

The Sun 161

Chapter 161 – Tailing

Nick sat on top of a tall building.

At this moment, Nick was wearing a white cloak, which almost seemed identical to the one that the spy had worn when Nick had killed her.

This time, Nick was the spy.

About a hundred meters away was another tall building, but this one was different since it even had actual windows made of actual glass.

Glass was an extremely rare and valuable material, and the only place one would usually find glass was in the Inner City.

Yet, this building had real windows.

Almost no other building in the Outer City had real glass.

This meant that this building belonged to a company that earned a lot of money.

Of course, that company was Cycle.

Even though Cycle didn't have many employees, getting a profit of 100,000 credits or more per month in the Outer City was ridiculously high.

One had to remember that everyone in the Outer City could only do business with others from the Outer City.

At most, there were 50,000 people living in the Outer City.

So, while a building with real windows was unaffordable for almost every company, Zephyx Manufacturers could buy something like that.

For the past day, Nick had kept watch over Cycle's building.

Stephen had died, and Jonathan and Kiara had switched to Dark Dream, which meant that Cycle should be in a lot of trouble.

And Nick was here to find an opportunity to actually end it.

His job was to see if there were truly no more Extractors remaining and to find an opportunity to assassinate the last of them.

According to Jonathan, there were only two more Extractors left, excluding Ardam.

A tall guy with a long sword, called Futuma, and a bald woman with a big staff, called Selina.

Funnily enough, Nick hadn't seen either of them within the last day, which meant that they were probably living inside the office for now.

Given the current situation, that was understandable.

Over the next couple of hours, only a couple of normal people were entering and leaving the building.

And then, finally, something interesting happened.

Nick saw a tall man with a long sword walking out of the entrance, and he narrowed his eyes.

'This must be Futuma,' Nick thought.

Without looking around, Futuma chose a direction and walked away from Cycle.

The way Futuma was walking made it seem like nothing was wrong.

'Should I follow him?' Nick thought. 'My ability is still active, which means he hasn't seen me.'

Naturally, it was possible that this was a trap. After all, Nick had set up the same trap two days earlier.

After a bit of hesitation, Nick decided to follow Futuma.

As long as his ability was still active, nobody was perceiving him.

Futuma kept walking towards the south, and Nick kept following him.

A couple of minutes later, Futuma walked out of the Outer City and reached the edge of the Dregs.

When Nick saw that, he became more nervous and furrowed his brows, looking around.

Futuma had to know that this was a perfect spot to ambush him.

So, why would he come here on purpose?

Was this truly a trap?

But no one could perceive Nick!

After all, his ability was still active.

Eventually, Futuma stopped in the middle of a run-down street where nobody was living.

And then, he just stopped moving.

He just looked forward without doing anything.

Nick looked around, his face scrunching up in discomfort.

Was there anybody following him?

Nick couldn't see anyone else on the rooftops or the streets.

The stench of the Dregs entered Nick's nose, and his facial muscles tensed in disgust.

As he looked around, Nick became more nervous and paranoid.

Why was Futuma just stopping in the middle of nowhere?!

This had to be a trap!

But his ability was still active!

Nick had to put his arm over his nose to cover the terrible stench.

A moment later, Nick had to suppress several coughs.

'What the hell is going on?' Nick thought as he realized that this wasn't normal.

Sure, the Dregs stunk a lot, but it had never been this intense.

Not even the sewers smelled this disgusting!

It was almost like...

'The Dung Heap!' Nick realized.

Jonathan and Kiara had said that they didn't know of anyone who had gained an ability from the Dung Heap.

They had heard from somebody advancing their ability through the Dung Heap, but they had never seen an Extractor directly getting one.

Stephen, for example, had advanced his ability through the Dung Heap.

Just like Kiara and Jonathan, Stephen had gained his ability from the Bleeding Lady, but compared to them, he was already a level two Extractor, and his ability had already advanced.

By using the Dung Heap, Stephen's bloody cut had gained an additional poison effect.

Still, while the two of them knew what the Dung Heap could do to elevate an ability, they didn't know the pure ability the Dung Heap could bestow.

Additionally, they also didn't know what kind of ability Futuma had since he kept his abilities secret.

Well, Nick now knew the answer to both questions.

The stench was absolutely horrifying, and breathing became quite difficult for Nick.

Even more, the effect of the ability was becoming stronger and stronger the more Nick breathed.

"I know somebody's here."

At that point, Futuma spoke.

Nick furrowed his brows as he tried to keep his breathing in check.

Activating such an ability over such a great area had to use up a lot of Zephyx, and Futuma was a Peak Newbie, just like Nick.

As long as Nick could hold out, he would be able to keep himself hidden until Futuma had to deactivate his ability.

'He's bluffing,' Nick thought. 'If he knew I was here, my ability would have deactivated.'

Silence.

"Do you think I'm bluffing?" Futuma asked his surroundings evenly.

Nick didn't say anything.

Silence.

"You don't know why Cycle is truly called Cycle, apparently," Futuma said.

"The Dung Heap's ability is a cycle."

"It leaves me and comes back."

"But when somebody breathes it in, it can't come back, which means my internal Zephyx recovers slower."

"That's how I know you're here."

Chapter 162 – Offer

Nick narrowed his eyes.

Was Futuma bluffing?

It sounded very convincing that he knew that someone was there.

Even more, since he didn't know where Nick was, Nick's ability remained active.

It was actually possible to know that Nick was somewhere close to someone without deactivating his ability.

At this moment, a strong internal conflict was happening inside Nick.

Was Futuma bluffing or not?

If he was bluffing, he should be running out of Zephyx pretty soon, and Nick could get the jump on him.

If he wasn't bluffing, Nick might actually die to the poison.

'It doesn't actually matter,' Nick thought with narrowed eyes. 'One possibility has a high chance of death while the other is just a missed opportunity.'

The truth was that Futuma wasn't bluffing.

The Dung Heap's ability allowed someone to give off poisonous gas.

When the poison wasn't being absorbed by any living thing, it would simply go back into the body of the person who used it, replenishing a part of their Zephyx.

Naturally, using this ability still consumed Zephyx since one couldn't reabsorb 100% of the poison they had given off, but the Zephyx used wasn't a big deal.

Nevertheless, the amount of Zephyx Futuma was getting back from using his ability was far lower than normal, which meant something big was breathing and absorbing his poison.

Futuma had spread his gas over a radius of 50 meters.

Unfortunately, while he knew that someone was there, he couldn't tell where they were.

He just knew that they had to be within a 50-meter radius of him.

And he also knew that it had to be an Extractor.

