

CHAOS' HEIR

Chapter 10 - Enlisting

Khan didn't manage to make the girl talk, so he limited himself to resume his training. The mana flowed faster toward his brain and body under his attention, and the tingling sensation never stopped running through his skin.

The ride on the truck went by quickly. The transport only took a few hours to reach its destination since it flew above the Slums. When it landed, a couple of soldiers unsealed the fabric covering the container and told Khan and the girl to jump off.

A spectacular scenery unfolded in Khan's vision. He had the familiar Slums on one side and a tall structure on the other. The entrance to the domain of the Global Army resembled a massive metal palace surrounded by towering walls.

The walls were black and protected Ylaco's central districts. They surrounded the actual city and the various training grounds. The Slums were only dumps built around those defenses.

'I remember this scene,' Khan thought while inspecting the defensive walls and the tall structure.

Khan didn't recall much about his life inside Ylaco, but he had often visited his father at work with his mother back then. The structures of the Global Army shared a similar style, so he could sense a certain familiarity in that scene.

"Just enter the building and fill the forms," One of the soldiers said to Khan and the girl. "Enlisting is easy. What comes after not so much."

The girl performed a proper military salute. She placed both arms behind her waist and straightened her back, but the soldier ignored that gesture.

'Her situation must be similar to mine,' Khan guessed. 'Maybe her family still has ties with the Global Army.'

The people in the Slums rarely joined the Global Army. That force promised power and training, but it also imposed obligations and dangers.

The Global Army could compel its best soldiers to defend specific outposts on distant planets or go to war against threatening creatures born from mana. That job had a high death ratio. Most of those who enlisted from the Slums directly refused the mana core to remain on Earth.

Moreover, the citizens of the Slums didn't trust the Global Army enough to put their lives in its hands. The behavior of the soldiers in those districts made them lose any desire to become part of that rotten system.

Of course, Khan had no intention of becoming one of the lazy soldiers pretending to enforce order in the Slums. He wanted to travel to different planets and hunt for the Nak, even if that would turn him into a slave of the army.

The girl immediately ran toward the entrance of the tall structure, and Khan slowly followed her. He wasn't in a hurry to enter the training ground since the enlistment period would still take a few weeks to end.

A few soldiers stopped both of them at the entrance. They didn't bother to ask for documents since Khan and the girl clearly came from the Slums. Still, they took their signature and registered their fingerprints before allowing them inside the building.

"Hold on a second!" One of the soldiers suddenly said after Khan registered his fingerprints. "You are already in the system, but your last name has been erased. You must come with me."

Even the girl stopped to look at the scene. It wasn't too rare for the people in the Slums to have a relatively important past, but the erasure of the last name was a serious matter.

Khan inspected the soldier, ignoring most of her features. His focus was on her uniform. The woman had a star on both arms.

"Have you ever heard of Bret, the previous head of the science division?" Khan asked.

His identity wasn't a secret. The Global Army already knew who he was, but Khan wanted to avoid wasting time. The soldiers would have to ask many authorizations to find the censored files connected to his last name.

The woman's eyes lit up. She didn't know Bret personally, and she had never met him. However, she knew the story about the scientist who lost everything after the Second Impact.

"I'm his son," Khan added when he noticed the changes in her expression.

The soldier wanted to add something, but the details of that story began to fill her mind. A holoscreen came out of her watch, and she pointed it at Khan while whispering a few faint words.

The screen quickly became green, confirming Khan's story, and the soldier let him proceed without asking further questions.

'I hope Dad didn't make people too angry here,' Khan sighed while proceeding through a large hall.

The soldier would definitely warn the higher-ups about Khan's arrival, but he couldn't do much about it. His identity would have come out sooner or later anyway.

Technology that Khan had never seen filled the hall. A dark metal almost made the entirety of the furniture, and electric torches shone on the tall

ceiling. A series of desks featuring holoscreens occupied half of that room, while comfortable chairs stood on the other side.

Khan neared one of the desks and completed his enlistment. The soldier on the other side used his watch to check Khan's age before handing him a series of digital sheets to sign.

After reading through those sheets, Khan signed the documents and officially became part of the army. The easy part was over. He had to go through the training camp now.

"Follow the corridor," The soldier said once Khan had completed all the steps. "It will lead you to your quarters, where you can rest until the enlistment period ends. Someone will then pick you up and bring you to the training camp."

Khan followed those instructions and quickly found a small room that featured a bed, a bathroom, a chair, and a table. That wasn't much, but it was far better than his house in the Slums.

'I guess they will take care of the food,' Khan thought while putting his bag on the ground and eating one of his last cans.

The door of the room closed automatically, and a series of menus appeared on its surface. Khan inspected them and discovered that the habitation offered many services to help him get through that period.

'They have games, food, movies, books, but nothing related to the mana,' Khan understood after a quick inspection of the services. 'I guess they won't let me roam freely through the building. I'm stuck here.'

The news didn't bother Khan. That room was a paradise compared to how he had lived in the last eleven years. His training and the free food would make him go through the isolation in a blink.

Khan began to meditate after choosing a few plates on the menu. The food arrived thirty minutes later, accompanied by a new set of clothes and a series of clean towels.

'I bet that Dad's cell isn't as comfortable,' Khan thought while changing his clothes.

His bag was pointless now. Khan could get a new one through the menus on the door. He could also obtain multiple sets of clothes for free.

After upgrading his equipment, Khan threw himself into his training, alternating light workout to long meditations. He didn't sleep much, but he went all-out when it came to eating.

The enlisting period ended quickly. Khan kept track of the passage of time through the digital watch on the door-menu, so he made sure to be wholly rested on his last day of isolation.

During the afternoon of that day, writings suddenly covered the walls of the room, and a mechanical voice soon resounded inside it.

"The device is ready to depart," The voice announced. "Brace yourself for launch."

The writings on the wall said the same thing, but they also had a timer that was dangerously reaching zero. Khan quickly leaned next to the bed before pressure fell on him and made him crouch on the ground.

The pressure soon vanished. It lasted for less than an instant, but the event had been too sudden. Still, that was nothing compared to the surprise that Khan felt when part of the door became transparent and showed him what was happening in the outside world.

'This thing is flying!' Khan shouted in his mind when he saw the scenery from the window.

The whole room had set off from the tall structure and was flying toward the training camp. From his position, Khan could also see a few more rooms flying behind him.

The travel took a few hours. The landing ended up being quite awful, but the doors finally opened afterward. A dark corridor appeared in Khan's view. The illumination worked, but someone had purposely created a dark environment.

Khan peeked out of the door. The girl from before and a short boy were doing the same from their respective rooms. They were all in the same place with no idea what to do.

A series of arrows suddenly lit up on the ground and pointed toward a side of the corridor. Khan, the girl, and the boy quickly took their belongings and exited their rooms to follow those marks.

The arrows led the trio into a large hall that featured some more young boys and girls. There were seven of them there, and none of them seemed to go past eighteen years old.

Khan was about to ask something to those people, but a metal door closed behind him and sealed the hall. Writings then appeared on the walls before a mechanical voice resounded through the room.

"You will all perform a quick test now," The voice said. "You should pick some weapons. You will need them."

Part of the walls opened when the voice finished its line. Weapons of various sizes and nature came out of them, attracting the attention of the ten in the room.