

BIOLOGICAL 83

Chapter 83: Odd Encounter (3)

Erik watched as the spikes protruding from his back disappeared, as if they had never been there. The heavy body of the Leylarhad collapsed onto him, its blood soaking his clothes in a deep crimson hue.

While struggling under the weight of the dead creature, Erik pushed the carcass off and dumped it to the side with a heavy thud. He stood there for a moment, studying the lifeless form. Then, almost instinctively, he dipped his fingers into one of the wounds and tasted the blood.

[LEYLARHAD'S BLOOD GAINED. STARTING THE ANALYSIS.]

[ANALYSIS COMPLETE.]

[50 DNA POINTS ARE REQUIRED TO EXTRACT THE DNA.]

[2360 DNA POINTS DETECTED. DO YOU WANT TO START THE EXTRACTION?]

Erik didn't hesitate. "No," he said.

He knew better than to begin such a process amid a thaid-infested forest. It was safer to wait until he was home.

His next task was gruesome, but necessary. He grabbed the Leylarhad's head and smashed it against a nearby rock to crack open the skull. After several forceful blows, he split the skull apart.

Erik reached into the cavity, and then his fingers searched through the brain matter until he found the brain crystal. The small, transparent orb was about half the size of a coin. He cleaned it off as best he could before swallowing it whole, grimacing at the lingering taste of brain matter.

[LEYLARHAD'S BRAIN CRYSTAL ACQUIRED. STARTING THE ANALYSIS.]

[ANALYSIS COMPLETE.]

[50 DNA POINTS ARE REQUIRED TO EXTRACT THE POWER.]

[2360 DNA POINTS DETECTED. EXTRACTION IS NOT ADVISED; THE HOST HAS INCOMPATIBLE DNA.]

[EXTRACTION ABORTED]

Now the only problem was that his clothes were drenched in blood. Fortunately, he still had the dirty clothes he wore during his fight with Zakir.

He used the blood-soaked garments to clean himself off as much as he could, then changed into the sweaty, less bloody clothes. He stuffed the stained ones into his backpack, aware of the unpleasant odor emanating from him.

<This will do, for now. As soon as I arrive at Mister Fox's house, I will clean myself at the water hose... > the young man thought.

His brisk ten-minute walk brought him to the breach's edge, which he had approached during his escape. He entered the wheat field and made his way toward the farm.

The sight of Mister Fox's farm soon came into view, its familiar structures like the old barn, house, and surrounding fence offering a sense of normalcy. The land, worked on by machinery and the more than twenty workers in the fields, buzzed with activity.

Upon reaching the gate, Mister Fox welcomed Erik, who maintained a distance to avoid them noticing the smell of blood on him.

After a brief exchange, Erik excused himself to the water hose behind the barn. The summer heat was still oppressive, but it made for a comfortable wash. He cleaned his body and somewhat cleansed the blood-stained clothes and backpack, though they were far from perfect.

Erik then moved to the fields, ready to use his powers for his job. As he channeled mana, a wave of heat enveloped him, the air turning hot and humid. His power flowed into the surrounding vegetation, filling the air with the scent of flora.

Fruits on the trees grew larger and sweeter, grass turned lusher, and carrots sprouted, large and robust. The crops flourished under his influence, transforming the wheat fields into vast multi-colored expanses.

Berries dotted the bushes, flowers bloomed in vivid colors, and mushrooms sprouted from the earth. Even the weeds grew strong, almost metallic in their resilience.

The farm workers and Mister Fox, now used to Erik's abilities, no longer expressed surprise but remained in awe. Each time Erik wielded his power, it was a spectacle, a miraculous transformation of nature that never ceased to amaze.

After completing his task, Erik watched as the farm went back to normal and the workers resumed their usual activities. Now they harvested the abundant fruits, berries, and vegetables he had helped grow.

Erik made his way to the barn to retrieve his backpack and then sought Mister Fox to collect his pay. Not that he needed it anymore. The biological supercomputer solved the money issue.

It was since that day that Erik was eating more fancy stuff. He couldn't buy stuff that was too easy to be seen or noticed, but he knew what to do with that money.

