

The World Is Mine For The Taking

Chapter 48: Chapter 8 - Midterm Examination (2)

Midterm examinations—an event conveniently situated in the academic middle of the semester.

This test, taken halfway through the school term, serves as a gauge for students to assess their progress and consider adjustments to their study routines. While not the sole platform for showcasing a student's knowledge and grasp of a particular course, midterms often provide the initial insight into how well the class material is being absorbed, processed, and retained.

In simpler terms, it's a written exam to determine a student's academic prowess.

Sadly, I, Shredica, don't shine in the academic realm. My claim to the top spot in the bronze class rests solely on my combat excellence—my fighting skills are unrivaled. If the evaluation focused solely on combat, I wouldn't worry about studying a thing. All my attention is geared towards combat, explaining why my academic abilities are lackluster.

Of course, the prospect of someone snatching the first spot in the bronze class due to my lackluster exam performance wasn't a concern. Reclaiming the top spot would be a breeze. This school places its primary focus on fighting, and that's the main yardstick for evaluation. Matters like academics, etiquette, and languages are mere secondary considerations.

What troubled me was the potential cycle of retakes if I didn't ace this test. Failing meant repeating the year, and that was something I loathed. I needed to ascend to the rank of a Magic Knight, and I needed it swiftly. Falling behind a year was not an option.

Hence, Mr. Leon found himself standing in front of me, ready to receive my orders.

"What?" he balked. "Teach you?"

"When I say something, make sure your ear catches it. I don't enjoy repeating myself," I glared at him. "Well, I suppose I should reiterate for you. I want you to tutor me. Lectures don't interest me, and I never considered them necessary for becoming a Magic Knight, so I never bothered understanding them. Regrettably, that left me with some rather gaping knowledge holes.

Hence, I'm ordering you to be my tutor for this impending test. Oh, and don't forget, this isn't a request—it's a command." With a flick of my phone, I exposed a photo of him sauntering into a brothel.

"Wow," he deadpanned in the most lackluster tone possible. "You really know how to use a photo against me to get your way, huh?"

"I'm in quite a bind, Mr. Leon, so I truly need your cooperation," I asserted.

He locked eyes with me for a few moments, those crimson orbs examining my resolve. Eventually, he sighed, his hands finding their way into his pockets. "Fine. Just keep that phone away from me. Unfortunately, Miss Shredica, I doubt I can be of much assistance. Similar to my prowess in combat, my academic skills are sorely lacking.

I plan to retreat to my room, attempting a night-long study session, yet even with all that effort, I anticipate failure. Therefore, I'll temper my expectations to avoid the sting of disappointment."

"So your strategy is a retake?" I probed.

"That's right," he affirmed. "If failure is inevitable, retaking becomes the only recourse."

"Hmm..." I hummed, a thoughtful glint in my eyes. "But what about the joint training?"

"Joint training?"

"You know, where the entire student body congregates at a designated location for collective training. Those destined to fail this exam won't get to participate, you know."

"That's... the first time I've heard of it."

"Well, I'm not surprised, especially since you're always sleeping with your eyes open."

"Huh? How do you know that?"

I discovered it when I gained interest in him. Despite appearing attentive in class, his eyes were perpetually hollow, as if he wasn't focused on anything. In fact, one could say he was in a daze. Upon closer inspection, it became apparent that he was simply sleeping with his eyes open.

"I'm kind of impressed that you have a very peculiar talent like that."

"I perfected that art to catch some Zs in the middle of class without the professor being any wiser," he proclaimed, a touch of pride in unveiling this peculiar talent. "I excel at dodging classes by feigning wide-eyed alertness, especially when the subject is a real snoozer. Well, let's be honest, most of them are. So, you're knocking on the wrong door."

If you're aware I'm catching some serious Zs during lectures, you should know just how much I'm in sync with your vibe, right?"

"Unfortunately, you're the only one I've got."