After all, any normal animal or human would have already died by now, and Specters don't breathe.

So, it had to be a Zephyx Extractor.

Zzzt!

At that moment, a blue spark appeared on top of one of the buildings.

Futuma looked over.

At that moment, Futuma saw a semi-transparent Barrier that was burning the gas he was releasing.

Naturally, this was Nick.

By activating his Barrier, Nick could protect himself from the poison, but the sound and visual effects of his Barrier would also reveal his location to Futuma.

Under normal circumstances, Nick would have just run away in secret.

"You want to talk?" Nick asked from his rooftop.

If Futuma wanted to kill Nick, he would have simply waited without saying anything while using some kind of method to contact Ardum.

At that point, Ardum would arrive with Selina, and they would search through the surroundings for Nick.

Yet, Futuma had said several things, and he had even explained his ability.

This meant that Futuma wasn't interested in killing Nick.

At least not right now.

Futuma could see Nick's appearance through the blue shimmer of his Barrier.

As Nick looked at Futuma, he saw his Barrier slowly vanishing.

Naturally, Nick hadn't deactivated his Barrier.

There simply wasn't more to block for the Barrier.

This meant that Futuma had pulled his poison back.

When Nick realized that, he deactivated his Barrier. After all, keeping it active drained a lot of Zephyx.

"You're Nick, the Chief Zephyx Extractor, right?" Futuma asked.

"Yes," Nick answered evenly from his rooftop.

"What happened to Jonathan and Kiara?" he asked.

"You're not asking about the fat man?" Nick asked back.

"It's obvious what happened to him," Futuma answered emotionlessly. "Someone with such dark secrets won't dare to betray Ardum."

Nick narrowed his brows.

Futuma had essentially confessed to knowing that Ardum and Stephen were monsters.

Apparently, not everyone fell for Ardum's spiel.

"They're working for me now," Nick answered.

Silence.

"How did you manage to convince them?" Futuma asked.

"The fat man had a Peddler Storage Token on him. I simply showed them what was inside," Nick said.

Futuma just raised an eyebrow. "That would do it," he said with an unimpressed tone.

"Why do you want to talk to me?" Nick asked again. "You're not fooled like the others."

"Ardum isn't the best actor," Futuma said, looking at Nick. "I never believed him for a single second, but compared to others, I simply didn't make a big deal of it."

"He knows that I know, and he knows that I don't care."

"If you got the power and the money, you can do whatever you want."

Nick wasn't a big fan of what he was hearing.

"You still haven't answered my question," Nick said with an emotionless voice.

Futuma looked into Nick's eyes without fear.

"Money and power," Futuma answered.

"I want money and power."

"Loyalty and fairness are unimportant in the face of money and power."

"Give me money and power, and I will be your ally."

"If I join Dark Dream, Cycle is done for," Futuma said.

Nick wasn't quite sure what he should think about that.

On the one hand, they could take down Cycle right now, but on the other hand, Futuma knew no such thing as loyalty.

In a certain way, it was like going into a relationship with someone who cheated on their current partner with you.

Sure, you would get the person, but that person had cheated on their partner.

This meant that the chances were high that they would also cheat on you.

Just like how Dark Dream could gain Futuma's power by offering more than Cycle, another Zephyx Manufacturer could do the same by offering more than Dark Dream.

Sadly, they probably also wouldn't be able to kill Futuma after hiring him and dealing with Cycle.

Someone like Futuma was smart enough to prepare for such an event.

Futuma would know that Dark Dream might want to kill him, and he would have certainly prepared something for that event.

Accepting Futuma would be troublesome.

It would be like accepting a snake to come into one's home.

"What do you have in mind?" Nick asked.

"A leadership role," Futuma said.

"I don't switch sides just because someone offers me more money. I also want more power."

"The money part won't be a problem for you since Cycle pays horribly, which just leaves the power part."

"I want a team leader position."

"Give me that, and I will join."

Chapter 163 – Protective Order

Nick looked at Futuma from afar with furrowed brows.

Should he accept or not?

There was definitely a major risk associated with this decision.

Would someone who was only interested in money and power be trustworthy enough to tell them some secrets?

With enough money, Futuma could maybe even be bought to become a spy.

Having a team leader as a spy would be devastating.

In fact, Nick didn't want to hire Futuma at all.

He simply didn't like him.

Compared to Nick, Futuma was only interested in his own gain.

It was almost like Futuma had no morals, which was in stark contrast to Nick, whose entire purpose in life was to make the world a better place.

However, Nick knew that things weren't that simple.

Jonathan and Kiara had told Nick about Futuma.

In Cycle, Futuma garnered a lot of respect from everyone.

In fact, almost all of the Extractors had seen Futuma as their Chief Zephyx Extractor instead of Stephen.

Whenever there was a major decision, the Extractors looked at how Futuma reacted before they gave their own answers.

From what the two of them had said, Futuma was the epitome of reliability, and he even pushed back on some policies that would have been detrimental.

Futuma was definitely a capable leader.

Having him as a team leader would be a tremendous asset to Dark Dream.

For a while, Nick just silently looked at Futuma as he evaluated his options.

"Fine," Nick said after several seconds.

"What do you have to offer?" Futuma asked.

"A position as the only team leader. When we expand in the future, there will be other team leaders as well, but you will be our first," Nick said.

"What about the money?" Futuma asked.

"You get 10% of all the Zephyx you produce yourself and 5% of all the Zephyx your team produces, including yourself," Nick said.

Wyntor and Nick had already talked about what Nick's team leaders would earn in the future.

When they finally hired a team leader, Nick's share of the profit would drop from 10% of what every Zephyx Extractor produced to 5%.

However, Nick's amount of work would also drop since he would only need to give orders to the team leaders instead of to the individual Zephyx Extractors.

Hypothetically, if there were five teams of five Extractors, Nick would only need to give orders to five people but would gain 5% of what 25 Extractors produced.

And since Extractors got 10% of what they produced, it would be like Nick was earning as much as 12.5 Extractors, while the team leaders earned as much as 3.5 Extractors since they were also working with Specters themselves.

The difference in earnings was monumental, but the amount of money the normal Extractors earned was still absolutely top.

By hiring Futuma, Nick's workload would drop even more, and he would only need to search for new Specters.

Although, he also needed to work with one Specter to increase his own level.

When Futuma heard Nick's offer, his eyebrows shot up in surprise.

Apparently, he genuinely hadn't expected such a good offer.

A second later, Futuma's brows furrowed, and he looked at the ground.

"Do you accept?" Nick asked after a bit.

Futuma looked at Nick again and nodded. "I presume you don't have a contract ready."

