

# Extras 41

## Chapter 41 Rey's Analysis

'Oof! This is looking bad...'

As Rey was on the ground, eating dust just like the rest of his friends, he actively observed the current battle unfolding before him.

Of course, he did so inconspicuously, since most of the people that Billy had defeated were either unconscious or too tired to watch anything.

'I made sure to get eliminated among the first batch of students. He practically one-shot me...' Rey smiled, almost as if he was proud of that achievement.

He hadn't spoken to Billy since that night when he walked back their living quarters with Alicia, but Rey constantly caught him throwing bad stares his way.

'I don't get his deal. If he wants to talk to Alicia, he can just go and meet her in the library. I'm sure they'd bond well there...'

Of course, Rey didn't like the idea of Billy sullyng the sanctuary that was the Library, but it was always an option for the latter.

'Billy looks pretty well-toned now. He's also in great shape. Plus, he's strong and popular....' Rey could easily notice all these things because of the body-hugging outfit Billy was fond of wearing.

It was in direct contrast to the baggy stuff Rey constantly put on.

'I'm sure he has more of a chance with Alicia than I ever could. He should just give it a go or something...'

Once again, Rey didn't like the idea of Billy hanging around Alicia too much.

It wasn't because he felt jealous or anything, but because he knew the kind of person the guy was.

'He was able to easily abandon me—his friend from middle school—as soon as he got the chance to.'

Billy was obviously a grifter, and Rey thought he was unreliable.

He certainly wasn't the kind of person Alicia needed in her life at this point—especially with the rumors going around and her increased isolation.

'I wonder what he's doing about the rumors, though...'

All of Billy's problems could easily be solved if he just went to the Library and developed an interest in the things that Alicia also had an affinity for.

'I mean, she practically talks to a nobody like me. I'm sure if it's Billy, she'd be able to relate more...'

But Rey knew Billy would never do that.

Even back on Earth, the boy dreaded books and was constantly failing.

'I don't claim to be very smart or anything, but at least I was average.'

Billy wasn't the 'smart' kind of Nerd. He was the kind who obsessed over s and games.

'Well, that's enough of that.'

Rey sighed as he watched Billy deliver the final blow to Trisha, who crumbled to her knees.

Despite the ebony's prowess, she just wasn't a match for Billy's superior combat.

'I see. So this is the level of an Alpha Class elite...' Rey thought to himself.

There was only one problem, though.

'This isn't impressive at all.'

Billy was one of the strongest among the Alpha Class students, but from what Rey was seeing... his overall ability wasn't particularly exceptional.

'I don't know. Could it be that he was going easy on all of us?'

Despite thinking this, Rey could clearly see Billy breathing heavily and also leaking out some beads of sweat.

'It doesn't seem like he had it too easy, though.'

Perhaps it could be argued that Billy was only acting like this to make the Beta Students feel better.

However, Billy wasn't that kind of person at all.

"You all did excellently well. I haven't been pushed like this in a while..." Even Billy admitted it as he heaved a little.

"Especially you, Trisha. You were exceptional."

Despite hearing this, Trisha didn't seem pleased in the slightest.

In fact, she had an immensely disappointing expression.

It felt like she was beating herself up for losing.

'If Billy is trying to make us feel better, he's doing a poor job.' Rey sighed.

This convinced him even further that Billy wasn't pretending to be exhausted.

He genuinely was.

'And that's what makes this whole thing surprising. I didn't expect him to get tired so easily. Especially after his mundane performance.'

Rey thought Billy's moves were too flashy and didn't properly focus on efficiency.

'Maybe it's because we've only been sparring, and no one here has any proper battle experience.'

In an actual fight with monsters, flashy and stylish moves weren't what determined a fight at all.

Techniques had to be fluid, but also impactful. Rather than focusing on style, it was more effective to cut off all extraneous material and fixate on the goal itself.

If one wanted to kill an enemy, would they focus on slicing through parts of the body, or would they simply dismember their targets and then decapitate them once they could no longer offer any kind of resistance?

'I guess it's because the Alpha Class Students have started seriously learning Martial Arts...'

The Beta Class was still in the basics, and from what Rey could see, most of what they were learning wouldn't be useful in a real fight.

It was the same way most of what students learned in school wouldn't be applicable in the real world after they graduated or sought a specific degree.

'That's why this is a waste of time...'

Rey honestly wished he could just skip Training altogether and focus on his business in the Dungeon, but he couldn't do that.

At least, not yet.

'There's no helping it. I should just be patient.'

Right now, most of the students were beginning to stir, so Rey also did the same.

They sluggishly rose to their feet at Billy's instructions, and he joined them in their obedience.

'If this is the level of the elite Alpha Students, maybe I'm a lot stronger than I think.'

However, the moment Rey thought about Adonis, and the fact that someone like him was considered qualified enough to tutor the entire Alpha Class, he changed his mind instantly.

'I shouldn't use Billy as a metric!'

Until he was certain that he was as strong as—if not stronger than—the Hero, Rey couldn't be satisfied.

'Gotta keep grinding!'

Chapter 42 Return To The Hobgoblins

'Hehe! Finally, I'm back!'

Rey had a wide grin on his face as he began to walk down the wide passageway of the seventh floor.

He had been looking forward to this moment for a while now, and there were a lot of things he couldn't start doing.

'I made sure to properly understand every single detail about Hobs that I read. While the research on them was incomplete, he practically knew all there was to know at this point.'

As per the plan, he would ensure their civilization flourished by teaching them a bunch of things and ensuring that they evolved a lot in the process.

'I should also experiment with the effects of various Monster Cores on them.'

Rey was genuinely curious about what would happen, and he was itching to find out.

"SKRRIAAAK."

"GURRIAKKA."

"HUKAKAYA."

The sounds of Hobgoblins danced in his ears as he entered the clearing.

Once again, he was greeted with a putrid odor. It wasn't as bad as the previous time, but it still smelled disgusting.

"Well... I'm back." Rey muttered as he watched the Hobs recognize his presence.

The instant they saw him, all of them—women and children—rushed to his presence.

They all kneeled and bowed their heads in subservience, speaking words in Goblin language that properly passed across a message of submission.

'Guess we're back to this...'

Rey didn't particularly dislike it, but he also wasn't the biggest enjoyer of being worshiped.

As long as they did what he wanted, he didn't mind either way.

"Well, let's begin, shall we?"

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It took all day for Rey to properly teach the Hobgoblins about hygiene.

'I honestly thought it would be like last time...' Rey thought to himself as he watched the Hobgoblins.

Unfortunately for him, teaching them about the important aspects of development wasn't nearly as easy as instructing them to harvest Monster Cores.

These green things were indeed smart, for monsters, but not by a large extent.

Rey realized he had to recognize that.

'Well, at least we made some progress today.' He comforted himself with that thought.

Not only were they able to properly set up the waste system, but Rey also taught them all about fire and its uses.

