

The Mafia 311

Chapter 311 Blessed by Mana

Hours after arriving at The Vile Altar...

Deep in the ruins of this remote area of Scott Province, Vicente's unconscious body lay in the center of the dark area he had encountered hours earlier.

By now, the darkness of the area had returned to normal. Still, the place was somewhat different, without the previous negativity that had frightened the young Fuller.

On the other hand, the area's natural mana had increased and concentrated around the black-haired man lying unconscious in the middle of the ancient altar.

His chest rose and fell with a certain frequency, while his breathing was good, like that of a sleeping person.

But in Vicente's consciousness space, his first Magic Gem and its two pentagrams were reaching their peak after the sacrifice of the spirit hours ago.

After being used to the limit and exhausted, the powers of this gem and its pentagrams had almost completely 'dried up' and broken. However, with the spirit's action and the sacrifice of 40% of his power, this existence prevented such a tragedy.

Finally, after hours of self-repair, a unique fluctuation erupted from this primary essence of Vicente, breaking the dry, solidified shell that had appeared hours before.

As this happened, an intense yellow glow came from Vicente's gem, along with a vibrating sense from the two pentagrams.

Then, green lines appeared around the inscriptions on the yellow pentagram, while the reddish hue of the red pentagram became different, closer to orange.

Several different inscriptions appeared around Vicente's first pentagram. In contrast, the part of his consciousness space that belonged to his first magical form seemed to grow to the boundaries of the second magical form.

But it didn't go far, and after the first gem had gained only 1% of the space of the other, Vicente's consciousness space stabilized, along with his level, stopping at just over 93% progress within level 4.

Vice's spirit body within his consciousness space reached its best state, fully recovering from the damage he had suffered earlier.

When he opened his eyes in the dark chamber, he acted like he had woken up from a nightmare, feeling his heart beating fast and sweating all over his body.

He looked from one side of the dark chamber to the other, searching for the ghost from earlier, while he couldn't understand what had happened and how he could still be alive.

'Where is that fucking ghost? What happened?' He asked himself as he stood up, not realizing he had increased his level and experienced a significant qualitative improvement.

Then something startled him.

"My master, I'm here."

Hearing this voice from inside his head, Vicente widened his eyes before focusing on himself.

"You!" He shouted as he took control of his spirit body and looked at the cocoon where the ghost from earlier was inside him.

"You... Have you possessed me?" Vicente shouted, not remembering what had happened earlier.

Hearing this, the ghost inside the cocoon remained silent momentarily, analyzing the situation.

'It seems that my master wasn't in control earlier...' This negative entity looked at Vicente's second magical form from inside the cocoon and understood what had happened.

'So that's it... It seems that my master is loved by mana. In addition to two Magic Gems, he also received a consciousness gem.

The consciousness of his second magical form is what defeated me!'

According to some ancient legends of Polaris Realm, some Magic Gems could form their own consciousness under certain conditions.

If a magician was very talented and their magical form was very unusual, there was a slight chance the world would bless them during their Awakening and create a consciousness in their Magic Gem.

According to ancient theories that ghost knew, mana was not impartial. It favored those with a great affinity for it and sometimes blessed some of its chosen ones with something of the sort to help those magicians reach their potential.

Few knew why, but Magic Gems with consciences had already appeared around the continent, and there were reports of at least 50 people blessed in this way in known history.

For the ancient experts of the world, it happened because high-level talents were scarce, and the dangers of the magic world were infinite. To give their chosen ones a chance to progress, the mana, or rather the world, created consciousnesses in Magic Gems, which basically served to increase the chances of development for those favored by heaven.

Seeing Vicente didn't remember anything from before, this negative soul was sure this young man was a chosen one of mana, which was quite obvious after his display of power earlier.

'I didn't expect him to have something like that...' Thinking about it, the spirit finally explained to Vicente. "My master, earlier, your second magical form defeated me, and I became your slave. Look." He showed the symbol of his connection with Vicente, the yellow pentagram marked on his cocoon.

Seeing it, Vicente immediately felt a connection with the creature. 'He has indeed become my slave! How did that happen? Before he was...'

'Why is your current level so low? Before, you seemed to be a Sovereign.'

"That's a long story, my master. Unfortunately, your body isn't strong enough to withstand the full power of your second magical form. To help you recover, I have given up some of my powers."

Looking at himself, Vicente realized he was stronger than before, having reached level 4 and already close to level 5.

'My strength has increased a lot!' He thought, feeling incredible mentally and physically.

Looking at his first magical form in his consciousness space, he saw the changes in his pentagrams, but also in his gem.

His yellow Magic Gem now seemed to have a green hue, while his pentagrams seemed to be progressing qualitatively.

'I hadn't expected anything like this...' He smiled as he clenched his fists, seeing the evolution of his powers, a process that generally only happened to those who had passed the 4th stage.

According to basic magical theory, naturally formed pentagrams, such as those that came from Magic Gems, could grow along with their owners. However, this was a complex process, and usually, only magicians of at least the 5th stage could demonstrate it.

Virtually every 5th stage magician would have a first pentagram orange, while only geniuses could achieve such an evolution while still in the 4th stage.

But Vicente already saw signs of his evolution when he was only at the 2nd stage!

'I got it...' He smiled, feeling his heart calm down, realizing the spirit was trustworthy and had even given him something precious.

Chapter 312 Elements

Looking at the cocoon, Vicente made a gesture of thanks. "Old ghost, you helped me a lot. I thank you for that."

"There is nothing to thank for, my master. As your slave, I'm ready to die for you."

"Still, I'm not ungrateful to those who help me, whether out of duty or free will." Vicente didn't change his mind, feeling he had benefited greatly. "Old spirit, do you have a name?"

"This one was called Torne. But the master has all the autonomy to call me whatever he wants."

"Old Torne, can you tell me what happened? How did I force you to become my slave?" Vicente asked.

"That, of course, was the second magical form of the master. The master is the new holder of the Throne of Darkness, the highest magical form there is on the Dark Path!" The spirit said enthusiastically, feeling happy to be able to serve Vicente.

If Vicente had shown the ghost his throne earlier, he wouldn't have dared to attack this human and would have asked him to follow him. Even without the master-slave relationship they currently had, the ghost would have been proud to be at the side of the 'son of darkness.'

Hearing the ghost's words, Vicente narrowed his eyes. "Throne what?"

He had never heard of the Throne of Darkness, but what worried him the most were the last words of the ghost, the Dark Path.

The Dark Path was powerful. But its followers were usually madmen, serial killers, genocidaires, in short, the kind of people you would want to stay away from or kill if you had the chance.

The whole world hated and persecuted Dark Path magicians, so it was not easy to have a Magic Gem associated with it.

Torne explained. "Yes, the Throne of Darkness is the opposite version of the Throne of Light, the two thrones that control the elements of Darkness and Light, respectively.