"I don't," Nick said.

A moment later, Futuma took a rolled-up piece of paper out of one of his pockets and unrolled it, showing it to the distant Nick.

"What is that?" Nick asked with furrowed brows.

"Insurance," Futuma said. "I'm not going to walk into Dark Dream without having signed a valid contract. I'm not a great fan of putting my life in someone else's hands."

"This piece of paper is a protective order. After signing it, if I die before we negate the protective order or before it is fulfilled, Dark Dream will have to pay a hefty fine of about 500,000 credits."

"Naturally, as soon as I have signed my employment contract, the protective order will be null and void."

"I want you to sign this on behalf of Dark Dream. Without this, I won't go near Dark Dream," Futuma said.

Nick looked at the distant Futuma with furrowed brows.

"I'll need to read this first," he said.

Futuma rolled the protective order up again and held it out in front of him.

A moment later, Nick jumped down from the building and walked up to Futuma.

Naturally, Nick was still careful about Futuma.

He wouldn't lower his guard until Futuma signed his actual employment contract.

After some seconds, Nick reached Futuma and grabbed the protective order.

Nick took a couple of steps back to be at a safe distance and glanced at Futuma warily.

While Nick started reading with much difficulty, he also kept glancing at Futuma.

Of course, Futuma got annoyed by Nick's constant vigilance and took several steps back.

Then, he turned around with his hands lifted up to show that he wasn't luring Nick into some sort of trap.

"Is that better?" Futuma asked. "Can you focus on reading now?"

Nick furrowed his brows as he glanced at the distant Futuma.

He didn't like Futuma's attitude, but he was right.

It did lower Nick's vigilance.

Nick returned to reading, but then, he glanced at Futuma again.

Futuma was turned away, not looking at Nick.

Then, Nick's eyes narrowed, and a gleam appeared in them.

DZZZZZZT!

Suddenly, Nick's Barrier shone in an aggressive blue light, and Nick felt like all of his power was being sapped away!

Immediately, Nick jumped to the side with all of his power.

CLINK! CLINK! CLINK! CLINK!

Nick saw several scalpels, scissors, knives, and saws hitting the ground after they flew past the spot where he had just been.

A poisonous green Aura emanated from all the small tools and weapons, and the metal of the streets around them started to rust.

If Nick hadn't been ready for a sudden attack, he would have died!

Luckily, he had noticed just in time that his ability hadn't reactivated after Futuma had turned around.

Chapter 164 – The Torturer

Mere moments after Nick had noticed that his ability hadn't reactivated, he had turned his Barrier on.

If he hadn't done so, these many small objects would have skewered his body, and based on what he was seeing, he would have also been poisoned.

Without hesitation, Nick immediately looked to his back.

On top of the building where Nick had been earlier was a person.

Ardum.

At this moment, Ardum held several bloody tools in his right hand as he glared at Nick.

At the same time, Futuma spun to face Nick and narrowed his eyes.

Meanwhile, a person wearing a black cloak ran out from one street while they were holding a huge staff.

That was obviously Selina.

Based on all the reactions, Nick could tell that this had been a trap.

Selina and Ardum had probably been called over by a signal, but they hadn't attacked before Nick's vigilance had lowered.

Earlier, Nick had still been on one of the highest buildings in the surroundings, and he had constantly looked around.

So, they had waited until Futuma could convince Nick to lower his guard.

And it would have worked.

The only reason why they hadn't gotten Nick was the activation condition for his ability.

When Nick saw the bloody tools in Ardum's hands, he remembered what Wyntor had told him.

Naturally, Wyntor knew what kind of ability Ardum had since he was originally supposed to get the same one.

It was the ability of an Elder Specter, which was called the Torturer.

The Torturer was a moving pile of bloody tools, and even though it looked like a Possession Specter, it was actually a Physical Specter.

It gained power from causing pain, and working with it was one of the worst things.

However, it had probably the most useful ability out of all the Specters in Crimson Fungus City.

The ability allowed someone to conjure very durable and deadly tools in exchange for Zephyx.

But most important of all, this ability could be evolved in many different ways.

Naturally, this Specter was owned by Kugelblitz, and the very few Newbies Kugelblitz recruited would receive the Torturer's ability.

Interestingly enough, Albert also had the Torturer's ability, which meant that he had most likely been recruited by Kugelblitz before he had been a Zephyx Extractor.

As the son of a major shareholder of Kugelblitz, Ardum naturally also got the privilege of receiving the Torturer's ability, and based on what Nick had just seen, Ardum had probably evolved his ability by using the Dung Heap.

While Wyntor was smarter than him, Ardum was still extremely powerful and dangerous.

Nick was in trouble.

Especially since there was also Selina, who had the Bleeding Lady's ability.

The only good thing about this situation was that Futuma couldn't use his ability with his allies present.

As soon as Nick finished jumping to the side, he deactivated his Barrier.

The barrage Nick had just withstood had probably consumed over 80% of his Zephyx, which significantly weakened him.

While Barriers were essential for survival, if a Barrier consumed all of one's Zephyx, one would basically be unable to move.

So, even though they hadn't received any injuries yet, they would have already lost.

Because of that, Nick deactivated his Barrier after jumping to the side.

"I'm not surprised that you're a Chief Zephyx Extractor anymore," Futuma said as he pulled out his long sword.

"But you're still nothing compared to our Chief Zephyx Extractor."

Then, Futuma smiled.

"Which is me."

Since Nick had killed Stephen, Cycle needed a new Chief Zephyx Extractor, and Ardum had assigned the role to Futuma.

Because of that, Futuma hadn't even entertained the thought of joining Dark Dream.

After all, if they managed to destroy Dark Dream, Futuma would become a Chief Zephyx Extractor with five Specters he would be responsible for!

Nick just narrowed his eyes and didn't answer.

A moment later, Futuma was lunging at him as Ardum readied more of his tools.

Selina was still a bit away from the battle.

Nick gritted his teeth as Futuma's blade approached at surprising speeds.

Futuma definitely wasn't inexperienced in fighting other Extractors.

BANG!

Futuma's blade bounced back as Nick slapped it to the side with the long blade on his left arm.

A moment later, Nick already lunged forward with his right arm and aimed for Futuma's chest.

However, Futuma quickly stepped back.

DING!

And blocked Nick's strike with his blade.

Yet, the strongest aspect of fist weapons was their unparalleled attacking speed, and Nick's next attack was already on its way.

Futuma narrowed his eyes with a serious expression as he jumped back again.

But then, Nick jumped back.

SHING! SHING!

Two tools passed through the space between Futuma and Nick.

If Nick had continued attacking, he would have been impaled.