They could use it to cook, for warmth, and also to burn away all their wastes.

When Rey asked them what they drank for water, the Goblins showed them a pool of muddled water that probably had as much infection as the feces problem he had gotten rid of.

Water fell from crevices in the ceiling at particular intervals, and when it did, they let it gather in a ditch they dug themselves.

Unfortunately, this meant that the water would mix with the dirt, leaving it in an unsanitary state.

Also, since the water wasn't running, it improved the chances of disease festering.

'Monsters are living things too. While these ones have evolved to tolerate sickness in an unhygienic environment, it isn't absolute.'

Ninety percent of Hobgoblins died before reaching adulthood, and even among those who did, only seven percent made it to old age.

It was that bad.

'If I solve all these problems, just how well will they prosper?'

Rey was genuinely curious about that.

In order to solve the water problem, he instructed them to make large pots from the Orichalcum that was abundant among them.

This would allow them to cook and also harvest water into clean vessels.

'I don't know complicated stuff about homemade equipment and health practices. Maybe I'll have to learn about that too...'

Rey wondered how he was going to ask Alicia for a book recommendation on those topics.

Wouldn't it be too absurd?

'Sometimes I wonder how much she knows about what I do...'

Rey often pondered on the reason why Alicia never asked him any questions regarding how he spent his time and what he was up to.

After being caught sneaking around the Royal Estate, Rey had thought he would be constantly policed by her, but that wasn't the case at all.

'Does she know, and she's hiding it? Or is she really oblivious?'

The Alicia he knew was constantly curious and suspicious of what she didn't understand.

That alone made Rey suspect the former.

'I can't be too sure, though. I just have to remain lowkey...'

If she didn't say anything, he wouldn't as well.

The Hobgoblins weren't done constructing the pots he had instructed them to. He knew it would take a lot of trial and error, but they were bound to get the hang of it eventually.

It was getting late, though, and Rey knew he had to leave pretty soon.

Before going, he had to do two things.

The first and most important was to drain as many Monster Cores as he could from the Hobgoblins' depository.

As for the latter, it was already staring him in the face.

'I guess I should do this first...'  
Rey smiled widely as he stared at the 'thing' that had now become his opponent.

It was a NightWolf.

The dark fur of the beast danced with the stale air within the arena that the Hobgoblins had made for him, and its blackened eyes reeked of starvation.

NightWolves were usually fed the feces of the Hobgoblins, and occasionally, some grounded Orichalcum mixed with dirt.

The Hobs thought of this as the perfect revenge against the very beasts that tortured them for Eons in Goblin-Time.

'That's a pretty nasty meal if you ask me...'

As a result of their terrible diet, NightWolves were extremely weak.

Compared to the healthy-looking Hobgoblins, their bodies were pretty disproportional.

The NightWolf that currently faced Rey had a bloated stomach, but it's limbs were extremely bony.

Its fangs had been clipped off, most likely by itself.

'I noticed they occasionally eat their nails so their bellies stay full...'

It sucked to be the NightWolves, and their very existence reminded Rey that the Hobgoblins were just as cruel as he was.

No... perhaps they were even worse.

'Monsters will always be monsters.'

"GRRRRRRR..."

As the NightWolf growled, Rey prepared himself for whatever attack that would come.

'I'm not expecting much, but I'd like to see what it can do!'

Chapter 43 Rey Vs The NightWolf

~WHOOSH!~

The NightWolf lunged at Rey with primal ferocity, opening its jaws wide as it desired to rip him to pieces.

'It's faster than I expected...'

Of course, its speed was nowhere close to Rey's, as he easily evaded the beast.

Despite the NightWolf's bony legs and malnourished body, it was just as fast as an average Hobgoblin adult.

'I can only imagine how fast it would be if it was in perfect condition.'

Of course, there was no way to find out about that now.

Perhaps he could discover more about the NightWolves if he tried, but Rey genuinely had no real interest in them.

He just wanted to know their Skills.

'I have limited time. In between training myself and experimenting with the Hobs, I don't think I can handle another commitment.'

Besides, the NightWolves were the major source of nutrition for the Hobgoblins. There was no way he could just use them as he pleased.

... Not unless he had some way to substitute them for something else.

'I'm currently broke, and I don't have access to a large quantity of food.'

Since he wanted the Hobs to grow healthy and strong, forging the NightWolves was a necessary sacrifice.

'Even this single NightWolf has enough nutrients to feed dozens of Hobs. I have to leave it in good condition after I kill it.'

"GRRRAAAHHHH!"

The NightWolf charged towards Rey once again, its eyes now glowing purple for some reason.

'Could it be... a Skill?!

~BZZTZZZ!~

Crackles of lightning flashed around the NightWolf as it rushed towards Rey.

With its body coated in purple currents, its speed drastically increased, and charred marks appeared around the very ground it trod.

'I see! So that's its Skill...'

Rey wasn't particularly disappointed since he didn't have a lot of high hopes for the NightWolf, to begin with.

'My [Greater Lightning Magic] Skill can do the same, and a lot more too...'

Still, Rey wasn't done with his research.

'Let's see how much damage it can deal.'

Rey planted his foot on the ground and waited for the blow to come.

'This is the first time I'm intentionally taking a hit from a monster...'

He wasn't particularly frightened since he had Skills that could come to his aid if he was ever injured.

However, it still felt weird.

All of Rey's instincts told him to kill before got killed, or harm before he got harmed.

Anytime he was in such a zone, he went on a frenzy.

But this time, he was still.

'I genuinely want to know!'

The NightWolf closed the distance between it and Rey within a mere second, its claw raised to deliver vindictive justice.

~SWISH!~

The claw slashed through Rey's baggy shirt, and his eyes instantly widened the moment it happened.

'N-no...! How could I have been so careless!'

Rey instantly regretted his decision to stand still. It had backfired in the most unexpected way!

And no, it wasn't because he was hurt in any way.

Not even a scratch was on his body

The reason for his current distress was something far more serious.

It was...

'My favorite shirt! Goddamn it!'

Rey honestly felt like crying.

He hadn't been paying attention to what happened to his outfits too much since his defenses always ensured he would never get touched.

He had worn this current shirt because he felt great today, and now it was in tatters.

'You... it's all YOUR fault!' Rey glared at the NightWolf.

The Monster instantly felt the bloodlust that radiated from its supposed prey.

It could feel every hair on its skin stand, and all of its instincts told it to run—flee as fast as it could.

The resounding crackles of electricity danced around the NightWolf as it turned tail and deserted the fight.

"Hey! Where are you going?!" Rey yelled, but the NightWolf did not listen.

It was too busy following its internal directive.

"Oi..." Rey's voice suddenly took a dangerous turn.

~ZZZTTZZ!~

"... I asked you a question."

Purple flashes of lightning began to dance around Rey's body as he activated the same Skill that the NightWolf just displayed.

