

[Adam POV]

I had taken a job to subdue an illegal magic school that was located in the north of the country. Originally I had intended to take an easier job, seeing Laxus had wanted to accompany me, but my latest encounter with his father had stopped that from happening.

I really couldn't wait for Ivan to be excommunicated, the guy was getting on my nerves.

Anyhow, the job I had taken to fill the time paid 459,900 Jewels. Which left me after completion with a total of 321,930 Jewels. The guild took a commission between ten to thirty percent, depending on how much the job in question paid and such.

It was still a lot of money, even after the commission.

My time here had given me a rough idea, so to speak, of how much the local currency was worth in comparison to the dollar. The exchange rate was something around 100 Jewels per dollar.

Meaning I was making around 3,219 dollars and some pocket change.

Know that I think about it. It was honestly baffling how little the rent truly is, I mean, I'm paying around 700 dollars for a very nice place.

I guess comparing the economy of this world to my former one was a pointless endeavor.

Before I could continue with that train of thought, a street vendor strutted up to me, brandishing a black velvet cloth draped over his arm. He pulled back the cloth with a flourish, revealing a dazzling array of amulets, wands, and crystals. His eyes practically twinkled as he said, "These are the strongest magic items in the world! What do you say?"

I deadpanned.

Sure, the strongest magic item in the world, for 1000 Jewels.

I kept my eyes focused forward and didn't slow my pace as I passed the vendor. "Not interested," I said without turning my head or even slowing down.

Rule #1 of dealing with unwanted street vendors, is to never make eye contact because if you do, they will follow you to the deepest confines of the earth to sell you their crap.

Without more interventions, I continued walking up the steep, pebbled road that led to the Magnolia train station. My mind was spinning with thoughts, wondering what kind of enemies

I would have to deal with for the job, however, I pushed those thoughts aside for the moment, and queued up at the booth.

The air hummed with the sound of time ticking away and the tick of my shoes on the concrete. Eventually, my turn in the queue came up, and I requested a ticket for the northern line, and then stepped back, readying myself for my journey.

I had in my person 50,000 Jewels for food or any other things I might need.

I didn't normally use hotels or such, as sleeping in the wilderness worked just fine for me, and it saved me money, which was a pro for me.

"I really hate this part," I muttered. I honestly didn't enjoy traveling between locations, because more than not I would travel a few hours for a job that would take me a few minutes.

As I waited for my train to arrive, an old woman, wearing a bright-colored hat and carrying a large suitcase, walked slowly towards me. She looked me in the eye and asked, in a soft but clear voice, "Excited to travel, young man?"

I smiled at the old lady. "I will be, once I arrive."

The old woman shuffled closer, her wrinkled hands grasping a weathered suitcase tighter. "Young people nowadays. You are

young, you should enjoy the journey, believe me, you will miss it once you get to my age." she croaked in a raspy voice.

I suppose that's one way to look at it. "I will keep that in mind. So, how about you? Excited to travel?"

The old woman chuckled, her breath wheezing as she did so. "To be honest, no. I'm simply transporting a gift for my granddaughter, I don't want her to forget me, so I have to put in some effort."

So she gives me advice but doesn't truly believe in it. What a strange lady. Then again, that's most people for you.

Pushing those thoughts aside, I turned to look at the old lady, and I could see a few tears welling up in the old woman's eyes, so I replied. "Well, even if you aren't enjoying the trip, I feel it's a nice gesture you are doing for your granddaughter. Keep that attitude in your heart, and have no doubt that she will grow to remember you fondly no matter where you are."

The old woman gave a grateful smile, "That is very kind of you, young man. You are a good listener. Enjoy your journey," she said with a smile, before hobbling away to get on her train.

I watched her walk away and my thoughts weighed heavy on me. The thought of someone you love not being able to remember you. "It must be truly horrible," I said to myself.

Then as the old lady faded in the background, I heard the whistle blow followed by the train's wheels squealing, and the engine roared with the train pulling up the tracks to my left.

Eventually, after everyone had disembarked the train, one of the train attendants came out and gave the green lights to start entering the train, so I walked inside the train taking my seat as fast as I could before pulling out a book from my bag to read.

I continued reading for about ten minutes before the train closed its doors and started its journey. Five stops before my destination, what a drag.

Though I had to admit that with the soothing hum of the train and the colorful scenery flashing before my eyes alongside my book, I couldn't help but drift off into a sense of peace.

I arrived at my destination twenty-five hours later. Even though I truly hated long travels, mostly because what I would get out of them was a few hours at most, I really couldn't complain, the time this unbearable journey had given me had offered me the opportunity to finish the book I had been reading.

The Mystery of Voiceless Poet.

It had been a good read.

"Well time to find the illegal magic school," I said to myself, as I stepped out of the train.

A few moments later, after asking a few questions here and there, I found myself standing in front of a large, white, two-story house, with a large fenced-in yard covered in overgrown plants and tall grass.

Taking the view, I let out a sigh and started to walk toward the entrance.

The amount of information I had on this job was very slim. The only thing I knew was that this school was supposedly teaching dark arts to whoever had the money to pay them, and that they had killed multiple civilians since they started doing their shit.

As for new information, well. Some of the people I had asked around said this house had what I was looking for, though I seriously doubt it, it would be far too obvious if they were hiding in the only creepy house in all of the places.

Pushing my thoughts aside, I walked towards the front door and knocked.

Nothing.

I knocked again.

Nothing again.

I knocked again, this time harder, but yet again, nothing.

Deciding to change my approach, I kicked the door, intending to break it down.