These are supreme magical forms that have only appeared seven times in history, with the Throne of Darkness appearing only once, while its counterpart has appeared six times.

However, due to the high rank of these magical forms, they are not inherited within a lineage. The mana of the world chooses those who will receive these powers according to their affinity. In other words, it's not something you're born with. It's something you gain recognition for, master.

You have been recognized somehow, which is why your second magical form is the dreaded Throne of Darkness!"

Vicente's mouth fell open when he heard these words, not knowing whether to be happy or desperate.

"This will be a challenge..." He sighed, showing Torne his concern. "I never thought I'd have to live as a magician of the Dark Path."

"My master, do not be deceived by the limited view humans have of the magic world. Darkness is just another element in our world. There is no harm in having this element. On the contrary, it's a great honor." He defended his side.

"I know darkness is powerful, but its consequences..." Vicente muttered.

"My master, forgive my boldness, but it is a fallacy to say that there are negative consequences to the Dark Path. No dark magician has ever lost control of themselves because of their elements.

Elements are not creations made for our powers, but rather, our powers are consequences of the existence of elements.

Elements are essential to the way the world works. Without them, the world would be chaotic and probably cease to exist. But with the elements, the world is constantly renewed.

With light, living things develop. With darkness, living things perish.

Night and day, life and death, darkness and light. These are necessary parts of the existence of the world.

While light is behind healing and magical development, darkness is behind death, decay, etc. In other words, the element of darkness is not necessarily evil.

Unfortunately, limited magicians associate darkness with vile attitudes because the wielders of darkness are very powerful, and their powers are usually very effective at killing."

Listening to the spirit's eloquent words, Vicente couldn't help but find a certain logic in Torne's lines. "But many of the Dark Path ended crazy."

"Because of their own greed. The darkness itself doesn't influence anyone to be this or that, my master. You are the best example of this. Even though you can't actively use your powers, the darkness has been in you since you awakened your powers. But do you go mad and crave someone's blood for it?"

Vicente narrowed his eyes, unable to argue with his slave's words.

"No, of course not. Because elements don't affect their users, elements give powers, and those powers may or may not corrupt those who use them, but that depends on the mentality of their users.

A mentally weak person will naturally become a piece of shit if they get access to supreme power. But supreme power is nothing more than a weapon that can be used for good, evil, or whatever."

"I see. Thank you for your words, old Torne. You have much experience." Vicente reassured himself about his second magical form, understanding that darkness was no different from his weapons.

"With the supreme power over darkness, the master will rule this world!" Torne said excitedly.

"I don't want to rule the world. But if this power is useful for me to reach the pinnacle of magic, I will use it without regret!"

"Hahaha, great, my master, great!"

I hope I can accompany you on your journey to supremacy. Please, master, let this poor spirit help you at least on the first part of your journey.

Unfortunately, I'm not strong. But I have a lot of knowledge."

"Hmm, I hope you advise me well, old Torne. But first of all, how long has it been since I arrived at The Vile Altar?"

"The Vile Altar, huh?" Torne thought of that old name and replied to Vicente. "The master arrived at this old place about 11 hours ago."

"11 hours? Shit, I won't have time to prepare! The damned Mages can arrive at any moment!" Vicente changed his expression and left his consciousness space to open his eyes in the dark chamber.

'Does the master have an appointment?' Torne realized something was wrong and asked Vicente in the young man's mind.

"I came here to face some troublesome enemies. Unfortunately, I didn't have time to prepare myself, and now they can arrive at any moment." Vicente muttered.

As he spoke, Vicente quickly began to manipulate the metals around him, as Torne had destroyed his armor earlier by throwing him from side to side.

As Vicente began to form a new suit of armor, Torne noticed something on his master's neck.

'That... This is... Cataclysm Moon Pendant!' He shouted into Vicente's mind, catching the young Fuller's attention.

Chapter 313 Cataclysm Moon Pendant

"Hmmm?" Vicente turned his attention to the cocoon where Torne was recovering from the sacrifice, curious as to what he meant by the previous words.

"This is the Cataclysm Moon Pendant! Master, you have the Cataclysm Moon Pendant! Quickly, store it in a spatial ring!" Torne said in an agitated yet excited tone.

"Cataclysm Moon Pendant? What are you talking about?" Vicente moved one of his hands to the crescent-moon-shaped necklace Julian had given him more than four years ago.

"That necklace in the master's hands is the Cataclysm Moon Pendant, a cursed item of the Cataclysm Order! Hurry, take it off, master. This item can bring tragedy even to Sovereigns!"

Hearing Torne's agitated tone, Vicente immediately put away the pendant he had been wearing every day for the past four years, becoming a few degrees more serious as he considered the curse word Torne had uttered.

"Old Torne, what are you talking about? A teacher of mine gave me this necklace a few years ago. How could it be such a powerful item that it could even affect Sovereigns?" He asked.

"Sigh... Master, either that teacher was an ignorant fool, or he wanted to harm you. The Cataclysmic Moon Pendant was the most important cursed treasure of the Cataclysmic Order, the faith of The Vile Altar." The ghost explained.

"The founder of our faith created it 50,000 years ago during the first great crisis we faced. It allowed us to survive more than eight wars with the magicians of the Light Path.

Unfortunately, just over 2,000 years ago, the former leader of our faith disappeared along with the Cataclysmic Moon Pendant. We have never been the same since, which may have contributed to our defeat in the last war."

Hearing this, Vicente narrowed his eyes, not understanding. "If this item is cursed, how could losing it have weakened you? If it's something that strengthened you, why did you ask me to keep it?"

Torne's words seemed to contradict each other, making it difficult for Vicente to understand what this old ghost had in mind.

Torne took a few steps back from his words and explained. "Master, a cursed item is not necessarily an item without value. If used properly, it can be the best thing for a magician like you. But it shouldn't be used all the time, because it can bring you endless trouble.

The Cataclysmic Moon Pendant is a cursed item that increases the cultivation speed of dark elements, but not only that, it can also mutate the magical forms of those around it!

It can be used to "cultivate" powers based on dark elements, but it can also increase the quality of those people's talents.

There are other effects, but these are the main ones, enough for the master to understand how valuable this item was to us."

Vicente nodded as he stared in shock at his spatial ring where the item now lay.

"However, changing talents and magical forms is not a simple matter, master. It's a taboo. Therefore, there is a lot of negative karma in the Cataclysmic Moon Pendant. So whoever uses it, even though they can benefit greatly from its power, will also attract a lot of trouble.

If you use it wrongly, you could become powerful but be surrounded by enemies more powerful than you, and eventually die prematurely!"

Hearing these words, Vicente swallowed his saliva, seeing the situation he was currently in.

'I was almost killed by a Sovereign earlier... On the other hand, I'm only an Acolyte, but there are several Mages who want my head.' Vicente clenched his fists at the thought.