A C-Tier Skill called [Lightning Coat].

It wasn't a particularly weak Skill, though its base damage output was quite low.

What made the Skill considerably useful was its 'Buff' attribute.

It increased the user's speed and strength—though not by an extremely crazy amount.

Just a 25 percent increase.

For a weakling like the NightWolf, that number wasn't a lot.

However, for someone like Rey... it was overpowered.

~WHOOOSH!!~

Rey instantly swept through the gap between himself and the fleeing creature.

In a flash, he was right in front of the pathetic thing.

"Where the fuck do you think you're going?"

Rey grabbed the NightWolf by the throat, heading the creature whimpering instantly.



He could feel the blood and bones that stuck to the beast's trembling body. Its fur was hard and rough, but none of that conceded Rey.

Even with the crackles of electricity from the NightWolf, Rey was unbothered.

His own burst of purple electricity seemed to do the one damaging the NightWolf.

"Now I see why the Hobgoblins were able to defeat you guys..." Rey whispered.

The NightWolves were by far superior to the Hobs, but they were also straightforward creatures.

'Their attacks are predictable and usually center around my lower abdomen to my leg area.

For the Hobs, that was around their chest.

'It's no wonder their armor mostly covers their chest.'

Speaking of the Hobgoblin armor; it was made of Orichalcum, which was a nonconducting mineral.

'Add that to the Mana-dulling effect it has... the NightWolves didn't stand a chance.'

It was quite an amazing thing—how strong predators like these could lose simply because of the innovation of a weaker species.

'I wonder if the same can be applied for the Dragons...'

When it came to power versus adaptability, which would emerge superior? From what he was seeing, the latter seemed to be the case.

Rey couldn't say for sure, though.

After all... he still hadn't met a Dragon.

At least, not yet.

Chapter 44 A Sparring Dummy

The next day arrived in the blink of an eye, and once again, Billy was the one responsible for training.

Rey didn't really mind it; as long as Billy didn't pay any special attention to him and simply performed his duties as their tutor.

Unfortunately for Rey, he was in for a rude awakening.

"Rey Skylar, step forward."

Rey didn't like it when people used his full name—especially when it was being said in a public place like this.

'Reminds me of a teacher calling me out in class...'

Why couldn't he just be left alone?

Still, if he refused to step out, he would be drawing more attention to himself.

As a result of this logic, he obeyed.

"Today we're going to be reviewing the Martial Arts techniques you have been learning and providing counters for them."

Rey felt butterflies in his stomach as he felt the gaze of everyone on him.

He still wasn't very comfortable about any of this.

"After the sparring session yesterday, and the rest of it being a theoretical discussion, I have come to the conclusion that you're all lacking in a lot of areas."

At this point, no one bothered to argue with him.

Not Trisha... not Adam... and certainly not Rey.

They all knew their place as inferior students, and Billy seemed to be enjoying himself for that very reason.

"I'll be using Rey here as my training dummy for today. Or, maybe a sparring partner would be the most appropriate word to use."

'The hell...?!' Rey's thoughts echoed as he noticed Billy's sly grin.

'What's he on about now?'

"Everyone present will grab a partner. You'll be engaged in sparring with them. As for me... I'll use this one."

Billy slammed his hand on Rey's back, knowing he would tumble and fall.

In response to the slap, Rey did as expected.

"U-urgh!"

Deciding to move with the flow of the slap, he collapsed to the ground like a helpless student.

'I see what's going on now...'

After their class yesterday, Rey had thought Billy had stopped his petty fixations on him, but apparently he was wrong.

'It makes no sense to make me his sparring partner. We're twenty in the Beta Group. We can evenly split the class and everyone will have sparring buddies.'

However, if they used Billy's model, then one of the Beta Students would be without a partner.

That made no sense!

"Trisha, it'll be unfair for you to have a partner right now, so maybe just observe."

It seemed Billy quickly noticed the problem that his arrangement posed, so he swiftly tried to manage it.

Rey instantly called bullshit on it, though.

'So Trisha is too strong for a sparring buddy and you're not? Why can't you choose Trisha as your sparring buddy? Wouldn't that be perfect?'

The stronger a person was, the better they would be in being Billy's sparring partner or training dummy.

'What he wants isn't the best sparring partner, but the one he can freely beat up.'

Rey could tell already... that Billy was planning to utterly humiliate him.

'This is the third time, Billy. I let it go the first two times, but now...?'

As Rey rose to his feet, he hid his glare under an innocent facade.

'I'll make you regret this.'

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Just as agreed, the class was split into groups of two.

There were nine groups, and Trisha remained the one without a partner.

The plan was to watch Billy and Rey's fight sequence, and then try to imitate—or replicate—the process in their own turn.

Rey would be the one initiating the Martial Arts Technique, while Billy would use its direct counter.

The purpose of this lesson was to let the students know the diverse use of Martial Arts as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each technique.

Every student thought it was a good lesson to be learning.

All except one.

'This is dumb. Monsters don't use Martial Arts, and all of this seems unnecessary...'

The only reason Martial Arts was being learned in the first place was to improve the abilities the students gained after activating their Skills.

As such, if one had a Buff Skill, they would be able to use Martial Arts as the perfect conduit to get the most out of that Skill.

The same applied for any other Skill; like shapeshifting or flying.

The way to incorporate the existing Skills of the students to their combat... that was its true essence.

'Everyone already had considerably better Skills than most denizens of this world. Instead of learning Martial Arts and its weaknesses, it's better to adopt whatever Martial Arts technique we learn into our Skills and develop our own style.'

In essence, Rey didn't subscribe to learning fixed techniques, but to appropriate them into his own preferred method of combat.

'But... this is what we get instead.'

Rey stopped himself from sighing since he was being watched by everyone.

As he stood in front of the smirking Billy, he took the Martial Arts form that they were supposed to start with.

'He'll counter me in the most brutal way possible—humiliating me in the process.'

Rey could already see it play out, and he didn't like it at all.

'The very reason I decided to hide my powers is to avoid attention being drawn to me, and yet...'

He wasn't about to be treated like shit just for trying to fit in with everyone.

'We've been told not to use any Skills since this is a purely technical match.'

That was enough to put a smile on Rey's face.

'Let's see how it goes.'

"Alright, Rey. Why don't you begi—?"

~WHOOSH!~

Rey perfectly imitated the footwork of the Martial Arts technique that they were taught, swiftly closing the gap between himself and Billy.

"H-huh?!"

It seemed Billy was more than stunned to see Rey close the distance so quickly.

They were already mere inches from each other, and Billy was yet to move a single muscle.

'As long as no Skills are involved, I should be able to get away with this...'

~WHUUUM!~

Rey sent a blow flying to Billy's stomach, trying his best to hide the wide grin that was forming on his face.

'Why don't I show off a little?'

Chapter 45 A Spar With Billy

"Keuk!"

Billy winced the moment he felt something land on his stomach.

