

CHAOS' HEIR

Chapter 18 - Lessons

Khan woke up early in the morning and left before Samuel. He didn't want to see if his friends had prepared something for him, and the conversation from the previous night wasn't enough to make him trust the boy.

The canteen was already open by then. Only a few recruits and soldiers roamed through the building at that hour, so Khan could enjoy his breakfast alone and review his schedule.

'History of mana in two hours,' Khan read on his phone. 'Basics of mana cores will come right after. Both of them are mandatory courses, so my poor knowledge shouldn't be a problem.'

Khan had scored A-plus in the initial test. Some of his courses differed from the other recruits since the Global Army placed his foundation above them.

Khan had feared that his initial success could eventually hurt his instruction, but it seemed that the Global Army had planned everything perfectly. All the courses that involved knowledge about the mana were mandatory. His good grade only affected the physical lessons.

Waiting those two hours felt hellish to Khan. He spent the first ten minutes after his breakfast roaming around the building, but he eventually found an isolated spot and entered a meditative state.

Training was the best method to kill time. A single session could last for hours, and Khan would barely sense it.

Khan had obviously set the alarm, but a familiar voice interrupted his training before his phone could ring.

"What are you even doing here?" Martha Weesso asked when she saw Khan sitting cross-legged in the corner of a park near the building.

"Long time no see," Khan scratched the corner of his eyes before standing up and revealing a broad smile.

Martha wasn't alone. Two girls were with her and inspected Khan from head to toe, and he could see from their expressions that they didn't like what they saw.

"Is he a friend of yours?" One of the girls asked.

"Why is he sitting on the ground?" The other girl added.

'I guess people can understand my background even if I shower every day,' Khan sighed in his mind. 'Well, I probably won't need condoms.'

"You can go ahead," Martha said without bothering to answer her friends. "He is a classmate from the special courses. I have something to discuss with him."

The two girls widened their eyes at those words. Only the recruits who had scored A in the initial tests had access to the special courses. Their opinion of Khan changed immediately, and they even shot smiles toward him when they left.

Khan waved his hand toward the girls before turning toward Martha. An honest smirk appeared on his face as he gave voice to his thoughts. "Thank you, but don't worry. I don't need your help."

"You definitely do when it comes to girls," Martha laughed. "Luke might be a bit pushy, but he has some charm at least."

"Don't I have charm?" Khan laughed before wearing a serious expression and placing his hand under his chin.

"You still have some dirt on your trousers," Martha laughed while covering her mouth.

Khan suddenly noticed the few brown spots on his dark-blue uniform and proceeded to clean them up. Martha continued to laugh while she watched the boy patting his butt in the attempt to remove the dirt.

"You are hilarious," Martha commented when Khan finished cleaning himself and showed her his thumbs.

"I guess I don't see the need for formalities," Khan commented. "The Slums are better in that sense. They are dirty and dangerous, but you could always understand the intentions of those around you."

"Can't you understand mine?" Martha replied while wearing an innocent expression.

"I have seen what you can do with hammers," Khan snorted. "And you can't beat the master of pretense here."

"I should perfect my art in the Slums," Martha continued. "The best training ground for actors."

"You got that right," Khan laughed.

"Come on," Martha said while pulling Khan's uniform. "The first lesson will start in ten minutes. I don't want to be late on my first day. Also, give me your number. I can't believe that I have to ask for it."

"It's part of my charm," Khan replied while making the previous face, but Martha simply laughed and took out her phone.

The duo walked around the tall building. A crowd made of many young recruits had gathered around the entrance. The boys and girls chatted happily and exchanged numbers as they waited until the last second to join the lesson.

"Why don't they enter already?" Khan asked.

"The first lessons have nothing important for them," Martha explained. "Most of their families have already taught them a lot. Some of them don't even consider mana as a miracle. It's simple normality for them."

"Are you like them?" Khan asked, and he didn't fail to notice the faint sadness that appeared on Martha's face after his words.

"My family is relatively poor," Martha explained. "I live next to the training camps, in the worst districts of Ylaco. I have my grandfather to thank for my mana core. I would have had to opt for a synthetic C-tier otherwise."

Khan didn't answer. Martha's face told him that it wasn't the time to crack jokes. He knew how important silence could be in those situations.

A group of four boys suddenly appeared in the corner of Khan's vision. He recognized Bloke, Samuel, and the other two who had tried to bully him one week ago, and the four also noticed him.

