

## **The Sun 121**

### **Chapter 121 – Ability?**

For the next two hours, Nick had to collect three more spears, each one more difficult to get than the last one.

By the end of it, Nick felt like he was about to die.

His arms were nearly unusable, and his back was aching whenever he tried to straighten his posture.

When Nick reached the top of the building again, Manela nodded at him.

"Good work. That should be enough for today," she said.

Nick breathed with difficulty and only nodded without saying anything.

By now, Nick had realized why Manela had made him do these things. Updated from novelbln.(c)om

First of all, Nick became familiar with his new training spot.

Second, he was undergoing arduous physical training, which should also improve his strength.

Third, Nick was getting more used to the weight of his spears and learned how to carry them without using up too much of his power.

Fourth, Nick was getting very familiar with his spears.

The way he was handling the spears now was far easier and more skillful than before the exercises.

Even more, Nick had gotten familiar with creating several footholds with his spears and using them to reach terrain that he otherwise couldn't.

Funnily enough, even though Nick's task hadn't been to throw spears, he had needed to throw his spears more than once, and the throws always needed to find different targets.

Sometimes, they needed to pierce a wall below Nick.

Sometimes, they needed to pierce a wall above him.

Sometimes, they needed to pierce the ground far away.

And sometimes, they needed to pierce the ceiling.

Additionally, since a wrong throw would cause huge issues for Nick, every single throw he made was very careful and calculated.

After all, if one of his spears bounced off a wall, they would fall towards the broken grates, which meant that they would fall into the sewers.

If one of the spears fell into the sewers, Nick would have to get it back.

The spears were too valuable to leave like this.

Even more, Manela would probably become quite angry if Nick left one of his spears in such a dirty place.

Nick needed to be extremely careful with his throws, and that had already resulted in him becoming much better at throwing them.

All in all, the training had been quite effective.

"Same time tomorrow," Manela said, "but this time, we will meet here."

"Of course. Thank you," Nick said through difficult pants.

Manela nodded once more and jumped off the building towards the Outer City.

She was extremely silent and made no noise, even though she had probably jumped over 50 meters into the distance.

Even when she landed, she made no sound.

'Is that her ability?' Nick thought.

'My spears already weigh 30 kilos each, and they are made for Mid to Peak Johns. She's a powerful Veteran, which means her spears are even heavier.'

Nick saw seven thin spears on Manela's retreating back.

'She's probably walking around with over 300 kilos of extra weight.'

'Yet, she makes no sound when she moves.'

'It's almost like she's a ghost.'

'Or a Specter.'

Nick looked at Manela until he couldn't see her anymore.

Then, he took a deep breath.

A moment later, his spears suddenly became very easy to carry.

His ability had activated.

Nick easily jumped down the building.

With his stronger body, he would have no issues withstanding such a high fall.

Nick calmly fell.

BOOOOM!

But then, Nick's eyes widened in shock as the ceiling he landed on broke into pieces.

'Fuck!' Nick thought.

Nick landed on the floor below the ceiling, and since the ceiling had slowed Nick's fall, he didn't break the floor as well.

However, half of the roof of the building he landed on was broken.

'How the fuck did she do that?!' Nick thought as he pushed the bent metallic rubble to the side.

'She should weigh three times as much as me, but the building she landed on didn't show any signs of breaking!'

After climbing out of the broken house, Nick jumped from building to building to get back, much more careful not to break them.

For the remainder of the day, Nick ate some food and trained with his melee weapons.

The next day, after working with the Dreamer, Nick grabbed some lunch and moved to the training field again.

It was easy to get there since nobody saw Nick as soon as he reached the rooftops, but when the four-story building came into view, things became difficult.

Nick didn't see Manela, but he could tell that she was there since his ability had deactivated.

Traveling across the rooftops became problematic again.

Eventually, Nick managed to reach the top of the big building, but...

"You're late," Manela complained with narrowed eyes.

"Sorry," Nick said. "I forgot about the difficult path to this place. I'll start earlier tomorrow."

Manela snorted in annoyance. "How could you forget? You should have known how far you needed to travel and what you would carry. Clearly, you knew how long it would take."

