

BIOLOGICAL 93

Chapter 93: The tournament (13)

Both combatants were fast and dashed toward each other at breakneck speed. Jacqueline immediately unsheathed her claws.

They jutted out from small slits between her knuckles and were at least ten centimeters long. They weren't that sharp, probably because the young woman had to keep them safe enough not to kill Erik, but they were threatening nonetheless.

They didn't look like bones at all but, instead, had a rather metallic look, as if they were industrially made. That was probably one of Jacqueline's power perks, allowing her to shape the claws. If that was true, Erik had to pay attention.

Since the young woman started with the big guns already drawn, Erik responded in kind. By making his mana travel from the brain crystal to the rest of the body through his neural links, he created his usual thin coat of sharp mana, making it surround his arms.

CLING! CLANG!

The sound Erik's mana-coated arms and Jacqueline's claws made when making contact was that of metal. That was in itself surprising since Erik' didn't clearly have metal anywhere, and Jacqueline's claws were made of bones.

The young man unleashed a punch at his opponent, but she was very fast and was able to dodge it with ease. Erik retracted his fist before Jacqueline had the opportunity to attack him.

To do so, he channeled an untold amount of strength into his right foot and jumped two meters on his right, gaining distance from his opponent and having time to readjust his position.

At that moment, though, the young man understood that Miss Wiley was not an easy opponent since she sped toward Erik at unprecedented speed, erasing the distance Erik had just gained in a matter of seconds and punching at Erik's face.

SWOOSH

Erik bent back and, with an agile move, placed his hands on the ground to gain momentum in order to free his legs from his weight and kick Jacqueline on the chin. A move that, this time, was successful.

THUD

Erik spent the next few moments spinning on himself, basically doing a somersault and jumping two meters high, landing on his two feet a couple of meters behind. The kick, instead, sent Jacqueline flying, though she was able to regain her footing the next second, and she too, landed on her feet while looking at Erik.

"You are better than expected, Erik Romano..." The woman said.

"You are not bad either," Erik replied with a huge smile on his face. That was it, the thrill of the fight. Since the first time he killed a thaïd, Erik didn't stop longing for this feeling.

It almost intoxicated him when he was fighting against Logan and was only amplified now by the fact that he was facing someone who could actually hurt him.

Jacqueline looked at her clawed hands, then up at Erik, still smiling, "I will make sure you won't get another chance to hit me." With those words, she rushed forward again, trying to be as unpredictable as possible and catch Erik off guard.

The speed she showed was unbelievable for a RHO individual, meaning that her neural links mostly enhanced her strength, making her muscles strong enough to have an insane burst of power.

Erik could keep up with the young woman thanks to his enhanced dexterity, which improved his coordination and reflexes. Still, as the two fought, Erik realized that the young woman had to have an insane amount of strength.

<Analysis,> Erik thought, and immediately, a transparent blue and white window appeared on his peripheral.

- Name: Jacqueline Wiley.

- Brain crystal power: Bone Claws (Uncommon)

-Race: Human.

-Physical characteristics: Approximately 1.75 centimeters tall. Lean build. Estimated weight 65 kilos.

-Personality and traits: She appears to be a very equilibrated person. Her martial art is top-notch, and her brain crystal power complements well her fighting style.

-Power Level: 47

-Approximate Strength: 17

-Approximate Intelligence: 14

-Approximate Dexterity: 14

-Approximate Energy: 40

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<She almost has as much strength as I do, and I'm at a disadvantage in terms of mana... This won't be an easy fight> Erik thought while avoiding another attack from Jacqueline.

Despite being slightly slower than him, Erik had difficulty avoiding her attacks since she was also an expert fighter.

She probably trained much more than he did, as he could reach decent fighting levels only thanks to his high dexterity and the biological supercomputer ability to imprint almost every piece of knowledge into his brain in an instant.

At that moment, a dangerous move from Jacqueline made Erik almost shit his pants. She raised her right leg in an attempt to kick him.

Erik dodged the move only to realize that it was a feint and that her real kick was coming. Jacqueline started to spin insanely fast on herself, rotating her body as if she was made of rubber and gaining momentum. She charged a roundhouse kick that was aimed at his head.

If Erik got hit by that attack, he was confident she would have knocked him out. Still, luckily, Erik was able to jump back in the nick of time, successfully avoiding the attack.

The move was so strong that it made the wind around Erik stir like a stormy sea and caused Erik's hair to blow away behind his head, despite the fact that the young man had jumped back.

"That was dangerous," Erik said with incredulous eyes.

"You have seen nothing yet!" Jacqueline replied.

Soon, the two started again, with Erik and his opponent exchanging punch after punch and dodging attack after attack. The fight was pretty good to watch since the two fighters had similar styles and were at similar levels.

Their brain crystal powers were not particularly oppressive like Adam's or Zakir's ones but well suited for martial arts.

Unbeknownst to the duo, too focused on their fight, a small crowd gathered around them. Some of them were Jacqueline's fans who came to support her in her fight, but most of them were there only to see Erik lose.

It was common knowledge that Erik wasn't anymore as he was a month ago. And despite maintaining a generally low profile, not talking much, and not disturbing anyone, he proved to be extremely arrogant in some circumstances.

One of them was during his confrontation inside the cafeteria, and another was when he dared to talk back to Priya and multiple other people at the school entrance.

The problem was that Erik wasn't totally a prick. If he just had a domineering attitude toward the other people and struck fear in them, they would have probably left him alone, but Erik wasn't like that.

At the cafeteria and at the school entrance, Erik went way out of character. He didn't like behaving like a prick, but he knew it was sometimes necessary. However, Erik started building confidence slowly but surely, which was why he talked to Jacqueline without problems or gave snarky replies to Zakir during their match.

Sometimes, though, Erik lost any regard for whoever was in front of him. It was a sudden thing, a situation that Erik had no control over. The same thing happened with Logan, Conal, and Orson inside the forest. At that time, the young man was consumed by hatred, and something inside him triggered. In that rare moments, Erik would become worse than Logan, Conal, and Orson put together.

"Who do you think is going to win?" a girl asked her friend.

"I don't know, but I really hope its the plant hugger..."

"There is no chance Jacque is going to lose," A guy chimed in. "She is undoubtedly stronger than the plant hugger. You can't even compare the two!" he added.

"Are you blind?" the girl replied. "They are basically even!"