The fist carried so much force that he could already feel a heavy wind pressure before it even touched him.

Fortunately, he had been fast enough to take a step backward, so that mitigated the blow by a considerable degree.

'A-ahh...!'

Billy did his best not to clutch his stomach despite the burning sensation that now swirled on it.

It stung him, to say the least, but he endured the pain.

He also tried to hide his downright shock, but Billy failed woefully at that.

His bloodshot eyes were glued to Rey, who had resumed his standby stance—almost as if prepared to deliver another volley.

'D-did Rey just land a hit... on me?'

Sure, Billy was already aware that he wasn't using any Skills, but his Stats were meant to be superior.

How was Rey able to do something like that?!

'Calm down, Billy. He just got lucky. Yes... I was distracted and he had a lucky score.'

After chalking it down to a fluke, Billy found himself regaining composure.

There was no way Rey could beat him in a thousand years.

'I'm a lot stronger now! I'm among the Top 5 in Alpha Class!'

"Let's try that once again. I wasn't paying enough attention." Billy quickly spoke.

He had been unable to show everyone watching the proper counter to give to the Martial Arts that Rey displayed.

He never thought he would make a blunder, but Billy quickly took it in stride.

'Next time... it won't happen again!'

"Begin!"

As soon as Billy said this, Rey used the same footworks as last time, but he drastically changed the rhythm.

As such, instead of arriving at Billy in six steps, he did so in eight.

'He's too... slow!'

Billy had already begun his counter the moment he saw Rey approach him, already ensuring Rey wouldn't be too fast and catch him off guard again.

Unfortunately, by acting too early, Billy's counter failed woefully.

And... the moment it failed...

~WHOOOSSH!~

... Rey closed in with a powerful fist.

~CRUNCH!~

This time, Rey's heavy blow landed right on Billy's face, causing him to stumble backwards.

The cracking sound he heard was most likely the sound of his nose breaking.

'E-eh? Again? How...?'

How was this happening?!

Billy gritted his teeth now, a heated glare traveling to Rey, who—for the purpose of the training—had gone back to his earlier position and returned to his standby stance.

It pissed Billy off to an absurd degree to see Rey appear so calm.

"Twice in a row, huh? Interesting..." Billy touched the bridge of his nose and readjusted the cartilage that had gotten shifted.

Even though he managed to smile, he was burning with rage within.

"Let's try this again."

Billy, at this point, didn't care if he was going to badly damage Rey in this next round.

'I planned on inflicting light punishment on him throughout the course of this training, but now... I've changed my mind.'

It was better to break him as early as possible.

'Come, Rey! I'll show you the difference in our abilities!'

The third try for Rey was the very opposite of the second.

Rather than utilizing six steps to draw closer to the target, Rey completed the process in four.

His swift movement allowed him to get near Billy faster, eliminating two of the tedious steps by improving his momentum.

Sure, it would come at the sacrifice of some stamina, but the speed made the improvisation worth it.

'Hehehe! I can see what you're doing, Rey!' Billy grinned internally.

Whether or not Rey was speeding towards him, it didn't matter.

He was going to counter perfectly!

Billy began to push his body forward for a counter.

'I'll match your speed! You can't escape me!'

As his body arched forward, and he made to grab Rey, who was now within distance, Rey made the final two steps and rerouted his blow.

Billy did not realize when Rey had moved to his right flank, completely evading the grapple that would have served as a perfect counter.

The result was inevitable.

~WHAM!~

Rey's blow hit Billy right in the cheek, causing Billy to stumble and finally fall to the ground.

Everyone's gasp came like a chorus, and their surprised stared greeted the surprising victor.

Several of them mouthed words like:

"H-how?!"

"What the hell?!"

"Rey actually won?!"

It was amazing—no, downright inspiring—to see someone from the Beta Class defeat an Alpha Student.

And to think it was the most average of all of them—Rey Skylar.

"WHAT DID YOU DO?!" The voice came from the ground.

Billy was rising from his feet, having a furious expression.

He glared at Rey with a passion, not even bothering to hide his emotions any longer.

"That wasn't the Martial Arts Technique you were supposed to use. What the hell did you do?!"

Billy's words sounded like the sayings of a sore loser, but no one could say that.

They only waited patiently for how Rey would respond.

"But I used the Martial Arts Technique. Six Steps and a Thrust."

No one could deny that was what he did.

However...

"B-but you—!"

"I delayed for a brief moment and gave a feint—which is allowed in Martial Arts."

The veins on Billy's face increased slightly.

"What of the second round? You used eight steps before the thrust!"

For a moment, there was silence.

Billy was being petty about the moves, and everyone knew that, but he wasn't wrong.

Rey hadn't been faithful to the technique he was meant to use.

"I made a mistake in my footwork and ended up with eight instead of six. But, you never corrected me or said I was in the wrong back then."

As Rey said this, everyone's eyes widened instantly.

"I don't know why you're mentioning it now... Bill."

Rey's condescending words were laced properly with a respectful tone. It clearly made a mockery of Billy and his pride, but no one was complaining.

Something about the weak beating the strong—even if it was merely on the grounds of technicality—made them feel good.

Sure, they knew that if Billy was to use his Skills, he would destroy Rey.

However, the apparent nobody had found a way to grow stronger without relying on his Skills.

And whether Rey knew that or not, his action managed to inspire a lot of his fellows.

Chapter 46 A Discourse With Trisha

"We're going on a short break. I'll be right back!"

The way Billy stormed out of the training grounds made it clear that he wasn't in a great mood.

Everyone could see that the nobody called Rey had managed to get under his skin; even though it was just by employing certain unexpected tactics to his form.

The gazes they now directed towards him was one of silent admiration and pride.

While they weren't the ones who won... it sure felt good!

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'So many eyes are on me...'

Rey was currently laying on the grassy plains, his eyes tightly shut as he enjoyed the fresh air and nice weather.

He didn't particularly like the attention that was being bestowed on him, but he also recognized it as inevitable.

'This is what I get for standing out...'

Rey was certain that if he had lost to Billy, he would also attract a ton of attention—though not for positive reasons.

He would be pitied, and recognized as weak prey.

'I don't want that. Just because I refuse to stand out, it doesn't mean I want to be shit on.'

As Rey had these thoughts, he began to hear hushed murmurs and ramblings of surprise from his classmates.

At the same time, he could hear soft footsteps approach him.

"Hey, Rey. Wanna talk for a minute?"

Rey recognized the voice and slowly opened his eyes to see the girl who had it.

'Trisha... huh...?'

Her arms were currently on her hips as she looked down on him laying down.

'From this angle... I can see quite a lot.' Rey thought to himself, not sure if his cheeks were red or not.

Trisha was extremely fit.

She had an extremely well-toned body, and her muscles were perfectly in tune with her slender body.

Despite this, she had a large pair of boobs, and her ass wasn't lacking either.