But just as he felt he had been foolish to keep the item with him for so long, he remembered the day Lauren had awakened her powers.

'It can't be...'

"How long would one have to be in contact with it for it to take effect?"

"That depends. In normal situations, spending 6 months next to it would be enough for the talent and magical form to mutate. But special conditions could speed it up."

Vicente clenched his fists. 'Lauren's magical form is a scythe... Could it be because of me?' He broke into a cold sweat, imagining that his sister had been taken because she had been with him for so long.

But feeling guilty, he remembered how his mother had died.

"A few days after I received that necklace, my mother died in front of me. That could be..."

Understanding what his master meant, Torne replied. "It is unlikely. As much as the Cataclysmic Moon Pendant has negative karma, it doesn't usually attract misfortune without producing results first.

But I can't say with 100% certainty. The power of this cursed item can only be fully understood by magicians of the 5th stage or higher.

Besides, the magical world is naturally chaotic and dangerous, master. Your family's tragedy may have had something to do with this cursed item, but it could also have been something random. Cases like your family's are not uncommon."

Thinking about it, Vicente made a serious face. "The teacher who gave it to me had mediocre talent, and as far as I know, his life was ordinary. Why wasn't he affected by it?"

"That is not strange. As powerful as the Cataclysmic Moon Pendant is, it can't violate the magical rules of our world.

A magical talent and form can only be mutated before the Awakening. If this person found your cursed item after his Awakening, he could only benefit from it if he already had some affinity with dark elements.

Otherwise, the item would have no positive or negative effect."

"I see..." Vicente clenched his fists, imagining this was why his and Lauren's powers were completely different from those of their parents.

'Julian probably didn't know about this... Forget it. I'm not going to take action against him.' He sighed, not blaming Julian for the tragedies in his life.

'But if all this is true, Nina will probably end up like Lauren and me.' He clenched his fists, imagining his younger sister would be even more affected by her Awakening than Lauren had been.

Since she was the one who spent the most time near the Cataclysm Moon Pendant before the Awakening, she would undoubtedly have dark powers if she managed to awaken her magical powers!

Vicente then looked at the cocoon in his mind space and asked. "Old Torne, how did you Cataclysm Order people use this item? By the way, can you tell me a bit about your history within The Vile Altar? Was this outpost built in this area because of the necklace on my spatial ring?"

"My master is truly perceptive," Torne said. "Yes, this altar was built here when some members of our faith realized the necklace had been lost in this area of the Seidel Kingdom. Unfortunately, at that time..."

As he was about to speak, a noise suddenly came from a few dozen meters above the chamber, attracting the attention of not only Torne but Vicente as well.

"Are they here? The black-haired man pushed Torne aside as he became more serious.

Chapter 314 Arrival of the Enemies (1)

The moment he felt a strong fluctuation, Vicente turned his attention in the direction where three Mages had just arrived.

The black-haired man narrowed his eyes considerably, feeling the mana of these people, who were several meters above the chamber where he was now standing.

'Kohen Reeves... It looks like you really wanted to kill me.' Vicente noticed two people next to this Sacred Devotee, two Mages, one at the same level as Kohen, Low-level, and the other was a little stronger, being a Mid-level mage.

The time it had taken him to reach The Vile Altar and then recover from using the Throne of Darkness had been enough for Kohen's reinforcements to change their destination and come to this place.

They had met moments ago near The Vile Altar and then had come to this place where Vicente had arranged to meet them.

'This is a problem.' Vicente thought to himself, a grim expression forming on his face. 'The chances of my previous plan working out are much lower. With three Mages on my side, our victory would be straightforward to achieve.'

He wanted to use his various guests to eliminate many of his problems at once. Therefore, it would be best for Vicente if his group were outnumbered and had some difficulties in the battle. That way, his temporary allies would have a better chance of dying before leaving this place!

As someone who didn't want to compromise with the people of the Ironcrest Temple, the best thing for Vicente would be for Kohen and the rest to die. But how could that happen when his group would be so strong?

'Shit! With so much power on my side, maybe the army Commanders will give up on confronting me. In that case, not only would I be forced to join Kohen and his comrades, but I'd also have three enemies in the bloody army!' Vicente cursed his luck.

'What am I going to do?'

While he was thinking, Torne heard his master's thoughts, something he could do if Vicente wasn't careful.

'My master, your power has increased a lot compared to before. Besides, you'll have more guests than you expected, so don't lose hope yet.' Torne said as he sensed five other Mages approaching the area of this ancient altar.

'Oh? What are you talking about?'

Vicente's range of senses was much shorter than Torne's, so, of course, he hadn't yet sensed the soldiers of the royal army nor Mark's four temporary companions.

But Torne was a spirit who had already reached the 4th stage and was currently at the peak of the 3rd magical realm. It was easy for him to sense those seven individuals approaching!

'Two level 5 Acolytes, four Low-level Mages, and one Mid-level Mage are also coming here, master. In addition to the three you noticed, these other seven opponents are approaching us.' Torne replied in Vicente's mind.

'What? Seven? Who are the other four?'

Vicente didn't know about the men Mark had taken to Milfall, but he was also in the dark about their sudden movement behind Kohen.

'If the master is careful, it's possible to eliminate them all.' Torne said to Vicente. 'Above the chamber you're in is an ancient defense mechanism. Take it, master. With it, you'll have an invincible defense for up to 10 seconds.'

If you fall into one of the temple's traps, you can use it to save yourself while your opponents perish.'

'Oh?' Vicente looked up at the ceiling of the dark area he was in, quickly took a light device from his spatial ring, and illuminated the area.

As much as he had an affinity for the element of darkness, and this could be used to see in the dark, it would only be useful to Vicente if he actively used his second Magic Gem.

In the situation he was in, he didn't show any signs of his affinity for darkness because his magical form was "partially sealed" by the consciousness of that Magic Gem.

Unable to rely on his dark element, he could only see the area better with a light device.

Looking up at the ceiling of the altar he was standing on, where there was a black sphere that looked like nothing much at first glance, Vicente realized that a strong sensation was emanating from it.

'A defensive formation?'

Formations were special kinds of curses, or rather incantations, created by formation masters.

Formation masters were nothing more than enchanter who specialized in creating magic-based formations that worked like passive spells that anyone with the key to it could activate.

There were all kinds of formations, but the most common were defensive, which could create barriers of mana that could trap enemies in impenetrable areas or protect the formation user from attacks.

Given the value and importance that such formations could play in a primarily defensive force, they were very expensive and rare to obtain.

Unlike normal enchanters, who existed in large numbers, formation masters made up less than 2% of the magicians capable of casting enchantments.

When Vicente saw the first formation of his life, he was naturally amazed.

'This formation was designed to protect the altar where I was. But since I won't be here anymore, we can use it for something else.' Torne explained. 'There must be other items and treasures like this on the altars of the Cataclysm Order. In the future, the master should consider going after them. There must be things that the damned Congregation of Revelation didn't destroy.'