This was not a one-on-one battle.

If it were, Nick would be confident in winning against Futuma.

Sadly, it wasn't.

Ardum jumped down from the building as he readied more of his tools, and Futuma stopped retreating.

Selina was also coming dangerously close.

Nick continued jumping back.

"Kiara and Jonathan are still alive!" Nick shouted towards Selina.

Ardum narrowed his eyes as he glanced at Selina.

BANG!

The floor below Nick caved in as Selina's heavy staff hit it.

Luckily, Nick had jumped away just in time.

"Those traitors will be next!" Selina shouted in a cold voice.

Nick gritted his teeth.

Kiara had told Nick that Selina most likely wouldn't listen.

Selina was a very loyal person, and without concrete proof, she would attack Nick on sight.

Sadly, Nick didn't have proof of Ardum's and Stephen's conduct that he could take out just like this.

The only things that could convince Selina would be Jonathan and Kiara telling her directly about what they had seen and the child they had saved.

Sadly, none of these things could be put in a pocket and pulled out when one wanted.

At this moment, Ardum threw his next set of terrifying tools, and Nick had to jump away again.

Meanwhile, Futuma and Selina were charging at him.

Things were getting problematic.

Chapter 165 – How?!

Nick jumped back once more while Futuma and Selina rapidly ran towards him.

Futuma and Selina were Peak Newbies, which meant that, on a baseline, they were just as physically strong as Nick.

Luckily, based on what Nick could see, they weren't focusing on training their bodies.

While they were definitely athletic, they didn't look like they dedicated their life to sports.

Futuma reached a full sprint as he held his long sword at his side, ready to explode forward with a strike.

Meanwhile, Selina wasn't as fast as Futuma. Her physique and her heavy weapon made her slower by quite a bit.

Ar dum kept a certain distance from his two agents and kept conjuring poisoned tools.

Suddenly, Nick pulled out one of the three spears he carried with him and dropped it to the side.

The spear stuck into the ground, and Nick's three opponents could see how heavy it was.

The fact that Nick was running around with three of these was extremely shocking.

How would he even be able to throw them?!

With 30 kilos less on his person, Nick's speed increased, and he quickly took a bigger jump backward.

CLINK! CLINK!

Nick used his blades and blocked two tools that Ar dum had thrown at him while jumping back.

When Ar dum saw that, he gritted his teeth.

This had already turned out way worse than he had expected.

Nick was way stronger than anticipated!

Ar dum was already quite frustrated and nervous.

After all, they were currently in the layer of buildings between the Dregs and the Outer City.

If Nick simply jumped across a couple of buildings, he would be entering populated space again, which would make things troublesome.

One had to remember that they were officially not allowed to fight.

If anyone witnessed them fighting and the guards investigated, Cycle would have to pay a hefty fine, and they would also receive a brutal warning.

Ardum had to kill Nick before he could flee into the city!

Otherwise, Nick would just land in a crowded street and casually walk forward, acting like he wasn't in a battle.

And Ardum wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

Nick landed on top of a low building and looked forward.

BANG!

Futuma also jumped towards the building's roof, keeping his sword ready.

Nick moved strangely, almost like he was pulling on something.

Immediately after, Nick fell backward, past the small building's roof.

"BEHIND YOU!"

At that moment, Ardum's urgent voice thundered throughout the surroundings, and Futuma immediately turned to look behind him.

The spear Nick had dropped earlier was currently almost above Futuma.

'How?!' Futuma thought in shock.

Luckily, the spear would pass over Futuma, based on its trajectory.

Meanwhile, Nick landed behind the building.

At this moment, nobody could see him, and his ability reactivated.

A Ghost Wire extended from Nick's right arm and stretched over the building, creating smoke at the edge of the building's roof.

Nick's eyes were narrowed.

And then, he pulled forward with all of his power.

CRRRRRR!

Immediately, an invisible cut appeared in the metallic building, created by the Ghost Wire.

Futuma's eyes widened in shock as the spear suddenly angled towards Futuma and shot at him.

Its speed was insane!

He couldn't react!

BOOOOOM!

A copper-colored Barrier appeared around Futuma.

Naturally, Futuma had his own Barrier, and he had already activated it when Ardum launched his first attack.

The spear hit the Barrier with insane power, and the Barrier shook violently.

However, Futuma's trajectory didn't change.

The Barrier that Futuma used also expended Zephyx to nullify the kinetic force of whatever was hitting it.

This naturally cost more Zephyx than the other kinds of Barriers, but it meant that Futuma wouldn't get stunned or thrown away by an attack.

The next moment, Futuma felt like the world around him was swimming and distorting.

This was a symptom of being critically low on Zephyx.

He wasn't out, but his concentration had already suffered quite a bit.

'How?!' Futuma thought in terror.

Nick had depleted nearly all of Futuma's Zephyx in an instant!

With one attack!

A Newbie shouldn't be able to do that!

To put this into perspective, Nick's Barrier managed to withstand over five poisoned tools that Ardum had thrown at him, and Ardum was an Early John!

But now, Nick, a Peak Newbie, had done even more damage with one attack than Ardum had done with five!

This shouldn't be possible!

DING!

Futuma immediately slashed the spear away from his Barrier with his sword.

On the other side of the building, Nick felt all the power he had put into the pull vanish.

'I got his Barrier,' Nick thought.

The next moment, Nick clicked on something on his right hand, and the Ghost Wire lost its connection to him.

Retrieving that spear was too troublesome right now.

Without hesitation, Nick jumped to the side and exploded forward.

With his ability active, his speed had increased substantially.

Futuma landed on the building, and the spear Nick had abandoned hit one of the other buildings.

Selina had slowed down in shock, but she quickly sped up again.

Ardum gritted his teeth violently.

BANG!

Ardum jumped forward, and he quickly passed by Selina, landing on the building.

"Don't engage him without me!" Ardum ordered. "He's too dangerous!"

Futuma nodded as he jumped past the building.

Selina also jumped onto the building.

Ardum sped past Futuma, and the two of them simultaneously fell towards the alley behind the building.

Then, their eyes widened.

Where was he?!

Nick had vanished!

In an instant, they found the only path Nick could have taken and ran down the alley.

Ardum passed Futuma and reached the turn that Nick had to have taken.

Cling!

At that moment, a part of Ardum's neck sparkled with a silver color.

Ardum looked down and saw an almost invisible wire on his neck.

SSSSSSSSSS!

At that moment, the wire suddenly shot toward Ardum's right with incredible speed.

Ardum immediately understood what was happening, but it was too late to react.

Chapter 166 – Floor

CRACK!

