

BIOLOGICAL 46

Chapter 46: Outside the barrier (1)

Erik found it almost unbelievable how effortlessly he had lured Logan and his friends into pursuit. He knew Logan wasn't renowned for his intelligence at school, yet the ease with which he had been duped surprised even Erik.

Crafting the message had been unusually fun for Erik. most of the time He refrained from hurling insults at others, but he had made an exception in Logan's case, finding a certain enjoyment in penning the provocative words.

Now, on the train, and when boarding it, Erik was aware of his limited options for escape within the confines of the moving vehicle.

The moment he caught sight of Logan's gaze from across the carriage, he realized the need to act.

The train carried only a few passengers, their numbers limited but diverse. Among them were predominantly farmers. In fact, this train brought them to the fields, while their journey to the city was most likely for bureaucratic reasons.

Among these travelers, some were clad in business suits, perhaps heading to the fields looking for the farmers for some unknown reason, while others opted for more casual attire, like jeans paired with sweaters or jackets.

A few appeared as though they had been catching up on sleep during their journey, their tranquility now interrupted by the commotion. Despite Erik's attempts to remain inconspicuous, his mask drew curious glances from those around him.

After having spotted Conal, Logan, and Orson closing in, Erik resumed his hurried escape. He navigated through several carriages, jostling against passengers who were in his path.

His urgent strides underscored the urgency of his situation, each step a race against his pursuers.

"Hey! Hey you!" a voice rang out in the train's confines. A man, startled by the sight of the masked figure dashing past him, called out. "What are you doing?"

Almost immediately after, the same man felt the brunt of Logan's pursuit. The young man, in his chase, collided with him, sending the man tumbling to the ground.

The man, recovering, picked himself up and hastened away, eager to avoid further involvement in the unfolding commotion as he understood something was going on here and he wanted to remain out of it.

As Erik glanced back, he saw Logan just steps behind him, his proximity startling. The veins on Logan's neck were pronounced, resembling serpents in motion beneath his skin.

His expression was one of intense anger, fueled by the novelty of being challenged in such a manner by a random guy who didn't even have the gall to show his face. If only he knew what Erik was up to.

Logan was accustomed to being feared and unopposed. His reputation was built on the foundation of his intimidatory tactics. Of course, that was true only with lower-ranked people, as guys like Nathaniel could mop the floor with him.

That someone had dared to confront him, to expose his actions, ignited a fierce rage within him.

Logan knew that his bullying had earned him resentment, but he had always quelled opposition with force, making examples of those who dared to stand against him, and avoided confrontation with those he knew he couldn't beat into submission.

Now, as he locked his eyes on Erik's masked figure, his face contorted with fury. In his mind, Erik's flight only confirmed his perception of him as a coward, further fueling his urge to beat the shit out of him.

Engulfed in his fury, Logan was so focused that he failed to notice a bag lying on the ground.

His foot caught on it, sending him tumbling forward. He fell hard, crashing into a bench nearby, resulting in a gash on his forehead that bled.

Conal, seeing his friend in distress, made his way to Logan. He extended a hand, aiding him in, rising from the ground where he landed.

Meanwhile, Erik maintained his pace, continuing his escape. He reached a carriage where two police officers stood guard.

Then he pulled a jacket from his backpack, removed his mask, and donned a hood that concealed his face. Then entered the carriage with an air of nonchalance, blending into the environment as if he were just another passenger, positioning himself near the carriage exit.

The two officers cast a glance at him but didn't give his presence much thought, dismissing him as just another commuter amidst the many faces they encountered daily.

Thereafter, Conal, Orson, and Logan made their way into the same carriage.

Their eyes landed on the young man standing with his back to them, but his face was concealed and they couldn't see it.

After having noticed the police officers nearby, they realized any confrontation was off-limits. Despite their suspicion, they couldn't identify the young man.

The trio took seats close to each other, their faces etched with undisguised animosity as they stared at the back of the unknown figure. Then the train pulled into the northern district station.

Erik, having remained calm and collected, anticipated the doors' opening. The moment they slid open, he bolted from the train, his exit swift and urgent.

Logan, Conal, and Orson were quick to follow, their departure leaving the police officers in a state of confusion and surprise, unsure of the sudden flurry of activity in an otherwise routine commute.