Nick took a deep breath. "I would have come ten minutes early with the use of my ability."

Manela frowned. "I don't need to know about your ability," she said. "If you tell me your ability, it would seem like I coerced you into telling me with my superior power, and my motives would be called into question."

"I don't want to know what ability you have," she said.

Nick nodded. "Of course."

Manela also nodded and turned to the training field.

"But you don't seem to mind," Nick added.

"What are you talking about?" she asked.

"Your ability," Nick said. "How else would you be able to remain so silent while jumping so far with so much extra weight?"

"That's not an ability," Manela said.

Nick's brows raised in shock. "It's not?"

"No," Manela confirmed.

"Then, can I learn that?" Nick asked.

"It's on your training plan," Manela said. "It's not a focus, but it's part of your training."

"That as well."

Nick just looked at Manela with confusion.

What as well?

The next moment, Manela just gestured towards Nick's side with her head.

Then, Nick saw one of Manela's spears stuck in the roof of the tall building, just two centimeters away from Nick's left foot!

This spear hadn't been there!

He hadn't heard or felt anything!

How did this spear appear there?!

Chapter 122 – Advantageous Disadvantage

"How did this spear get here?" Nick asked in shock.

"You're going to learn how to do that later," Manela said before she opened her right hand.

Nick was about to shake it again, but he remembered the scene from yesterday.

Instead, he just awkwardly looked at it, not knowing what to do.

"My spear," she said. "Hand it to me."

"Oh, sure!" Nick said quickly as he grabbed the spear.

Then, he pulled it out with all of his power.

Whoop!

And nearly fell over as the spear easily and neatly came out of the roof.

'It's so light! That's probably only five to seven kilos!'

Nick had expected something like fifty to seventy kilos!

Awkwardly, Nick put the spear on Manela's hand, and she took it.

The next moment, the spear shrank in her hand!

The tip was compressed and entered the shaft, making the spear less than ten centimeters long.

The next moment, she slid the spear down her sleeve.

Without Nick asking, Manela unbuttoned the sleeve on her right arm, showing Nick her wrist.

There were six compact spears around her wrist.

Then, she flicked her wrists, and one of the spears flew into her opened hand and expanded back to its big size.

"Not every spear needs to be equally strong," she said.

"The spears on my back are for strong and durable targets, but they are not as silent."

"If you want to focus on throwing spears, you have to buy multiple sets for different purposes."

Manela looked at the spears on Nick's back. "The spears on your back are for single target assassinations and direct heavy battle. They are not made to be used against quick and nimble targets."

Nick nodded with understanding.

"Time to warm up," Manela said as she took all five of Nick's spears.



Shing! Shing! Shing! Shing! Shing!

Within three seconds, all five of Nick's spears landed on different houses in the training area.

"Get them within 20 minutes. If you can't do that, you will try again," she said.

Nick took a deep breath and immediately jumped down the building.

Without his spears, he became quite agile and fast.

However, he quickly found something that surprised him.

Right now, Nick stood in front of a gap that was five meters wide, with a three-story high building on the other side.

Nick was only on a building that was one story high.

Even more, except for the small holes left behind by Nick's spears from yesterday, the wall was rather smooth.

For quite a while, Nick looked with shock at the wall.

This entire time, Nick had viewed the presence of his spears as a drawback due to their heavy weight.

But right now, he couldn't climb that building!

Climbing it with his spears was quite easy since he only needed to create a small ladder, but it became extremely difficult without them.

Traversing the rooftops had become more difficult without his spears!

Nick would have never thought that this would happen.

Nick almost always used this building as a sort of central checkpoint to get to every other building since it was in the middle.

But this time, Nick couldn't climb it.

He needed at least two spears to get on top of the building!

'I can't waste time here!' Nick thought before he changed his route.

Originally, Nick wanted to get the spear that was the furthest away first since every spear added extra weight, but now, he would get that one last.

About ten minutes later, Nick retrieved three spears and reached the top of the tall building.

Five minutes later, he retrieved the last spear.

Now, he only needed to get back.

He reached the starting point...

23 minutes after starting.

So close!

Without saying anything, Manela threw the five spears to the same spots again.