The old man, usually stern, greeted him with an uncharacteristically broad smile. Despite the warmth of the gesture, Mister Fox's smile seemed out of place, driven more by greed than genuine affection. His eyes shone with delight at the sight of the flourishing fields and the bountiful harvest, the fruits of Erik's labor.

His eyes sparkled when he saw the trees develop their fruits. The sight of those massive plums or pears growing and ripening and being harvested by the farmers warmed his heart.

Mister Fox had always cherished the farming life and was skilled in it. But the satisfaction he derived from selling the crops, particularly those nurtured by Erik, was exceptional.

To him, Erik had become a symbol of prosperity, a human talisman for wealth. The old man struggled to find the right words for Erik, managing only a simple yet insincere, "Good job, kid."

Erik acknowledged the compliment with a polite nod, although he felt a twinge of discomfort at Mister Fox's transparently greedy demeanor.

<The time this man takes advantage of me will end soon... > Erik thought. <I just need to justify the money I earn somehow. >

Mister Fox then handed over Erik's earnings. With the money in hand, Erik left the farm, his thoughts now turning to his journey back home. He had much to do: further training of his neural links and extracting the DNA and brain crystal power of the Leylarhad.

Erik's journey home was uneventful, giving him ample time to reflect on the dangerous encounter he had survived that day. Once home, he dedicated a few hours to refining his neural links. After this focused training session, Erik turned his attention to the biological supercomputer, querying about the Leylarhad's brain crystal power.

"System, how long will it take to assimilate the Leylarhad's brain crystal power?"

[RESPONSE: SIX HOURS NEEDED FOR THE LEYLARHAD'S BRAIN CRYSTAL POWER TO BE ASSIMILATED. BEGIN PROCEDURE? 50 DNA POINTS REQUIRED. IMPOSSIBLE TO START THE EXTRACTION, MISSING DNA DETECTED.]

"Yeah, of course... System, start absorbing the Leylarhad's DNA."

[CONFIRMED. STARTING THE LEYLARHAD'S DNA ABSORPTION. DEDUCTING 50 DNA POINTS. EXTRACTION BEGINNING. RECOMMENDATION: REST ON A BED DURING PROCESS.]

"Let's do this..."

As the procedure begun, a wave of excruciating pain engulfed Erik, compelling him to clench his teeth and suppress his instinctive cries. He gritted his teeth. "SHIT!"

The relentless agony was inescapable, invading every nerve in his body. His thoughts, once clear and focused, now dwindled to a sluggish crawl.

The surrounding room seemed to spiral out of control, whirling in a dizzying, chaotic dance. A sharp, piercing tinnitus erupted in his ears, a torment that added another layer to his suffering.

The intensity of the pain magnified, as if invisible claws were tearing at his flesh. The feeling of being consumed by an unseen inferno ravaged his senses. His skin felt as if it were ablaze, every touch of air like the lick of scorching flames.

In these excruciating moments, time stretched and contorted, minutes stretched into what felt like endless hours. Each second was a battle, a struggle against the desire to succumb to the torment.

But slowly the agony waned. The crushing pressure eased, the fiery grip loosened, and the room's spinning abated.

The shrill ring in his ears faded to a dull hum, then to silence. Relief washed over Erik, leaving him trembling in its wake.

He lay there, taking deep, steadying breaths, his mind emerging from the fog of suffering, grateful for the reprieve and the silence that followed the storm.

[DNA ABSORPTION COMPLETED. HOST DNA NOW COMPATIBLE WITH THE LEYLARHAD'S BRAIN CRYSTAL POWER.]

"Start the brain crystal power extraction," Erik said, steeling himself for the next phase.

[PREPARATION COMPLETE. STARTING THE EXTRACTION OF THE LEYLARHAD'S BRAIN CRYSTAL POWER. 50 DNA POINTS UTILIZED. SIX-HOUR DURATION ESTIMATED FOR COMPLETION. RECOMMENDATION: REST ON A BED DURING PROCEDURE.]