

The Mafia 101

Chapter 101 Casualties?

Vicente looked at the entrance of his building with concern, noticing a level 1 Acolyte there.

However, as he looked at that place, he saw that person fall face-first to the ground, and a young red-haired man covered in blood appeared at that door.

"Rory?"

"Vice?"

The two shouted each other's names, all the enemies in the area already dead or unconscious and unable to hear each other.

"What happened here, man? How did it all start?" Vicente asked as he continued where he was, too tired to walk around the area casually.

"I don't know. We just got attacked. I was training when suddenly there was a bang and shaking. When I realized we were under attack, our men were already unloading their weapons on the enemies attacking us." Rory said as he ran a hand over his mask, removing some of the blood of his enemies.

"So that was it... Anyway, those bastards are from the Defiant Tyranny. They probably attacked us because of the Scarlet Syndicate emissaries." Vicente sighed in defeat, having no choice but to take sides.

He had done nothing to encourage such a group to attack him. He was willing to listen to an offer from anyone who knocked on his door. Yet, he had been brutally attacked by the people from the Defiant Tyranny and had now lost several of his men.

Not only that, but because of a visitor he had not invited, they would now become mortal enemies of the group that had attacked them!

In this society, no one would care if side 'A' killed side 'B' for being attacked in the first place. Everyone knew every action had a reaction, but the attacker did not care about the other party's right to defend itself. If they lost some of their men, they would definitely not stand still just because 'it was already expected.'

Revenge ruled this world!

Was it acceptable to stand still against a group that "dared" not accept the oppression of the strongest? Of course not.

Thinking about it while taking a deep breath, Vice couldn't help but curse the two sides responsible for this confrontation.

'Scarlet Syndicate, Defiant Tyranny, this will come back to you. I promise you that!' Vicente clenched his fists as he looked at the bodies in the area.

At that moment, the survivors inside the Fuller family home finally left their posts and came to help Vicente and Rory.

Rory quickly ordered them to kill the men who had just passed out from exhaustion or injuries while most of the group collected the belongings of the dead.

At 4 a.m., the street in front of the group's headquarters would be completely cleared, with a giant bonfire burning in front of it.

They had already killed all their enemies, so there was no turning back now. Defiant Tyranny would definitely come after them, so there was no point in hiding the bodies or anything else.

Vicente and Rory simply decided to expose their position against this group and publicly declare war on this local underworld organization.

As this fire extinguished the bodies of their enemies, Vicente looked at the flames and said. "Rory, go to one of the Scarlet Syndicate's posts. Accept the proposal from earlier and tell them what happened here."

"Are you sure about this?" Rory looked at his friend.

"We have no choice. Now we either get the Scarlet Syndicate's protection, or the Defiant Tyranny's people will kill us." Vicente said with an ugly expression on his face.

He kept looking at the fire from inside his building, already without the mask from earlier, but still with his clothes stained with blood and remains. "Let's take advantage of it while there's still time to stick to the earlier agreement. We will adjust our plans accordingly in the coming days."

"I understand. That must be the only way to go nonetheless." Rory sighed before leaving his friend to go directly to one of the places Aaron had said belonged to the Scarlet Syndicate.

Rory didn't even bother to change his clothes. Like someone in a hurry, he left in his blood-stained combat gear.

Vicente stayed behind to guard his property, afraid of an enemy reaction.

But while he was in the office on the second floor of the building, one of his men came in with an update on what had happened that night.

"Boss, we have the numbers on the enemies, our members, and the items we have collected." A Senior Apprentice, tall and strong, hairless but with a large black mustache, said this with a terrible countenance.

Blood could be seen on his clothes, a mixture of his own blood and that of the enemies.

"First, speak of our losses," Vicente ordered as he stood with his back to the man, still looking at the bonfire before his area.

"We lost 11 men tonight. Of those, 8 were Junior Apprentices, and the rest were Intermediate Apprentices. But among the survivors, we have 9 seriously injured men and 7 with minor injuries. Some need urgent medical attention. Otherwise, we will have more casualties in the next few hours." He informed, making Vicente even angrier.

A considerable number of his men had died that night!

But not only that had been lost. The building had been damaged and would have to be repaired. Some of the wagons had been completely destroyed, and the group would have to replace them.

"OK, take two of the less injured men to the offices of Doctors Doyle and Hill," Vicente ordered, using some of the names Aaron had given him.

Doyle's and Hill's clinics were open any time of day and kept their clients completely confidential. They even visited their clients in the middle of the night and didn't charge exorbitant prices.

They were one of the few who could efficiently serve the underworld, the only drawback being their peculiar and sometimes dangerous methods. But for desperate people in need of medical attention, they were excellent.

The man made a mental note and gave Vice the rest of the results before he left. "As for the enemies, 26 bodies are burning right now, boss. Eight were Senior Apprentices who fell to our weapons, 14 were level 1 Acolytes, and the rest were level 2 magicians who mostly died at your hands.

None of them managed to escape, so the entire group that attacked us is gone." He said in a tone of obvious satisfaction with that part.

Losing his men were bad. But 11 Apprentices dying in the face of 16 Acolytes and 10 Senior Apprentices were magnificent!

Those 11 men from Vicente's group had died with class!

It was true that Vicente and Rory had killed most of these stronger people. However, these men had their glory, killing higher-level opponents and still helping their leaders.

"Those 26 enemies didn't leave any spatial storage items behind, but we collected weapons, armor, and some coins.

We collected 8 gold coins, 675 silver coins, and 993 bronze coins.

There was nothing else of value among them."

Chapter 102 Membership Agreement ?

After informing his leader of the amounts collected on the bodies of the enemies, the man who informed Vicente left to attend to his order regarding doctors for the group.

Left alone in his office, Vicente made an ugly face as he felt pain in his back. 'I need a healing potion.' He thought to himself.

Unfortunately, the potion he had was not suitable for Apprentices like him. If he drank it, even if it was meant to heal or even strengthen whoever consumed it, he might even explode!

The amount of mana one had in one's body was something very delicate. When one ingested something that would naturally 'bless' one's body with mana, one always had to be mindful of one's absorption capacity.

If they took in more than they could handle, they would run the same risk of increasing their cultivation and not increasing the number of Magic Pentagrams to stabilize their powers.

With that in mind, Vicente decided to find an alchemist when morning came.

'I will use some of what I set aside to buy new weapons to get some pills and potions.' He reconsidered his plans.

With so many dead, he now had more weapons than staff. His urgency for new artifacts was also lessened because he had begun to study forging.

As someone with several men on his team who could advance a level or two with resources, Vicente changed some of his plans to increase the quality of his forces rather than just increasing the number of men on his side.

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While Vicente was considering what to do with his savings, news of what had happened to his group was already spreading through the city!

At the Defiant Tyranny headquarters brothel, the leader of this local criminal group, a level 5 Acolyte, was red with rage when he discovered that one of his battalions had been wiped out.

He didn't even know that the group had gone into action until the news of their destruction reached him a few moments ago!

To him, the group was just watching these people, as he had ordered earlier.

"What the hell! How did this happen? And how did those bastards do it?" He shouted as the mana in his body solidified around his fists, and the people in the room kept their distance from their boss as the table smashed to the floor.

A Senior Apprentice broke into a cold sweat and informed his leader.