The left side of Ardum's head sparkled silver as Nick's spear hit him.

Nick's spear had activated Ardum's Barrier.

However, Ardum's Barrier was very different from normal Barriers.

After all, Ardum was a potential heir to the Melfion family.

The silver sparkle had been Ardum's Barrier, which had created a thin film of energy over Ardum's clothing and skin, and when the spear was close to hitting Ardum, the Barrier's shape changed.

The Barrier stretched out and angled 30° to the side.

The spear hit the angled Barrier, and its trajectory changed so that it passed by Ardum instead of hitting him.

Naturally, quite a bit of the spear's force still hit the Barrier, but it was almost negligible.

Together with the five-to-one ratio of attacking Zephyx to defensive Zephyx of the Barrier, Ardum didn't even lose 10% of his Zephyx.

Inside the alley, Nick gritted his teeth.

He hadn't expected Ardum to be first.

If any of the other two had arrived, they would have been killed, most likely.

Sadly, Ardum's Barrier was just way too advanced and powerful.

However, even though Ardum didn't take any serious damage, his fear and anger still exploded.

Just now, he had felt like he was about to die, which made him absolutely furious!

How could such a nobody cause such panic in him?!

This was one of the greatest acts of disrespect that Ardum had ever experienced!

"You're going to pay for this!" Ardum spoke through gritted teeth with pure venom.

Nick didn't answer and just pulled out a black ball from one of his pockets.

BANG!

Nick threw the ball onto the ground in front of him, and a huge cloud of smoke filled the alleyway.

Ardum snorted.

The next moment, a silver flicker appeared in front of Ardum's eyes, and some kind of display appeared.

In Ardum's vision, the colors changed, but the smoke also seemingly vanished.

Naturally, such an expensive Barrier had more than a few utility effects.

Right now, Ardum could see how Nick ran into one of the buildings at the side.

Ardum aggressively shot forward.

BANG!

Ardum punched through the door of the building that Nick had just entered, and he quickly charged down one of the hallways.

Sadly, this one led into an empty room.

SHING!

The display in front of Ardum's eyes changed.

The colors became subdued, but there were several bright specks floating in the air.

These bright specks were particles that created human scent.

This meant that Ardum could essentially see Nick's smell with his eyes.

The particles were dispersing, but they were still far more concentrated in some spots than in others.

Naturally, this meant that Nick had been there.

Ardum rapidly charged forward again, following the trail of scent that Nick had left behind.

Eventually, Ardum reached another room.

The trail ended in front of a hole in the floor.

Ardum narrowed his eyes.

Did Nick jump into the sewers?

CRK!

Suddenly, an arm shot out of the hole and grabbed Ardum's ankle!

ZZZZZT!

But the next moment, a spark of lightning appeared around Ardum's ankle after it sparkled with a silver color.

The arm started to smoke and rapidly retreated back into the hole.

Obviously, such an obvious weakness as getting grabbed was something that the Barrier could deal with as well.

BOOOOM!

Suddenly, the floor below Ardum exploded as a foot kicked through it.

Ardum was flung forward, and his Barrier sparkled again.

'You want to throw me into the sewers?!' Ardum thought with absolute fury.

In the air, Ardum turned to Nick's foot and threw a scalpel at it.

DING!

Luckily, he missed.

The next moment, Ardum landed on the other side of the hole.

CRACK!

A blade shot through the floor and cut to the side.

CRK!

The plate Ardum was standing on collapsed, but he managed to jump to the side.

DING!

One of Ardum's knives hit the blade and bounced off.

The blade vanished.

BANG!

And reappeared at the edge of the room.

Then, it rapidly moved along the outside of the room.

Ardum gritted his teeth and threw his remaining tools at the flooring beside the blade.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The three tools punched through the floor.

SPLASH! SPLASH!

Two distant sounds of splashing appeared.

'Did I hit?' Ardum thought with furrowed brows.

Yet, the blade kept going around the room at incredible speeds.

Ardum focused on conjuring more tools.

Sadly, conjuring tools took some time.

Over the next couple of seconds, Ardum launched several tools at the spot where Nick should be, but he had no idea if he actually hit him or not.

When the room became too unstable, Ardum jumped to one of the walls and punched through it, keeping himself above the floor.

The floor began to shake, and the blade vanished.

While Ardum held himself up on the wall with his left hand, his right hand was ready to throw another three scalpels.

As soon as the floor fell down, Ardum would throw them at Nick!

BOOOM!

Yet, instead of falling, the floor suddenly shot upwards!

Ardum's eyes widened.

His entire vision was occupied by the floor of the room that was coming closer and closer.

Ardum's Barrier activated when the metal floor touched him, and a silver light appeared.

Behind the floor, Nick's eyes sparkled as the silver light of Ardum's Barrier shone through some of the holes in the floor.

Since the floor had already risen by a lot, Nick grabbed one of the walls of the room with his hands and kicked the floor in the direction of the silver light.

BANG!

The entire floor bent, and Ardum's eyes widened as it shot towards him.

CRACK!

The floor buried into the walls and ceiling in several places, getting stuck in them.

At that moment, Ardum gritted his teeth and also kicked the floor.

BANG!

The floor bent in more places, and Nick could see the spot that Ardum had just kicked from the other side.

BANG!

An extremely powerful impact bent the floor again, and Ardum's Barrier shone again.

This kick had just consumed nearly 3% of Ardum's Zephyx!

With the ceiling above it and the wall behind it, Ardum's Barrier couldn't redirect the force of the strike, which meant that it was forced to block it directly.

BANG!

Ardum kicked forward again, bending more of the floor.

BANG! BANG!

Yet, more powerful attacks came from the other side of the floor, using up more of Ardum's Zephyx.

Worst of all, Ardum couldn't tell where Nick was!

He knew that Nick was somewhere behind the floor, but he didn't know where!

Chapter 167 – Splash

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The floor got bent in more and more places as Nick and Ardum punched and kicked it.

Some seconds later, more and more parts of the floor fell into the sewers.

The amount of floor in the room was decreasing.

Yet, Ardum still couldn't find Nick!

Where the fuck was he?!

In a rare moment of peace, Ardum used his knives and created large cuts on the floor in front of him.

As long as he could see Nick, he would be able to kill him!

The only reason why Nick had been able to fight him evenly was because Ardum couldn't properly use his ability like this.

At least, that was what Ardum thought.

After more cutting, almost all the floor in the room had fallen into the sewers below, and Ardum could finally see the entire room.

Nothing!

Nick wasn't here!

Then, Ardum saw a small hole in the ceiling near the other wall, and Ardum immediately realized what had happened.

