Chapter 13: Earning Vera's Recognition

Vera, Lux, and Eriol, sat on top of the White Hippopotamus, Sophie, as they traveled along the river.

This was not the first time that Vera had taken Lux on a journey with her, so he was quite familiar with the landmarks that they were passing.

After traveling for half a day, the White Hippopotamus swam towards the riverbank. After walking up to land, Vera, Lux, and Eriol dismounted from her back and observed their surroundings.

"Where are we, Grandma?" Lux asked.

This was the first time that he had stepped into this place, and he was not sure why Vera had brought him here alongside Eriol.

"This place is called the Westmill Valley," Vera answered. "This is a place where both common and ranked monsters can be found. Don't worry, the strongest monsters here are Rank 2 Monsters. As long as you don't go deep inside the valley, your chances of meeting them are slim. "

Lux gulped because according to the knowledge he had, Rank 2 monsters were as strong as Grade C Apostles.

In Solais, there were various ranks to measure the strength of an individual.

Only those that had stepped on the Apostle Rank, were considered individuals that had surpassed the limits of mortality.

Those who had become Apostles were eligible to enter the Intermediate Area of Elysium. It was also where stronger monsters and richer resources could be found.

Children who were twelve and above were given the opportunity to enter the Beginner Area of Elysium, where common monsters, like the Horned Rabbit, could be found anywhere.

This was the place where they could hone their combat abilities, in preparation to step into the Apostle Rank.

Since Lux was not allowed to enter Elysium, Vera could only take him to a similar environment where common monsters could be found. This was the only way for her to gauge whether Lux and Eriol were lying to her.

"Come, let us make camp," Vera ordered as she took out a large tent from her storage ring.

Lux happily helped his grandma prepare the tent because it had been a few years since they had gone on a camping trip together. Even so, he was still very proficient in doing these simple chores, because he wanted to be useful to her whenever they left Wildgarde Stronghold to visit the nearby towns in their territory.

After finishing the tent, Vera started to prepare their lunch.

Lux busied himself with practicing his swordsmanship. He was holding the rare weapon, Tranquility, that allowed him to summon a Forest Wolf to aid him in battle.

"Go!" Lux shouted as he activated the summon skill.

Immediately, a wolf with light-brown fur appeared in front of him.

Lux gave his Grandma a side-long glance to see her reaction, but the latter didn't even raise her head as she stirred the dish inside the cooking pot.

Eriol, who saw this scene, chuckled, because he knew what Lux was thinking. The God of Games was aware of Vera's level, and such a simple display was usually not enough to move her heart, but a tinge of wariness or concern had touched it and she briefly shifted her eyes from the meal in front of her to her grandson.

While weapons with summoning abilities were not that rare in Solais. Anyone who was able to get their hands on one could easily do what Lux had done.

Of course, Lux wasn't aware of this. He thought that having a cool weapon was enough to impress his grandma, so her seemingly indifferent reaction made his heart ache.

"Now, now, don't be so down," Eriol wasn't able to ignore Lux's depressed state, but nor would he reveal the subtle change that had come over Vera, when he decided to cheer him up. "Your grandma just wants to know if you are capable of entering Elysium without relying on external strength."

Lux scratched his head as he looked up at Eriol who was sitting on a tree branch. "Does that mean I can't summon the Forest Wolf and Diablo?"

"You can," Eriol replied. "I'm sure that your grandma will not complain as long as you understand that you shouldn't over rely on them. I'll give you an example. If you were to fight against a Summoner and his powerful summon, who would you attack first?"

"The Summoner?" Lux answered with uncertainty.

Eriol nodded. "Once the Summoner is dealt with, the summon will also disappear. So, although a summoned creature is strong, the Summoner must also have a way to defend himself. There are beasts with very high intellect. They would directly attack you and ignore your summons if you were to face them in battle."

Lux crossed his arms over his chest as he digested Eriol's words. He then glanced at the Forest Wolf who took a sitting position in front of him.

"Should I upgrade my personal stats first and not strengthen Diablo then?" Lux inquired.

Eriol smirked, "Lux, whether you do, or do not, that decision will always be yours to make. Do not rely on others to make the decision for you. No one can decide what to do with your life, except you."

"But, I don't know what to do? Can you give me a hint?" Lux pressed his hands together and pleaded.

Eriol glanced at Vera who was busy cooking their food. He knew that she was listening to their discussion, and testing him to see whether he was indeed a good mentor for Lux or not.

Since that was the case, Eriol decided to give Lux some tips in order to make him understand the concept of roles in battle.

"Priests and Mages are almost always at the back of the party. Swordsmen, Defenders, and close combat professions will always be at the front." Eriol explained. "Archers will always be somewhere where they could snipe their enemies from a safe distance.

"Different strokes, for different folks. What you need to ask yourself is what role you want to play in the greater scheme of things. Do you plan to go solo, or do you want to team up with others? Since you have learned Necromancy, you can have the best of both worlds. Even without people, you can form a party with your summoned creatures."

At the mention of Necromancy, Vera raised her head and looked at Lux who was deep in thought.

"Lux, is that true? Have you learned Necromancy?" Vera asked with a serious expression on her face.

"Yes, Grandma," Lux answered.

"Show me."

"Okay."

Lux took a deep breath as he activated the Summon Skeleton Skill.

"Come forth! Diablo!" Lux ordered.

A magic circle materialized on the ground in front of him.

A second later, a white Skeleton with a black flame mark on its head appeared holding a bone sword in its hand.

Vera frowned because she knew that her grandson didn't have this kind of Necromantic ability in the past. In fact, she had been paying close attention and the boy hadn't shown anything that said he would have this kind of ability today.

She was finding it hard to believe how her grandson, who always fainted during critical moments, could have learned Necromancy without her knowing it.

As Vera appraised the white skeleton, her eyes widened in shock when she noticed something that only experts like her could see at a glance.

"A Named Creature!" Vera hurriedly approached the Skeleton.

She then closely appraised it to ensure that her eyes were not deceiving her.

"How can this be?" Vera asked in confusion. "How can you have a Named Creature in your current state? Is this your doing?" she finished, turning to face Eriol who was still seated on the tree branch.

"I only gave him the means," Eriol replied. "The one that made the choice for his first Skeleton to be named was Lux."

Vera was aware of how powerful a Named Creature could be. Unlike other creatures, a named creature could grow strong at a faster rate than others. Also, it possessed unique abilities that set them apart from normal creatures.

"What do you think, Grandma?" Lux patted his chest. "Don't you think that I have what it takes to enter Elysium now?"

Vera glanced at Diablo before shifting her gaze to her grandson. She admitted that having a Named Creature would greatly help Lux in the long run, but the problem was his short term progression.

"Only if you don't faint in battle," Vera ruffled Lux's hair fondly. "If you faint, no matter how strong your summon is, it will just disappear into thin air."

"Don't worry, Grandma. I will not faint anymore."

"We'll see about that."

Eriol smiled as he watched the playful banter of the grandmother and grandson pair. Now that Vera had finally acknowledged Lux's potential, all that was left was to see how the red-headed boy was in actual battle.

As long as Lux passed his grandma's test, the God of Games was sure that Vera would give Lux her full support and permit him to enter the Beginner's Area, using the backdoor that Eriol had prepared for him.