"Boss, I was watching the area earlier when it was time for the shift change. The new watch leader was informed about a visit of the Scarlet Syndicate to these people and ordered an attack afterward."

"Scarlet Syndicate?" One of the group's high-ranking henchmen narrowed his eyes. "Have they joined forces with our enemies?"

"I'm not sure." The Apprentice looked at the level 4 man who asked him. "But there was a contact, and the person who replaced us decided to attack preemptively."

There was no way for us to know that they were strong enough to withstand an attack from one of our 4 battalions. After all, there were only Apprentices in that group."

"Only Apprentices? Are you saying we lost one of the battalions to such a group?" The number two over there shouted angrily, feeling this was a terrible mistake.

Obviously, they wouldn't let it go unnoticed. However, attacking such a powerful group without preparation was an undeniable mistake.

"What are these people's magical talents?" The leader asked, knowing that this was the only acceptable explanation for this defeat.

"We don't know. They hide their Magic Gems with masks..." The man quickly described what he knew, not even knowing these people's abilities, for only a few had acted publicly and shown their powers until now.

After listening for nearly ten minutes, the leader of the Defiant Tyranny ordered. "I want this resolved as soon as possible. Find out the talents of these people so we can attack them with everything we have! I will personally slit the throats of the fucking person behind this group!"

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On the other hand, while the two physicians requested by Vice earlier were already moving to his headquarters, Rory was already in Scarlet Syndicate's post.

Having used the contact from earlier to gain access to the staff of this post at one end of Scarlet Syndicate territory, Rory nervously was watching the people watching him as his contact came to this place.

The people in that group were rather hostile. They looked at him with ugly expressions, seeing him rather negatively.

But was it bizarre to do that to someone who reeked of blood and had several battle scars on his clothes?

Even criminals had their standards and would not only be more careful with some people but would also be influenced by bad first impressions.

But Rory's wait would not be extended, and soon, the man he had seen earlier with Vicente entered the waiting room where he was being watched.

"You guys made up your minds faster than I expected." The man entered the room smiling as he looked at Rory and understood what had happened. "Let me guess. You were attacked?"

"More or less... Anyway, we've considered your proposal, and we're ready to go through with it. It still stands, right? You said we'd have until the next night to think about it. We still have a few hours before the deadline."

The man said nothing and asked. "Who attacked you?"

"The Defiant Tyranny." Rory didn't hesitate.

"I see..." The man was playing with a ring on one of his fingers when he heard that and tapped twice on the table.

After a moment of silence, he said. "We can proceed with the deal I proposed earlier. But we'll need more if your group wants our protection from the Defiant Tyranny. How about 70% of your profits?"

"55%," Rory said.

"70%."

"60%."

"70%."

"65%! That's the best we can do." Rory got a little nervous, seeing that this person had not only caused problems for his group but wanted to charge them to solve what they had created!

This was the height of absurdity!

The red-haired young man said. "If we can't make a deal, you won't gain anything."

"And you will die." The blond man smiled at Rory.

"It's not that simple. We can run and hide. Plus, we can raise our level and hire mercenaries. It would be harder, but we can survive for a while." Rory said in a determined tone without showing his desperation. "And if we die, you will gain nothing. You might even get into trouble because of a local destabilization.

I hear your group is being targeted by several others these days... Will they stand by if Defiant Tyranny's actions cause local destabilization?"

Sometimes, major conflicts did not start because they lacked a "spark" to detonate the explosive "material" already in the "area."

In the case of Millfall, the Scarlet Syndicate was definitely the group with the most enemies at the moment. If there was any local instability, the chances of that explosive "material" going off and harming that group were not small.

As a group that was enjoying some of their recent gains, this was no time for them to face problems like a war in their "backyard."

Rory and Vicente knew the complicated situation of the local powers and were not ignorant of the consequences of getting involved with these groups.

The man noticed that Rory wasn't an ignoramus getting involved in problems he didn't understand and stopped playing with the ring in one of his hands.

"Very well, 65%. We can agree on that."

With those words, the two of them would soon draw up a quick and simple Magical Agreement, stating that the Scarlet Syndicate would support them locally while they would give them 65% of the profits from their operations in their public business.

Vicente would also have to sign an agreement with this group, so right after finishing his talks there, Rory quickly made his way back to the almost-destroyed building with the agreement already signed by that representative.

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Nothing more exciting would happen in Millfall for the rest of the night, and the day slowly dawned on the city.

While surprising rumors began to spread in the neighborhoods of Vicente and the Defiant Tyranny, the agreement with the Scarlet Syndicate had already been confirmed by being signed by the leaders of both sides.

The physicians called in by Vicente's men had already cared for the men in more worrisome conditions on the almost-destroyed estate. However, there were still people who needed the care of those doctors for more time.

Not all of them could be cared for with medical treatments alone and needed potent drugs to recover fully.

Vicente and Rory had used the remaining time between their nightly actions and dawn to recover some of their physical condition. However, still bruised from their previous battles, which had given them injuries that were difficult to recover from with meditation and self-healing, they left the estate at dawn and went in search of local alchemist shops.

It was time for them to strengthen the group with some drugs!

Chapter 103 Botanica Magica?

When they pulled up to an alchemy shop in the center of Millfall, Vicente, and Rory were dressed as they usually were when they weren't running their criminal organization.

They entered the largest alchemy shop in town with no masks on their faces and their Magic Gems on display.

Millfall had many small professional shops of all kinds. There was even a 'shopping mall' in the town center where various small merchants and professionals could rent space for their businesses.

But these locations in the local 'mall,' unlike some places on Earth, were where less prestigious shops set up their sites.

A good shop of a renowned specialist would not have to pay rent for a small space in such a place! They would have their own shop in one of the city's main avenues, a big place with many possibilities.

This place's 'shopping malls' were for beginners and lower-level professionals, such as 1st stage experts, to display their shops and services.

It would be difficult to find large establishments run by 3rd stage or higher alchemists in such places in cities like this.

Knowing this and looking for good quality items, Vicente and Rory chose the best place in town to buy or trade alchemical items.

The most famous store in Millfall, Botanica Magica, had everything from ingredients, techniques, and spells for alchemists, recipes, and even pills for sale.

Botanica Magica was the closest thing you could get to what alchemists had in their association, but without having to be an alchemist or a member of the organization.

If you had coins and patience, you could easily do business there!

As people who knew they had no time to waste, Vicente and Rory would not look for foolish savings by looking for the cheapest place.

Sure, if they looked elsewhere, they could pay less than they would have to for the items in this store. But they understood that their focus was on their business, not on getting discounts from professionals and stores they would have to waste their time getting to know.

In their minds, getting more guaranteed products faster was worth paying a little more!

As they entered a large building with a design that made Vicente remember some historical buildings in Asia, he immediately sensed an intense medicinal fragrance.

As they entered this fragrant environment, they came across a large area without walls where there was a huge hall of more than 400 square meters filled with people.

In this area's center was a large circular counter where several attendants could be seen guiding customers.

Around this place, there were signs on the ceiling here and there giving directions, but several small places, like monuments, were available for people to look at.

But these were not monuments. Here and there were plants and ancient artifacts, damaged but valuable for their history and classification.

In certain corners were small shelves and tables with items for sale.

