

## BIOLOGICAL 78

### Chapter 78: The Tournament (6)

The moment the referee's whistle pierced the air, Zakir lunged at Erik with a confidence that suggested he was underestimating his adversary.

While launching into a swift aerial assault, Zakir drew back his arms and thrust his knee forward, aiming a vicious strike at Erik's head. His strategy was clear: deliver maximum damage and aim for a knockout.

Erik, just barely evading the onslaught, realized the sheer speed and power Zakir possessed. It was clear this was no ordinary match, especially being only the second round.

In mid-air, Zakir, noticing Erik's evasion, extended his leg in a gravity-defying move. He aimed a sidekick at Erik's head. With no room to dodge, Erik raised his arms to shield his head.

The force of Zakir's kick reverberated through Erik's arms, sending his head spinning for a moment. But now he had an idea about what kind of person he was fighting against: someone who knew how to use his body well.

However, grasping Zakir's fighting style and countering it were two distinct challenges. Zakir stood strong, his mastery over his body and exceptional physical capabilities far surpassing those of his peers.

The fight between Erik and Zakir quickly became the center of attention, drawing a crowd eager to witness the outcome.

Many of the audience had come hoping to see Erik defeated. While some were familiar with Zakir's reputation, others were not, yet the consensus tilted in Zakir's favor.

The air filled with chants of "Zakir! Zakir! Zakir!" and cries for more action, revealing the crowd's anticipation of a spectacle.

As Erik steadied himself, he saw Zakir charging towards him, instilling a sense of panic.

Erik, less experienced in combat than his opponent, struggled to devise a defense against such a fierce adversary.

Within moments, Zakir closed the distance, launching a punch aimed at Erik's face. The young man, however, was not an easy target. His enhanced abilities, thanks to the system, elevated his combat prowess beyond what was typical of his rank.

He dodged each of Zakir's punches, yet found himself trapped in a defensive stance, unable to repel his opponent.

"That's all your awakening amount to? You can barely do anything."

His next move was a blistering fast punch to Erik's stomach, one that Erik couldn't evade. The blow forced the air out of Erik's lungs, and as he doubled over in pain, Zakir seized the moment.

With ruthless efficiency, he delivered a powerful knee strike to Erik's face, sending him sprawling to the ground.

It looked like the fight was going to end already.

"ZAKIR!"

"ZAKIR!"

"ZAKIR!"

The crowd was chanting his name.

"ZAKIR!"

"ZAKIR!"

"ZAKIR!"

"C'MON! LET ME SEE WHAT YOU CAN REALLY DO!"

Erik rose to his feet, wiping the trickle of blood from his nose with a swift movement of his thumb. He adopted the classic Kyokar fighting stance, left foot back, right foot forward, fists raised in readiness.

"That's it? Let me see!"

In response, Erik launched an offensive. He closed the gap between them and unleashed a barrage of punches.

This sudden onslaught caught Zakir off balance, contrasting with the ease he had exhibited earlier.

Erik's superior strength and speed became his primary weapons, countering Zakir's impeccable technique and vast experience.

Erik was naturally stronger and faster than Zakir, and it was his only edge against his flawless technique and a ton of experience.

At that moment, the system user realized that if he wanted to win this match, he had to take advantage of his physical capabilities. However, he also decided to take advantage of the system to pry into his opponent's information.

<Analysis. >

A blue and white screen appeared in front of him, in a small corner of his peripheral.

Erik could simultaneously absorb the information on the screen and maintain his focus on the intense fight.

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- Name: Zakir Nguyen.

- Brain crystal power: Dark Tendril (UNIQUE)

-Race: Human.

-Physical characteristics: Standing roughly at 1.80 meters with a lean build, he weighs about 75 kilograms.

-Personality and traits: As per Amber Joyce's account, he aligns with the profile of a sociopath. This assessment is consistent with observed behaviors. He exhibits marked aggression, impulsivity, and a heightened state of agitation. His aggressive nature is not just suggested but blatantly apparent. His actions and reactions, especially before the fight, reinforce this perception.

He exudes an aura of hostility and appears to be ready to escalate conflicts with little provocation.

-Power Level: 58

-Approximate Strength: 14

-Approximate Intelligence: 7

-Approximate Dexterity: 15

-Approximate Energy: 654

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<Just as suspected... >

Zakir's physical capabilities fell short of Erik's, yet the level of energy he possessed left Erik astounded.

His energy reserves were considerable, not the highest Erik had encountered, but impressive. Zakir's past place among the top 20 students seemed justified; his behavior alone likely cost him that spot.

<I wonder what his rank is... > He had no way of knowing that presently, unless he asked around.

Erik's confidence surged as he realized the gap in their physical stats. Despite Zakir's substantial energy, the disparity was significant enough for Erik to envision a path to victory.

Zakir's combat skills, while formidable, didn't surpass Amber's. The tournament's rules, prohibiting lethal force, played to Erik's advantage, limiting Zakir's ability to fully harness his brain crystal power.

Zakir's sole edge lay in his endurance, his ability to sustain his brain crystal power. But with his more destructive capabilities constrained, Erik saw his opportunity.

However, outside the competition, Erik would lose if his opponent used his power to the fullest. However, here, in this controlled environment, Erik held the upper hand.

The awakener intensified his offensive, realizing the urgency of securing victory.

Zakir, initially nimble, faltered under Erik's relentless physical assault. His stamina waning, he struggled to keep pace. Yet, neither combatant had tapped into their brain crystal powers.

<He's more skilled than I expected, > Erik thought to himself.

At that moment, Zakir shifted his approach. Aware of the potency of his powers, he displayed his abilities rather than attempting to overpower Erik with raw force.

While concentrating on his mana, Zakir's energy flowed to his back, gathering and solidifying. Seconds later, two dark purple tentacles sprouted, extending from his body.

The madman then whipped at Erik with his humongous eldritch appendages, but the young man noticed this and stepped back, avoiding Zakir's attack by an air breadth.

The tendrils struck the ground with such force that they shattered the earth, leaving two gaping holes, each the size of a basketball and two meters deep. It was a devastating move.

Zakir hadn't expected Erik's agility. Meanwhile, Erik realized the lethality of those tendrils; a direct hit could injure him. After having seen how crazy Zakir was, Erik wouldn't even be surprised if they had the power to kill him. Yet, he was determined not to let Zakir land a blow.

The referee, witnessing the dangerous maneuver, intervened.

"No lethal techniques are permitted. This is your first warning. Control yourself, or face disqualification."

Erik understood the gravity of the situation. Given Zakir's unstable nature, he had to be vigilant to expect and evade his unpredictable, dangerous attacks.

Zakir lashed out once more, the tendrils whipping through the air towards Erik. The challenge of dodging them intensified as Zakir pumped more mana into the tendrils, enhancing their speed and force.

As Erik leapt back to evade, Zakir seized the opportunity. One tendril snaked out, attempting to ensnare Erik and draw him closer. Yet Erik's agility shone through. He twisted free from the grasp of the menacing appendage.

In a swift motion, Erik closed the gap and delivered a solid punch to Zakir's face. The sound of the impact resounded, drawing gasps from the onlookers. Zakir stumbled backward, landing on the ground with a thud.

"Is that all you can do?" Erik said. Zakir maniacally laughed at that. Zakir, undeterred, used his tendrils with acrobatic finesse to spring back to his feet. Mid-leap, he executed a horizontal slash at Erik, who bent away from the strike.

It was at that moment that Zakir charged at him. Zakir launched himself with the tendrils and gained unprecedented momentum, making it hard for Erik to avoid getting hit.

