

Versatile Superstar: Rise In Hollywood Chapter 16

In LA, the production team had already prepared the set of X-Star. It was quite similar to the set they had used in the last two seasons with some minor enhancements.

As for the contestants' living quarters, it was right beside the set with separate rooms allotted to everyone and a shared kitchen that they could use anytime, whenever they felt like it.

Aiden probably was the most pleased about having a separate room to himself. He liked privacy, and a whole room to himself meant he could work on more songs and practice without anyone disturbing him.

As for the start of Star Week, the program team had given the contestants three days to get used to LA and sightsee, if they wanted, before the start of shooting.

Many contestants, including Jackson and Emily, visited renowned places in LA. After all, the city is internationally known for being the home of the rich and famous, Hollywood, the main home of major entertainment companies, crazy traffic, ethnical diversity, and the second-largest city in America.

With about four million people, this place is also called the 'City Of Angels'.

It has a lot of places to see, including Hollywood studios, Griffith Park, The Getty Centre, Santa Monica, Venice Beach and even art and history museums. This place was almost an entire world in itself.

But instead of exploring the city, Aiden just spent time in his room, occasionally going out for strolls.

It wasn't like he didn't want to sightsee, but he wanted to improve his skills more than the other contestants. Due to him having a system, he perfectly knew where he stood compared to others, which prompted him to grind his levels and decrease the difference between them as soon as possible.

"The average level of contestants in Star week is around Basic Grade 9, which is the same as me, but there are way better contestants, and with my current level and skills, I don't stand much chance against them."

Tonight was his third night in LA, and by now, Aiden had already analysed every other contestant's skills. Although he was not lacking compared to the average, he knew that the competition was just as much about luck as skill and talent.

And he can't afford to put his trust in something as volatile as luck.

Tomorrow, the shooting for Star Week will officially begin. And there was still uncertainty in his heart as to whether he would be able to survive any longer in this intense competition.

Every day he had practised hard, and even if his system prompted that he was close to breaking into Basic Grade 10, he knew there was a long way to go for him.

He found it even more challenging to break through to the next grade from his current grade.

‘Ahh, I’m hungry.’

Aiden sighed, putting down his pen. He was writing lyrics for his next song as he didn’t know when he would be required to sing one. After all, his composing skill was his biggest strength, and he needed to use it as much as he could. And when he walked on the stage next time, he wanted to have something that would give him confidence – a new song would be a good bet.

Turning his head, he noticed that it was already close to midnight.

Standing up, he opened the door of his room and slowly moved towards the kitchen. It was on the ground floor, and he had noticed some cup noodles in one of the cupboards earlier that day.

For now, they would satisfy his cravings, and he would be able to sleep.

The hallway was dark, so Aiden had to use the flashlight on his phone, but when he reached the kitchen, he found someone unexpected there, who held a packet of cup noodles in his hand.

With wavy blonde hair and a face that seemed like he starred in a 90s teenage movie, this person was amassing many fans and was one of the hot topics of this season’s X-Star.

‘Cameron Bryce. One of the strongest contestants in the show.’

pANDA novel When Cameron noticed Aiden standing behind him, he nearly screamed. But when he looked closely, he recognised Aiden.

“You are Aiden, right? Aiden Silverware?”

“Silvereye.”

“Yeah, that. Well, hi, what are you doing here in the middle of the night?” He asked, putting down the cup of noodles on the table.

“The same thing you are up to.”

Aiden pointed at the cup noodles, and Cameron immediately understood. After all, waking up in the middle of the night for some food was not uncommon, so he didn't bother much.

After adding water to their cup noodles, they sat down at the table and waited for them to get ready. By now, every contestant was quite aware of each other.

It was the same for Aiden and Cameron. Though, it was the first time they were talking to each other.

“So, you also woke up in the middle of the night?” Cameron asked, trying not to let an awkward atmosphere set in.

Cameron looked like someone who wouldn't enjoy the company of others, but Aiden felt like he was a better person than people thought of him.

“I have not slept yet. I was trying to write songs.” Aiden replied. “I don't know what will come in the next rounds, so I'm trying to prepare a song, just in case I need it.”

Cameron nodded his head but hesitated a bit before replying.

“I write songs too or used to. Since I was sixteen, I've been trying to make them, but they never actually worked. Felt like something was always missing from them. So, I have stopped doing that for a while and focused more on my singing.”P.AND.A n.o.v.EL

Aiden recalled the short introduction video of Cameron he had seen in the second episode. Since Cameron's grandfather was a musician, there must be some pressure to walk the same path as him.

“Music is often like that. My songs aren't perfect either, especially when I don't add any instruments to them besides my guitar and voice. You can say they are straightforward and sometimes even quite lacking. I focus more on the emotions.”

Aiden replied as the noodles got ready. Then, they both picked a cup and started eating them.

“My grandpa used to say something similar. Music can never be perfect until you are a genius and most of us are not, so we need to focus on affecting the listener's feelings and emotions. What do you feel after listening to a song? You need to portray the emotions directly, but that's the hard part.”

“It certainly is hard for me.”

“Doesn’t seem like it. I have seen you singing. You know how to portray emotions. But, unfortunately, that’s not a skill that’s easy to come by.”

Cameron said, looking a bit envious. Aiden didn’t know why but Cameron seemed to have overestimated him by the way he was talking.

If he was truthful, it should be Aiden who should be jealous of Cameron’s monstrous talent because when he first saw the latter’s status, he felt the same way he did for Rachel.

[Cameron Bryce] [21 years]

[Singing level: Intermediate Grade 2]

[Special skill: Limit Break]

Cameron was on the same level as Rachel, and he was sure to reach the grand finale if everything went normal.

As for his skill, Aiden couldn’t make much sense of it. It seemed to be a skill he would normally see in an anime, and the closest guess he had was that the skill helped him break his limits easily.

Maybe, it was because he was on the same level as Rachel despite being two years younger.

“Are you nervous? Star Week is going to start tomorrow.”

Cameron suddenly asked while Aiden was looking at the former’s skill interface. Star Week was basically a long round in which one or two contestants would be eliminated every week until only four of them would be left for the grand finale.

“A bit, but I’m used to it now. This competition has helped me a lot in getting used to pressure. It was way different when I used to wander through auditions.”

“Auditions?”

“Yeah,” Aiden pursed his lips. He spoke too much, but after a moment of thought, he decided to go on, “Acting auditions. I mainly came to the United States to become an actor. To take a chance in Hollywood, but it didn’t really work out. That’s when I found out about X-Star.”

“So, you are more of an actor?”

“Well, in this competition, I’m a singer.”

Aiden smiled, but Cameron didn’t seem satisfied with his answer. He tilted his head a bit before asking.

“I’m asking whether you enjoy acting more than singing?”

“Umm, that’s a difficult question.” Aiden shook his head, wondering about it. He certainly liked acting more, but his love for music had grown in the past few weeks. “Let’s say I enjoy both things. Both are very different and alike to me at the same time. I would love to play a character in a movie, and likewise, I enjoy telling a story through music.”

Cameron didn’t say anything else at that and just finished his noodles. Then, standing up, he gave Aiden a weird look.

“That was a nice talk. I will see you in Star Week. I think I will love beating you if we are against each other.”

He said before walking back to his room.

The last line of the sentence was something that Aiden had seen on the broadcast a lot. Although Cameron turned out to be a good guy, he had a bit of edginess.

‘And he got annoyed because I also act...? Weird....’

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//DreamNote//

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