H. Academy 878

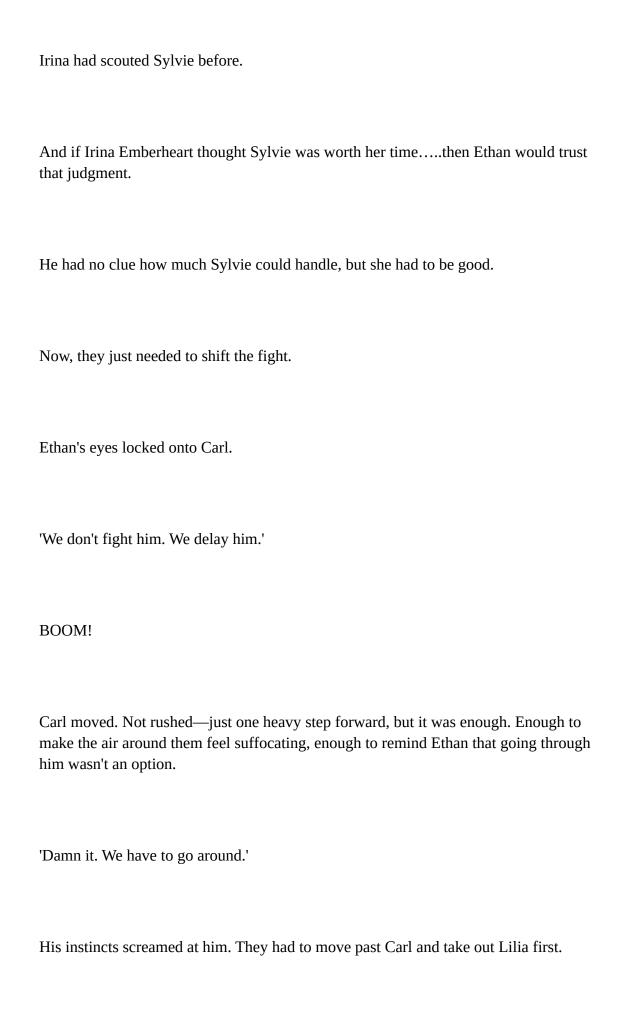
Chapter 878 - Artifact Training
BOOM!
The impact sent a tremor through the battlefield, dust kicking up as the massive figure of Carl stepped forward, his war hammer resting heavily against the ground. His broad frame exuded sheer power, the faint glow of mana radiating from his weapon as he rolled his shoulders.
Carl.
As if that wasn't enough, the sharp whistling of arrows sliced through the air, forcing Ethan to instinctively duck. His gaze flickered upward, catching sight of a familiar figure perched high on the remnants of a crumbled building, her bow drawn with deadly precision.
Lilia.
Ethan's chest tightened slightly. He had expected a challenge, but this this was ridiculous.
'Are you kidding me?'



Ethan's instincts kicked in. Move. Now.
TAP!
He kicked off the ground, diving behind a fallen pillar for cover as another volley of arrows rained down. The air crackled with tension, the simulation's mana-infused battlefield humming around them. He peeked out, his mind already working through possible counters.
BOOM!
Carl took a step forward, the ground practically trembling beneath his weight. The hammer in his grasp radiated power, mana visibly coursing through it like veins of molten energy.
Ethan's fingers curled tighter around his spear. A tank. A damn near indestructible one.
Sure, in a drawn-out fight, he could probably find a way to chip Carl down. Spear against a heavy weapon. Agility against raw endurance. In a real battle, patience could be his weapon.
But in a time-limited simulation?
'Not happening.'

SWOOSH!