Logan's shout echoed through the train station, raw and thunderous. "STOP, YOU MOTHER FUCKER!" His voice was laden with rage.

The young man, responding not with words but with action, took a flight of stairs down. His movements were determined as he leaped out of the train station, embodying a daring bid for escape.

Logan pursued his target, his features twisted in a scowl that made him look like a bulldog. "DON'T RUN, YOU USELESS COWARD!"

His every word resonated with the intensity of his emotions, echoing his deep-seated irritation and his fervent wish to confront the one who had challenged him.

Erik, meanwhile, remained focused, undeterred by Logan's enraged cries. He continued his escape, arriving at a vast, unpaved road. This familiar route, which he traversed daily on his way to Mister Fox's farm, was now the road, allowing him to fulfill his vengeance.

Logan, catching a glimpse of the open unobstructed road, let out a shout. "You can't hide anymore, you little prick!"

The bully, though, was unaware of the fact that Orson and Conal were feeling uneasy.

The entire chase seemed too calculated, too intentional to be a simple coincidence. They realized they might just be pawns in the masked student's game, dancing to his tune.

As the wheat fields came into view, a flicker of anxiety crossed Logan's face. The possibility that the masked man might use the dense crops for cover was a concern. "I'll get you, I swear."

"Logan!"

"Logan, stop!"

"Don't chicken out now!"

Conal and Orson proceeded to back Logan's pursuit. They watched Erik dart towards the wheat field, their steps dogged yet cautious. They trailed him, noting his progression towards the woods lying just beyond the fields.

The sight of the forest struck them as unusual, but the thought of the masked student leading them towards a breach in the city's defenses, and into the territory of thaids, never crossed their minds.

As they passed the last stretch of wheat stalks and stepped into the forest, they remained unaware of the peril they were walking into.

Erik ventured into the woodland, aware of the risks that lay ahead with thaids lurking around the area.

His prior encounters had been with weaker thaids, which didn't imply all of them were feeble, but rather that those near the city were weaker. This realization didn't guarantee safety; the deeper woods could house stronger, more dangerous monsters.

Erik scanned his surroundings, vigilant for any sign of hidden threats.

Despite these looming dangers, a sense of excitement persisted within Erik. His desire for retribution against Logan, Conal, and Orson eclipsed his fear.

He recognized the perilous nature of his emotions, yet the frustration and resentment he harbored towards them had reached a boiling point.

Seeing no immediate threats, Erik concealed himself behind a bush. This move caused Conal, Orson, and Logan to lose sight of him.

The trio, unaware of Erik's nearby hiding place, continued their pursuit, pushing deeper into the forest. They searched, covering several kilometers in their hunt, oblivious that he had eluded them just moments before.

"Logan..." Conal's voice carried a hint of uncertainty.

"WHAT?!" Logan's frustrated response had no delay.

"I don't think it is safe here!" Conal uneasy glanced around the unfamiliar surroundings.

"Why shouldn't it be safe?" Logan's brow furrowed.

"It's just... a forest inside the barrier seems odd, don't you think?" Conal's eyes shifted from tree to tree.

"What do you mean, you coward? We are inside the barrier!"

"Are we sure about that?" Orson interjected, his voice quieter, more contemplative than Logan's, but tinged with skepticism.

"Of course we are! It's impossible to get past it without going through the military outposts! What are you scared of?" Logan's assertion was forceful, an attempt to dispel the growing apprehension, but his glance too darted around, betraying a hint of his own uncertainty.

Conal and Orson exchanged nervous glances, each hoping Logan's confidence in their safety was not misplaced.

"We're being toyed with."

Conal nodded in agreement, his expression grave, the reality of their situation sinking in.

At that point, Orson became unsure about following his two friends.

They pressed forward, remaining vigilant for any sign of the masked man's presence. After enduring what felt like an endless stretch of unsettling quiet, they detected a sound.

"There!" Conal said, directing their attention towards the source of the noise. But his initial reaction to discovery turned to a shiver of horror as he took in the scene before them. Six insect-like monsters stood gazing at them, their stares suggesting that they viewed the trio as nothing less than a delectable feast.