

VILLAIN 163

Chapter 163 Daemon Valerion

One by one, the Temple students left the room, their expressions a mixture of conflicting emotions.

"Only eight will qualify..."

It was Danzo who spoke, seemingly lost in thought.

You could say the number of qualifying spots was incredibly low... which made sense. After all, thirty-two used to qualify in the past.

But this time, personal strength and skill weren't going to be the only factors—luck, and perhaps even external conditions, would play a role as well.

The exam was truly difficult, and those eight seats were far from guaranteed.

As Danzo and I exited the hall and stepped into the wide corridor outside, the students quickly scattered.

But we came to a halt when we heard shouting nearby—familiar voices.

Our eyes met instantly, and without a word, Danzo and I moved toward the source.

And what we found before us was... a strange sight.

There, on the ground, lay Kyle Walker and Jan Dover—both of them classmates of ours—bruises from heavy punches clearly marked across their faces.

Someone had beaten them badly, and it wasn't hard to guess who, especially with the people standing in front of them.

"That uniform..."

Those blue Temple uniforms...

"Abyss Class..."

Since the Abyss and Elite classes were superior to the others, they had distinct uniforms to set them apart.

The closer we got to our beaten classmates, the stranger things became.

At first, we thought the Abyss students had ganged up on the two and beaten them down.

But looking closely... Kyle and Jean weren't the only ones crushed into the floor. Several Abyss students were down as well, while the rest stood at the back, hesitant and afraid—all eyes fixed on the lone figure standing before them.

His build was nearly identical to Danzo's. Muscles bulged even beneath his uniform. His platinum-blond hair and golden eyes said enough on their own. His features were intense—he reminded me of someone I had met not too long ago.

That arrogant figure was about to punch Kyle, who had long since lost consciousness.

But just in time, Danzo grabbed his wrist and blocked the strike completely.

"Hey, that's enough."

Danzo's aura surged into his fist, tightening with enough force to shatter the bones of a normal person.

Yet the young man didn't seem fazed at all. He simply looked up at the newcomer.

"Take your filthy hand off me."

"...What?"

Danzo was stunned by his words—and even more stunned by what happened next.

With a flick of his arm, the young man broke free of Danzo's grip and even forced him to stagger several steps backward.

Danzo couldn't understand. Or perhaps, it's better to say—he couldn't process what had just happened.

"Did I just lose... in raw physical strength?"

Danzo was known as the strongest tank in the Elite classes. And yet, here he was—forced to retreat by someone from Abyss.

The latter smirked at the sight of Danzo stepping back.

"You're better than those other trash. I was going to send you flying with that move, but you held up pretty well."

Suddenly, a powerful aura of explosive lightning surged from the young man's body.

"Shall we go again?"

Veins visibly popped on Danzo's forehead as his own aura flared to match.

"Bring it on, you bastard."

The two were moments away from clashing—until I threw myself between them at the last second.

"That's enough. You've done more than enough already."

I turned toward the blond-haired young man.

"Daemon Valerion."

Danzo was caught off guard by my words, while a wicked grin formed on Daemon's face.

"And who are you to decide when I stop... Frey Starlight?"

It didn't seem hard for him to recognize me. And clearly, Daemon had no intention of backing down.

"Move, Frey. This guy wants a fight."

Danzo didn't mind throwing hands, but I couldn't let that happen. I already knew how it would end.

Unlike duelists like me, tanks didn't need weapons to fight. Their fists alone were more than enough. They were always ready to go at a moment's notice.

"No. I already told you... that's enough."

I pointed to the students lying unconscious on the ground.

Two from our side, and four from theirs.

And it was worth noting—judging by the injuries—this hadn't been a class brawl.

Daemon had taken them all down... by himself.

But I ignored that fact.

"People from both classes have fallen... let's end it here."

"You talk too much, Starlight. Didn't I tell you? You're not the one who gets to decide anything here."

Daemon cracked his knuckles.

"Now come at me. Try lasting longer than your pathetic friends."

I let out a frustrated sigh...

Looks like there's no other choice.

I unleashed my aura, and slowly, the killing intent I had gained through past experiences began to seep into the air.

Daemon's eyes widened in surprise—but that twisted smile of his only grew wider.

"Oh? Would you look at that, haha... Seems like you'll put up a good fight."