'This is like a fair.' Vice thought to himself as he looked around the already noisy area at the beginning of the day.

In the magic world, people woke up very early. Shops like this one would be open at 8 a.m. with many people coming and going.

Rory saw some of the 3rd or 4th generation disciples of the owner of this shop selling things in the area and asked Vicente. "What exactly are we going to buy today? All of our men are Apprentices, so everything we need should be available in this area."

The Botanica Magica building had three levels. Each one represented a magical stage, where resources and services were for sale to people of equivalent magic power.

On the sides of this large hall were stairs that led to the upper levels, but mere apprentices like them wouldn't need nor have the means to buy 2nd-grade resources.

But Rory was curious about what his friend wanted to buy there. He knew how many coins they had to spend, but Vicente had the final say, not him.

Vicente answered his friend as he watched and walked around the area. "I want to spend at most half of our savings. I will buy something to heal our wounds and resources to strengthen our weaknesses. However, I want to help at least five of our men advance with what we buy here."

Pills, potions, and 1st-grade resources cost between 2,000 and 15,000 bronze coins on average, depending on the drug type, purity, and delivery.

Vicente had the equivalent of 100,000 bronze coins to spend this morning, so he could not help all of his men.

If he wanted to increase the strength of his group, he would have to focus on a few of his men. He could not help them all at the same time!

He still needed coins to keep his operation running, buy food, and pay his workers.

Vicente knew he could get between 6 and 30 magic items from this shop, not enough to help everyone in his group.

He spotted the place where a young alchemist had several vials on a table and was sitting reading a book.

Rory also looked at the young alchemist, who was dressed in one of the association's robes.

He smelled a medicinal scent that caught his attention. 'This looks like a good alchemist...'

Vice asked as they approached the brown-haired man. "What do you have here, friend? I see there are fewer people in the area interested in your resources."

The man continued to read his book but replied to Vicente. "That's natural. Not everyone is willing to pay the price for good resources."

"Oh? And what do those good resources do?" Rory asked with a smile, seeing that this alchemist was quite confident.

An alchemist's level did not determine everything. Just as there were Acolyte warriors who were weaker than Apprentices, there were 1st-stage alchemists who were more talented than some 2nd-stage alchemists.

A 1st-stage alchemist would never be able to produce a 2nd-grade pill because of the lack of mana in their body. But if a talented 1st-stage alchemist competed with a not-so-talented Acolyte alchemist to produce a 1st-grade pill, the low-level person could produce a purer and more efficient pill!

The purity of a pill did not reflect the mana used in its production but the intelligence in mixing the ingredients and bringing them to their full potential in the mixture. It was not enough to have a lot of mana or just an extra Magic Pentagram to achieve this. One would have to have a deep understanding of alchemy!

This understanding could be achieved even at a low level.

The alchemist took his eyes off the book and looked at Rory, especially at the green gem on the redhead's forehead. "I have pills and potions of various kinds. But they are all high in their purity, close to 90%."

The purer a pill or potion was, the better its effects would be, and the fewer impurities would accumulate in the body of the one who ingested it.

Pills and potions could easily raise the magic level of living beings. But this did not come without a price. By accepting this "easy" power, one would have to deal with the consequences of accumulating impurities in one's body, which could range from reducing one's life expectancy to limiting one's future progress.

Such impurities could be eliminated somehow, but these were not easy or cheap processes. As a result, most people had to be careful about the number of magical resources they consumed during their journeys.

This was not so important in the early levels because the amount of power needed to advance was small, and the impurities were not many. But as one progressed through the magical ranks, it could easily get one into trouble. Therefore, purer pills and potions had a higher value.

However, in addition to the weaker damage, the main effect of this type of resource would be stronger if it were purer.

Depending on their talent, magicians could absorb more or less of the same resource. But resources could provide more or less benefit depending on their purity.

The pill Rory had taken earlier was an example of this. It had not been able to give him a breakthrough, but if it had been purer than it was, it might have been different!

Listening to this alchemist, Vicente became more serious. 'Junior Apprentices or Senior Apprentices can only consume 1st-grade pills and potions. But one has an entirely different need than the other. So those who are closer to the Acolyte level need more pure 1st-grade resources if they want to advance.'

His eyes narrowed, aware of what he needed to solve his problems. 'I need such resources to help the Senior Apprentices in my group become Acolytes!'

He said to the alchemist. 'Very well. I need resources to help less talented Senior Apprentices advance to the 2nd magic stage. What do you have here that can do that?'

Chapter 104 Pills and Potions?

"Low-level Senior Apprentice? How low?" The alchemist looked at Vicente while still sitting where he was.

Different talents had different ranges of purity that were indicated for consumption to be affected as one wished.

If someone with the red talent, the lowest of them all, wanted to advance from Senior Apprentice to level 1 Acolyte, they would have to consume something of high medicinal strength and purity.

Just as there were anesthetics with different intensities on Earth, there were pills, potions, and more with similar characteristics but different intensities in the Polaris Realm.

"Orange-grade talents," Vicente replied.

"Then you definitely need a pill with a purity above 80%. The most suitable for such people would be a Spirit Bone Marrow Pill, which can destroy some imperfections that bodies of lesser talents have."

The Spirit Bone Marrow Pill was a kind of resource that, if compared to those found on Earth, would be like morphine among analgesics. It was not the strongest in its category but extremely strong in its purpose.

There were several different grades of such pills, and people of lesser talent usually used them to approach breakthroughs.

They were violent in their effects, and once ingested, they would even change some of the essences in the bodies of the magicians who ingested them. Contrary to what one might think, this was not an easy thing to do, but rather a very dangerous one, which increased the chance of death during the magician's promotion by 50%.

However, low-talent magicians were so inefficient at absorbing the medicinal essence of resources that they would have to use drastic methods if they wanted to advance.

Vicente and Rory looked at each other, knowing that such a pill was among the most expensive they could find.

"I have 2 such pills with 90% purity. I can sell them both for 20 thousand bronze coins. What do you think? Are you interested?"

Rory swallowed his saliva when he heard that. That was 20% of what they had to spend today!

"Is there no potion of the same kind?" The young redhead asked.

Pills and potions could be made with the same substances. Yet, each type of substance had its strengths and weaknesses.

Pills usually had longer-lasting effects, and one had to meditate to digest their medicinal power. Potions, on the other hand, had more immediate effects, and one did not have to do much to benefit from them.

However, because potions were so much simpler, they were weaker than pills and naturally cheaper.

Because of their milder and quicker effects, most existing potions were of the recovery type for healing or restoring one's mana without any effort.

"No. Someone with that talent level who tries to advance to the 2nd stage will not get what it takes to advance in one try with a potion. At most, they would get closer to advancing, but I wouldn't guarantee you much." The alchemist said.

Vicente kept the price of these pills in mind and asked. "What else do you have here? Think of my friend and me. What here can help us? We need something regenerative and also for progress."

The alchemist looked at their foreheads once more, then at the vials on the table beside him. "What is your level? Junior? Intermediate or Senior?"

The two standing young men were hiding their cultivation, so there was no way for this Senior Apprentice to estimate their cultivation.

"We are Intermediate Apprentices," Rory replied.