But once again, nothing.

I kicked again, and like before, nothing.

Well, that's interesting.

The door and the surrounding area hadn't even been damaged by my efforts, and I knew I had used more than enough power to break a wooden door.

“Ugh,” I grumbled as I stepped back to assess the door, and this was indeed a normal wooden door from what I could tell, with a sort of copperish metal inlaid in the middle.

An enchantment to make it more durable?

It could be, but it doesn't explain why I can't sense anything odd with the door.

Maybe it had a concealment spell as well. That way it would explain why I couldn't sense shit inside the house, or within the door.

It certainly makes more sense than the door being made from indestructible wood. Though if that was the case, I might need to find where those trees grow at, the guild needs stuff that is hard to break.

“I’ll be happy to answer that!” I heard a woman call out with a bright and happy tone.

My eyes widened in surprise as I slowly spun around, and there she was, hovering a few meters away from me. She wore a billowing black dress that floated out in every direction, her arms and legs perfectly still, her hair moving in an unseen breeze. "But... I didn't ask anything..."

Just like the door, I can feel her presence.

I smiled, this might just be worth the trip.

The woman's eyebrows shot up comically and her mouth gaped open in disbelief. She blinked several times before she finally muttered, "You didn't? You sure?"

I shook my head and smiled warmly. “Nope, but if you tell me what I'm supposed to ask, I’d be happy to oblige.”

The woman's lips twitched and her eyes widened in disbelief for a few seconds before she released a laugh. "It doesn't matter anymore," she said, making a small pause. "Whether you asked or not about how the house is so durable, that is. After all, you will soon find out why that is."

In the blink of an eye, her features had contorted into an almost maniacal expression as her eyes scanned around the place, focusing each time they landed on me. Not only that, the tone of her voice had shifted from a lighthearted lilt to a menacing low rumble.

I let out a laugh, my fingers drumming against my scalp. "Spooky. Just one thing before we start," I said, looking the person in front of me straight in the eye. "Are you the one responsible for that illegal school running around here?"

"Yes," she said, her voice almost a purr. "But that's neither here nor there. Do you want to know why the house is so durable? I'll tell you why."

I guess she really wants people to ask about the damn house.

"Why oh why, mysterious lady, do enlighten me?" I asked, humoring her.

The woman's face contorted in an insane grin, her eyes glinting red with the power of her magic. "For years I have

been tapping the same well that Zeref did!" she cackled, her voice a few pitches higher than before. "The souls of those that have died in great anguish by my hands, they fuel my enchantments and make this house an indestructible dark haven!"

My eyes grew cold, and my face expressionless as I slowly reached for the hilt of my Zanpakuto. "I appreciate the honesty," I said, slowly tilting my blade out of its scabbard. "It makes my job a lot easier..."

Her sadistic smile widened as her face lit up with sinister glee as she slowly moved closer. Her beady red eyes shone with malicious appreciation and her thin lips curved into an unkind smirk. "You're adorable," she cooed in a low, almost sweet voice as she hugged her own body in delight, while still keeping her gaze fixed on me. "I can't wait to hear you scream," she whispered mostly to herself, her voice escalating in pitch and becoming filled with an unnatural glee. "The screams of the innocent are the best!"

I could feel Zanryuzuki tremble in my grip, barely containing her desire to cut the one that stood in front of me.

I heaved a heavy sigh, my breath fogging in the crisp air of the north, as Zanpakuto slid free of its scabbard with a hiss, with the tip of the blade glinting in the faint moonlight. "You really shouldn't have said that," I murmured without emotion. "Now she won't hold back at all. Not that she ever does."

The demented woman's laughter cut off abruptly, and the area fell into a jarring hush. She raised an arm, pointing a skeletal finger at me. Her cracked, sagging mouth spoke with a hollow voice, "House of Souls, devour!"

I don't recall her being this ugly a few moments ago.

As I pondered over her change of appearance, the house standing behind me seemed to grow larger as the woman laughed, blotting out the sky above before the door opened slowly with a sickening creak, like a gaping maw ready to swallow me whole.

It kind of reminds me of a movie, but I can't remember the name.

"Suffer!"

I stepped forward and out of the shadows, uttering. "Bakudo #4, Hainawa," I pointed at the woman as a stream of crackling yellow energy billowed from my hands, forming a rope-like structure that I hurled toward the woman. Her eyes widened in shock as the rope constricted around her, immobilizing her.

The woman's face was a deep crimson as she thrashed against the kido spell that bound her in place. "How?! How did you dodge!" She screamed, her voice echoing across the place.

"Oh, that? Well, I just moved," I replied, before blurring out of her sight and appearing a few steps behind her, calmly sheathing my Zanpakuto back. "Just like that."

"What-" The woman began, but her words died on her lips as a trickle of blood ran down her neck before her head thudded to the ground with one final gurgle.

Well, that's that.

I wonder if I should be worried I feel nothing after having decapitated someone.

Meh, it's not like she was worth any kind of concern.

Now what to do with the house?

I can't imagine their suffering, I wonder if I can release them by giving them a soul funeral.

Deciding to give it a try, I approached the house and tapped the door with the hilt of my Zanpakuto, pushing some of my spiritual energy into it. The tap left an emblem at the point of impact which shortly began to shine brightly.

The light emanating from the house began to fade and soon died away completely. I smiled at that, as the house creaked and groaned before crumbling inwards, and a cloud of dust and debris billowed out.

It had worked.

I had felt their souls shouting in gratitude moments before the house crumbled to nothingness.

May they find their peace.