

The Crafts 68

Chapter 68: Argument

"Run!" Wally screamed as he took to his heels and made his escape.

Astar and Klein didn't dilly-dally either as they ran away from the scene. None of them had their four fellow students in mind, as the only thought in their heads was to escape.

The desolate beast was at the peak of the first level of the Apertures Opening stage. It was an opponent none of the students could take on their own. Escaping was already a challenge, so there was no need to consider rescuing their classmates.

As the three ran, the desolate beast didn't rush to chase right away but glanced at the four students on the ground who had a green light shield protecting them. A bird in hand was better than one in the sky, and the desolate beast seemed to be familiar with this proverb. It tried to claw at the shield but failed. It even tried to eat them, but the shield was tough.

In frustration, the beast pounded two of them deep into the ground and threw the other two into the distance, before rushing after Wally and his crew.

The trio didn't run much, as their legs could only take them so far as compared to a flying desolate beast. Instead, they relied on the complicated terrain to immediately find a new hiding spot, which was a hole situated close to a large tree. The hole was barely wide enough to let one person through at a time, but the inside was quite spacious.

It could fit in the three of them with a bit of room to spare for movement. It was most likely a burrow of some underground desolate beast, but had been abandoned by the said beast or maybe the owner had been killed. They remained there while pondering their next course of action.

Although the light shield was an option, doing so was no different from failing the test. Even if it was temporarily halted, there was no saying whether they would be excused or not, as the Greendale Highschool is known for its strict standards. This event might even be recorded in their student data folder, together with their response to it.

After all, in the real world, accidents and unexpected scenarios were very common; things wouldn't always go as planned. This means that, if they performed well, it would be a plus. But if their reactions were poor, it would affect their future.

So until they had no other option, relying on the shield was the very last decision they would take.

"We should split up. There's no time." Klein abruptly said.

"We can't. We're no match for it on our own." Wally refuted right away.

"Then what else can we do?"

"Why don't we kill it?" Astar suggested.

"Are you crazy? That's a peak first level desolate beast!" Klein turned and glared at Astar as if he were a mad man.

"Look, we already know a lot about desolate beasts; their weak points and all that. Also, it's still at the first level and we have vestiges with us. We are also split well, with ranged and close combat fighters. If you go all out, you can make a shot with your vestige that's pretty close to the first level in terms of power. I can also exhibit something similar if I push myself to the limit.

It's worth taking the risk unless you want all our hard work to go down the drain." Astar stared back at Klein.

Seeing the daring look in Astar's eyes, Klein couldn't help but yell back, "You're truly a mad man. Leave me out of this."

"Hold up first. What do you say, Wally?" Astar asked, hoping that Wally's response would be on his side.

"We can't. It's too risky." Wally shook his head.

He felt that maybe because it was Astar's first time facing monsters or that things had been going somewhat smoothly for them, but Astar's danger sense was badly low. He was becoming more daring with his suggestions. Although such a mentality was good for a freelancer, they were still just students.

"Are you guys really going to give up on such an opportunity? That's twenty points." Astar couldn't help but try to convince them.

"Oh yeah? And who would be getting it?" Klein narrowed his eyes.

"I can compensate you guys for it. But just please, let's do this." Astar said.

Wally couldn't help but frown.

Of the trio, Astar was the one in the most comfortable financial situation. This was why it was only until their second year that they became friends. On the contrary, Klein was in a similar situation as Wally, but a bit better as his family could afford a vestige for him, albeit after losing an arm [1].

Originally, the difference in social and financial status never affected their friendship, but Wally sometimes got a certain feeling from Astar in their conversations; it was the aura of a trust-fund baby. Even right now, Astar was overconfident and detached from the reality that their 'target' was a monster that could kill them over and over, if not for their shield.

Instead, he felt that they could take it on, which was somewhat delusional. He even thought he could convince them to risk their lives with his money.

"Wally, I'm leaving." Klein suddenly said as he turned around to crawl his way out.

"Roar."

The desolate beast's voice sounded outside.

"It's close. We don't have much time to escape. Our only option is to fight." Astar said.

Klein ignored him and quickly crawled out of the hole before dashing in the opposite direction. Only Wally and Astar were left, but they quickly exited the hole as remaining behind was risky. The desolate beast might have been too large to crawl in, but it could bury them in the ground.

Just as they left the hole, the roar of the monster was quickly heard and only just a few metres away.

"It's too late." Wally sighed as he prepared to fight.

"You guys keep it distracted while I try to aim for its weakness." Klein's voice sounded in the team chat.

"You're still around?" Wally was surprised.

Klein had left a few seconds earlier, which was enough time for him to have gotten to a safe distance. Even if the desolate beast showed up, it would have been distracted by Wally and Astar, giving him more time to escape. Despite that, Klein didn't run.

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"We came here together, so we have to leave together. Astar, you owe me one." Klein said.

"Sure."

Astar grinned as he understood that Klein's statement was the same as agreeing to let him have the points if they managed to kill the beast.

At that moment, the desolate beast came into full view in front of the group. Previously, they were too scared and in a hurry, not bothering to take a good look, but the situation was different now.

"A helokiel." Wally muttered.

There were a lot of desolate beasts in the world, and the species depended on the environment and even the planet, as each planet had different living conditions. The majority of desolate beasts on Eretre had been recorded. For the Greendale Highschool students, they were taught about the monsters on their continent—the Groeten continent.

The helokiel was a somewhat common aerial desolate beast in the region. It had a stout body with eagle wings, menacing jaws, and terrifying claws. Unlike most monsters, it didn't have a tail.

If one were to describe a helokiel using normal animals, it would be a monstrosity with the head of a hyena, the wings of an eagle and a muscly body similar to a tiger, but without the patterns and tail.

"We can't handle this." Wally said.

"Hold on."

Seeing as the desolate beast had yet to take action, Astar took out a certain pill and swallowed it. He grimaced a bit, but in the next moment, Astar's face was flushed, and he looked energized. Even his aura had subtly risen to be on par with a peak Body Strengthening stage practitioner.

"!!!"

Wally and Klein were both surprised by this but they didn't say a word. Now wasn't the time to be asking questions.

"We have fifteen minutes."

Astar gripped his vestige, which happened to be a sword.