"In that case, I believe that the Mageblood Essence healing potion can repair low and medium-level damage to the bodies of magicians at your level. I have four such potions. I can exchange each of them for 3.5 thousand bronze coins."

He took one of the pill bottles and said. "For you to get closer to the Senior Apprentice level, I have this pill, Crocodile Tear, with 85% purity."

Crocodile Tear was a few degrees lower in potency than the Spirit Bone Marrow Pill. It would not put its user at risk of death and would simply give the one who ingested it more essence to attempt a small breakthrough.

It was one of the options for magicians to use in the middle of their magical stage to strengthen themselves quickly.

"Crocodile Tear costs 8.5 thousand bronze coins each."

Seeing the reflective expression on their faces, the alchemist closed his eyes for a moment and made an offer. "If you take the two Spirit Bone Marrow Pills, two Crocodile Tears, and two Mageblood Essences, I can give you a small discount.

How about 40,000 bronze coins? For that price, one of the two potions will be free."

Because he sold higher-quality resources, which were more expensive, this alchemist had fewer customers than average. The customers who did know him knew that his pills and potions were excellent. But as a 17-year-old alchemist, he still had a long way to go before his name was known.

If he had the chance to make a big sale like this, he would do it to get rid of these highly perishable products!

Pills and potions would rot after a few weeks of production. So you wouldn't often see many of these items available for immediate delivery.

But by selling his goods in his master's shop, this alchemist could usually sell his stuff before it rotted.

However, he only made the most common types of pills for sale. If one wanted him to make something special, one must order it in advance!

"40 thousand?" Vicente heard this suggestion and stopped to think. 'With that, Rory and I will recover, and we will have a chance to increase our strength with 2 of our men. I would still have 60 thousand bronze coins for more business.'

"OK, I'm interested," Vicente replied, and the alchemist immediately started to prepare a wooden box where these resources would go.

"By the way, if you are interested in hiring my services, I also make customized pills and potions to order. You can give me the ingredients for the pills and potions you are interested in and pay for my services upon delivery, or even pay me for all the cost of the ingredients, and I will do all the work myself." He advertised himself before placing his contact in the box.

"Liam Young..." Vincent read the alchemist's name and address on the box.

Vicente saw Liam packing his things to leave as he paid for the coins and said goodbye. "Very well. I'll look for you in the future."

He and Rory still had to buy more pills, but they couldn't afford Liam's high prices, even considering the possible discounts this man could give them. On the other hand, the other types of pills that Liam had available to sell today were not interesting to them.

After saying goodbye to him, they walked back through the first level of the Botanica Magica until they saw several people gathered around a tent.

Chapter 105 Ava Oak

"Look, young master Symons is buying potions for his servant!"

"Ahh, I would love to be in her place... To be close to him day and night and still receive such gifts."

"Tsk! Someone with your looks would never get a place next to such a refined nobleman." A red-haired, well-dressed young woman with nice cleavage said this to some of the women crowding around to see the most desirable young man in town.

The eldest son of Viscount Symons, heir to the family fortune, and considered the most talented of the local younger generation, Marcus Symons!

At the age of 16, Marcus was already a level 3 Acolyte, someone with green talent and an unusual magical form. He had a great future ahead of him, and even though he was already engaged, many women could certainly benefit from being around him.

Even if they were the 3rd or 4th wives of someone like him, many women would be happy to be with him.

It was better to share a capable man full of qualities than to have the exclusivity of a common man!

Vicente and Rory observed the many women there, ignoring the comments from Marcus' fans and the young men who were jealous of this blond guy in front of a 1st-stage alchemist.

"Is that the Viscount's heir?" Rory muttered to his friend, watching the handsome, tall man smile as he bought magical resources for the Senior Apprentice servant beside him.

"Thank you, young master. I'll continue to work hard to satisfy you!" The red-haired woman said with a smile on her face that told everybody she was willing to do crazy things for this man.

Vicente observed this but didn't waste his time wondering if these two were in some kind of romance. Besides the crowd, what most caught his attention was the medicinal scent of the products of the alchemist serving the son of Viscount Symons.

'These pills could probably help my Intermediate and Senior Apprentices improve their strength.'

Vicente was no alchemist, but he did not need to be one to recognize the medicinal essence capable of increasing the strength of himself or his men.

Because of this, he realized early that Liam had things that were useful to him and noticed this other alchemist also had things useful to his people.

Ignoring the crowd between him and the alchemist, he walked on, Rory following behind.

"Hey, who are they?"

"Why are they going to young master Symons?"

A few young men nearby muttered, while most of them were some distance away from where Marcus and his servant were.

But besides the alchemist in the tent, a young woman stood beside him, facing the servant and master, smiling at each other as several people watched them.

When they stopped in front of the young blonde woman next to the alchemist, Vice and Rory naturally got all the attention of Marcus' fans and the young master himself.

Marcus immediately looked at Vice and Rory, two people he had never seen or heard of before.

But even when he realized they were out of the ordinary, he still glared at them. 'Who are these idiots? Don't they realize that I'm here now?'

Vicente merely nodded at the young master, recognizing that Marcus was there, and then looked at the alchemist and the woman in the tent.

These people had already delivered young master Symons' purchases and received payment. Noticing that neither side seemed to be in the middle of a conversation, Vicente told the two in the

tent. "Hello, I am looking for pills and potions for the Intermediate and Senior Apprentices of Orange-grade talent."

Seeing Vicente's magical form, the young blonde next to the alchemist frowned and remembered what she had recently heard from her older brother.

'Form of '69' lying down...' She forgot that the Viscount's son was right there, and a smile formed on her face. "Vicente? Is that you?"

"Huh? Do you know me?" Vicente did not recognize her, but considering her beauty, he was sure he had never seen her before.

However, looking at this young woman who seemed to be the same age as her, Rory remembered seeing someone who looked like her.

"You... You awakened your magical powers with me." Rory said.

"Oh? Is that so?" Vice saw the beauty agree, but she quickly explained herself.

"I don't know you, although it's true that I awakened my powers with your friend. I actually heard about you from my older brother, Lukas." She said before introducing herself. "My name is Ava Oak."

Vicente and Rory remembered that name from their conversation with Lukas a few days ago, recalling that he had told them to stop by the Oak Supply Store and look for Ava.

"I didn't expect to find you here. Is the Oak family related to Botanica Magica by any chance?" Vicente asked.

Marcus laughed when he heard that. "Of course they are. Botanica Magica is of the family of the wife of the Oak patriarch."

Vice and Rory knew a lot about some of the internal affairs of Millfall's powers. But they didn't know everything, and, of course, they didn't know about the Oak family's situation with this shop.

But even though they were close, the Oak family and Botanica Magica were not supporters of each other. Lukas and Ava's family was small compared to such a big store.

The family behind Botanica Magica made room for young people from the Oak family to learn from the disciples of the alchemist who owned the shop.

Ava studied with this alchemist by her side, acting as his secretary.

Although she was a magician and already knew how to make some potions and pills, she couldn't compare to this Senior Apprentice who was about to become an Acolyte. She would need at least a few more years at his side to reach the same level of alchemy that he had now.

"Oh? I was not familiar with that. Thank you for the information, young master Symons." Vicente smiled at Marcus.

"So you two already know each other?" The alchemist smiled and said. "I have some things that are compatible with what you seek. Please come in, and let's talk in private."