Out of everything, though, Trisha's thighs were the main attraction.

They seemed so succulent and were usually moist that even Rey couldn't help staring at them from time to time.

The only thing he told himself, which made him feel like less of a degenerate, was that literally everyone was doing it.

He had caught several boys and even girls gawking at Trisha's tanned thighs.

'And now they're in sight...'

Rey gulped down the saliva that had formed in his throat as he enjoyed the sight for as long as he would be allowed to.

"Oi! Are you listening to me at all?"

"H-huh?" Rey snapped out of his daydream and retraced his gaze to Trisha's face.

She had a small frown on her face, and that instantly made Rey shiver a bit.

'She caught me staring, didn't she?'

"U-um... what were you saying?" Rey managed to croak out, hoping that would make her ignore his transgressions.

Trisha was the most influential person in Beta Class. If she decided to persecute him, then he would be in for a rough ride.

"Urgh! I knew you weren't paying attention."



Before Rey could say a word in his defense, Trisha squatted, bringing her face closer to his.

Of course, that meant the temptation to stare at her legs had increased exponentially.

The fact that Trisha was fond of wearing tank tops and extremely skimpy shorts didn't help his case.

'Control yourself, Rey! Please have some decency!'

Fortunately, he was able to do just that.

"I was asking about how you were able to apply those changes to the Martial Arts you used." Trisha asked, her face still as serious as when she first appeared.

However, something about her inquisitive eyes made her seem less scary than normal.

"They aren't really changes, but—"

"I know. Variations of the same moves, right? But that made you think of tweaking the fixed technique. We were never told that it was a malleable technique, and our instructor was also very strict about getting it right."

Rey knew she didn't directly say it, but Trisha was also poking at his silly excuse for using those eight steps instead of six.

'She knows it wasn't by accident...'

Rey found himself smiling as he stared at her face and thought of all she said.

He didn't know why, but he liked her straightforward personality.

She was fierce, and her blunt nature reminded him of a certain girl that he constantly met in the library.

'Well, Alicia is different, but...'

Rey quickly shook his head and dissolved the thoughts he was having. He knew full well where they would lead him to if he continued.

"I just think Martial Arts should be dynamic. Especially in this world."

"But specific forms exist for a reason. By connecting the steps and following due course, it's more efficient and—!"

"This isn't Earth." Rey answered, sharply interrupting Trisha before she could say any more."

"W-what...?"

"We're in a world of Magic and Skills. This isn't our old world anymore." He reiterated.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"It means you need to stop thinking like you're going to be fighting in tournaments or street brawls. We're going to be facing monsters... dragons..."

As Rey was saying these things, he could see Trisha's eyes widen.

'It seems she's getting it.' His smile grew broader.

"So... what do you suggest we... no I do? I... I want to get stronger. Much stronger."

As Trisha said this, she cast her gaze on her hand. It seemed she was distracted by a certain line of thought.

Perhaps it was a fleeting memory.

"Stop thinking like a Martial Artist. You have Skills now. Powers that are more effective than merely swinging your blade. You should be trying to incorporate everything you learn and know into those Skills, not the other way around."

According to Rey, one's Skills were the foundation upon which to build every other ability obtained. Martial Arts had to be learned and mastered to suit the Skills one had, and not the Skill being used to properly utilize Martial Arts.

"In the end, we are not like the people of this world. We already have these powerful abilities at our disposal. Every growth we make should be with that in mind."

As Rey finished speaking, he found Trisha smiling at him.

This was perhaps the first time he had seen her smiling up close.

It was... beautiful!

"You're a lot smarter than I thought, Rey Skylar."

Rey didn't like being called by his full name. However, he didn't feel any aversion when he heard Trisha say it.

Her firm tone pronounced his name perfectly.

"If I want to survive in this world... I have no other choice." Rey responded.

Trisha rose to her feet, keeping her gaze on Rey.

"I'll be watching you very closely from now on."

The moment he heard that, Rey gulped.

'Did I say too much?' He asked himself.

"I'd rather you don't. It would be a waste of time..."

"I don't think it will."

"There's nothing spectacular about me. I'm actually being serious right now."

As he said this, Trisha's smile grew broader.

"You liar..."

She refused to elaborate on her words and just left.

'What in the world...?'

Rey could not properly place what kind of conversation he just had, and what that meant for him.

It seemed his decision to humiliate Billy had backfired on him.

'I now have a target on my back.'

## Chapter 47 Grim Discovery

"I wonder what she meant by that..."

Rey was busy inspecting the pots that the Hobgoblins had made while rubbing his chin and remembering what Trisha said to him. free. com

Her last words would not leave his mind.

"Liar? Me? I mean, sure... I lied to her, but..."

Once Billy returned, he made Trisha his new sparring partner, and Rey was allowed to sit the rest out.

Trisha's rounds with Billy ended in the latter's victory, but it wasn't by an easy margin.

And, despite Trisha losing, she didn't appear sad or disappointed in the slightest.

Rey could see the sharp contrast between the face she made when Billy first defeated her and the one she made in the recent spar.

'I guess she's learning more...' Rey felt happy for her, but also threatened.

'I had to take extra care before coming here today, all because of what she said.'

Though Rey doubted that Trisha would abandon her training just to become his full-time stalker, he still had his concerns.

'No one can know my secret!' He told himself.

"G-GURRRIKA...?"

Rey's thoughts were brought back to reality thanks to the voice of the Hobgoblin who was showing him the most recent batch of pots.

'Ahh! Right... the pots!'

Rey took his time to observe the dark utensil, mumbling to himself as he did so.

"It looks nice. But... it would be better if it had handles and a cover."

Then, there was also the fact that they had to test it under heat and see how well it functioned.

'I had to take into account heat conductivity and its durability.'

That meant ensuring the Orichalcum lining was thin enough to ensure enough heat to permeate the pot and boil whatever was needed to boil.

If it was too thin, though, it could cause it to crack and leak over time.

'The pots used to fetch water don't require much work. The problem is that the models they made are too heavy.'

Too much Orichalcum had been merged together and sculpted to form a massive bassier to hold in water.

'Well, I guess there's no real need to move it. Water comes from a fixed location, and they can just fetch their water from it with smaller bowls.'

Problem solved!

As for the pot being showcased to him, Rey decided to give his verdict.

He nodded and smiled, tapping the bald head of the Hobgoblin before him.

"KIKIKIKRII..."

It seemed the creature was giggling, and Rey could see a smile forming on its face.

'Praise from someone they recognize as a higher being gives the Hobgoblins joy.' He had learned all about this from the book Alicia recommended.

He honestly couldn't thank her enough.

'While they try to make more pots to resemble the approved model, I should go and take my daily batch of Monster Cores.'

Despite consistently taking the Cores for days now, the heaps didn't seem to reduce in the slightest.

Rey put as many Cores into the sacs as he could carry, filling them to the brim.

