

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 5: The Sudden Turn of Events

Confronting those red eyes, Lucien felt his hands and legs were shaking, his head buzzing. Different thoughts about what he should or should not do overwhelmed him, so he just stood there.

“Badge! I still have the badge!”

The badge was his greatest support. When Lucien was trying to concentrate and cast the shield spell, a sudden shout from Gary almost terrified him out of his wits.

“Cast Light!” Gary’s voice was calm and decisive. He shouted loudly to bring them back to the reality from fear.

Right! Lucien realized that their top priority was to be able to see clearly. He rubbed the badge and murmured, “Gaya.”

A ball of white light appeared in front of them and pushed the darkness away.

Then Lucien saw them, red-eyed rats of regular size. The floor, walls and even a weird human-shaped plant were all covered with the black rats like a crazy swarm, giving Lucien goose bumps.

The rats also saw their enemies. As soon as the light appeared, they started screaming and flooding towards the humans.

At that moment, they managed to take a glimpse of the chamber: a desk was placed in the corner with three glowing books on it; another flat, broad, weird-looking table was at the center of the room, drawn with different strange patterns, like red, blue or green, similar to the Saint Truth Badge. There were also some small stoves, pots, and glass bottles.

But, they did not get enough time to notice details as those crazy stinking monsters already jumped in front of them.

Howson and Corella held their swords and shields, with their backs against Gary, in a simple formation.

The leading rat threw himself right at Lucien. Its mouth was open wide, showing its two long and sharp fangs.

Lucien raised his Sword of Light and hurriedly swung at the head of the red-eyed rat. However, he was too nervous to predict the rat’s movement, and the blade missed, although the light coming out of the sword still caught it. Lucien could smell the rat’s burning flesh. Its skin turned black and rolled up inwards.

But the rat did not stop and was already in front of Lucien's face as if it could not feel the pain. He could smell the rotting odor coming from its mouth.

Lucien was too nervous to make the right decision. He tried to lift his sword once again and at the same time reached out his left hand to try to defend. Due to his panic he almost dropped the sword.

Feeling desperate, Lucien couldn't help but watch the creature about to sink its sharp teeth into his chest.

At this critical point, a shining blade arrived and hacked the rat directly, splitting it in two parts.

"Do not panic. Protect your vital parts. You still have the healing spell." Commanded Gary.

Corella also ordered in a sharp voice, "You idiot! Come here with us! You wanna die standing at the front?"

They were aware that Lucien was the only guy among them with a badge, which was very important to them. They could probably survive facing these insane rats without any spells, but no one knew what was waiting for them next.

Lucien tried to calm himself down. The guards were well-trained, so when facing dangers they knew what they should do. But, Lucien, a little boy, could not protect himself. No one was born for fighting, or with the ability to remain calm in the face of dangers.

In this first real fight, the guidance from an experienced guard like Gary would be a precious lesson for Lucien in the future.

After a moment Lucien finally calmed down. While hacking with his sword, he gradually stepped back and joined the guards.

Now, instead of one or two, hundreds of rats started insanely attacking them.

Lucien's sword was sharp and splendid. When he swung it, the sword was surrounded by a halo, and Lucien could see an almost solid afterimage of it through its path. According to Gary's command, Lucien's wielded the sword of light to shield them.

Any rat that ran into him was cut down in half by his blade. The smoldering cuts burned rats' organs and skin charred without dropping a single drop of blood. Some of the strikes missed, but even then the fur and skin charred and they became slower, crashing into the floor right before Lucien.

The three guards were responsible for the remaining ones.

"Haha, great job kid!" Corella whistled.

Lucien did not feel satisfied, though. He could feel the power of the sword was gradually decreasing.

Gary was still hacking the remaining ones, “Calm down. We have enough power to deal with these monsters.”

A new wave of attack came again, like a black swarm.

Lucien was improving rapidly. Although still worried, he decided to trust himself and the three guards.

The hacked bodies of dead rats fell to the ground like rain drops. But some red-eyed rats still managed to pass through the defense and moved towards them quickly.

They cannot handle all of them. Lucien was thinking worriedly. Nobody could wield a sword that fast.

Of course, they were fighting not only with their swords. Two small silver shields were cooperating with the swords. The crazy jumping rats could not stop in time and knocked directly into the metal. Many were twitching on the floor and died soon.

Corella laughed, “You can’t be a good knight without a shield!”

After several rounds of attack, the red-eyed rats changed their pattern. Instead of throwing themselves directly towards their faces, some started approaching through the floor, while others climbed on the wall to attack them from above.

The situation again turned serious.

“Leave those coming from above to me.” The tall Howson, who was silent all the time, said to them.

Lucien nodded with appreciation, wielding his light sword to defend from the rats on the ground. “Shield of Light?”

“Not yet.” Gary shook his head.

They were like a small boat floating in a roaring ocean. They could be easily destroyed.

Suddenly, Howson missed one rat, which fell directly on Corella’s shoulder. The rat gave him a bitter bite in his neck. Corella groaned with pain and twitched his shoulder.

“I got bit! It’s numb there. Their teeth must be poisonous.” He swore bitterly.

“Let me do the healing.” Lucien was about to rub the badge but was stopped by Gary.

“Corella can still hang in there. There are too many rats. Save it after... Ouch!”

Before he finished, Gary got bit under his kneecap.

Soon the guards started focusing on their unprotected parts. But unlike them who were wearing kneecaps, boots and chain mails, Lucien was merely wearing linen short clothes. Suddenly he got bit in his ankle.

Feeling pain and numbness from his ankle. Lucien almost lost his balance. He felt thirsty at the same time. He wanted water.

“Protect yourself. Raise your Shield of Light first. Then use Healing.” Gary commanded. Half of the rats were dead already.

Lucien quickly became focused and rubbed the badge.

“Simen.”

A white shield of light appeared and covered him. He would need more time to cast another spell, so he took a step forward, trying to cover his companions under the shield and the sword wall.

After a couple of seconds, Lucien concentrated again. He rubbed the badge.

“Gourdi.”

A white light radiated from the cross and covered his ankle. The numb feeling disappeared instantly.

Although Corella and Gary were still injured, the situation had been turned around. The number of red-eyed rats decreased, so Lucien seized the chance and healed the wounded as well.

Stabbing through the last rat, Corella sighed slightly, “Finally over.”

The ground was covered with layers of dead bodies and dark blood.

Standing there, Lucien could not believe he actually made it. Gary nodded to him, “You did well, Lucien.” Then he turned around, “You guys did a good job, too.”

Corella’s face looked weird. Then he answered in a confused and fearful voice, “How...Howson’s not here...”

The silent but reliable Howson, who was protecting them from behind, disappeared?!

Lucien started feeling creepy again.