Hearing this, Rory and Vicente entered the tent while Marcus watched them silently, clenching his fists. 'What annoying people.'

"Let's go, Harper. We have nothing else to do here."

Chapter 106 Friend of My Friend?

Entering the tent and seeing the crowd dwindle nearby, Vicente and Rory soon heard a few words from Ava and the alchemist.

"Are you friends of the Oak family? Tell me about yourselves." The alchemist said as he was one of the Oak patriarch students teaching Lukas' sister.

As someone connected to the Oak family, he naturally wanted the best for the family and young talents like Ava and Lukas.

Vicente then said. "I don't think I can say that right now. I met Lukas while my friend Rory and Miss Ava were awakening their magical powers. After that, we met by chance and talked about the future.

Lukas and I have an aptitude for forging, but we are not backed by the traditional powers of our craft. We may become friends, but we are not yet."

This man liked sincerity and appreciated the words of this black-haired young man.

"But senior Dylan, Vicente is being too modest. My brother told me that he has plans for these two and that I should help them if I have the chance." Ava said in a low voice so that her temporary teacher could hear her.

'Is that so?'

Dylan said then. "Well, you two will certainly have a good relationship in the future. I can feel that. So tell me what you need. I'll see how I can help you. A friend of Lukas is a friend of mine."

Good connections made all the difference. There was no need to ask for favors. By being connected to the right people, such a person would benefit without even knowing it.

Being a friend of the Viscount, one would get discounts in almost every store they went to and access to events that few knew existed.

As the saying goes, there was nothing better than being a friend of the king!

For example, Lukas was not tall enough to give Vice and Rory access to many opportunities. But as the eldest son of the Oak patriarch, he could help his contacts with alchemist items through his family.

Vicente knew he didn't have enough to refuse certain favors and agreed to owe one to Lukas. "I need items to help my men level up. They are not talented, so I feel I need strong pills with good purity."

"Hmm, Intermediate and Senior Apprentices, right?" Dylan remembered Vicente's words from a few moments ago. "Well, right now, I only have one pill that can help the orange talented Senior Apprentices. But I do have several options for Intermediate Apprentices."

Dylan showed some pill bottles on the table, showing Rory and Vicente 8 options for their men at their magic level.

"The only pill I have for Senior Apprentices is a Glory Night, 80% pure. It should be enough to help one of your men if someone is brave enough to take it."

Glory Night was the most powerful type of pill for magicians who wanted to advance with the support of a pill. Compared to Spirit Bone Marrow Pill, it was 50 times stronger!

As a result, the dangers of this pill were much greater for those who took it, and it was usually only suitable for people of very low talent who were facing a cultivation bottleneck.

Already knowing about this pill, Vicente could not agree to buy such a thing. His men were not very talented, but if they were given time, they could naturally become Acolytes.

There was no reason for him to use such a resource now, an item that normally could not be found in the 1st grade because it was compelling and usually had a starting level of 2nd grade.

The level of pills mainly depended on the mana level of their creator.

However, depending on the resources used to create the pill, some could even affect stronger ones. In other words, there were items of the 1st grade that could affect 2nd-stage magicians.

"It's not worth the risk," Rory muttered.

The alchemist agreed and said. "It depends on the age of the one who wants to advance and become an Acolyte. But indeed, I would avoid giving this pill to a young or even middle-aged person. If I gave it to someone like that, not only would the risk of death be great, but it would also destroy the possibility of that person reaching level 5 of the 2nd stage.

But it depends on you. It is your choice and such a person's intention. If you want the pill, I can sell it to you for 11,000 bronze coins."

That was a good price!

Liam had sold each Spirit Bone Marrow Pill for 10,000 bronze coins, so paying only 11,000 for this other was a bargain.

Dylan really did give Lukas' friends a nice discount!

Unfortunately for Rory and Vicente, they didn't have the coins to take advantage of such chance.

"The price is perfect, but we do not have enough to buy this just to save for the future," Vicente said.

The alchemist then spoke about the 8 pills for the Intermediate Apprentices. "As for the other pills, I have here 3 types of pills for your weaker men. They are..."

He quickly presented each of them, giving a price for each.

One of the three types costs 6,000, another 5,000, and the last 7,000 bronze coins.

After hearing the prices and names of the pills, as well as a basic explanation of the effects of the one he had never heard of, Vicente decided to buy 6 of the 8 pills for 36,000 bronze coins.

This left him with the equivalent of 24,000 bronze coins, enough to search for more resources for his men, who were about to become Acolytes.

"Alright, here they are," Ava said as she handed Rory a box with their pills.

Unfortunately, they had no place to store them, so they would have to carry them to their estate carefully.

After receiving the coins from Vicente, Dylan asked. "Is there anything else you need, young man? Enjoy it now. I won't make such good prices when you come to me in the future."

"How long and how much would it cost for you to make Spirit Bone Marrow Pills with at least 80% purity?" Vicente asked.

Liam had already made it clear to him and Rory that he made pills to order, but from what they understood, it would not only be more expensive to order pills by the hour from this alchemist, but it would also take longer.

At the same time, they could not wait too long. The Scarlet Syndicate would not support them 100% of the time, and there were certainly ways for Defiant Tyranny to make things difficult for their group, even with their recent affiliation with that other group.

As such, Vicente and Rory needed to purchase resources that were already available and were only interested in gathering information on reliable alchemists who could serve them for future orders.

Dylan thought for a moment and answered. "It would take me 3 days if I did have the ingredients and no orders in front. But I already have two orders for the next few days, so I advise you to find another alchemist".

That was Botanica Magica. The professionals there were not just competitors trying to steal customers from other alchemists.

Every deal that was made in the shop benefited all the other alchemists there because they were all, to some degree, disciples of its owner. When one sold something, part of the sale stayed with Botanica Magica and was used for the benefit of all the shop members.

Instead of letting this young man go looking for other shops in town, Dylan pointed out an acquaintance of his. "Go to the black-haired man across the area. He should have what you're looking for."

Seeing where Dylan was pointing, Rory immediately noticed a black-haired man standing beside a round red cauldron.

Vicente also looked toward this alchemist, who seemed to cook pills while serving his customers.

Dylan laughed and said. "This is your first time here, right? Don't be surprised. Some alchemists make pills in public. Not all of them are distracted by conversations and people watching them.

The one you see is a great 1st stage alchemist who should soon advance and become an Acolyte. Enjoy it. He won't be selling 1st-grade pills for long.

A higher-level practitioner could produce items of a lower grade than their level if they wanted to. Of course, they would produce lower-grade items of higher quality than they could at lower levels, but few did that. Even if they could produce lower-grade items of higher quality, the cost of those items would still be much lower than the price of items of the same grade as the practitioner's stage.

For example, a 2nd-grade pill might cost between 20 and 50 thousand bronze coins!

Thus, more skilled practitioners rarely waste their time making items of lower grades.

Vicente and Rory listened to Dylan and said goodbye, saying they hoped to see them in the future and then going to the alchemist.

Chapter 107 Favorable and Unfavorable Movements?

After saying goodbye to Ava and Dylan, Vicente and Rory managed to buy two more pills from the alchemist Lukas' friend had recommended.