BANG!

At that moment, a blade shot through the ceiling above Ardum and hit his head.

Ardum's Barrier blocked the blade.

CRACK!

But compared to Futuma's Barrier, Ardum's Barrier didn't negate kinetic energy unless it was programmed to do so.

Ardum lost his grip on the wall behind him and shot down.

Ardum's eyes widened in horror and fury, and he turned to look up.

Through the bit of sunlight coming from behind Nick, Ardum could see Nick's silhouette through the hole that Nick's hand had just made.

Immediately, Ardum threw all his knives at Nick in a last-ditch effort to kill him.

DING! DING! DING!

Nick moved to the side, and the three knives punched through the ceiling in front of Nick.

"I WILL-"

SPLASH!

Ardum couldn't finish his dramatic shout as he fell into the sewers, and his mouth got filled with liquid that only a limited number of people would call water.

Nick moved forward again and looked into the sewers through the hole.

'If he has a similar reaction to Wyntor, he will be out of the fight for a while,' Nick thought.

Then, Nick slowly snuck forward on the second floor of the building.

While he was doing so, Nick clutched the right side of his abdomen.

A lot of blackened blood was flowing out of that spot.

Ardum had hit him with one of his knives when Nick had been cutting through the floor.

The spot where the knife had hit Nick hurt like hell and burned like crazy.

It felt like Nick's insides were decomposing.

BANG!

Nick heard a loud crash from below him.

It sounded like someone had kicked a door open.

On the first floor, Futuma and Selina charged forward.

Earlier, they had seen Ardum get hit by a spear and charge into a smoke-filled alley.

The two of them had run through the smoke-filled alley, but they didn't see anyone on the other side of the smoke cloud.

They had been searching for Ardum and Nick until they heard and saw three knives shooting through the roof of one of the buildings.

Ardum had to be in here!

The two of them searched through every room on the first floor.

Some seconds later, Futuma nearly fell into the sewers as he entered a room without a floor.

Luckily, he had reacted quickly enough and grabbed the floor behind him.

"Ugh, cough, cough, huuuuuur."

Futuma heard the sounds of violent coughing and heaving from below him and looked down.

There, he saw his boss, Ardum, puking his guts out.

He was swimming in the "water".

Ardum saw Futuma. "Don't- huuurh, don- huuurh, do- argh!"

Futuma furrowed his brows as he tried to decipher what Ardum wanted to tell him.

BOOOOOM!

Futuma's copper-colored Barrier exploded into pieces, and his eyes widened in shock and horror.

Behind him, a hole had appeared in the floor of the first floor.

And in the wall behind it.

And in the floor of the second floor.

Yet, Futuma's chest also had a hole.

Nick had been watching Futuma through the light-holes in the second floor, and when he had seen Futuma hanging from the floor, he knew that his opportunity had arrived.

Nick remembered where Futuma was, ran to the room beside the one he was staying in, and threw his spear with all of his power through the floors, walls, and Futuma's chest.

Splash!

At that moment, a part of the sewers splashed.

Nick's spear had landed.

But the next moment, a tiny wire that was going through Futuma's chest strained.

BANG!

And Nick's filth-covered spear enlarged the hole in Futuma's chest as it shot back.

Futuma lost the strength in his arm and fell into the sewers.

BANG!

Right on top of Ardum, who was pushed below the surface again while he was coughing, gorging himself on another mouthful of sewer soup.

BANG!

A door was kicked open, and Selina charged through the room.

But then, she suddenly stopped and barely managed to avoid stepping into the room without floor.

She had just heard a sound coming from here.

Selina quickly looked into the sewers, but she couldn't see anything.

There was just water.

Then, she looked around.

That was when she saw a suspicious hole in the ceiling.

'That hole is the same size as the enemy's spear,' she thought with narrowed eyes.

BOOOOOM!

Selina's Barrier exploded.

Her eyes immediately lost all focus, and she fell backward.

There was now a sizable hole in her face.

CRACK!

And the hole became even larger as Nick's spear passed through it again.

Splash!

At that moment, Ardum broke past the surface again and took a deep breath.

BANG!

And was pushed under again by Selina's corpse.

On the second floor, Nick chuckled a bit.

"Ow!" he suddenly shouted as he clenched his abdomen in pain.

Nick removed his hand and saw that it was covered in blackened blood.

'I have to deal with this,' he thought.

BANG!

Nick punched through the ceiling and went to the roof of the building.

Then, he ran to the place where he had talked with Futuma earlier and grabbed his spear.

Finally, Nick ran towards the Outer City.

Chapter 168 – Hospital

Nick jumped from building to building as quickly as he could.

The injury in his abdomen didn't feel good at all.

However, before Nick dealt with the injury, he had to quickly tell Wyntor about what had just happened.

In just a few minutes, Nick ran into Dark Dream.

As soon as he arrived, everyone turned to look at him since he had just violently thrown open the doors.

Immediately, the people noticed that Nick was injured and that he was bleeding.

"Nick!" Trevor shouted in urgency as he ran over to Nick.

Nick pulled him closer and whispered into his ear.

"Futuma and Selina are dead," Nick whispered. "Ardum is the only Zephyx Extractor left in Cycle. You have to tell Wyntor immediately!"

When Trevor heard that, his eyes widened in shock.

It was over?

The war was over?

Then, Trevor realized that Nick had essentially dealt with Cycle completely on his own.

Jenny and he hadn't done anything to help.

Completely on his own, Nick had gotten two Extractors from Cycle to join Dark Dream while killing four others, including the first spy.

One of them had even been a John!

"Nick, what about-"

"No time!" Nick shouted as he ran towards the exit. "I'll talk to you later!"

Trevor blinked a couple of times in shock, but he quickly realized that Nick was probably dealing with his injury.

"What did he say?" Kiara asked after walking to Trevor.

Over the past two days, Kiara and Jonathan had become familiar with the people of Dark Dream, and they didn't feel nearly as uncomfortable as they had anticipated.

Dark Dream was actually pretty nice to be in.

"I have to get Wyntor," Trevor said with furrowed brows before he ran to one of the assistants.

It was currently in the evening, and Wyntor wasn't in Dark Dream right now.

Meanwhile, Nick was rapidly running towards the place that had healed him when he had caught the Dreamer.

Nick stormed through the doors, and the clerk behind the counter raised her eyebrows in shock.

BANG!

Nick slammed his bank card on the counter. "I've been poisoned by a powerful ability from a level two Specter! Heal it!"

The clerk's eyes widened, and she quickly punched a button below the counter.

"Walk in that direction!" she said, pointing towards her right. "The team will meet you on your way!"