'Okay. How do I get that defense formation out of this place? Do you have the key?' Vicente smiled, imagining if everything worked out in this place, he could think about the possibilities Torne had in mind.

'Master, this is what you have to do...'

...

While Vicente was at the lowest level of The Vile Altar ruins, Kohen, Killian, and Levi had just stopped at the entrance to the ruins.

The three Ironcrest Mages, who had met about two hours ago and then headed this way together, were still unsure of what would happen there.

Kohen had warned them about Cesar's letter just before he left Millfall and led his companions to this place. But neither he nor his two allies were sure that Cesar was truly willing to make a deal with them.

However much that might have been Cesar's intention in his letter to Kohen, the three Mages were not unaware of the possibility that it was something more.

Arriving at this place together, they didn't act like they were there to find an ally. As soon as they set foot in the area's ruins, the three began to act with triple their usual caution.

"Stay alert. There's a possibility that Cesar has set something up against us." Levi, the Assistant Temple Master of the Ironcrest outpost, the leader of this group, a Mid-level Mage, said to his two faction mates.

If they were willing to act against Cesar, they had to consider the worst. Their target also had plans of his own!

"Yes!" The two agreed as they scanned their surroundings.

A second later, Kohen, the young-looking blond man, changed his expression as he sensed something amiss.

"Someone is approaching us!"

Chapter 315 Arrival of the Enemies (2)

When Kohen alerted Levi and Killian, they immediately turned in the direction from which they had also noticed the auras of Mages approaching where they were standing.

That was The Vile Altar, a long-abandoned place where there wasn't much to justify the presence of human Mages nearby.

The three Ironcrest natives felt several 3rd-stage auras approaching them and quickly realized the men arriving there were there for them or for Cesar.

Either way, this was a problem!

Raising his aura, Levi looked strangely in the direction of the men arriving there, someone of the same level as himself, a soldier of the royal army, Peter Asper, an old acquaintance.

"Levi Logan... I didn't expect to find someone from the Congregation of Revelation in this place. What are you doing here? Looking for something you people left behind in the war 2,000 years ago?" Peter asked as he looked at the Assistant Temple Master of Ironcrest.

"Peter Asper..." Levi muttered as Killian and Kohen looked at Arthur and Alex, Peter's two companions.

But as they looked at each other, the two groups of three could sense four more individuals stopping not far from them.

As the soldiers of the kingdom looked in the direction of two Acolytes and two Low-level Mages, Killian's eyes narrowed as he recognized these people. "Kaleb... Tyson. Why are you here?"

"Tyson?" Kohen looked strangely at the man, a member of The Faceless Ones, the second-largest underworld faction in Scott Province.

The Faceless Ones were an Ironcrest group. As such, all three Mages from the city's temple knew the identities of the gang members very well!

"What are the Faceless Ones up to?" Levi shifted his focus and looked at the two newly arrived Mages.

As much as the army Mages were more of a concern to him, these three men were members of an official force, relatively trustworthy. But the newcomers from The Faceless Ones were capable of betraying their own parents. Having one of them around would upset anyone!

"The Faceless Ones?" Arthur looked at the four individuals, aware of the history of the second-largest criminal faction in his province. "Tsk! The kingdom is full of vermins!"

Tyson, the bald, sharp-eyed man, smiled as he saw two Mid-level Mages staring at him as if he were the most important one there. "Friends, why behave like this? Aren't we all here for Cesar?"

Levi and Peter looked sharply at Tyson, both noticing the other's intentions.

'Competitors?' Peter wondered.

'Are they here to help that brat? No, that can't be. They seem to be here to...' Levi clenched one of his fists, realizing the situation.

"I see... That's it." He muttered as Killian and Kohen stood beside him, both in position to fight if necessary.

"Boss?"

"It looks like that brat Cesar really used us. If I'm not mistaken, he lured everyone here to make us fight each other." Levi commented with a dark look on his face.

As valuable as Cesar was, he hated being used by others!

'Fucking brat! You'll pay for this.' He considered, but already being in this place, he knew escaping without a fight would be impossible.

These men were here for Cesar. Whatever the reason, if they moved, they would have to wipe out the witnesses. Otherwise, they might incur the wrath of Caesar's noble friends or even be punished for breaking royal laws.

That was especially true for the three soldiers who had careers to defend.

On the other hand, the three men from the Ironcrest Awakening Temple had their own reasons for protecting the information about their presence at The Vile Altar tonight.

"If the people from the Saltstar City Temple find out about our movement, we'll have problems." Killian looked at Arthur, aware this soldier served in the province's largest city.

Kohen's eyes narrowed as he realized the problematic situation they were in. "What are we going to do? These people probably want to kill Cesar. If we let them act, we can escape without compromising our presence here."

"But why are they here?" Killian asked quietly as the three groups looked at each other strangely. "We need to know that first."

Levi agreed and asked aloud. "Peter, Tyson, I'm here with my group to talk to Cesar. Why are you here? Do you have business with him as well?"

"Oh? Talk? Don't you want what he has?" Arthur asked as Peter and Tyson stared at him.

'Idiot!' Kaleb, the man with tattoos all over his body, thought as he looked at Arthur. 'Those three might not have known what Cesar had... Now we have another competitor.'

"What does he have?" Kohen was in the dark about the 3rd-stage herb, so Killian and Levi didn't know either. "With a yellow pentagram in the second slot of his Magic Gem, is there anything else for him to have?"

'So it's true...' Tyson closed his eyes and saw that Cesar really was as formidable as the rumors in Millfall said. 'That's why someone like Mark is taking a chance with us.'

Peter then opened his mouth, seeing Levi had already realized that wasn't all Cesar had. "Levi, if you're here just to talk business with Cesar, I ask you to leave with your group. Cesar has committed a grave crime! We're here to deal with him. We'll kill anyone who gets in our way!"

As he said this, Peter's three pentagrams, one red, one orange, and one yellow, emerged from his body while his magical pressure caused the two Acolytes of The Faceless Ones to retreat.

Meanwhile, a huge domino-shaped piece of bone, the color of bones, appeared behind him.

The two soldiers at his side realized what their leader wanted and acted accordingly, displaying the same configuration of pentagrams.

A large war-hammer made of mana appeared in Alex's hands while Arthur's body was covered in a green layer of energy.

There were an infinite number of magical forms in this world. Some magicians could control elements with their powers and form things of all kinds. Others could form weapons, artifacts, flames, and so on. There were many possibilities and different classifications of magical powers.

Arthur's was in the same category as the power of Vicente's first Magic Gem, while Peter and Alex's powers were of the tool type.

"Trying to intimidate us?" Levi's eyes narrowed as his expression turned dark.