This time, Nick knew what he had to do, and he was faster than last time.

21 minutes.

Once again.

20 minutes and 28 seconds.

And again.

20 minutes and 42 seconds.

Once more.

Over 21 minutes.

Nick breathed heavily.

He had already used up almost all of his power in the previous attempts.

Jumping from building to building with so much weight was extremely exhausting.

Nick knew that he wouldn't be able to finish the task today.

But when he saw Manela's strict gaze, he knew that giving up was the wrong move.

Nick also remembered that he would need to pay for the lesson if Manela felt like Nick was wasting her time.

So, he had to continue trying.

But since Nick couldn't possibly win anyway, he took the time to look at the route again from the top of the building instead of immediately jumping down.

He used this time to optimize his route for tomorrow.

A couple of minutes later, Nick raised an eyebrow as he noticed something.

There was another way to get two of his spears that was way faster than the one he always used, and the reason why he had never found that way was because he was planning his route with his spears in mind.

The original route was to go ten meters towards the center, 20 meters towards the right, get one spear, travel back to the center, go 30 meters towards the left, get the next spear, go back to the center, and climb the big building with the spears.

But with the new route, Nick could run all the way around the battlefield in a circle.

From the south, which was the starting point, Nick could go towards the east, then the north, then the west, grab spear number two, turn around, grab spear number five, grab spear number four, grab spear number one, and then go towards the center to get the last spear.

It would be much faster.

Nick took a deep breath and jumped down the building.

He followed the new route.

And came back after...

23 minutes.

However, Nick had also planned his new route for over five minutes.

After starting once more, Nick managed to get through the exercise in just a bit under 20 minutes.

He had done it!

Chapter 123 – Peak

Nick reached the top of the building and breathed heavily as he collapsed onto his knees in exhaustion.

He had never been this exhausted before.

"Well done," Manela said. "I thought it would take until the end of the lesson, but we still have about half an hour left."

"Take a break for two minutes," she said.

Nick didn't answer and just continued breathing with difficulty.

When the two minutes were up, Nick had somewhat recovered.

SHING!

And the five spears shot towards the same places again.

"One last time," Manela said. "If you manage to do it in time again, you'll get a surprise."

Nick took a deep breath.

Again?

Nick's bones were already hurting from the constant falls and his muscles constantly pressing on them.

His body was shouting at him that what he was doing was dangerous and that he needed to stop.

This was too much, and it might become dangerous!

However, Nick only took a deep breath.

If it were just himself, he would never do something as risky as this.

But he trusted Manela.

Manela seemed like an honest person, and she also seemed too intelligent to make Nick do something like this without a good reason.

Nick trusted in Manela's character and experience.

So, Nick almost immediately jumped down again.

As soon as he started running, Nick felt himself being slower than before.

His exhaustion had hit him full force.

But he just kept jumping.

CRK!

Nick slipped, and his knee hit the roof of the building he was on.

It hurt quite a bit, and his knee made weird sounds whenever he moved it, but he just gnashed his teeth and continued.

Despite all odds, Nick managed to do the jumps he needed to do.

Eventually, he retrieved all of the spears.

Nick felt like he was about to collapse, but he still managed to accurately throw the spears into the tall building before climbing up and retrieving them again.

Finally, he arrived, and he immediately fell onto the ground, breathing heavily in exhaustion.

He was done.

He was so done.

He didn't care about the time anymore.

He was just done.

"A bit slower than expected," Manela said.

Nick didn't care.

"It took you 18 minutes and 36 seconds."

That took Nick by surprise.

"W-what?" he asked in confusion through heavy pants.

"18 minutes and 36 seconds," Manela repeated. "That's your time."

Nick almost couldn't believe it. "But... how?" he asked.

"Don't act too surprised," Manela said. "That's still quite slow for a Peak Newbie."

"But I'm..."

That was when Nick realized.

"And that's your surprise," Manela said.

"I... broke through?" Nick asked in confusion.

Manela nodded. "You can reach the next level after only accumulating about 80% of the Zephyx necessary. In your case, you seemed to have somewhere between 93% and 96% of the Zephyx you needed to become a Peak Newbie."

