. The war of so long ago required heroes to fight, but we don't have those now. If we take account of the consequences of letting them succeed, the casualties that could come from it could be devastating."

War was terrible!

People died, dropping to their graves like flies. It was a horrifying sight that I would rather not experience—at the very least I didn't want those I cared about to see the horrors of true battle.

That said, peace had made these people weak. Perhaps conflict served its purpose at the time. If the humans had kept increasing their military prowess rather than pursuing other paths in Magic, this wouldn't have occurred,

Then again, if all focus had been on military technology, a lot of Modern Magic wouldn't have been developed.

Peace and War had their results, but I would pick the former at any time.

"Even if we have to risk our lives... we must prevent the enemy from achieving their aim!"

This was currently about more than just me. As a result, I couldn't shoulder everything alone. I would need to use these people well!

"B—but, even if you say that... we're no match for them..." Someone's voice trailed.

It was Roy Lesyrio—head of the Elite Ten of his Class who spoke.

He wasn't wrong, but he wasn't entirely correct either.

'In battle, the ones who emerge victorious aren't always the ones with the most powerful forces.'

If that were not the case, there would be no way Humans could have survived for so long in the war between the Demons.

"Using your strategy, you wanted to enlist only the elite among us to fight, but that isn't good enough. My plan involves everyone present. We all have roles to play."

The stronger ones would strike the locations that were saturated with more Demons, while the weaker ones would fight against the fewer ones lurking around.

Of course, I planned to provide Potions and Automatons to each group to increase efficiency and their chances of survival. Also, at least one fairly powerful member had to be present in every team—preferably someone who could use Light Magic.

I went on to explain the weaknesses of the Demons to my audience, using my encounters with them to answer their questions as to how I knew so much.

Since I was the one responsible for saving four out of six dormitories, no one could object to my explanations.

"The most troublesome matter is finding the Lecturers' Meeting Hall." I finally addressed the biggest issue.

While it wasn't going to be too hard to do so if I used Spellcraft—in fact, I had an inkling of how to easily spot it—the problem was what awaited me after that.

"The location will be heavily guarded. There will be many forces concentrated in that location since that is the advantage they have over us, as well as their only weakness." I further explained.

Since our forces were still too limited, we probably only be able to send a few people to that area, of which I would need to be among.

'Only I can use Spellcraft to detect them... but should I really have others with me?'

Most of the students would be burdens to me. The only helpful ones were going to be needed in more saturated ones.

'That means I have to go alone, then...!' My thoughts trailed.

This must have been what the enemy was after. It was clearly a trap—something to reel me in for an execution.

I had no idea how strong the enemy's forces were... however...

'They also don't know what I'm capable of.'

Ultimately, this was one large game between me and whoever the mastermind was... and all the students and demons who were fighting... were merely pawns.

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Chapter 250: Prelude To The Counterattack [Pt 2]

After laying out the basis of my strategy, there was an air of unease permeating everywhere.

Those who listened attentively knew I was correct, and that my solution was the most optimal—or so I would have liked to believe. Still, it appeared they simply didn't have the will to follow it.

"Let's check out the survey results then."

Hearing my offer, the Rankers and other representatives nodded and I collated my Automaton, using a Light Projection Spell to display each angle of their survey in panels.

As a result, twelve panels were instantly displayed before everyone, displaying various angles of the Academy, and also different areas.

Since the Automaton had captured the surroundings from the sky, their range of vision covered a wide range.

It also helped that they had night vision installed, allowing better visibility for everyone. This technology was common in many magical fields, so what I had my Automaton do wasn't overly impressive.

What amazed everyone was the fact that I thought to resort to such a thing in the first place. Plus, making so many Automaton without being specialized in it was quite difficult.

The only reason I could do it was because of my Multiple Cores, my experience in the field, the training I had undergone, and also Spellcraft.

Of course, I couldn't make overly complicated structures, and my Automaton weren't very durable. Still, these kinds of constructs had their uses.