However, they had to pay a high price for the two pills that the man had at his disposal. According to the man, there were no other pills like the ones they wanted in the shop at the moment.

Vicente, who had already guessed this from the medicinal scent in the air, accepted such a man's price and paid 24,000 bronze coins for the two pills.

Having done that, they returned to their estate after disguising themselves so that no one would be able to trace them from their morning movements.

...

Arriving at their estate, Vicente and Rory soon distributed the items they had just bought to the men they considered most worthy of investment.

But none of these 12 people were allowed to immediately start taking the pills they had received from their bosses.

Given the group's problematic situation, these people would continue to stand guard around the estate while Vice and Rory would recover and try new advancements.

They were the main warriors, so they had to be in the best shape possible!

With that in mind, the two soon drank the potions they had bought with Liam, quickly noticing the quick and gentle effects of the recovery potions.

Vicente immediately felt the pain in his back go away as he drank his potion. Not only that, but he also felt all the mana he had used up earlier and had not yet fully recovered return to normal.

He felt like a deflated balloon returning to its full size, bursting with energy and explosive power in each of his muscles.

Recovery potions not only regenerated injuries and spent mana. They also had the side effect of raising one's spirit and temporarily increasing one's strength.

This was so interesting that some magicians would use potions of various kinds to boost their attributes before an important battle. Even recovery potions were used for this purpose if one did not have the specific spirit and attribute enhancement potion.

However, this was not a power of the user but rather a temporary condition that would pass after minutes or hours, depending on how much one used one's powers.

The positive effects of the potions were very fast, and 5 minutes after taking these two potions, Vice and Rory were fully recovered and ready to meditate.

The two took their Crocodile Tear pills and soon began meditating, trying to strengthen themselves and raise their magic level!

...

While Vicente and Rory were doing their best to prepare for the challenges ahead, the people of Defiant Tyranny had already learned of their new enemies' alliance with the Scarlet Syndicate.

This would definitely hamper their actions against these brave young men who had stood up to them in self-defense the night before. Yet, that didn't mean this local group would accept that and leave things as if nothing had happened.

As a prominent local criminal society, Defiant Tyranny had several ways to pressure Vicente's group and punish them for their crimes.

At the moment, they were not looking for immediate revenge. A frontal attack would only cause the members of the Scarlet Syndicate to act in defense of these young men. They were looking for elusive options, difficult to counter or defend against.

The underworld had its own ways!

...

At Millfall's royal guard post, the Commander worked as usual, dealing with the local matters that required his attention.

The local work was simple. He had to watch the nobles, enforce royal law, and collect the taxes these noble families and local businesses owed to His Majesty.

As a Mage, little of what happened locally caught his attention or was even a problem in the eyes of this seasoned soldier.

But while going about his routine at the Royal Guard office in Millfall, this man suddenly felt a shadow behind him and took his eyes off some documents he was reading.

He did not get up and remained seated in his chair. But he murmured in a low voice. "What do you want? This is not a good place for us to communicate."

"I know. My group has a problem with a rookie. We need your help." The shadow said in a low voice, causing the soldier to narrow his eyes.

"A newbie? Do you want my help because of a rookie? Are you sure about that? I just owe you a favor, so I won't owe you anything else if you use it for this." The Commander muttered.

He was one of the strongest local Mages. However, he was only a soldier and lost out to many high-ranking local Acolytes in terms of influence and wealth.

"I have no choice. I want to hit the bastard, even if it means losing the last favor you owe me. These people I want to hurt are strangers. I'd rather not underestimate them." The gruff, sultry voice said this.

"Very well, tell me who they are, and I will find a way to affect them. But as we've done before, I'll just put them in position for you to do the dirty work."

"That's all I need." The voice said before disappearing.

...

While some moved for bad, others moved for Vicente's good.

Already aware of what had happened at the headquarters of Vicente's mercenary group, Jax Peters was already moving to fulfill the black-haired young man's demands.

He and his younger brother had been beaten the night before. But their situation could have been much worse. Jax had realized that when he heard what happened to an elite squad trying to raid Vice's building that night.

Considering Vicente was strong enough to kill several low-level Acolytes and crazy enough to challenge powerful people in Millfall, this man didn't want any trouble with him!

Jax prayed for Defiant Tyranny to eliminate Vicente. But until that happened, he wanted no more trouble with this crazy young man.

Maybe Vice was destined for the darkness of death, but before he perished, he could still have several chances to take people like Jax with him!

Afraid of that, Jax had already given orders to his family's people to pay the weekly coins Vice had already said they would have to pay.

Meanwhile, Brody was trapped in his own room, too afraid to leave the house after what he had seen the night before.

The black-haired person behind the iron mask was a monster! If he wasn't careful, he could lose his head in no time!

...

The morning passed quickly, and soon, the afternoon in Millfall was ending.

The Fuller family's territory was still intact, and with the rumors circulating, no new trouble had hit the taverns under the group's protection.

Vicente's customers grew more confident in his proposal and began to consider the possibility of extending the shifts of their establishments.

Zander's Tavern had been opening up to an hour later recently, but after the latest news, the brothers were already thinking about keeping it open much longer.

Vicente was bold enough to act against groups of Acolytes, so he must have had his cards up his sleeve. After all, what fool would risk his life without a lifesaver?

Because of thoughts like that, some of the local merchants already visited by Vice or Rory became more interested in joining their group.

But some still wanted to see how this rising group in this outermost part of Millfall would deal with the consequences of their recent actions. They had acted against big people. Surely, there would be consequences!

If they showed that they could continue to grow and withstand the pressure of their enemies, many people would finally be willing to make deals to join Vicente's burgeoning territory!

But while many in the neighborhood were thinking about him, Vicente was finishing his cultivation and opening his eyes.

Unfortunately, he did not feel his magic level at a new level. However, in a single afternoon, he had advanced more than 60% of the way to the peak of his level, Intermediate Apprentice.

'Liam's pill didn't give me the breakthrough I was looking for, but that was because I had only recently reached my current level.' Vicente thought, considering the fact that this alchemist hadn't had a chance to feel his level.

The pill Liam had sold to Vicente and Rory was for Intermediate Apprentices who were close to advancing, not for young people who had just reached that level!

But with his extraordinary talent, Vicente had absorbed a lot from that pill, increasing not only the density of mana in his body but also his understanding of his two elements, Earth and Lightning.

Leaving his state of meditation, he did not hesitate to activate his ability, causing a Red Pentagram to emerge from his being, a little bigger than before and in a brighter shade.

The moment he moved his mana across his Magic Gem and felt his ability, a smile appeared on Vicente's face.

Chapter 108 Progress?

When Vicente activated his first ability, he immediately felt all the metals around the building, feeling more control and less weight on his consciousness.

When he activated his ability, he had to focus on a particular amount of metals, and if he couldn't control that, he would feel pressured because there were more metals around him than he could handle.

But as he got stronger, Vicente felt that he could control more and more metals, and the pressure he felt from what was beyond his control diminished.

This was a somewhat obvious breakthrough for him after he had greatly increased his understanding and the mana density in his body. But beyond that, Vicente felt he could go further with spells involving the Earth and Lightning elements.

He furrowed his brow and felt the Earth around his building, realizing that if he wanted to, he could subtly manipulate part of the walls of his property at will.