"You can view Zephyx as a pile of stones, and you advance a level when the pile grows to a certain height. By simply putting more stones onto it, it will eventually reach that height."

"However, you can also force it to reach that height if you put in a lot of effort to realign the stones."

"Our bodies use up Zephyx as fuel, and a higher level simply means that you produce and use more Zephyx. The stored Zephyx in your body is used as a magnet to attract more Prephyx, and if it manages to attract enough, it will disperse into your body, and the new amount of Prephyx absorbed in a given timeframe remains at the early peak."



"In short, even if you break through with less Zephyx, you will have just as much Zephyx as someone that did break through with all the required Zephyx."

"By forcing yourself to the absolute brink, you managed to absorb enough Prephyx to push yourself over the edge."

"That's how you managed to break through."

Nick listened with rapt attention.

That was possible?!

He could break through earlier?!

"How exactly can I achieve that?" Nick asked.

"Very strong stimulus," Manela answered. "Most commonly, a dire situation."

"If you feel like you're about to die, your survival instinct can give you the push. If you feel like you have to save a loved one with all of your power, you can get that push."

"In your case, it was simply trying very hard to finish the course."

"Of course, something like this can't be compared to something like a life-and-death fight, but you also had more Zephyx."

"80% is what has been observed in experiments where Extractors were put up against Specters in a battle. It might be possible that it can go even lower, but we don't have any specific data for that."

"In short, since you already had something like 95% of the required Zephyx to break through, it wasn't very difficult to force it," Manela explained.

Nick absorbed all the knowledge like a dry sponge.

Right now, reaching a new level didn't require a lot of time, but things wouldn't stay that way.

With this method, he could probably save years in the future!

"Thank you for telling me," Nick said through exhausted pants.

"Everyone knows that," Manela answered. "It's nothing special."

Nick didn't answer.

"Anyway, we are done for today," Manela said. "You are too exhausted to do anything but lay on the ground, and if you attempted to throw your spears in this condition, you might throw one of them into the sewers."

"I will note the remaining ten or so minutes down and will add them some other day."

"For now, we're done. See you tomorrow."

Nick slowly forced himself to sit up. "Th-Thanks," he said in exhaustion.

Manela just nodded and silently jumped away.

Nick collapsed onto his back again and just looked at the sun.

Looking at the sun wasn't painful since its beams weren't that bright.

For the next 20 minutes, Nick just lay on top of the building.

And then, he went home.

Luckily, his ability was active again, making it easy to get home.

Chapter 124 – Ghost Wire

When Nick came home, his muscles ached all over.

It had never been this bad before.

Nevertheless, Nick forced himself to get some food before falling into bed.

This time, he slept over nine hours, which was quite a lot for him, and as soon as he woke up, Nick's body had already completely recovered.

Nick still remembered that his body had been sore for several days before he had become an official Zephyx Extractor.

If things were still like back then, Nick's muscles would have ached for up to a week, based on the pain he had been feeling.

And yet, it had only taken a couple of hours for them to recover.

Although, it might not be that surprising.

Specters could recover from fatal injuries within just a couple of days, and Extractors became more powerful by using the same kind of powers as the Specters, which was the Zephyx.

In a way, it was to be expected that the recovery rate of a Zephyx Extractor also increased.

Maybe, at some point, it was even possible to recover lost limbs without having to resort to Restoration Liquid?

After finishing his work, Nick walked towards the training area again.

This time, it was much easier since Nick had already created a pathway to get to his goal. Additionally, he had become a Peak Newbie.

In the end, he arrived ten minutes before the training was supposed to start.

Surprisingly, Manela was also already here.

"Since we ended early yesterday, we are going to start early today," she said.

Nick nodded.

Without saying anything else, Manela grabbed Nick's five spears and threw them toward the same location as yesterday.

"Less than 20 minutes, go."

Nick nodded and immediately started.

Since he was fully recovered, he was much faster than yesterday, and he completed everything in barely 15 minutes.

Nick's breathing had already quickened, but he wasn't close to being exhausted.

Sure enough, this just counted as a warmup.