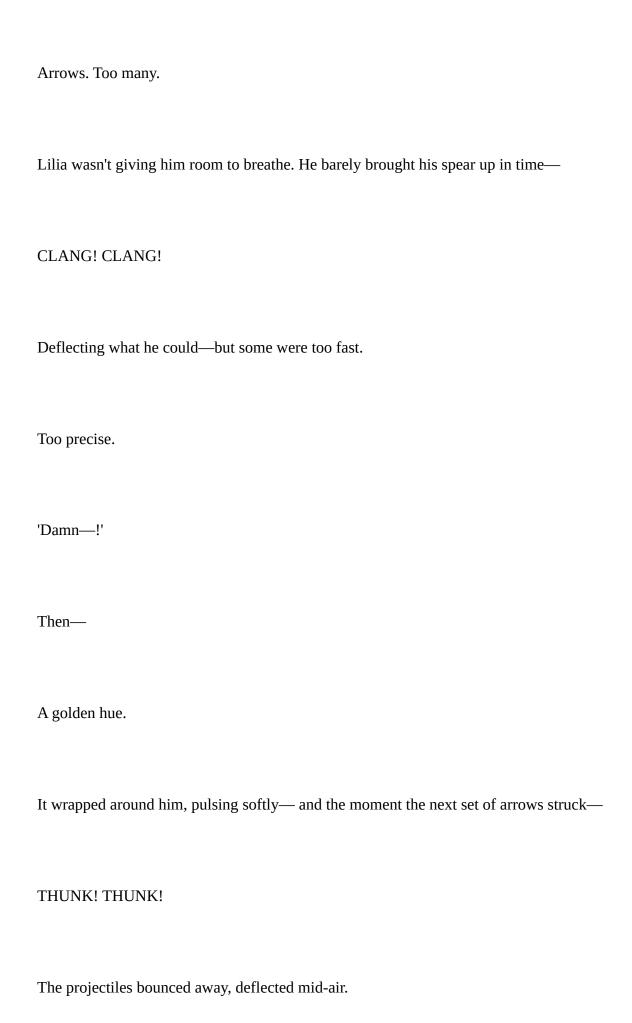


Ethan knew his own limits. Even with his agility, going head-to-head with Lilia was a death sentence if she had the time to set up. And Carl? Carl was a living wall. He didn't need to chase them down—he just had to be there.
Ethan's eyes snapped to Layla.
"Go!"
Layla rushed forward, shield raised, golden mana shimmering around her form. She let out a sharp battle cry as she met Carl's strike—
BOOM!
The hammer slammed into her shield like a meteor, the impact sending a deafening shockwave through the battlefield.
"Ghk—!"
Layla skidded back instantly, boots digging trenches into the dirt. Even with Sylvie's enhancement, the sheer force of Carl's swing made her stumble.
But she held.
Ethan didn't waste time.

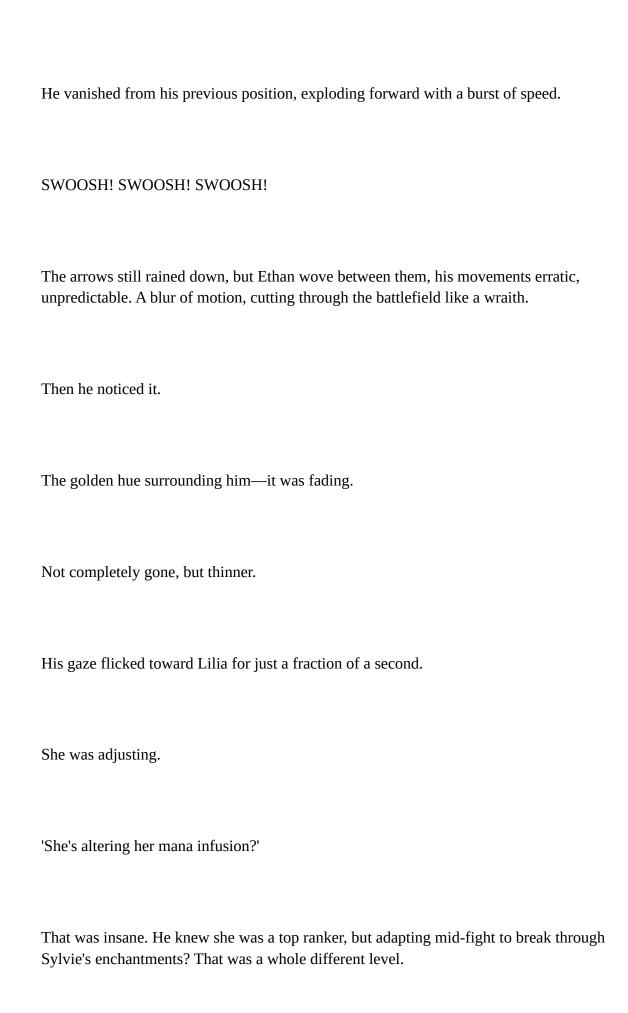
TAP!
He shot forward, using the distraction to weave around Carl. Fast, sharp movements, his spear angled low as he closed the distance. Lilia was still perched on the ruins, nocking another arrow—
SWOOSH!
Too late.
The sky darkened with incoming arrows.
Ethan gritted his teeth and kept moving—but then—
RUMBLE!
The ground shook violently beneath his feet.
'Shit—!'
His footing went unstable, the once-solid terrain now betraying him. A controlled