Bloke revealed a cold smile, but Khan limited himself to wink at him. He even scratched his groin and turned when he saw angry expressions appearing on the group.

"Friends of yours?" Martha asked when she noticed that interaction.

"I'm everyone's friend," Khan laughed.

The duo entered the building and reached the staircase near the canteen. They quickly found the room for the lesson through their phones, and a large hall filled with seats soon unfolded in their vision.

The hall was immense. It featured a series of screens on one side and many elevated seats on the other. Khan guessed that the room could contain more than five hundred students, and the sheer size of that place left him slightly dumbfounded.

"Let's take a seat," Martha said while climbing the steps that led to the rows in the back.

"Won't we have problems hearing the professor from there?" Khan asked.

"The desks have many functions," Martha laughed. "Following the lesson won't be a problem. You can even watch it on your phone later on. The Global Army makes sure to put everything on its network."

Martha's explanation left Khan speechless, but he quickly recovered and followed her in the back rows. Students soon began to walk inside the room, and Luke eventually appeared in the distance.

"Mind if we join you?" Luke asked as a boy remained behind him. "He is Bruce Eerly, another recruit who scored A in the initial test."

Bruce was shorter than Luke but taller than Khan. He had a slender physique, short black hair, and dark eyes. He was slightly less good-looking than Luke, but a noble aura surrounded his figure.

Martha and Khan didn't oppose the duo, and the lesson started after they exchanged a few casual words.

A middle-aged fat man called Andrew Conche quickly entered the room. He wore a military uniform that featured a star on both shoulders. The class automatically activated a few functions at his arrival, and the screens behind him lit up before the beginning of the lesson.

A series of menus suddenly appeared on Khan's desk. He could zoom on the professor, draw headphones to listen to his words, or read from a screen that automatically transcribed his lines.

'This is way too perfect!' Khan thought as he drew headphones and zoomed on the professor to make sure that he didn't miss a single word.

The lesson was quite boring, but Khan didn't dare to get distracted anyway. Professor Conche described the events right after the First Impact and reviewed the initial accomplishments of the humans with mana.

'This is quite vague,' Khan thought while listening to the lesson. 'It doesn't make any technical descriptions. He is basically reading a list of feats.'

The lesson couldn't end quickly enough. Most of the recruits had utterly given up on listening to Professor Conche by the end of the class. Only Khan and a few students continued to pay attention for its whole duration.

"That was incredibly boring," Luke exclaimed once the lesson was over. "Any reporter can do a better job in explaining this stuff."

"They already do," Bruce laughed. "I'm pretty sure the professor is reading the scripts of one of the recent documentaries."

"And we have to listen to him even for the next lesson," Martha sighed.

The ten-minutes break went by quickly. Very few recruits left their seats, and even Professor Conche only limited himself to do a short walk outside of the room.

The second lesson was far more interesting for Khan, even if most recruits still found it boring. Professor Conche reviewed the main differences among mana cores, a topic that most boys and girls knew thanks to their families.

"Both synthetic and organic cores have weaknesses," Professor Conche explained. "Synthetic cores take longer to raise the attunement with mana, and they eventually break since their fusion with the human body isn't perfect. Still, organic cores are far rarer, and a body requires specific training to accept them. The surgery with organic cores also is riskier since the fusion is tighter, so replacing them can lead to long-lasting injuries."

Khan felt like a sponge that absorbed every bit of knowledge that reached his ears. The second lesson was clearing most of his doubts involving the differences among mana cores.

Satisfaction soon filled his mind. Professor Conche had confirmed that he would never need to change mana core throughout his life. Khan wouldn't have to mind one of the greatest issues for soldiers.

The lesson eventually ended, and the recruits quickly left to flood the canteen. Khan soon noticed that the younglings around him stared at his group in awe, and the girls even shot smiles at their passage.

"Luke has told everyone that he made it to the special courses," Martha explained when she noticed Khan's confused expression. "All the camp will guess that we belong to the same class since we are with him."

"Is it important to score A?" Khan asked. "Lieutenant Unchai said that everyone could reach the upper courses."

"But very few do it," Bruce explained. "Most of the recruits even have to skip the initial physical lessons to recover from the transplant. Our current status says that we'll go far in the army as long as we don't mess up."

Author's notes: Do let me know if the chapters become boring or something. I'm trying to keep a quick pace, but I must slow down to build the world at times. Also, do you like this current release time?