

Versatile Superstar: Rise In Hollywood Chapter 4

Aiden's celebration didn't last for long. After he passed the first round – the preliminaries- he was excited, but it soon died down after realising that this was just the first step of a long journey.

If he indulged too much in celebration, he might lose the next round, then the disappointment would be on another level.

So, after just one day of celebration, he started practising hard.

In the morning, he would drive the taxi around and practice in between rides, and during the night, he would go to the bar where he worked and even sing a few songs for the customers.

The bar owner was sharp enough to notice Aiden's skills and gave him a slot to sing in the bar at night, which became a good rehearsal session for him.

He practised a lot of popular songs and even unknown songs that he could sing well.

The participants could be asked to sing any song in the competition, so they needed to master many different singing styles.

Like this, he spent two weeks and on the 4th of April, he left his rented apartment and headed towards the theatre where the second round of the reality show was going to happen.

The first three rounds were scheduled in New York, and after that, the show would shift to Hollywood, Los Angeles.

When Aiden entered the set where the next round would happen, the staff directed him toward a room. As he reached there, he couldn't help but feel a bit overwhelmed by the number of people in the room.

The room was full of people, with most of them sitting somewhere on the ground while a few were standing. Rather than a room, it was more of a big hall.

'There should be around a hundred people here.' So he thought, but just as he noticed the crowd at the other end of the room, Aiden couldn't help but reevaluate himself, "Um, I guess it's way more than that.'

Exactly 200 people were going to be selected after the preliminary round. And it seemed like there were really that many people.

At first, he wasn't sure because not every contestant made it to the broadcast. The show would even reject some at first but then would decide to call them back.

'Out of all these, only 16 will remain after the third round.'

He pursed his lips as he moved to take a seat in a corner. The Cameramen were shooting everything around them from a distance, and some staff members were responding to the contestants' queries.

From hearing their conversation, Aiden deduced that the judges would soon arrive and brief them about the rules of the second round.

Until then, everyone needed to wait.

If it was going to be like last year, Aiden already had a basic idea.

"Hi?" Just as Aiden was lost in his thoughts about the expected challenges for the Second Round, someone gently nudged the side of his arm, and a voice entered Aiden's ear, attracting his attention. It was from a girl similar to his age.

The girl, an Asian, to be more specific, continued, "Hello, I am Emily Jung."

She had dark black hair with light facial make-up. And with the perfect American accent, he knew she wasn't new to this country.

Before Aiden could react, a guy sitting opposite them spoke. He was a white guy with dyed red hair, creating a stern expression on his face, especially with his sharp eyes.

"I'm Jackson Brown from New Jersey. Nice to meet you all."

As he introduced himself, his eyes fell on Aiden, and the latter had no choice but to introduce himself.

"I'm Aiden Silvereye."

"Ah, I knew you were familiar."

As he introduced himself, a girl sitting beside the white guy muttered. She was a blonde-haired girl with an appearance that one could only describe as model-like.

With a gentle appearance and a sharp chin, she seemed like the type who would get more votes due to her appearance rather than singing.

"Hi! I'm Rachel Rose from New York. I was there when you gave your audition."

"Oh."

Aiden simply nodded at that and wondered how he hadn't remembered seeing her on the day of his audition. It must be because he was mostly worried about his audition and wasn't bothered to look at the other contestants.

"What do you all think we need to do to pass the second round?"

Emily started a conversation, and Jackson quickly chipped in with his guess. Both seemed like the friendly types, and even Rachel would speak from time to time.

Only Aiden stayed silent.

'How are they even in the mood to talk? Am I the only one so nervous?'

He sighed and silently opened his system.

One of the features of his system was to see the skill level of other people. Of course, he can't see the skill level of people with whom he had a lot of skill disparity, but aside from that, he could check the status of other contestants.

[Emily Jung] [21 years]

[Singing level: Basic Grade 10]

-There's a chance of manifesting a special skill.

As Aiden looked at Emily, her information came into view. He couldn't see anything other than her singing level, but that was more than enough.

'She's way better than me and could get a special skill.'

The line which said that there was a chance of her manifesting a special skill was something that made him wonder how formidable she would be after getting a special skill.

Next was Jackson.

[Jackson] [18 years]

[Singing level: Basic Grade 6]

'He' will have to improve a lot too.'

That was the evaluation of Aiden after seeing his information. Jackson probably had barely passed the first round, and he doubted whether the latter would pass the next one.

The only saving grace was his age which was still pretty young, so there was room for improvement.

'I wonder what would be the evaluation of Rachel.'

She noticed his gaze as he turned to look at her and glared slightly at him. She didn't seem to like him a lot, but Aiden didn't care about that.

Silently, he looked at her skill level and couldn't help but be shocked.

'Damn'

[Rachel Rose] [23 years]

[Singing level: Intermediate Grade 2]

[Special skill: High notes]

Seeing her skill interface, he couldn't help but rub his eyes to make sure that he was not seeing anything wrong.

The information was just too unbelievable for him to process.

Working in the bar, he had seen some professional singers from time to time. He even met a guy whose one music video had crossed 100 million views. However, his singing level was only two levels more than Rachel's.

By this logic, Rachel would probably be at his level by the end of the competition.

'No, with those skills, she can win the show.'

Aiden thought and couldn't help but feel like his biggest competitor would be her.

'How am I even going to defeat her...?'

At that moment, the door of the hall was pushed open.

The three judges walked in, with Marlo walking two steps behind them. The camerapersons focused on them as the contestants stood up and made a circle around them.

“Congratulations! You are here from a group of thousands, and you should be proud that you were able to reach this round. But that was just the beginning, and only 40 of you would be left standing after this round.”

Andrew began, and not one contestant spoke. Aiden sensed nervousness from the expression of the participants around him.

Like him, many people were feeling nervous about the prospects of passing this round.

“Only one in 200 would get the grand prize of 1 million dollars and a chance to sign a record label deal.”

Steven said, and the sound of clapping resounded out. A million dollars was a lot of money, no matter which part of the world you’re from.

In the first season, the prize money was only 300k dollars, but as the show got more popular, the prize money had increased drastically.

“But it won’t be the end of the journey for any of you. Singing isn’t a race to see who’s the fastest; it’s a marathon, and only those who can preserve till the end etch their name among the greatest of all time. I am sure you all must be wondering about what the challenge of the second round will be.”

Alyssa finished her words and looked around. No one had any clue about the second round.

If they went as per the last season, the second round could be a face-off between two contestants. As Aiden wondered what the second round would be about, Marlo took a step forward and gestured to a big screen.

“The second round will be a...”

His words trailed off, and the screen turned on on its own. Then, slowly, the scene of firecrackers bursting into the sky appeared on the screen, and big, bold words appeared in the middle.

‘A team mission.’

Aiden read the words and sighed inwardly. Around him, contestants began whispering their thoughts aloud.

“A team mission? Are they going to group us together?”

“I don’t even know anyone here!”

“Are they going to put us in a group randomly?”

“What if I get grouped with someone who isn’t good?”

Questions like those floated around the room, and Aiden silently waited for the judges to give clear instructions.

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.