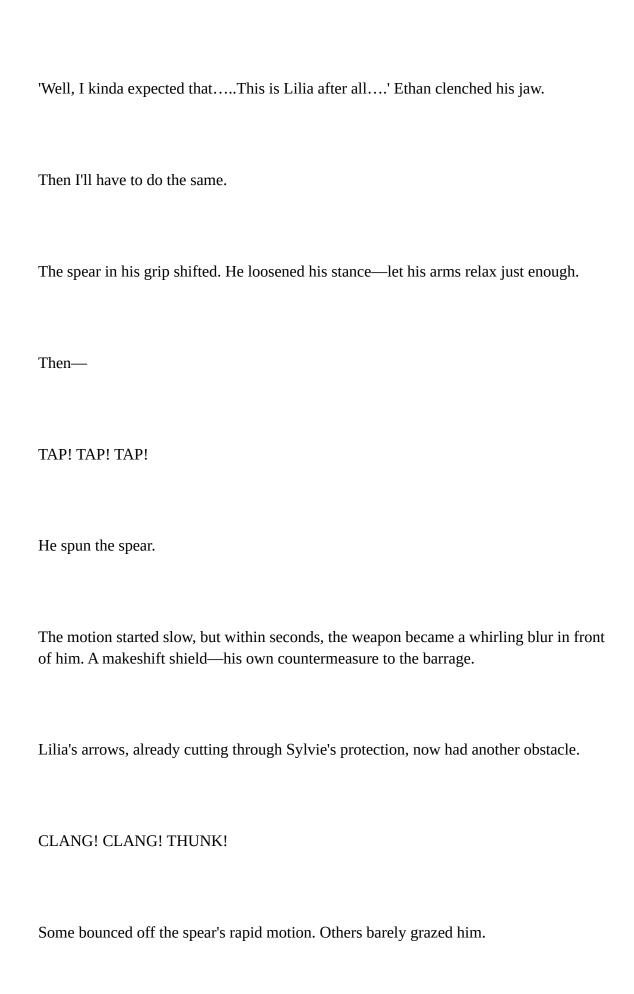
tremor.