Once everyone was done viewing the survey, they seemed to finally realize how grave the situation was. Even I was astounded by the scenes I didn't get the privilege of seeing earlier.

The Shadow Demons had ransacked nine major areas on Campus.

Other than the dormitories, they invaded the several libraries our Academy had, the Research structures which held experimental information and technology, and Restricted Zones that only authorized personnel could venture into.

Not even all the staff could enter.

There were also areas like a Mini-Museum which contained some artifacts... and then the Oasis.

The areas that were most concentrated with enemies were two of the Restricted Zones, and the General Library—as expected.

Other sites also had their share of numbers, but the initial few had staggering amounts.

What worried me the most was their quantity. They were more than even I expected.

'Does that mean a high-level Demon is the one controlling these things? If that's the case, then...'

I removed the possibility of a Demon Lord being present, so I settled for a General as the worst possibility.

If I gave it my all, then I could probably stand a chance. Probably...

I knew what my role would be in the plan. Coordinating our forces to deal with the Demons was a good idea, but it was still pretty evident that most students were weak.

While I would be assisting in many ways—same as the more reliable personnel surrounding me, it would still be hard to win.

Which was why we needed the Lecturers back. I couldn't dispute that fact.

To get to them, I would need to spot their building using Spellcraft. Alone!

'A large portion of their forces will be stationed there. Plus... the leader might be there as well... maybe...'

In a way, perhaps concentrating our forces in that single location would be best, but what if I was wrong in my prediction?

It could be a feint, and by the time we realized it, the enemy would have achieved their goal.

There was simply no time and less information to work with. We had to act on what we had.

"I believe you're all convinced now. This is the only path we can take."

No one could argue anymore.

If we went against this, we would lose a whole lot more. The idea of Demons succeeding and launching an invasion on the human world frightened the students.

If hundreds of thousands of Demons of this caliber—no, even stronger—stormed humanity in waves, would we survive?

I was certain they played the scenes in their mind—how they and their families would suffer if they simply waited things out and allowed a leak.

Besides, once the enemy was done with their objective, it was clear they would bare their fangs at us to eliminate the future of humanity—and kill as many as they could.

It would be a loss on both fronts.

"Understood. We'll go with Jared Leonard's plan." Fabian Lestrome conceded.

As the leader of the Rankers, his word carried weight, and so no one complained.

"That's perfect. Then there's one final thing to consider."

Depending on how this played out, I could have to take drastic steps myself.

"Who will be the leader? Someone has to be in charge of this whole operation."

The group eyed me—at least most of them did. That was because it was common sense to leave the leadership role to Fabian.

'Unfortunately, I don't trust your flustered mind, prince.'

"What are you implying? Naturally, I—"

"I believe Jared should do it." Kuzon finally spoke up, raising his hand.

The attention of our meeting members shifted to the golden-haired boy. Fabian seemed discontent that Kuzon interrupted him, but didn't say anything.

"Even if you say that, it doesn't mean anything. He's simply—" Someone among the Rankers tried to interrupt.

"Simply what? A First Year? Not a Ranker? I believe those Titles mean nothing as things stand now." Kuzon gave a casual smile.

"Jared saved four Dorms by himself, he took action faster than everyone present, and even prepared a plan that works. Not only did he obtain information on the Shadows, but he is also strong enough to kill over a hundred of them with a single Spell."

That last part seemed exaggerated to everyone seated who heard and they shot him a glare of disbelief, however—

"T-that's true!"

"We all saw it!"

"Jared was incredible!"

"He blew them all away in a single swoop!"

"He gathered us all together!"

The crowd that had slowly formed and were eavesdropping on our deliberations now began recounting their experiences with me.

I watched Aloe Vida nod as she smiled in her corner. As agreed, she didn't speak of my actions in her resurrection, but she silently agreed with the people that raised their voices under my banner.

Thankfully, they were able to serve as witnesses of my capabilities.

'This makes things easier. It's a good thing I acted quickly.'