"Today, we are focusing on this," Manela said as she held an empty hand in front of her.

Nick just looked in confusion at her empty hand.

"On what?" he asked.

Manela swung her hand around a bit, and Nick felt like something had suddenly hit his cheek.

However, the thing that had hit him was extremely light.

That was when Nick remembered that he had seen an almost invisible wire when Manela had thrown one of her spears the first time he had seen her.

After focusing on her hand, Nick could actually see a tiny wire.

"Take it," she said as she put the wire in Nick's right hand. "Look at it."

For a while, Nick just inspected the wire.

It was extremely light.

It was so light that he almost couldn't feel its weight.

Yet, it was extremely durable.

Nick didn't use all of his power, but he used quite a lot, and the thin wire didn't seem to get damaged in any way.

Even more, the tiny wire was actually beginning to cut into Nick's hand!

It was so bizarre that something this insanely thin could be that durable!

"It's called a Ghost Wire, and it's used for many different things," Manela said after a while.

"No normal material can be that durable while being that thin, which makes the origin of this wire obvious," she added.

Nick nodded. "It comes from a Specter."

Manela nodded back. "The Fear Queen is a normal-sized black widow that likes to put as much fear as possible into her victims. She usually restricts them with her silk and injects them with many different poisons that can cause extreme fear and extreme euphoria."

"This wire is a couple of her strings of silk rolled up into a single form. As an Adult Specter, the Fear Queen is very powerful, and her silk is just as powerful."

"You can keep that one and these four," Manela said as she took out another four stacks of wire.

Nick looked at them with surprise. "That sounds expensive," he said.

"Your boss paid for them. They are officially yours," Manela said.

Nick didn't feel comfortable with Wyntor giving him even more stuff.

He felt like Wyntor was giving him way more than he was giving back, which made him feel a bit guilty.

Nick almost felt like he was taking advantage of Wyntor.

But in the end, Nick could only sigh. "Thanks."

For the next three hours, Manela taught Nick about the Ghost Wire and how to use it.

There were many different things that Nick could do with such a durable wire.

For example, he could hang it between two buildings at neck height, and nobody would notice it before they ran straight into it.

However, the most important thing for Nick was the Ghost Wire's ability to act as a retrieval tool for his spears.

He hadn't noticed it before, but there was a very thin hole at the side of his throwing spears.

This hole was specifically made for Ghost Wires.

By putting the Ghost Wire through it, Nick had essentially created a long and invisible leash for his spear.

Each Ghost Wire was around 100 meters long, which meant that Nick could essentially retrieve his spears as long as he didn't throw them further.

If he wanted to throw them further, he would just have to let go of the Ghost Wire and retrieve the spear the traditional way.

For today, Nick kept dropping his spears from the house and retrieving them with the wire.

It was surprisingly difficult to make the spears shoot back at him without hitting anything on their way back.

But eventually, Nick managed to retrieve them consistently without any issues.

When it was almost time to end training for the day, Manela told Nick to retrieve his five spears once more.

Naturally, she detached the Ghost Wires before telling him to do that.

After Nick got the first spear back, he quickly attached the Ghost Wire, which didn't even take ten seconds, and after that, everything seemed to change.

He no longer needed to consider how to retrieve a spear after throwing it since he could just retrieve it with the Ghost Wire.

That made everything so much easier, and Nick's movements became far more fluent.

In the end, he barely needed nine minutes to complete the course.

#### Chapter 125 – Throws

A day passed, and the last day of throwing spear training was taking place.

This was already Nick's fourth day of training with throwing spears, and today, he would focus on actually throwing spears.

But the best thing was that Nick didn't fear messing up his throws anymore.

He could travel everywhere with his spears, and if he threw it somewhere he didn't want, he could just tug on the Ghost Wire to get it back.

The first thing he had to do was to run to the five spots again, but this time, Manela didn't throw his spears away.

She just wanted Nick to get to the five spots while carrying all of his spears.



That made things different, but Nick still managed to complete the task in about ten minutes.

And then, it was time for the actual training.

"There are many ways to throw a spear," Manela said as she took out one of her own spears.

After that, she lifted it with one hand and took a couple of steps forward.