At that moment, he and his two companions displayed their pentagrams together, causing the mana in the area to stir under the action of so many Mages.

A flaming orange bird emerged from the void behind Kohen. At the same time, an armor of mana appeared around Levi's body, hiding his entire body as he grew 40% in size.

Meanwhile, a glowing green crystal appeared in one of Killian's hands, and a green liquid flowed from it, spreading a negative vibration common to poisons into the surrounding area.

Chapter 316 Battle Begins at The Vile Altar!

"It looks like things are about to get a little messy..." Tyson commented to his men as he signaled for them to remain prepared but not to act immediately.

Meanwhile, Peter looked sharply at Levi, seeing the man dared to challenge him. "Levi, if you're not going out for good, I'm afraid this old man here is going to have to make you go out for bad."

"Cesar certainly has something of great value to them," Killian commented in a low voice, no longer in doubt. "It can't just be his talent. He probably has something precious to Mages in general. Kohen, what happened in Millfall?"

"Cesar recently recovered a 3rd-stage beast after visiting The Rocky Gorge. I don't know what else could be behind the movement of those Mages." He said it just so his two companions would understand.

Levi listened and saw it might be more advantageous for him to fight here, to protect Vicente and force him to give them what he had before forcing him to sign an agreement with them.

'Danmed Cesar. I'll help you this time, but you'll pay dearly for it!

But since you're only a level 3 Acolyte, we'd better deal with these people first and then sort out our business among ourselves later.'

Levi clenched his fists and said aloud. "Cesar is just a level 3 Aacolyte. Do you dare to attack him, Peter? Where is your honor?"

Kohen and Killian realized the position their boss had taken and looked at each other, positioning themselves against the soldiers.

The blond man with the flame bird at his side shouted. "Let's stop these greedy people here! Young Cesar is our friend, and we won't let old men like you abuse him!"

As he said these words, Kohen controlled his flame bird, initiating the confrontation of the Mages in these ruins while attacking the group of soldiers with his infernal flames.

"Tsk! You chose this path!" Peter said as he slammed one of his feet into the ground, causing the domino behind him to spin rapidly in the air before sinking to the ground.

"First Skill: World of Pieces!"

By moving his mana, Peter caused countless huge domino pieces to appear on the outskirts of the area, creating a territory surrounded by domino pieces on all sides.

Seeing the bird of flame approaching, Alex grabbed his war hammer and jumped at the bird that was threatening his group.

"First Skill: Heavens Hammer!"

Such a person shouted as he made his red pentagram glow and made a serious hammering motion while several energy hammers appeared in the air, attacking their target in 8 different ways.

"Not so fast, king's dogs!" Killian threw two green pills in the direction of his companions before using his skills, causing a green mist to explode from the crystal in his hands, spreading poison throughout the area.

"Second Skill: Moving Sand!"

When Arthur activated his earth-based skill, the ground around him took on the properties of quicksand, forcing everyone there to move.

"Shit! These lunatics want to fight each other!" Kaleb commented to Tyson as the Acolytes broke out in a cold sweat.

Tyson looked at them and threw a red and a silver ball toward them. "Go after Cesar. When you find him, activate the Nine Demons Formation. We'll join you as soon as possible!"

"Yes, boss!"

One of the level 5 Acolytes said as he picked up the 3rd-grade formations, items capable of trapping and defeating even Low-level Mages!

Seeing these Acolytes moving toward Cesar, Kohen used his second skill, making his orange pentagram glow as he threw balls of flame as big as houses at these people.

"Not so fast!"

"Tsk! Damn you, Kohen! You think you can stop us like that?" Kaleb shouted as he stepped in front of his men.

As his pentagrams appeared, his body changed shape, with horns appearing on his head, his skin turning reddish while his muscles grew.

With a beast-like magical form, Kaleb's pentagrams transformed his body, increasing his physical attributes and giving him beastly abilities.

"Second Skill: Mountain Roar!" He opened his mouth and let out a thunderous roar toward Kohen's fireballs.

The bald, relatively fat man saw this and activated his magical form, causing a wooden statue of a sitting man to appear in front of him.

"Third Skill: Demonic Buddha!"

This wooden statue glowed an intense shade of red. In contrast, one of its seal-forming hands glowed, and several energy needles appeared around it.

"Shit! Look out!" Seeing the criminals there intended to go all out against them to get the 3rd-stage weed for themselves, Peter moved, causing a huge domino to fall in the direction of the bald man.

"Third Skill: Mechanical Shields!" Levi also moved, causing several structures of his armor to fly off his body, creating shields in front of his men as the enemy needles flew at high speed against their vital points.

"Tyson! Do you dare to attack us? We'll destroy your little group at Ironcrest!" Arthur Hogan shouted angrily.

"You will all die here!" Tyson smiled before moving.

"Second Skill: Giant Buddha!"

His wooden statue grew significantly, tripling in size in the blink of an eye, breaking the giant domino that fell on him in half.

"Feel the overwhelming presence of the Buddha!" He shouted as he jumped onto one of the wooden creature's shoulders, causing the pressure around him to increase significantly.

As he did so, the various dominoes around him began to topple, showing the difference in the power of some abilities, even among people of similar talents and levels.

Some magic forms were simply more heavenly than others, allowing their users to fight even those stronger than themselves!

Peter felt Tyson's blow and took a step back, bringing his hands to his chest as he felt a taste of blood in his mouth.

"You bastard! I'll kill you for this!" He shouted before going all out against his opponents as well.

"Third Skill: Rain of Pieces!"

At that moment, the battle between the Mages intensified, becoming truly deadly even for 3rd stage beings like these human experts.

However, this would be a long battle that wouldn't end in just a few moves.

While the strongest fought, the two level 5 Acolytes managed to overcome the dominoes in their path and found a way into the depths of the ruins where they were.

Having already sensed Cesar's presence, they moved through the narrow passages and ancient traps in the area.

'Just wait a moment, Cesar. Our faction, The Faceless Ones, will be the ones to defeat you and take the 3rd-stage herb!' The one with the 3rd-grade formations thought as he moved, seeing traps on his way, but he could easily pass through them.

As long as he was protected by the defensive formation his boss had just given him, none of these traps would work against him and his companion!

Chapter 317 New Combat Skills

After collecting the defensive formation from the altar where Torne used to live, Vicente felt two level 5 Acolytes coming towards him while the Mages seemed to be fighting on the surface of the ruins.

'Are they fighting each other?' Vicente smiled as he asked himself, thinking that would make things better for him.

'They're deciding who gets to keep the master. For these Mages, you're the least of their problems in this area, master. From their point of view, as long as they beat the others of the same realm as them, they'll have no problem dealing with you. That's why they fight among themselves instead of dealing with you first.' Torne explained.

'But that wouldn't happen if you were stronger, master. They would unite to kill you first and then compete with each other for your resources.'