Nick nodded and quickly walked down the hallway.

About five seconds later, a big door at the end of the hallway opened, and four people quickly ran through it.

As soon as they saw Nick's uniform and his condition, they knew that he was their client.

One of them ran forward with a metallic bed on wheels and practically pushed Nick onto it.

After that, they pushed Nick into a big and brightly lit room with many little vials adorning the walls.

One had to remember that this was not a hospital in the classical sense.

This was a branch of a huge organization that had access to a powerful Specter that exchanged human life with healing liquid.

The people who pushed Nick in were also not really doctors.

They definitely knew a lot about the human body, but their main duty was to assess the damage and level of the client while choosing the correct mix of liquids to ensure optimal recovery.

Naturally, this service was not cheap at all.

In fact, it was so expensive that only Zephyx Extractors could afford it.

The main reason wasn't that Zephyx Extractors had a lot of money but because the Zephyx Manufacturers employing them would pay in case the Extractor couldn't.

Healing a badly wounded Extractor was extremely expensive, but losing an experienced Extractor was even more expensive.

Someone in the team rapidly opened Nick's uniform with practiced ease and threw it to the side.

Now, everyone could see the injury.

"The kidney has been hit and is poisoned," one of them said.

The others nodded solemnly.

"What's the level of the poison?" he asked Nick.

"Adolescent Specter," Nick said.

The man furrowed his eyes in displeasure. "Young man, you have to be honest. We are not with the guards, and we do not care whether or not you broke the law. I can see that this is not a wound that a Specter would usually inflict. Are you sure this came from a Specter?"

Nick took a deep breath. "Early level two Extractor," he said. "I got hit by a poisoned knife."

The leading doctor nodded. "Do you know if the poison effect was the Extractor's primary ability or an evolution?"

"Evolution," Nick answered.

"Are you certain?" the doctor asked.

"I am certain," Nick said.

The doctor nodded and turned to one of his people. "Get me B6 and H67," he ordered.

One of the people nodded and ran towards one of the big cabinets.

After opening it, the man grabbed one of the bottles before he ran to a different cabinet and did the same thing.

One of the bottles was blue, while the other was violet.

The doctor opened the violet bottle and put it over Nick's festering wound.

Skillfully, the doctor dropped six drops of violet liquid onto Nick's wound.

The liquid vanished rather quickly, almost like it had entered Nick's body through his wound.

Some moments later, Nick calmed down as a cool and refreshing feeling washed over his body.

"How do you feel?" the doctor asked.

"Calm... better..." Nick said slowly.

The doctor nodded and grabbed the other bottle.

Then, he very carefully dropped one drop of blue liquid onto Nick's wound.

A moment later, Nick's eyes shot open, and he took an insanely deep breath.

Almost immediately, Nick shot up from the metallic bed.

The other people had already retreated since they were used to that reaction.

Just now, Nick felt like someone had injected pure adrenaline into him.

"How do you feel?" the doctor asked again.

Nick looked with surprise at the doctor.

"I feel amazing!" he said in wonder.

The doctor nodded. "You've been cured."

"Please go to the front desk and tell them that you are healed."

"Have a nice day."

Chapter 169 – Kill Me

A group of five people stood in front of a tall building.

The people wore uniforms with red and black colors, the same colors as the standard Zephyx Extractor uniforms.

However, compared to those, these uniforms looked to be of higher quality, and their shape was also slightly different, giving off more authority.

On these uniforms were emblems depicting mushrooms in front of building silhouettes.

The people in the Outer City saw these kinds of uniforms even rarer than Zephyx Extractor uniforms.

These uniforms were the uniforms of the official city forces, and they all worked and resided in the Inner City.

One could also call the people who wore these uniforms the guards of the Inner City.

Naturally, since the Inner City was where all the rich and influential people lived, the level of the guards there was also vastly higher than in the Outer City.

All of these guards were Zephyx Extractors or ex-Zephyx Extractors.

When a Zephyx Manufacturer became big enough to have their own emblem, they were also required to support the city with more than just credits.

Namely human power.

At that point, the Zephyx Manufacturer needed to dedicate 20% of their Extractors to the city officials.

So, if a Manufacturer had about 20 Veterans and 100 Johns, they would need to dedicate at least four Veterans and 20 Johns to the city.

These Zephyx Extractors would work for eight hours each day for the city.

This meant that these Extractors wouldn't have any time to work with any Specters or for the Manufacturer.

Of course, the city also paid these Extractors, but the Manufacturers almost always had to pay their Extractors on top of that since the city's pay was horrendous.

The Extractors that were dedicated to the city would work as guards, officials, tax collectors, and so on.

But most of them were essentially just doing nothing.

It didn't take a lot of manpower to run the city.

The real reason why every Manufacturer needed to dedicate 20% of their forces to the city was to make a revolt impossible.

With 20% of all the Extractors in their pocket, the city could fight any Manufacturer that wanted to rise against it.

However, while this seemed like a horrible disadvantage for Manufacturers, it actually wasn't.

After all, someone who was working for the city had a lot of power and could sway some things.

The more people a Manufacturer had in the city's forces, the more advantages they could get with the law.

For example, there had to be at least one Zephyx Manufacturer that was causing illegal deaths in the Inner and Outer City because of one of their Specters, but the guards didn't know which Manufacturer it was.

Naturally, that was because that Manufacturer had so many people in the guards that they could keep such a huge operation hidden.

And right now, five of these people stood in front of Cycle's building in the Outer City.

The four people in the back had emblems with two mushrooms on them, which meant that they were level two Extractors who were currently working for the city.

When an Extractor worked for the city, they would wear the city's uniform, making it impossible to tell from which Zephyx Manufacturer this Extractor came.

One could only tell that these four were Johns.

Compared to these four, the person in the front had three mushrooms on his emblem, which meant that he was a Veteran.

Just now, the leading person had tried to open the front door to Cycle, but it didn't open.

That was a bit unusual since it was 9 a.m.

After some time, the guard frowned.

DUNG! DUNG! DUNG!

He knocked with a lot of force three times, shaking the entire entrance area.

"This is the City guard. Open the door!" the guard shouted.

No answer.

This continued for almost five minutes.

The guard just kept knocking and shouting.

"Seems like we got a winner," the leading guard commented.

The other guards looked with curiosity at the closed doors.

It wasn't every day that a Manufacturer went out of business.

The leading guard pulled out a thin golden blade and rammed it into the slit between two doors.

DING!

He moved the blade down and cut through the lock with a lot of force.

Finally, he pushed forward, and the door opened without any resistance.

When the door opened, the guards smelled a thick stench of blood coming out from the building.