Unfortunately, the walls were not made of 100% Earth, so he did not have enough to modulate this building as he wished and thus repair the various damages caused by enemy magicians.

But he felt he could manipulate the electrons around him more easily now, to the point where he could even electrify non-metallic surfaces and objects.

'Well, it's better than nothing.' He deactivated his ability, and the mana around him returned to normal.

He thought that he'd have to practice some of his forging skills later to see how this improvement would affect them. But soon, Vicente took note of where Rory had already finished his meditation and tested his powers as well.

"As expected. You haven't progressed either." Rory smiled as he looked at his friend.

"What did you get from the pill?" Vicente asked.

"I must have reached the middle of the Intermediate Apprentice level. We were hasty in not informing Liam that we had recently advanced to such a level."

"Yes." Vice agreed. "But it doesn't matter. He had nothing that could help us without hurting us. This upgrade today at least didn't create too many impurities."

Rory didn't disagree and changed the subject. "So what now? What do we do?"

"We will protect this post until tomorrow. In the meantime, let's authorize our men to use the pills we bought for them."

If these men became stronger, they could not reach new heights because of the combination of their powers with their weapons. After all, those weapons could only withstand the power of Junior Apprentices. But if they were stronger, they could see more, be faster, and be tougher.

As they advanced, they could become better shooters and, more importantly, have a better chance of surviving enemy attacks.

"If one of them advances and becomes an Acolyte, we'll have to look for Magic Pentagrams." Rory reminded his friend.

Vicente nodded, indicating that he had not forgotten. "We will do that when we advance and become Acolytes. We can hunt Magic Pentagrams together and save time."

Magic Pentagrams provided abilities, but they also stabilized a magician's mana. Therefore, they were crucial after breakthroughs.

But it was not dangerous not to absorb a new pentagram right after a breakthrough. What was dangerous was to keep trying to get stronger without a pentagram!

So, someone who became a level 1 Acolyte could go without their first second Magic Pentagram until they reached level 2. At that point, they would either have to stop trying to get stronger or risk exploding.

For this reason, it was not uncommon to find level 1 Acolytes with only one Magic Pentagram, even if it was not ideal.

With that decided, Vicente and Rory soon allowed the selected 4 Senior Apprentices and 8 Intermediate Apprentices from their group to go meditate and consume the other pills they had purchased earlier.

...

The next day morning...

After a full day since the previous incident, Vicente and Rory's group had yet to suffer any consequences for defending themselves against Defiant Tyranny's attack.

On the contrary, they had had enough rest for the day, and after hours of meditation of their 12 men, 10 had made breakthroughs!

With the resources at their disposal, most of them had achieved the expected promotions, with 7 becoming Senior Apprentices and 3 becoming level 1 Acolytes.

Of the two who had failed to advance, one had died, and the other had failed to take advantage of the opportunity and was still an Intermediate Apprentice.

Vicente and Rory had regretted it when one of their strongest men had died trying to advance, but it was out of their control, and they had only promised the others to return the person's things to his family.

They had all accepted the risks. This had been a fluke among many successes, so the group remained determined to move forward.

As for the failed survivor, he had been badly wounded in the previous battle, and the failure to advance had added to his injuries.

He was not out of danger yet and was already under observation by one of the doctors Vicente had hired earlier to care for his men.

At the beginning of this new day, Vicente and Rory were still at their group's headquarters, right in front of the newly promoted men and some of the other low-level individuals.

"Well done, we are stronger even though we lost some of our brothers the day before," Vicente spoke to his men with a solemn expression on his face. "Unfortunately, we do not have time to mourn. We now have powerful enemies who will knock on our doors sooner or later.

Concentrate on getting stronger and on our operation. As we improve our position, more opportunities like the pills from the day before will appear for the most dedicated men."

"Yes, boss!"

The men shouted almost simultaneously, determined to avenge their dead friends, but even more determined to get opportunities for advancement.

None of them were afraid because of the death of the Senior Apprentice who had failed to advance. This was a great opportunity for them to reduce their insignificance in this world!

Vicente then left for his home while Rory went to take care of some business on behalf of the group.

The stronger men left behind soon split up into shifts to protect this post while others went to arrange for repairs to the building.

Their defenses had been destroyed, and they had to build new barriers over this place!

And so three days would pass in the blink of an eye, with everyone in this group working harder than ever for their cause!

Chapter 109 Blue Beauty?

That morning, Vicente had received a contact from the local mercenary guild where his groups were registered.

Leaving his house after breakfast with Eve and Nina, he headed for the guild building in downtown Millfall before stopping at his headquarters.

So far, nothing had happened to them, and their membership in the Scarlet Syndicate had worked well for their group's protection.

At the same time, Jax had already sent his weekly contribution to Vicente's group, having sent him 10 gold coins the day before.

This had been a pleasant surprise amid Vicente's difficulties.

As he walked, Vice wondered what to do with his group after the recent advancements, deaths, and financial gains. His group was stronger and richer but had also lost members and made new enemies.

'I need to recruit more men.' He thought as he walked down the central sidewalks of Millfall with his mask on his face. 'I currently have 56 men in my family, of which only 36 are here in this city. But that is not enough to protect Nina, my headquarters, and my territory.'

I desperately need more men!'

He thought about bringing more people from Martell Village, which might even work for him to protect his partners' shops. But it wouldn't be of much use in the long run, as higher-level problems would probably hit him soon.

Before, the local businessmen who did business with Vicente only had problems with ordinary people, problematic consumers. But with the enemies he was making, bigger problems could hit them and target their business.

Vicente knew how criminals thought, and by now, several actions should be being developed against him.

This call to the mercenary guild was probably related to that!

'I will take care of the recruitment here in Millfall... For now, let me see what they're planning against me.' He paused for a moment in front of the guild building, a place that looked like a large house in the center of town.

But there was a symbol of this guild, and its doors were always open for mercenaries and clients to enter the property.

Vice made his way to the place he had visited several times before, quickly reaching the entrance hall where there were tables and chairs here and there and many individuals separated into groups chatting.

Unlike Martell Village, where the mercenaries gathered in a government building, things were different in Millfall. The mercenary guild was large enough to provide services to the hundreds of mercenaries registered there.

On his way to the reception, Vicente saw a few mercenaries who worked in Martell Village, but he didn't talk to anyone.

'Perhaps I should hire mercenaries? Those two who helped me when my parents died might be good options to try to attract to my group.' Vicente thought before stopping at the reception desk in this area.

"Mr. Mazzanti, please, this way." An attendant promptly took Vicente to the place where the guild master was waiting for him.

Upon arriving at this person's office, Vicente saw two other people waiting for the guild master in the waiting room and couldn't help but stare at the blue-haired woman next to a blond man.

The woman wore a suit of armor similar to the blond man's, which bore the symbol of the Royal Army of the Seidel Kingdom.

But what caught Vicente's attention was not that these two Green-talented magicians were members of the royal forces but the beauty of the blue-haired woman.

Her hair was the color of the sky, and her eyes were a brilliant blue that mesmerized Vicente.

"Beautiful..." Vice murmured.

He was not the kind of man who casually complimented women or flirted in ordinary situations. But women with hair in shades that didn't naturally exist on Earth caught Vicente's attention.