While Vicente had removed the defensive formation from the altar a few moments earlier, he had summarized for Torne why the Mages were after him in this place.

'That must be the case... Unfortunately for them, my strength has increased considerably.' Vicente smiled as he left the altar and walked toward the two Acolytes who were approaching him.

'Be careful with these two, master. They have an excellent defensive formation.' Torne warned as he realized what was happening a few dozen meters away from them, where those two were passing.

'Okay.'

Vincent ran through the corridors of that ruin, quickly reaching the stairs that led to the level where the two enemies were.

As he approached the two level 5 Acolytes, they noticed someone coming towards them.

"Stay alert. That must be him!" The one with the formations Tyson had just given them commented, knowing Cesar was quite slippery.

When Cesar appeared on that level of the ruins of The Vile Altar, the two men in hoods that covered most of their bodies, including the armor they were wearing, became more serious at the sight of the masked man in front of them.

Even though the place was dark, they could see the area well enough by using their mana to alter their eyes.

Earlier, Vicente hadn't been able to see much in front of the chamber where Torne was. But that was because of the element of darkness. This other area where the two Acolytes were was not affected the way Torne had affected the previous level.

So both Vicente and the two men could see the surroundings very well, what appeared to be a 100 square meter hall with four corridors connecting it, cracked walls, and holes in the floor and ceiling here and there.

"Cesar Mazzanti, if you hope to live, offer the 3rd-stage herb in your possession!" The Acolyte with the defensive and offensive formations said aloud.

Inwardly, he felt a bit bad because Cesar was about to reach level 5, much stronger than they had heard about this person's level.

Even so, he and his companion were confident they could handle the opponent in front of them, if not with their powers, then with the Nine Demons Formation.

Vicente stopped 20 meters away from them and looked at them from under his mask, feeling the power of the defensive formation these men were using.

"Who are you? I don't remember having problems with any of you before." Vicente said first, interested to know what group these two belonged to.

He hadn't expected anyone other than soldiers of the kingdom's army and Kohen's companions to come to this place. But it was not a total surprise that others had discovered he had something valuable in his hands.

"Tsk! You don't need to know that! Hand over the 3rd-stage herb or accept your punishment!" The other man said with an authoritative tone.

In normal situations, they wouldn't be stopped by Vicente. But with the formation their leader had given them and the presence of their leaders not far away, they had plenty of reason to be confident.

"So you are nameless fools," Vicente muttered as he moved towards them, catching their attention in an instant.

"That's fast!" One of the two commented as he saw a blur pass by where Vicente had moved while a red-orange pentagram emerged from the enemy's body.

As he approached the two men, Vicente decided to act quickly and decisively. Activating his first ability, he controlled the metallic elements around the ruin, making the entire structure shake with his will.

While Vicente was influencing the metals outside the bodies of these two men, they didn't feel a gigantic pressure on them only because of the defensive formation above them. Otherwise, they would have fallen against their opponent without even being hit.

Vicente could now use the metals in the bodies of his same-stage opponents to defeat them after the qualitative evolution and level increase he had recently undergone.

What Vicente could only do against 1st-stage opponents before, he could now do against Acolytes!

All thanks to Torne's help!

But even though he couldn't do that against those two because of the defensive formation protecting them, Vicente still had a big advantage.

He smiled in satisfaction as he felt his control over the place where he was 80% stronger. The way he was now, he could control much more metal around him and manipulate it with much more dexterity.

In a single instant, as he moved against the two men, several chains with sharp points like spears emerged from the walls, floor, and ceiling of the area, attacking the enemies from different directions.

Seeing this, the two men felt shivers run down their spines as they saw the enemy's attacks stop at their defensive formation but put much more pressure on the formation than the traps in this ruin.

"Shit! That bastard's already as strong as a Mage!" One shouted as he saw cracks appearing in the 9 points around the bluish defensive barrier around them.

"Silas, don't hesitate. Use the Nine Demon Formation, or we'll die before the bosses get to us!" The other man said in awe as he saw Vicente floating in the air near them while a yellow pentagram appeared behind him.

"That's not good enough, huh? Let's see if you can do this." He moved his hands, concentrating the field lines to pressure the enemy barrier as he thrust his pointed chains.

A shrill sound of breaking glass rang out as the bluish barrier shattered into many pieces, and the core of the formation exploded in the hands of one of the two Acolytes.

"Die!" Vicente saw his chains fly at the bodies of the two without restraint.

Chapter 318 Nine Demons Formation

"Shit!" One of the two Acolytes felt a hand on his left shoulder and turned pale as he felt his companion move him against his will.

Just as he was about to be hit from four different sides, the level 5 Acolyte with the Nine Demon Formation swiftly brought his ally's body in front of him.

"Silas!" The person screamed as he felt his body being pierced in several places, especially his abdomen and heart.

Meanwhile, Silas ignored the cry of pain from his ally, whom he had just used as a human shield to prevent his heart and abdomen from being hit by the enemy's blow.

But even though he had temporarily escaped the worst of Vicente's attacks in his direction, Silas still had his arms and legs hit by Vice's chains.

"Aaaaagh!" The first man opened his mouth in pain, while Silas was unable to do the same, his vocal cords severed by one of Vicente's many attacks.

However, Silas struggled to activate the Nine Demons Formation, seeing that he would have no escape.

'If I'm going to die here, I'm taking you with me, you bastard!' He thought, howling in pain as he felt his body being pulled in the opposite direction of the chains that had pierced him.

As this happened, his bones and muscles in the affected areas were further damaged, with one of the chains leaving his right arm so destroyed that as he fell to the ground, Silas felt that arm separate from his body.

"Aaaaaagh!"

His companion was already severely injured and would have died without further attacks if he had been given time. But he didn't have that time. As the twisted edges of Minos' chains, which had

parts similar to anchors, left his body, he was completely torn apart, no longer resembling a human but a pile of flesh, blood, and bones.

'Be careful, master!'

Torne shouted in Vicente's mind, feeling the power of the formation that had been activated just before Silas' body was severely injured amid the misfortune of the two Acolytes who died before they had a chance to use their powers.

Vicente heard Torne's warning and looked at the red sphere thrown in his direction, glowing as if it was about to explode.

But instead of exploding, a red magic circle with various inscriptions around it suddenly appeared from it.

When this magic circle appeared, the space inside it darkened. In contrast, hands and legs simultaneously appeared from it, forming a red barrier that covered the entire area of the plane where Vicente and the two bodies were.

As he moved away from the formation's middle, Vicente tried to control the metals around him. Yet, he felt a much smaller amount of metal in his area of influence. Meanwhile, as he tried to move one of his blades out of that area, he saw it hit a barrier much stronger than the defensive barrier of his enemies earlier.

'That is an offensive formation that traps its targets within a particular area, master. Unless you have the power of a Mid-level Mage to destroy it, the only way to escape is to destroy the formation's core.' Torne said as Vicente looked at the glowing red sphere above where nine creatures were emerging from the dark part of the magic circle.