She pulled the spear back and took a couple of steps forward before throwing it.

BOOOM!

The roof of the building the two were standing on shook as Manela threw the spear.

Nick just watched in awe as the spear seemed to shoot into the horizon!

One second, it had been there, and the next, it seemed to have traveled into the sun.

Of course, the spear didn't actually reach the sun.

"Watch," Manela said as she lifted her hand.

Then, she pulled back.

BANG!

And Manela suddenly also flew into the horizon!

Nick's eyes widened in shock.

Manela didn't fly as fast or as far as her spear, but she still flew for probably over 200 meters.

In the distance, Nick could see Manela catching her spear again, and that was when he realized what had just happened.

Manela had gathered an incredible amount of power and threw her spear with all of it.

Then, she tugged on her extremely long Ghost Wire.

With her power, she managed to completely stop the force of her throw and even put in so much that the spear started to shoot back at her.

Of course, the force of the throw had to go somewhere, which was why Manela's body had suddenly shot into the distance.

In the end, her spear returned to her, and she simply landed on a roof.

Surprisingly, the roof didn't collapse.

A couple of seconds later, Manela returned to the roof of the tall building.

"That was a Full Throw," she explained. "As the name suggests, a Full Throw is a throw that uses all of your power."

"The tricky part is to deal with the force when you have a Ghost Wire attached. Without it, it's just a normal throw, but with it, things get tricky."

"Imagine you attack someone with a Full Throw who is only 30 meters away, and they sidestep it. If there's no building within the next 70 meters and if your throw was strong enough, your Ghost Wire will pull you forward, right into your enemy's arms."

"But as you have seen, that can also be used to traverse great distances. I can jump high and far, but not that high and far."

"Of course, if I had actually wanted to go as far as possible, I would have jumped forward after throwing my spear."

"When facing an enemy, you will rarely be able to make a Full Throw. The preparation is long, and the enemy will most likely hear your loud steps. You can only use it when you are very far away from the enemy or when one of your allies is distracting the enemy."

Nick nodded.

"Next," Manela said as she lifted her spear again.

Then, she performed the same throwing motion but without taking steps.

The spear didn't fly as fast as before, and Manela was only pulled forward by about 20 meters when she tugged on the Ghost Wire.

Naturally, the power of this throw couldn't possibly compare to the one before that.

"This is a Stand Throw," Manela said after jumping back to the building. "This is most commonly used when your enemy doesn't see you, and you're not far away. In your case, that would mean about 30 to 70 meters, assuming you had an appropriate level of power for your spears."

"The throw is very silent, but it still needs some preparation. After all, you have to assume a throwing stance while also pulling your arm all the way back."

Nick nodded.

There wasn't much to say about the Stand Throw.

Ding!

Suddenly, Manela's body shook a bit, and Nick saw a spear shoot at Manela from a distance.

Manela easily caught the spear and showed it to Nick.

"That was a Hidden Throw," she said. "This one is not relevant to you yet, but I still want to show it to you."

The next moment, Manela slowly showed what she had just done.

She stood in front of Nick with her arms crossed, and she slowly angled one of her wrists backward.

Nick saw one of the small spears in her sleeve come out, stopping at the tips of Manela's fingers.

Manela pulled her wrist backward more, pulling the small spear with it.

An instant later, one end of the small spear pointed at Nick.

And then, she just moved her wrist rapidly forward.

Bang.

The quiet sound of something solid hitting something solid rang through the air, and Nick saw the center of the spear rapidly coming closer.

One had to remember that the tip of the small spear had been pulled into the shaft, but now, the tip was rapidly extending.

An instant later, a long spear shot past Nick's head before getting pulled back again.

"Now, I'm doing it with real speed again," Manela said.

BANG!

Nick didn't even see Manela's wrist move before her spear shot past him again!

"The throw is not very strong, but still strong enough to kill someone on my level if they don't have their Barrier active," Manela explained.

"Since you don't have Hidden Spears, you can't properly use the Hidden Throw."

Chapter 126 – Mask

"There's one last throw," Manela said as she took out one of her bigger spears again.

The next moment, she lowered her arm and threw the spear from her hip.