On Earth, no people were born with hair colors outside of the standard brown, black, red, and blonde. But in Polaris Realm, there were all sorts of variations, such as orange, purple, green, blue, and even the rare colored hair.

The pigmentation of the eyes followed the same possibilities, and this earthling could not help but admire the beauty of this blue-haired woman.

She heard the stranger's sotto voce comment and frowned at him.

"What did you say?" The blond man stood up, placing one hand on the sword at his waist.

Vicente realized his carelessness and smiled under his mask. He wouldn't flirt with anyone casually, but since he had already spilled the milk, there was no point in backing down.

"My lady, what is your name? It's not every day I get the chance to meet someone so gorgeous." Vicente said in a subtly different tone.

Whenever he or his men wore their masks, they changed their voices with their mana to keep their identities secret.

The woman looked at the metallic mask of the man who was there for her and her colleague. "Interesting... You are here because of trouble, yet you dare to flirt with me. Are you a fool or too confident in your abilities?"

Vicente understood the woman's attitude and ignored the man staring at him.

But when he noticed no ring on one of the woman's fingers, he knew she was single and not engaged to anyone.

In Polaris Realm, the custom of betrothal and marriage was similar to Earth's. A woman would always have a unique ring on one of her fingers if she were engaged or married.

Since she didn't have anything like that, this man was not her husband or fiancé, and Vicente didn't care if such a level 4 Acolyte liked the woman he was talking to.

The black-haired young man then said. "Neither, my lady. I don't know why I'm here, but that doesn't stop me from being curious about a lady's name, does it? By the way, my name is Cesar Mazzanti."

Cesar Mazzanti was the name of Vicente's former Don on Earth and the name he had chosen to use when acting on behalf of his mafia family.

She chuckled at Vicente's answer. "Nova Bain. But that is all you will ever know of me, Cesar."

After her words, the door to the guild master's office opened, and a tall, fat man with no hair on his head appeared and called these three people into his office.

Chapter 110 Framed

As they entered the guild master's office, the three of them were silent, with Vicente smiling under his mask and the blond man glaring at him angrily.

Nova was one of the most beautiful captains in the royal army post of Millfall, a woman in her twenties who had many suitors, including this blond man, her colleague and superior.

Seeing a low-level criminal flirting with the woman who had made him give up all the others, Jett couldn't help but double the negative feeling he already had for such a person.

As a member of the royal forces, he already hated criminals. But Vicente courting Nova was tantamount to attacking him!

'Wretch! I don't know why the Commander put you in his cross hairs, but now I guarantee you will lose everything you have!' Jett thought to himself.

The guild master didn't know why the blond was staring at Vicente so hatefully and decided to break the silence as soon as he sat down in his chair.

"Very well, young Cesar, I called you here today at the request of the royal army. Your operations seem to have broken local rules, so we need to talk." The fat, bald, but very well-dressed man said.

The royal laws had different levels of intensity. The army could destroy Vicente's group if they had proof that such a team had committed a serious crime, such as attacking a noble or member of royalty, plotting against the state, and so on.

But only the most serious crimes with concrete evidence led to immediate action by the army. In other situations, they had to be more cautious in their actions!

Even though the army was the most significant force in the state, it could not casually punish without evidence. Not only was there a danger that corrupt members would act against the state's good with swift actions, but the whole state would tremble with fear if this could happen without investigations.

How could ordinary powers, families, clans, and merchants act if, at any moment, they could lose their possessions for flimsy reasons?

For a state to function, even the force in power had to follow the rules and have some bureaucracy before punishing civilians!

Without that, it would be impossible for the state to function, and everyone would quickly oppose the royal family.

That was exactly why Vicente was there now because the army still had no evidence against him to act without worrying about appearances.

He understood this, and a warning came to his mind. 'So someone important in the army is against me... My enemies probably bought someone.'

The fact that the army had nothing serious against him at the moment did not mean they would never have something like that!

Vice worried and said. "I doubt that very much, guild master. I followed the conventional protocols and had the approval of 4 different army Captains for my operation. Besides, I'm only acting on the private property of my clients and myself. How have I broken any laws?"

Jett said. "Don't play dumb, Cesar. Those permits you got are worthless. The men who approved you are already under internal investigation for corruption. So, your approvals will be null soon."

"Really?" Vicente looked the angry man in the eye. "It's not my fault. It is not us mercenaries who decide who will accredit us. That's the army's problem. How can I be blamed for that?"

"Tsk! You can talk as much as you want. In a month, you will lose your licenses, and we can put you out of business if you don't prove to us that you are operating within the rules."

"What do you want?" Vicente asked, this time looking at the beautiful Nova.

Nova said. "We need all your data. From the number of men in your operation to contracts with local merchants. You need proof to distance your group from the crime of forming an unauthorized army."

"Unauthorized army?" Vicente repeated these words. "How could a group of 1st stage mercenaries have the guts to do that? Come on, guys. I'm obviously being targeted by someone powerful for what happened recently."

The guild master closed his eyes, knowing that this had to be the case. Otherwise, no one would believe such a small, weak group would dare form an unauthorized army.

Forming such a thing was punishable by death!

Nova was also surprised, but as an army officer ordered to contact Vicente, she only followed orders.

Seeing everyone in silence, Vice asked. "Is there anything else I'm being accused of? I want to prepare to defend myself at the Martial Court."

The royal army enforced the law and punished lawbreakers. But the Martial Court, an independent arm of the army, judged these offenders.

For these people to have come to him, there must have already been a case in progress at the local Martial Court, the only place where Vicente could defend himself and delay the army's actions against him.

"We also have a charge of murder against you," Nova said in her angelic voice.

Murder within the kingdom's cities was a severe crime in the Seidel Kingdom. However, one could only be charged with murder if they killed under special circumstances. Self-defense was not considered a crime.

"Murder?" Vicente laughed. "That's nonsense. I only killed enemies who attacked me. The army will find no evidence against me."

"We have a body," Jett said, making Vicente look at him.

He smiled and asked. "Cesar, where were you an hour before the attack on your building? Why weren't you with your people at your headquarters?"

This was a question Vicente could not answer. If he wanted to keep his identity a secret and protect Nina from what he was involved in, he could not tell them that he was at home practicing his skills at the forge.

Noticing Vicente's silence, the three suspected that he was indeed guilty.

The silence was not necessarily a confession, but he would have to speak or prove his innocence if he wanted to be free of guilt. Otherwise, he could be convicted at the Court Martial!

'Damn it! These wretches are framing me!' Vicente clenched his fists in anger. 'It won't stay like this, Defiant Tyranny!'

He stood up and said. "I am innocent of all you accuse me of. I will prove it in my own way. Talking to you won't solve anything, so I bid you farewell."

As he left, the guild master shouted. "Cesar, don't be rash. If you don't cooperate, even I won't be able to help you, and eventually, you won't even be able to be a mercenary."

Nova advised as she tossed a small card in Vicente's direction. "If you change your mind and decide to talk, come to us. You will have one week to present your defense and information. After that, the trial will begin, and in a month at the most, you could lose your business and even be arrested."

Vicente kept the card and then left, knowing that talking would get him nowhere.

But he was doubly angry. Criminals should not involve official forces in their problems!

'Fucking cowards. I'll show you how bandits act against their enemies!'