'I still have no idea how to sell these, but it still feels good having so many of them.'

Once Rey finished his daily routine, he observed the Hobgoblins some more, and then returned to the Sixth Floor for some training.

He now had 52 Skills, and his Stats had improved since the last time he properly trained.

'Might as well spend the rest of my time getting accustomed to the new Skill and some nice combinations.'

Now that he had more Mana than before, he could afford to do so.

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Once Rey was done with his business in the Royal Dungeon, he returned to the Royal Estate.

Since the Head Warrior Brutus was not present for a few days, and Rey knew it was very likely that those within the Refinery would know if this, he changed his disguise.

Or rather, he didn't even bother with it.

He simply used his [Projection] Skill to show them an illusion of whatever would distract them while he opened the gates by himself.

Of course, they would all think the doors were still closed, but in reality, he could sneak in and out whenever he wanted.

Upon arriving in the Royal Estate, he easily located his living quarters and went in.

As always, he would retreat into his room and have a nice bath before going to the library.

'Ahh... alright, then. Let's get this day over with!'

\*\*\*\*\*

'Haa! I'm so beat!'

Rey walked into his dark room with a smile on his face despite how he was feeling.

'Alicia left the library earlier than me today. Finally!'

Despite how long she would have spent in the library before his arrival, she always managed to outlast him there.

It was crazy!

But this time, he managed to win.

'I mean, compared to how many times she has won, it doesn't really matter, but...'

It made him happy beyond description.

'I wonder if I'm the only one who considers it a contest.'

To Rey, their silent rivalry felt like a mutual understanding.

He didn't want to say anything that would ruin the entire thing, but he also couldn't help but wonder if it was all in his head.

'Well, whatever! What matters is that I won!'

Now that he was back within his room, Rey began his everyday ritual.

'[Greater Protection Field]. [Safe Haven]. [Projection].'

The moment Rey thought this, his entire room was covered in two barriers, and an illusion made it seem as if he was already sleeping inside.

'In case anyone comes in at this time, they won't be able to detect anything out of the ordinary.'

That way, he wouldn't be able to get caught for what he was about to do.

"Let's bring out the spoils of war. Hehehe!"

Rey began to empty his Subspace, letting out all the sacs of treasure he had gotten from the Hobgoblins.

He also went to his secret stash spot to dump his Monster Core for the day.

That was when Rey realized a grim truth.

"Hold on... something isn't right here..."

Rey gazed upon his sacs which he had numbered accordingly, and found them to be in disarray.

Not only that, but one was missing.

"Haaa..."

That could only mean one thing.

"... Someone stole from me."

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Chapter 48 Catching The Perpetrator

'How could this have happened?!'

Rey sat in his bed in deep contemplation. Beads of sweat formed in his face as his brow furrowed in confusion.

'Who could have done it?'

To ensure the privacy of their saviors, their doors were enchanted with special Magic that none of them had been taught yet.

They were also given personal keys to their rooms, while being assured that none other possessed keys that could open their respective doors.

None but the Head Knight and Grand Mage.

Those two possessed a masterkey that could unlock anyone's room, and this was meant to be for their safety.

'Brutus and Lucielle aren't around. Could they have dropped the masterkey with someone who ended up coming in?'

That was definitely a possibility, but Rey found it very unlikely.

Why would the Royal Family do something so untrustworthy at this juncture? And why would they target his room?

'Could this be Billy? I did embarrass him earlier today.'

It was also possible that his new stalker, Trisha, was the one who was snooping around his room.

'But is that likely? I don't think so!'

They both didn't have access to his room, and the masterkey couldn't have fallen into their hands.

'Then who...?! Who could it be?!'

The more Rey racked his brain to find out, the more frustrated he became.

'I have to find out... and fast!'

He hadn't been interacting with his classmates properly, so he wasn't sure who could be responsible.

'T-then... maybe... Alicia...?!'

He found it strange that she left the library earlier than he did. It was very unlike her.

'But is that even possible? Why would Alicia...? No... I can't rule her out completely!'

Rey knew he was panicking, and for good reason.

'It's not just because I'll lose resources or anything like that. There's the fact that my secret could be exposed if this comes out.'

There was no way the thief didn't notice just how large his stash was.

'The fact that they could take only one means they were either in a hurry, or that was the limit of what they could carry.'

Each sac that contained Monster Cores was heavy, so someone with low physical Stats would be a suspect.

'I have to properly investigate. Or...'

Rey thought more deeply about the situation, his heart still racing despite his best attempts to remain calm.

'If they saw how many Monster Cores I have, it's only true that they'll try to steal more from me.'

Someone that could be so bold and shameless to do something like this would definitely not stop at one.

'And if it's the Royals that are behind this, then I'm sure I'll be hearing from them soon.'

Either way, if push came to shove, he would stuff as many Monster Cores into his Subspace and make a break for it.

'If I go to the Royal Dungeon, they won't be able to follow me down there—especially with Brutus and Lucielle absent.'

However, if it got to that point, Rey knew he would have to move his plans forward.

'I'd have to grow stronger at an absurd rate. That means all my efforts with the Hobs will be wasted.'

He would have to descend to lower floors and Level Up as much as possible, instead of just taking it slow.

'I don't think I like that outcome. Let's just hope it's the former...'

As Rey sighed, he collapsed on his bed and mumbled words to himself.

"Everything needs to be put on hold for this. I need to catch the thief."

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[Three Days Later]

An invisible silhouette slowly crept into Rey's room.

It was shrouded in what seemed like an invisible wall which rendered it invisible.

Despite this effect, every step it took caused a certain kind of distortion in the air. As such, any observant person could notice this intruder if they paid enough attention.

'I saw him leave for the Library already. Good. Now is my chance to score!' The thief thought, licking their lips in excitement.

Their short frame was only visible to themselves, and they hurried to the closet where the several sacs of the goods were.

With this many Monster Cores, he could finally leave the Royal Estate and have an easy life in some countryside.

Once the closet was opened up, the thief discarded all the clothes and fluff that hid away the face and found the goodies in plain sight.

'I'm going to be set for life!'

That was when they felt a hand on their shoulder, and a blade close to their throat.

'H-huh...?'

"Don't move. Make any sudden movement, and I'll slit your throat."

The moment the thief heard and felt these things, their bodies got the jitters.

The tone that whispered those words was laced with bloodlust.

He couldn't look at the face of the one who was speaking, but it couldn't have been his target.

'He already went to the library. Plus... this doesn't sound like him!'

However, the thief was wrong.

Standing right behind them was Rey, his eyes glowing brightly as he tightly held his blade.

"Don't get any funny thoughts." The whisper emerged once again, causing the thief to gulp.

'What should I do? What should I do? I... I can't be caught now!'

Desperation tugged at their heart, and so the only solution presented itself.

They had to use one of their Skills.

'[Phase]!'

~WHOOSH!~

In the blink of an eye, the thief slipped through the man who threatened them.