Clenching his fists at the sight of the enemy's tricks, Vicente thought about using his own defensive formation.

But then Torne said to him. 'Master, I know what you're thinking. Unfortunately, formations don't work within the influence of other formations. You should have activated your defenses before the enemy formation started working to protect yourself.'

"Shit!"

He used a sword and floated towards the core of that thing, intending to do what Torne had told him.

But the moment Vicente moved, the semi-transparent creatures with horns on their heads, tails, extremely muscular humanoid bodies, and sharp animal-like teeth moved towards him.

As the first of them slashed at his neck with its sharp claws, Vicente jumped from his sword back to the ground.

'Fuck!'

He saw the creature intending to cut his throat and used a sword to strike it, sending it into the confines of the barrier while already leaving a small dent in the blade of the sword.

'From what I can sense, these mana creatures are as strong as Low-level Mages.' Vicente estimated their strength as he considered the power of the first mana demon to attack him.

Thinking quickly about what to do, he acted and made the chains and metals under his control in the surrounding area form several fine, long, and sturdy needles.

Using the electromagnetic field around them, he gave them a boost, making them fly at high speed and on curved trajectories toward the formation's core.

When they felt those many needles approaching the formation's core, five of the nine creatures moved to defend it. Meanwhile, the other four flew toward Vicente.

"Tsk!"

Vicente made a series of seals, aware he couldn't affect the creatures made of mana with his usual blows. But he had another way of fighting these corporeal creatures, which were quite different from the ghost.

Moving his mana in his spell, he formed several hands of earth that rose from the ground of this area and headed toward the demons attacking him.

Meanwhile, he didn't stand still, moving further away from the approaching creatures as he saw an opening for another attack.

As he formed a new spell, several sparks appeared around him while bolts of lightning shot from the ground in this area toward the top, where the core of the enemy formation was.

The other demons stopped the needles from flying towards the formation's core, but they couldn't react in time to the lightning bolts cutting through the air towards the small red sphere.

"Break it!" Vicente shouted as all the creatures in the area looked in the same direction, making strange noises as they dealt with their own problems.

'Watch out!'

Then, just as one of Vicente's rays was about to hit the glowing sphere, Torne shouted in Vice's mind, causing the young man to retreat immediately, raising his defenses as much as he could.

As he did so under Torne's warning, Vicente saw the nine mana demons dissipate. At the same time, a five-meter-tall creature with muscles and body parts proportional to its size appeared in front of the formation's core.

In a single stroke, the creature created by the union of the nine demons destroyed Vicente's lightning bolt, followed by a kick that sent a blade of mana slashing at the spot where Vice was standing.

Swooish!

"Oh?" Vicente muttered in a cold sweat, feeling pressured as he saw the creature looking in his direction.

'How am I going to beat that bastard, old Torne? Does it have the power of all nine demons simultaneously?' Vicente asked as he drank a potion to restore the mana he had used so far.

Chapter 319 Rage Mode

'That is the case, master. It is the union of the nine demons, the maximum this formation can provide. So if the mana creature before you falls, you'll be free.

As for how to defeat it, there are only two ways. One is to destroy the formation's core, as I've already said. The second is to defeat it with a power even more robust than its own.

Unfortunately, the master has the same power this creature would have if it were a Low-level Mage. But it's as strong as a Mid-level Mage, maybe even close to a High-level Mage. In this case, there's no way the master can beat it with your normal powers.

Unless you have a pill that puts you into Rage Mode, there's not much you can do except try your best to destroy the core of the formation.'

Rage Mode was a name for a unique state in which magical beings temporarily increased their strength through special methods.

Some beings could enter this state on their own by consuming their life force. On the other hand, some pills could provide the necessary conditions for someone to enter a berserk state.

Either way, there would be a cost to such an action!

Regardless of the method used to activate Rage Mode, anyone who entered it would face drastic consequences after the effects of their desperate actions wore off. The consequences could range from instability in the magical base to loss of vitality, loss of limbs, and even death.

Because of the dangers of the magic world, every magician would have some way of activating this state.

But when Vicente heard Torne's words in his mind, he couldn't help but form a pessimistic expression. 'Old Torne, things have happened too fast for me. The only pill I have that can produce this effect is a 1st-grade one. I don't have anything compatible with my magic realm right now.'

'Unfortunately, my essence is weak. Otherwise, this old man would help you fulfill the requirements to destroy this demon. But since we're in this dire situation, take the 1st-grade pill, master. A 5% improvement is better than nothing. At least it won't be able to harm you after its effects have worn off.'

Agreeing with Torne, Vicente swallowed the 1st-grade pill he had in his spatial ring.

Upon ingesting that pill, he immediately felt his body temperature rise. At the same time, the mana in the surrounding area entered his Magic Gem as if it were a mana drain.

The pill in question had a quick effect, considering its purpose. In less than 5 seconds, Vicente felt his strength reach level 5!

If it had been a 2nd-grade pill, he would have probably reached the beginning of the 3rd grade. But since it was of a lower quality, this was its limit.

Anyway, the moment he felt his strength improving, Vicente didn't think it was a bad thing and moved, using his ability to move metal in the area while using it to run uphill.

The demon moved against him, forming a red sword as it struck in the direction of Vicente's neck.

The black-haired young man sensed the mana creature's murderous intent, but he wasn't afraid.

'I will put everything into this move!' His eyes lit up as he dodged the attack.

Swoosh!

The enemy's sword passed close to Vicente's torso as he squirmed, leaping nimbly from his swords and successfully dodging the first attack.

The enemy was swift and soon landed the second and third blows, making Vice sweat as he dodged attacks that would have taken his life if they had hit him.

Vicente gradually increased his height as he moved, reducing the distance between him and the formation's core.

He felt his eyes working better and better, seeing the demon's agile blows more and more clearly as the danger grew, and he dodged the enemy's movements more and more belatedly.

In the midst of this, his mana was consumed faster and faster.

Swoosh!

An enemy blow slashed at Vicente's arm, trying to rip it from his body, only a few centimeters away from the young man, who was able to dodge it.

When the enemy's blow came from that direction, Vicente suddenly felt like something in his consciousness had snapped.

'This feeling...' He narrowed his eyes as lightning formed on the tips of his fingers.

Meanwhile, the electrical sensation of his surroundings changed levels, giving Vicente a much deeper understanding of his surroundings than before.

As Vicente felt the lightning element in his surroundings map the entire space around the formation, he felt he could see the enemy's movements in slow motion.

As he watched the enemy attack him fiercely, Vice saw countless lightning hearts in the environment, forming a completely interconnected network of rays.

He could sense any disturbance within it, making him feel as if the enemy was moving at a reduced speed for a moment while seeing all the angles at which he or the enemy could move.

