

## Level Up Legacy - Chapter 12: Tough Love -

After Arthur was back home, he sent his application to the best academy in Kera city, Avalin. Oren also attended this academy but he was a first-year where Arthur applied to be a senior year. Now normally, no one can skip these many grades. However, being an awakens academy, they bent some rules for the awakens. As Arthur was formally registered by the Union, the impossible has been achieved. In a matter of a few hours, Arthur received his acceptance letter. He was to be transferred to Senior Year Class-A, the best class in the academy. He wondered the reason why he got the best class and then remembered that he also sent the recommendation letter of Master Ronin.

"Oh, I can start this Monday. It seems I have some free time to gain some experience and increase my strength." As Arthur read the acceptance email, he started formulating some plans. As the money Yuran sent was spent on this month's loan, he needed to get some money to rebuy the gear his father left him. He slept that night and woke up the next morning, making some breakfast. He was itching to use his Legacy since it has been several days since he used his ability and got stronger.

He then left the house and headed toward downtown, towards an address he last visited after his father went missing. The metro was crowded like usual, but Arthur had the time to waste, unlike yesterday. It took a while until he arrived at the station near his destination, and even more to get off. It was a commercial district where many guilds opened shops and auctions for weaponry and dungeons' supplies.

"Hah, I didn't think I would be back so soon." Arthur sighed as he looked at the sign of his father's old friend's shop. It sold used artifacts and weapons, so Arthur came to ask for help since he had no money to purchase his weapon. He didn't want to rely again on his father's friend, but he remembered the words he told him last time.

"I'll keep this until your father returns or you have a use for it yourself."

Arthur was too devastated at that time to feel appreciative, but now his heart was filled with gratitude as he remembered the past. He pushed the door and his ears rang with the bell's sound. The counter had a man polishing an artifact behind it who turned toward Arthur as he walked in. Arthur could see the work these years has done to Cairon Tate, one of the few who helped him.

His sideburns were now half grey and he grew his beard. His hair was thinning a bit but it grew long to cover for it. Cairon grinned as soon as he saw Arthur.

"Silvera!" His voice was happy and Arthur felt even more nostalgic as Silvera was what Cairon called his father. He walked briskly toward the counter and shook Cairon's hand and smiled.

"Mr. Tate, it's been a long time."

"It has indeed, why haven't you shown your face earlier?" Cairon's hand was calloused and Arthur realized something horrifying. The hand he was shaking didn't feel complete.

"Mr. Cairon, this..." His voice trailed and cracked as he looked at the hand missing two fingers and a big chunk of the palm from it. It had healed already but it was surely a blow to any person trading in artifacts and weapons.

"Ah this, yes. It has been a while since it happened, probably two years ago. A hellhound feasted on it after we were ambushed in a dungeon. No biggie though. I wanted to retire from that business for a while." Mr. Cairon waved his hand and tried to look unfazed. However, Arthur could feel the lingering bitterness. He would have been fooled normally, but his newfound intuition allowed him to read people better.

"What about you, brat? What have you been doing?" Mr. Cairon changed the subject seeing Arthur's saddened face and the latter was happy to follow along.

"I've been artifact scavenging for the past few years. It wasn't much, but we had our ends meet."

"You rascal, you've been digging up dungeons without contacting me? You know I could use a scavenger!" Mr. Cairon pretended to be angry and laughed. He knew Arthur wouldn't rely on him even if he forcefully helped him.

"I would have come for you earlier if I needed to, but it was really alright. Now, however, I need what I sold you years earlier. Is it still here?" Arthur couldn't help but smile.

"You mean..." Mr. Cairon's eyes went wide and he asked. Arthur simply nodded since he understood that he was asking if he awakened. "Hahaha!"

The apron-wearing man came from behind the counter and hugged Arthur as he laughed heartily. "Congratulations! Your old man would have been proud!"

Arthur awkwardly hugged back, even though he felt happy. Cairon was there for him when his father went missing, as he bought his father's belongings for a suitable price. That was also the reason Arthur came back since Cairon promised to safe keep them until now.

The happy man's words were incoherent as he rushed toward the back of the store to get a metallic suitcase which he placed in front of Arthur.

"I kept them maintained until now, as fresh as day one. Use them well, kiddo." Mr. Cairon slapped the suitcase with pride and started caressing it as if it was his child. It seems his youth memories with Arthur's father were flashing in his mind as Arthur could see a wistful expression. Mr. Cairon followed with a sentence that filled Arthur with pride and hope. "Your father is a good man."

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After he got back home, Arthur walked and saw Oren in the bathroom standing. As he took a closer look, he found the latter putting some ice and disinfections on his face. He saw a purple bruise on his face that made his rage boil.

"Oren? What happened to you?" His brother flinched and wanted to run away but Arthur grabbed him by the arm. Oren struggled and said that there was nothing wrong.

"Just let me see your face! Who did this to you?!" Arthur's voice was louder than he intended, and that served to aggravate Oren who was trying to run away.

"This has nothing to do with you!"

Arthur paused as he heard Oren's words. He knew why his brother said that. Over the years, he assumed the role of their father as he took care of his brother and mother. However, that has built a wall towering their brotherhood. Oren no longer wanted to rely on him in everything, probably fearing that he might increase the burden on Arthur.

Arthur grabbed Oren's hair and started to make a mess out of it. His brother was confused and started shouting to stop. As Arthur stopped, he looked at his brother in the eyes and said.

"It's not us against each other, Oren. It is us against the world, okay? If someone is hurting you, it's only right that I help you. I'll be attending Avalin Academy too. I'm going back to school since I want to go to college after my awakening. No matter what happens, I can't stand around idly as I see you struggling. So please, just... Rely on me."

His words finally reached his brother as tears glistened in his eyes and he started nodding. The two sat down and started talking about the cause of it all. As he started telling the story, Arthur's face got weirder and weirder. This... was not what he expected.

As Arthur looked over his brother, he could now see where this all started. Unlike his average looks, his brother was on the cuter side of the spectrum. He had curly brown hair that he got from their mother and he had his father's green eyes. With his still childish face, he could see where the problem all started.

"So... All of this started because you rejected a girl?" Arthur almost laughed out loud. He didn't know where to begin as this wasn't the reason he expected. In summary, there was a girl from an influential family that likes Oren and his diligent personality. His father made sure to raise the two properly as both of them had one characteristic unbecoming of their age, hardworking. That's why this girl liked his brother, plus his appearance. Furthermore, this girl was powerful... One of the most powerful in their year.

"Yeah, so after I rejected her because I knew I wasn't worth it, she said okay and went home. The next day she was absent. Then her brother came over, he is a third-year and said something along the lines," Oren tried to mimic her brother and put a serious expression, "I'll never allow someone to make my sister cry! Or something like that..."

"And that's when the bullying started?" Arthur started laughing as he couldn't help it. Although he wanted to teach this guy a lesson, he still found the whole thing befitting of being called... tough love.