Their body was still shrouded by a cloud of invisibility, so they swiftly made for an escape.

However...

"[False Pain]..."

... The moment they took a single step away from the eerie shadow, the thief was met with unimaginable pain.

"ARRGHHHHHH!!!"

They screamed in sheer agony, clutching their body very tightly while collapsing on the ground.

"There are several ways to deal with the [Phase] Skill." The voice emerged with a cold tone.

As the shadow stood on top of the groaning and screaming thief, the man looked down with an uncaring gaze.

"Who would have thought, though. You got into this place through the walls..."

The room walls weren't enchanted, so the thief had used their [Phase] Skill to intrude Rey's room.

"You must have thought I was easy prey. I guess now you're regretting your actions."

The voice was correct.

Right now, the thief was experiencing excruciating pain.

It felt like their chest was on fire, while several creatures were clawing at their body at the same time.

It hurt too much!

"You're using some kind of enchanted jewelry to stay invisible. None of us Students have access to enchanted objects beyond their use in class. Where did you get it? Did you steal it as well?"

Despite being asked these questions, the thief did not respond.

They could not!



"Undo your invisibility, and I'll stop the pain."

The thief had no choice but to do as they were told. They instantly turned off the enchantment in the necklace around their neck.

As soon as that happened, Rey launched his hand towards the thief and grabbed their throat.

"So it was you..." Rey raised the small figure of the perpetrator up, his eyes meeting the helpless boy's absent gaze.

"Noah Sherlock."

\*

## **Chapter 49 Path To Profit**

'Sooner or later... the thief will show up again!'

That was Rey's ideology after realizing his property had been stolen.

For the duration of the three days after this discovery, he gave several windows of opportunity, but the thief did not take the bait.

This meant his opponent wasn't merely a reckless individual, but someone smart enough to recognize how to exercise caution.

Still, Rey wouldn't give up.

By pretending to go to the Library, but then using [Stealth] and [Mimic] to return to his room, he could intercept the thief.

'Looks like it worked...!' Rey smiled while looking at the pained expression of Noah.

He had used [False Pain] to disable his target since he had the [Phase] Skill.

'[False Pain] just replicates the feeling of pain, so as long as I don't physically harm him, it's fine.'

Now that Noah has become docile, Rey thought it was the perfect time to stop the Skill.

Once he canceled the Skill, an expression of relief coursed through Noah's face.

However, before he could even relax, Rey tightened his grip on his throat.

"Like I said before... don't get any funny ideas."

~BZZZZ!~

Rey's eyes glowed, and flashes of purple electricity danced around him.

[Phase] could be interrupted by a surge of Mana, and since Rey was confident in his superior speed, he could instantly electrify Noah before the latter could make his move.

It seemed Noah also recognized this.

"I... I understand...!"

Since Noah understood his place pretty quickly, Rey grinned and loosened his grip on the boy.

He eventually let him down and completely removed his hand from his throat.

"I'm much faster than you. I can also force you to experience all that pain again. So, don't even think of running away."

While Rey doubted that Noah would even dream of defying him again, he felt it was important to stress on that point.

Defiance would be rewarded with pain.

"Why me?" As Rey said this he proceeded to sit on his bed.

"W-wha...?"

Noah was still shivering as he crumbled on the ground. He was probably too shaken to give a coherent answer.

However, Rey's intimidating gaze told him that he wasn't very patient.

He wanted answers... and fast!

"I... I thought you'd be a good place to start from. I wanted money, and I didn't know where to start from... so I thought... I'd start from you..."

"Why?" Rey asked, narrowing his gaze.

"W-well... I mean..."

Rey already knew why. It was because he seemed average.

He wasn't very important, so if some of his belongings were missing, no one would really care.

He was just an Extra.

"Because I'm average, right? I understand."

Noah had a sour expression on his face, mixed in with the fear that threatened to consume him.

Any second now, and Rey thought Noah would cry.

"I-I promise... I've never stolen anything else before. Please believe me..." Noah whispered.

In response to that, Rey scoffed slightly.

"That enchanted jewel shouldn't be in your possession. None of us have been granted anything like that yet... which means you stole it."

"N-no! I actually bought it!"

"You? You bought it? Let me guess... with the money you got from my Monster Cores."

"Eeeek!"

Noah's easily scared nature made him the perfect interrogation subject.

However, the more Rey thought of his answers, the more something seemed to surface.

"You said you bought that enchanted necklace. You also didn't deny it when I said you sold my Monster Core..."

Rey's eyes widened the instant everything clicked in his head.

"That means you've also gone outside. You've gone into town!"

Noah's guilty expression gave all of it away instantly.

'I was right! He actually left the Royal Estate's walls?!

Rey could see how that was possible, considering Noah's [Phase] Skill.

It was a viable way to escape the Royal Estate, and by using his other Skill [Projection] well, no one would be able to detect anything.

'When did he start? How long has he been doing this? What does he know?!

Rey found himself more curious than ever as he stared at Noah.

The anger he felt regarding his stolen Monster Cores soon became secondary. Instead, something else replaced that emotion.

'If he is able to buy and sell outside, and he came back here to get more Monster Cores, that means he already has a viable channel.'

Rey could feel it rising deep inside him—his insatiable greed!

'That means I can finally make money from my Monster Cores!'

He could finally turn all his hard work into profit.

"Hey, Noah..." Reg began, his tone still as stern as always.

"Eeep!"

Noah's submissive squeak pleased Rey. That meant he could control the boy.

'If I make good use of him, I should be able to turn this immense misfortune into a benefit.'

Noah already knew that Rey was strong. The fact that he saw so many Monster Cores in his closet made that clear already.

That was why Rey didn't bother hiding his Skills from Noah when capturing him.

And now, Rey was privy to more of his secrets.

'We're both hiding things from everyone else. If I capitalize on the current hierarchy, I'm at an advantage here...'

All he really had to do was throw Noah a bone, and the boy would probably do what he wanted.

"... I'm thinking we can help each other out." Rey's smile broadened as he rose from his bed.

Noah was still trembling in fear, but Rey had already lost most of his intimidating presence.

"Be my seller. If you do a satisfactory job, I can grant you a commission for every sale."

"E-eh...?"

It seemed Noah was confused about what Rey was proposing, so Rey drew even closer and squatted close to him.

"It's a simple arrangement. I supply you with the Monster Cores, and you help me sell them."

After that, they would split the profit.

Everyone ended up winning, and they could both get what they wanted.

Rey placed his hand on Noah's shoulder and smiled sweetly.

"What do you say, buddy?"

## **Chapter 50 Costs and Benefits**

Noah Sherlock had a very small frame for a High School Student.

With a cute face and an unimposing expression always displayed, he was always known to be a harmless yet fragile classmate.

As a result, he wasn't particularly bothered in class.

However, he was also a smartass who was recognized as a teachers' pet, so not too many people really liked him.