Vicente's black eyes formed several small beams in his irises as he found the opening he needed.

Drawing a gun from his spatial ring, he moved to dodge the attack that would cut off one of his arms, stepping back and then leaping forward.

The mana creature saw his opponent pass very close to it as Vice passed the demon. At that distance, it wouldn't be able to attack with its sword in time. It could only try to grab Vicente.

But even that wasn't possible. The moment the creature tried to give Vice a bear hug, the young man's body slipped out of the demon's grasp.

Vicente didn't hesitate to fire his weapon while stepping on the head of the creature who was trying to eliminate him, putting as much mana as possible into the shot.

Bang!

As the eyes of the demon below him bulged, it felt its mistake, noticing the bad feeling that comes before defeat.

Unfortunately for it, the speed of the bullet fired by Vicente was much greater than the speed of sound or even the magical perception of this being.

When the demon realized the danger, the small glowing red sphere had already been hit.

Crack!

The demon looked up and tried to fly towards the formation's core. But at that moment, electric chains surged through its ankles as Vicente leaped toward his target.

One shot from his weapon hadn't been enough to destroy the formation's core, but it had been enough to weaken it!

Chapter 320 Domain

When Vicente reached the formation's core with one hand, he didn't hesitate to concentrate his mana in his right hand and squeezed the cracked sphere as hard as he could.

Feeling everything that had just happened from inside Vicente's consciousness, Torne held back from saying anything during the battle.

Fights between magical beings happened at high speed. Any disturbance could negatively affect both the attacking and defending sides.

Comments and advice weren't interesting during an important move like Vicente's had been a few moments ago.

If this hadn't been the decisive moment of the fight, Torne wouldn't have been able to hold back. Seeing Vicente activate the Domain of one of his elements, the old ghost was naturally excited by his master's talent and potential.

What was Domain? It was a state of elemental understanding in which one could sense one's surroundings almost perfectly!

Within its realm, a magical being would be practically omniscient!

To reach such a high level of understanding that one could activate the realm was something challenging to achieve, something that only happened to those with high talents or high levels.

There weren't many people with high talents, so most Domain users were old monsters.

That's why Torne was surprised and could hardly keep his mouth shut when he felt Vicente in that state.

'He even saw a Lightning Heart!' Torne thought silently in the cocoon where he was recovering.

A Lightning Heart, or rather an Elemental Heart, was the natural way in which the elements were encountered in heaven and earth.

Almost every element would be available all over the world. In some places, like a volcano, some elements more connected to the essence of the volcano would be more concentrated in that area, but there would still be other elements.

But extreme places like volcanoes, where there would be a higher concentration of a specific type of element, were rare. Most of the world had a little bit of every element in more or less 'similar' proportions.

However, some elements could be considered opposites. For example, how could there be light and darkness in the same place?

Because of this problem, the elements in the sky and on the earth gathered into small elemental condensation nuclei, where only related elements were concentrated.

These small elemental nuclei were called Elemental Hearts.

When one used Domain-type abilities, the Elemental Hearts showed themselves to these magical beings and became part of their powers and field of perception.

Because of this characteristic, someone who used Domain could use these Elemental Hearts in many different ways, from using them against enemies in battle to meditation for their own benefit!

Torne was extremely pleased to feel all this in these last few seconds, seeing the great potential Vicente had in his first magical form.

As he thought, the core of the Nine Demon Formation exploded in his master's right hand.

As Vicente destroyed the thing with his hands, he saw the barrier of the enemy formation disappear as it lost its magical foundation.

The demon cracked as Vicente's streams of lightning held it, then exploded into many fragments of crystallized mana.

"Free at last," Vice muttered as he saw his surroundings return to normal.

Looking at the two enemy corpses, he quickly gathered the belongings of the dead while scanning the surroundings.

'Master, congratulations on awakening the Lightning Domain. With this ability, you'll be able to advance your understanding of this element faster, and you'll also have an extra advantage in battle.'
Torne said in his master's mind.

'Domain? So that was a Domain?' Vice asked, already knowing what Domain was but having no idea what this ability looked like.

'Yes. The Domain can be considered an advanced form of elemental mastery or understanding. A magical being can awaken it in many different ways. But it usually requires great talent or great experience.

The master's talent is high, and you used your abilities to the fullest in this battle. That must have given you this opportunity.

During high-level battles, our senses can more easily reach their maximum potential due to the preservative properties of living beings and Magic Gems. That's why it's common for masters to encourage their students to take on life-threatening challenges.' Torne said in his master's mind.

"Hmm." Vicente understood it, but he was glad to be able to use the Domain in such an important moment.

'Anyway, it's time to move on. I want to see who the hell ordered this formation to be used against me.' Vicente commented to Torne as he finished collecting the enemy's belongings and felt the battle on the surface of the ruins of The Vile Altar.

'If I'm not mistaken, those two Acolytes belonged to the group of one of the two Mages coming towards us.' Torne said, sensing the enemy's movements better than Vicente.

Six Mages were now fighting at the entrance to the ruins of The Vile Altar while two individuals were moving in Vicente's direction.

'The master can take revenge on them now. Now that we've broken out of that formation, you can use the defensive formation I gave you. What do you think about taking down two Mages easily?' Torne suggested to Vicente.

'Good. Tell me what to do.' Vicente said, knowing that Torne knew the structures and traps of The Vile Altar better than he did.

Though he had his own experiences and ways of dealing with situations like this, Vice was open to learning and listening to the advice of beings more experienced than himself.

With more than 2,000 years of experience and knowledge of the ruins of The Vile Altar, Torne was able to make the situation much easier for Vicente.

'Master, go this way...' The old ghost showed Vicente the way, quickly moving the young man toward the main trap of the area.

...

Meanwhile, inside the ruins, two Low-level Mages ran side by side, heading toward where the Nine Demon Formation had been active until a few seconds ago.

"It looks like your offensive formation was a bit unreliable, old demon Kaleb," Arthur commented to the temporary ally he and his group had made a few moments ago.

While Vicente fought the enemy formation, the men of the royal army had formed a temporary alliance with the members of the Faceless Ones faction.

As much as the army soldiers and the underworld members had differences, both sides wanted to kill Vicente and take the 3rd-stage herb. Meanwhile, Kohen and Levi's group wanted Vice on their side, which could be problematic for those others.

Even if Vicente agreed to subordinate himself to Levi's group, it wouldn't stop him from acting against the others who tried to rob him today.

Besides, it was too risky to offend the Congregation of Revelations. Since they had different goals than Levi's group, the best thing for their good would be to ally themselves and deal with the group without leaving any survivors behind!

So, while Tyson had stayed behind with Alex and Peter to deal with Levi's group, Arthur and Kaleb moved on to Vicente to take what they wanted!

"Tsk! Let's see how that damned Cesar survived our formation!" Kaleb said as he sensed Vice's direction.