Just as Daemon was reaching peak excitement, everyone froze as a sharp wave of sound hit our ears.

"Tell me... will you be able to hold your ground?"

A single young man appeared behind us, followed by a few familiar faces.

"Snow..."

Snow Leonhart. With his hands in his pockets and golden eyes that shone brighter than anything else, he looked like the fallen prince of some forgotten kingdom.

But the pressure he radiated... was no joke.

In response, the hesitant Abyss students finally took a few steps back—but not Daemon.

"So this is the so-called prodigy everyone's been talking about?"

Daemon took a step forward.

"Come on. Even if you hadn't shown up, I would've come looking for you."

There's a limit to how insane a person can be when it comes to battle—but Daemon was something else entirely.

He was planning to face the entire Elite Class on his own, it seemed.

I slowly stepped back, realizing this farce was finally about to end...

"No one moves. Stay where you are."

This time, the voice that tore through the air came from someone on a whole different level—the Student Council President.

Ellen White.

Beside her stood familiar figures, including the Saint Candidate, Uriel Platiny.

"Damn it..."

Daemon cursed under his breath, but even he couldn't resist Ellen—someone who never cared about anyone's background when she took action.

"If you're so eager to fight... then take it to the island trial, you bastards. Not inside the Temple."

Ellen let out a long sigh, clearly irritated.

"Your stupid actions reflect on me. You're like a thorn in my ass. Now... who's going to explain what the hell happened here?"

After a brief inquiry...

To my surprise, the one who stepped up to explain everything was none other than my cousin—Emond Starlight, ranked third among the Abyss students.

Watching him play the role of tattletale for his own class, I couldn't stop myself from chuckling.

It was honestly pathetic. But thanks to him, the truth came out.

Earlier, there'd been a spat between the Abyss Class and both Jan Dover and Kyle Walker, who had mocked them.

Later, Daemon Valerion arrived. Upon seeing them bickering like old men, he simply incited a fight.

But when they didn't respond the way he wanted, he jumped in and beat everyone up himself.

After hearing the full story, Ellen dragged Daemon off—despite his ongoing attempts to thrash around like a lunatic—while we were left to watch.

"A real pain in the ass just showed up..."

Danzo grumbled as he stared at Daemon.

"You should've let me smash his face in."

I turned toward Danzo and shook my head.

"Be careful when you face him... Danzo, he's not an easy opponent."

Truth be told, Danzo would've been crushed if they'd actually fought.

He raised an eyebrow at me, responding to my warning.

"I heard you when you said his name... Valerion. But even if he's from the imperial family, isn't he just another clown from the Abyss?"

Danzo wasn't entirely wrong. The Abyss Class was known as the place for students who didn't possess overwhelming talent like the Elite, but who outperformed others through hard work.

That's the general belief—but Daemon was a special case.

And it wasn't me who explained that.

"Daemon can't be categorized as someone from the Abyss."

Danzo and I turned toward the girl approaching from behind... Princess Sansa.

"Sansa..."

Danzo looked a bit flustered, unsure if he was supposed to bow or something—but she simply waved her hand, signaling him to relax.

Either way, Sansa continued her explanation...

"Daemon is the son of the current Headmaster, Ivar Valerion... which makes him my cousin. Since the Elite Classes were divided between me and my brother Aegon, it naturally evolved into a political struggle."

A battle for the throne.

"That's why assigning him to either Class A or B wasn't an option. Doing so would have implied he supported whichever side he joined. And as a member of the imperial family, he's bound by neutrality."

"The only viable solution... was placing him in the Abyss."

I nodded, fully agreeing with Sansa's explanation.

She was right. Daemon was a beast in every sense of the word. His talent alone could have secured him a place at the top of the Elite Classes—right alongside Snow.

He was a tank with overwhelming power, capable of wielding fire, lightning, and wind alike.

A warrior who could fight in any role, on any front.

Truthfully... had I not written him into the semifinals of the Victoriad against Snow, he would've reached the final without breaking a sweat.

Someone like him was undoubtedly one of the greatest threats standing between me and victory.

And speaking of threats...

"It's been a while, Frey."

The biggest one of all stepped forward with a smile—

Snow Leonheart.

"It has... and you're still as brilliant as ever, Snow."

This time... my final opponent wasn't an enemy.

He was a friend.