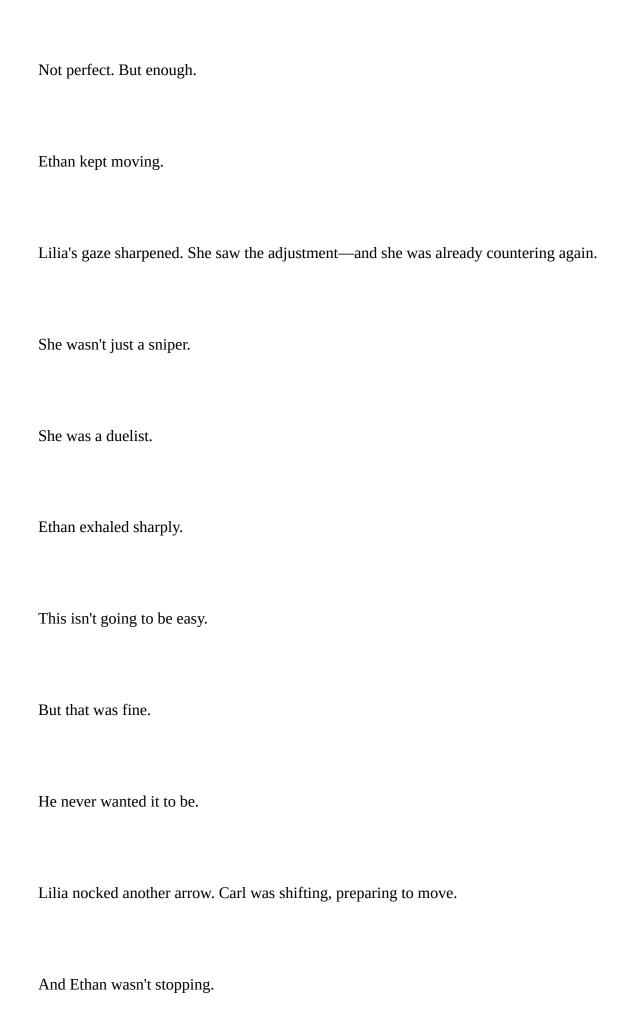
[Seismic Crash.]
Carl wasn't just a tank—he had control.
Ethan's body tilted—his stance breaking—
'No.'
TAP!
He twisted, spear stabbing into the ground as an anchor.
STAB!
The vibration rattled through his arms, but he didn't fall. Didn't stop. He balanced himself.
But then—
SWOOSH! SWOOSH!



Ethan blinked.
"Oh?"
His eyes flicked back toward Sylvie—who was watching him intently, golden energy still trailing from her fingertips.
'So this is what Irina saw in her.'
His grin returned.
'Alright. Let's make this count.'
Ethan didn't waste a second.
Mana surged through his legs, crackling like restrained lightning beneath his skin. His entire body felt lighter, sharper.
Spear of Hartley—Phantom Stride!
TAP!







He had one job.
Close the gap.
ROOOOAR!
The sound hit him like a tidal wave, reverberating through his skull. Ethan's entire body froze, his instincts screaming at him as his momentum suddenly shifted—not forward, but back.
'What—?'
His legs moved against his will, his body being pulled toward the source of the roar.
Carl.
'Shit—TAUNT SKILL.'
GRAVITY COMMAND—IRON ORDER.



Then—
A warmth.
A pulse of energy wrapped around his mind, his body.
A sudden clarity.
His body was still mid-motion, but the force pulling him back toward Carl was gone.
Ethan's gaze flicked instinctively to the side—
And he saw her.
Sylvie.
Her green eyes glowed with a golden hue, sharp and unwavering. Mana rippled outward from her, latching onto him, cleansing him.
'Cleansing effect? She had already reached this level?'

This wasn't just basic support magic. This was high-tier state cleansing.
Something that even veteran healers in the Hartley Guild struggled to achieve.
Ethan barely had time to process it.
His body was his own again.
No hesitation.
He moved.
TAP!
His foot dug into the ground, force redirecting just as Lilia's arrow ripped past the space where he had been.
BOOM!
The impact behind him was massive, cratering the earth where the shot had landed.

Too close.
Ethan exhaled sharply.
Sylvie had just saved his life.
His grip tightened around his spear.
'Alright Now I owe you one.'
His eyes locked onto Lilia once more.
And he sprinted forward.