"That's heartwarming. Ever thought of expanding your social circle?"

"I don't get the whole friendship spiel. Honestly, flying solo helps one tap into the depths of self-awareness. All that solitary time sparks the imagination and unleashes the creative torrent. When it comes to honing skills, for instance, you can focus without any distractions messing with your flow."

"That sounds exactly like the philosophy of a lone wolf." Mr. Leon withdrew his hand from his pocket, revealing his phone. "Well, if that's the case, then I guess we'll need help from someone. Luckily, I've got the right connection for this kind of job. I'm not a fan of seeking favors, but since I find the joint training intriguing, I guess I have no choice."

"I'll just have to treat our savior to their favorite meal as repayment."

My eyes widened with a tinge of surprise, "You're bringing in someone for help?"

"Yeah." He began tapping on his phone, ready to make the call. Before he could press the final button, I swiftly moved in, preventing any further action. He looked taken aback, "What are you doing?"

"I'm not thrilled about someone finding out I'm not exactly a genius, so I'd appreciate it if you don't go that route."

"What? How do you expect us to ace the exam then?"

"Through collaboration. Two heads are better than one, right? So, if we pool our intellectual resources and study together, we might just weather this storm."

"And how exactly do two individuals with a penchant for academic underachievement combine their intellectual prowess if they don't possess any? It's akin to arithmetic. Adding zero to zero still yields zero. But if we introduce an external factor, say one to the two zeros, we might get a result, right?"

Well, it doesn't quite make sense, but the point is, to weather this storm, we need some extra firepower. Having two heads is beneficial, sure, but isn't three better than two? And don't fret. This person is a bit of a loner herself, so she won't spill the beans about your lack of genius. I do hope you'll get along with her, though."

With a sigh, I released my grip on his phone. "I hope this person is someone I can tolerate..."

"If you've got the resilience of a monster, you'll get along just fine."

I pondered who this mystery person might be that Mr. Leon was planning to bring into the equation. Judging by the hints that she was academically inclined, my mind raced through the possibilities. While there were some bright minds among our classmates, Mr. Raymond was the only one I'd seen Mr. Leon engage with who fit the bill.

Yet, he referred to this person as 'she.' Considering Mr. Leon hadn't been conversing with any of the intellectually gifted women in our class, I was left wondering who it could be.

The answer revealed itself an hour later...

"This person you're talking about sure seems to be dragging her sweet time. It's been almost an hour since you messaged her with the meeting spot, right? Doesn't it only take ten minutes to get to Market City from Academy City?" said Shredica as she sipped on the orange juice she ordered. We were now entwined in the cozy atmosphere of the shop where I once worked.

Seated at a table, we lingered in silence until Shredica shattered it with her astute observation. "And I can't believe out of all the places you'd pick, it's this place..."

"Hmm? You don't fancy this spot? Almost all the girls from the academy adore it, you know?"

"It's not that I don't fancy it," she replied. Her gaze then wandered to the woman with vibrant orange hair at the cashier, who shot her a sly grin. "It's just the people I can't stand."

"Is that so?" If she couldn't stomach the cashier, who seemed to revel in savoring an awkward date like ours, I couldn't help but ponder how she'd respond to the person I had just called. "Well, the person I just called mentioned she's close now, so I think she'll be here any minute." As the words left my lips, the door swung open, and a new presence made its entrance.

"Oh, there she is," I exclaimed. "I'm here!"

"Oh, Leon!" the person approached with an air of nonchalance. "I'm kinda a bit late, am I? But that's not, like, my fault, is it? In fact, you should be grateful

that I even take my time to bother stepping in here to meet with you. You did mention you need help with studying, right? Well, consider yourself blessed, because I, Titania, will be the one who will assist you.

Be grateful that I even take the time!" she declared with flair.

I heard Shredica's voice, "Don't tell me..."

I cut her off before she could finish, "That's right. Titania will be the one who is going to tutor us."