The main hall was very clean, but it smelled like it was coated in blood.

The guards behind the leading guard became nervous.

Johns rarely fought Extractors or Specters, and whenever a Manufacturer was about to go under, they often resisted with force or just released their Specters.

And since these Specters were a danger to the city, the guards had to take care of them.

"Don't worry," the leading guard said as he strode into the building confidently. "Based on the report, this Manufacturer only has one Adolescent and two Hatchlings."

The other guards sighed in relief when they heard that.

The building was eerily silent as they continued walking towards the end of the main hall.

When they reached the counter, the stench of blood became even thicker.

No one was standing at the counter.

The leading guard approached the counter and looked behind it.

"Ah, that's where the stench is coming from," he said.

The other guards followed and also looked behind the counter.

They saw a huge pile of bloody minced meat.

It was like a pig had been thrown into a meat grinder and then just dumped here.

"Looks like the doing of a Specter," the leading guard said.

The other guards gulped nervously.

"Kill me."

A chill ran down the guards' necks as they heard the soft but almost lifeless voice of a young woman coming from one of the hallways.

"Please... kill me..."

The voice became louder, and some moments later, they saw someone stepping out of the hallway.

It was a severely bleeding naked lady with long black hair.

Her fingernails were over 20 centimeters long and extremely sharp.

A moment later, the woman raised her head, and she looked at the guards.

Her eye sockets were empty.

There were only two dark and bloody holes.

"Kill me..."

"Kill me!"

"KILL ME!"

"KIIIIIIILL MEEEEEE!"

And then, she charged forward.

Chapter 170 – Wrapping Things Up

"That's what happened," Wyntor said to the five people in front of him.

Right now, Nick, Jenny, Trevor, Jonathan, and Kiara were standing in front of Wyntor, who had just told everyone about what the guards had found in Cycle.

"He really freed all the Specters without telling anyone?" Kiara asked in shock.

Wyntor nodded. "Arдум is an egomaniac. He doesn't care about anyone else when there is something even mildly bothering him. He is the most important thing, and if he accidentally slightly stubs his toe, he wouldn't care if he had to kill a thousand people to make the pain go away."

At that moment, Wyntor had to chuckle a bit. "And with what Nick told me Ardam went through, I doubt that he had anything but rage and hatred in his mind."

Trevor and Jenny also chuckled.

Nick had already told them how he had thrown Ardam into the sewers.

"Did anyone survive?" Jonathan asked with worry.

After all, he had worked with the people in Cycle for a long while, and he didn't want to see any of them die.

Except for Ardum, maybe.

"Two of the guards and one of the clerks managed to flee," Wyntor said. "The others were killed by the Specters."

Kiara sighed. "Why? Why did this have to happen?"

"Well, when you know that the city is about to come and repossess your company, the only thing you can do is make it as difficult as possible for them to get your stuff," Wyntor explained.

"He can't destroy the building since it is leased in his name, and he doesn't own it."

"He can't just randomly kill his people since that would be considered sabotage."

"The only thing he can do is let out all the Specters and act like it was an accident."

Nick furrowed his brows. "Is there no way to fool the city? Ardum is also a Melfion, right? Shouldn't there be some way to deal with the inspection?"

"He already did everything he could," Wyntor explained. "While the building is leased in his name, Cycle doesn't officially belong to him."

"It doesn't?" Nick asked in surprise.

"No," Wyntor answered while shaking his head. "Officially, his Chief Zephyx Extractor owns 51% of Cycle. Naturally, unofficially, he owned all of it, but only the official accounts matter."

"He can claim that he had raised the issues regarding personnel and the Specters potentially breaking out with the Chief Zephyx Extractor, who just ignored all the issues."

"And since the Chief Zephyx Extractor officially owns the majority of the company, he couldn't do anything without the Chief Zephyx Extractor's permission."

"Under normal circumstances, when your business is judged to be unfit to hold Specters, you also receive a hefty fine and a long mandatory work sentence for endangering the city."

"Yet, since Ardum didn't officially own most of his business, he can't be held accountable, which means he won't lose any of his personal wealth."

The five Extractors were not happy when they heard that.

Ardum would get away scot-free?!

That was so unfair!

"Will Ardum take his revenge?" Jonathan asked.

"That won't be easy," Wyntor answered. "Since he officially failed to earn his inheritance, he has to get access to the family fortune via the traditional route."

"Becoming strong enough to actually control a major part of the Melfion family."

"He will need to become an Expert at the very least, and if he actually wants to control a substantial amount of the family's power, he will need to become a Specialist, a level five Extractor."

"Kugelblitz will hire Ardum as a level two Extractor, and he will have to work his way up the ladder."

"Due to our family name, he will get the job, but as soon as he is officially part of Kugelblitz, he has to work just as hard as anyone else."

"And Kugelblitz is very strict with how their employees conduct themselves."

"Kugelblitz represents Crimson Fungus City, and if one of their employees is found to use their position to suppress people outside Kugelblitz, they will terminate that employee and make sure that they don't find a job anywhere else."

"If you want to make it in Kugelblitz, your conduct has to be exceptional and exemplary."

"While Ardam definitely hates us, and Nick specifically, he won't sacrifice his life and future for revenge," Wyntor explained.

"Ardum might be an impulsive idiot, but that's for my standards, not for general standards."

"He isn't dumb enough to throw his life away for something like that."

The Extractors had mixed feelings.

On the one hand, they were glad that Ardam most likely wouldn't cause problems for them in the future.

But on the other hand, they felt like all of this was so unjust and unfair.

Even though Ardam had done all of these horrible things, he would still get an amazing job in Kugelblitz.

Ardum's fate after messing up everything was a fate that nearly everyone in the city wished for.

It was so unfair.

Everyone remained silent for several seconds.

"On a positive note," Wyntor continued, "the guards captured all three Specters and put them back into their Containment Units. Dark Dream has also received the ownership of all these Specters."

A collective sigh of relief was released.

They had still been a bit nervous about whether or not they would get the Specters.

"And not only that," Wyntor said.

The others looked at Wyntor with raised eyebrows.

"I also got into contact with the owner of the building, and I managed to acquire the lease for the building."

The eyes of the Zephyx Extractors opened widely.

"The building is far better than the warehouse we are in right now. In fact, it has space for up to 20 Containment Units of regular size. On top of that, we will have plenty of rooms for all kinds of things."

"While the lease is quite expensive, it's not an issue."

"After all, we now officially own five Specters."

At that point, Wyntor began to smile brightly.

After a bit, Nick also smiled.

Dark Dream was about to undergo another evolution!