Since Noah was a smart student who always aced everything he set his heart to, he made a lot of people appear bad in comparison.

All of this culminated into a somewhat average Karma Points for him.

When his turn came to choose his Skills and Class, he could only afford three Skills.

Shadow Magic (B-Tier)

Phase (C-Tier)

Projection (C-Tier)

His Class on the other hand was pretty average as well. He got the [Thief] Class, which dealt in stealth and agility.

It was quite hilarious how he ended up following the path of his Class to the letter.

Noah was able to leave the Royal Estate thanks to this particular ability set that he obtained, so he didn't particularly dislike his Skills and Class.

Not only did the [Thief] Class automatically improve the effects of any Stealth-Based Skill by 50%, but it also had an innate ability of camouflage if one was still for long enough.

It perfectly suited his needs.

With [Projection], he could make people see illusions. With [Phase], he could pass through matter—so long as there was no interference.

And, while he hadn't properly learned how to use his [Shadow Magic] Skill, he could turn his shadow tangible and loosely control it to do his bidding.

All in all, these abilities were incredibly useful when Noah ventured into the outside world to learn more about the world he had been summoned into.

There was a secret he had kept close to his chest—one that no one else knew.

He was a coward!

'I don't want to fight any Dragons! I just want a normal life!'

Unfortunately for him, he had no means or independent resources in this new world.

He was dependent on the Royal Council and the wealth of the United Human Alliance to survive.

That had to change!

And so, by coating himself in his Shadow, this increasing his height and appearing more intimidating, he ventured into the town and observed the commerce.

He was able to ask questions, and the people readily answered him thanks to his intimidating presence.

The information he could obtain was limited, since one needed money before they could learn the more intricate details of this world.

As a result of his need for money, he began to sell some of his personal items.

This allowed him to have his own disposable income, and it helped him learn more information.

But it wasn't enough.

Noah needed more money.

As a result, he cast his gaze on his classmates and their possessions.

That was when he decided on his first target—Rey Skylar.

\*\*\*\*\*

'Well, that was a mistake.'

Noah sighed as he looked at Rey who was making his offer.

"What do you say, buddy?" Rey was smiling at him, but Noah could not tell what was going on in the boy's head.

'Is this really all he wants?'

Noah disliked confrontations to a fault, and he was also genuinely afraid of a lot of people.

The only reason he had made it this far was because his fear of Dragons were far more than that of others. free.c om

He didn't even want to imagine facing one.

"C-can I think about it?"

"No." Rey said with a narrowed gaze, causing Noah to shrink in fear.

"I'm already being very generous as it is. You know I could just read your mind and know everything you know, before disposing of you, right?"

"E-eh?!"

"I could also wipe away your memories so you don't remember this exchange. Why else do you think I'm showing you so much of my hidden power?"

Noah found himself gulping hard.

'H-how did he get so much power, though? Just how many Skills does he have? Does he have a Hidden Class as well?'

He had so many questions, and most of all... he was frightened.

'For the sake of my survival, I have no reason to refuse.'

And so, with his head hung in defeat, Noah gave his revised answer.

"I... I accept."

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After Noah accepted, Rey sat him down and made him explain more about the details of his expeditions into town and what he had learned.

This included the economic state of the capital, the transportation factors and distribution to the other cities, towns, and villages within the Nation.

The prices of certain goods were also discussed thoroughly.

'Now I see why he went to the town and asked these things rather than sticking to the library.'

These sorts of things didn't exist in the Royal Library, and even if they did, they weren't in as much detail as Noah had found out.

Apparently, Noah also frequented the library. However, since he was a night owl, he usually read very late in the night until morning.

That was probably why no one noticed him going.

"The Monster Cores sell for 2 Gold Pieces each—though that's only because they're Grade 6 Cores. Lower Grade Cores sell for less."

Monster Cores were divided into 9 Grades, based on their worth. The lowest Grade was 9, and the highest was 1.

Grade 6 Cores belonged to C-Tier Monsters, so they were considerably priced well.

Since there had been a low influx of such quality of Monster Cores in the capital, their value was bound to increase.

"Two Gold Coins, huh...?"

One of the first things Rey did in the library was to study the currency and economics of this new land he found himself in.

In this world, they transacted using coins.

There were Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum Coins.

One Bronze Coin was enough to buy a low-budget meal. Two or three would get you something nice, and five was bound to leave you with a full belly.

At least, for the regular folks.

As a result, an average man spent about Ten Bronze Coins to survive a day.

This was, of course, not accounting for accommodation and other similarly important factors.

100 Bronze Coins translated into a Silver Coin, which was pretty much the average weekly wage of a working adult in this world.

100 Silver Coins translated into 1 Gold Coin.

With a Gold Coin, you could get a good house for a year. Rarer did commoners get to use Gold Coins, so it was reserved for merchants and high-class individuals in society.

As for the Platinum Coins... they were only used by the richest of Merchants and Nobles, or Royals.

100 Gold Coins translated to 1 Platinum Coin, and with just one of it... one could build a house, buy good land, and deal with top-end business.

A single Platinum Coin could make an average man set for life.

"Two Gold Coins seems like a lot."

"Seems? It is a lot!" Noah responded to Rey in disbelief.

"You sold an entire sac of my Monster Cores, right? They're about a few hundred in a sac. That translates to about 600 Gold Coins."

"Y-yeah. A total of 680 actually."

That was 6 Platinum Coins and 80 Gold.

"And how much did you get that enchanted necklace?" Rey asked with narrowed eyes.

"About... 180 Gold Coins..."

That meant he had 5 Platinum Coins left.

"I don't know if you studied the process of making Enchanted Items, but they usually utilize Monster Cores."

"Y-yeah. I heard that." Noah answered.

The fact that he heard it, and was stuttering about it, told Rey that he didn't completely understand the process.

"For example... your Enchanted Necklace will primarily use the Monster Core of a Monster who relies on Invisibility. The Core will be converted to the essence of the Necklace, while being powered by a Mana Crystal to activate its effect."

Of course, other minerals like Adamantite—which had great Mana conductivity—would be used as well.

"The point I'm making here is that Monster Cores are very essential in making Enchanted Items. As a result, it doesn't make any sense that the Monster Core of a C-Tier Monster will only be valued at 2 Gold Coins despite its scarcity in the Capital."

When considering the transportation cost necessary to bring C-Tier Cores from the other regions which had them, and the other conditions of commerce—such as time and certainty—it was clear that whoever had a direct source of Grade 6 Monster Core straight from the Capital, was encountering a sweet deal.

Such a merchant could either resell for a much higher price, or make his other products for a cheaper rate.

No matter how one sliced it, they would be in an immense advantage.

"That's why the Cores should have been more expensive..."

"W-what are you saying exactly?" Noah asked Rey, his brows raised in genuine curiosity.

Rey smiled at him, a small sigh escaping his lips.

"You've been scammed."