The power seemed to be nearly as strong as the Stand Throw.

"This throw is interchangeable with the Stand Throw and is called the Hip Throw. Both of them have their advantages and disadvantages."

"The Hip Throw is just as strong as the Stand Throw but is even faster. Even more, if you are in the air, for some reason, the Hip Throw is also much better than the Stand Throw. Additionally, you don't need to assume as obvious of a stance as with the Stand Throw."

"The problem is that aiming is much harder, and you also can't control the power as well. If you have space and time, performing the Stand Throw is always preferable, but if you don't, you are almost forced to perform the Hip Throw."

"The Hip Throw is mainly used if you are actively battling someone that is charging towards you."

"Someone that wants to get into your melee range is going to zig-zag and approach you rapidly while you are trying to retreat. In that case, you have to use the Hip Throw since the Stand Throw is just too obvious."

"Although, since you are also training in fist weapons, you might not even use the Hip Throw that much."

Nick nodded. "Probably not."

"For now," Manela continued. "I am going to teach you the Full Throw. Going through the most extravagant throw first will make it easier to learn the other ones later."

For the next couple of minutes, Manela taught Nick how to perform the Full Throw, which wasn't very difficult.

After all, it was just throwing an object.

Every human has thrown objects before.

Nick kept practicing the Full Throw for the next three hours, but compared to Manela, Nick didn't take off.

One had to remember that Nick's spears were designed to be thrown with much more power.

With Manela watching, Nick couldn't throw the spear properly.

With a Full Throw, Nick could barely throw his spear for about ten to twenty meters. nove(l)bi(n.)com

It was just way too heavy.

Eventually, Manela left, and Nick could actually try the Full Throw.

Since he wasn't that exhausted today, Nick decided to continue throwing spears with his ability.

Nick took a couple of steps back, lifted his spear, and performed a Full Throw.

BOOOOM!

The roof below Nick shuddered as he threw his spear into the distance!

Nick watched with satisfaction as his spear traveled further and further.

DING!

Suddenly, the Ghost Wire on Nick's right wrist became taut, and Nick felt himself get pulled forward.

The force was enough to pull Nick over the edge of the building, and he was just about to fall towards the sewers.

However, even though Nick had been surprised, his training with the Ghost Wire kicked in, and he pulled on it even more.

Nick was pulled away from the big building and landed on a smaller building further away just as his spear reached him again.

'Huh,' Nick thought. 'That went way better than I anticipated.'

After retrieving his spears so many times and after running across the entire training ground so many times, Nick had become extremely familiar with his environment and his spear.

The way Nick had simply pulled himself forward to land on a small building while easily catching the spear looked almost beautiful.

Nick had barely learned how to throw a spear properly, but he already looked like someone who had been using spears for years.

This made Nick realize one thing.

'Manela is an amazing teacher,' he thought in surprise and awe.

When he first appeared in this training ground, he felt unsure due to the weight of his spears and the destroyed grates and buildings everywhere.

The thought of throwing his spears in such a place had made Nick anxious and nervous before.

But now, it was easy.

The broken ground might as well not exist since Nick knew exactly what below him at any given moment was, and he could easily move across the air without losing his spears.

In just four days, Nick had become very confident in using his spears.

Eventually, Nick returned to the tall building and continued practicing Full Throws with his ability active.

Sadly, he had to stop after just half an hour.

The three hours of throwing had already exhausted his arm.

However, Nick still didn't leave.



'I think I can eat later. This training ground is too good, and I haven't properly exercised the rest of my body today.'

So, Nick decided to run and jump across the rooftops while carrying all of his spears.

With his ability active, this task was no longer a problem.

If Nick were to do his warmup routine again, he wouldn't even need a minute, which was why Nick wasn't doing that.

Instead, he threw his spears around in the air, pulling him from one side to the other.

Nick wanted to get familiar with how to move in the air.

Humans generally weren't good at moving in the air, but with the throwing spears, Nick had somewhat overcome this weakness.

After a bit more than an hour, Nick became exhausted and returned home.

'I'm excited for more training in four days,' Nick thought while eating.

'But first, I'm going to learn about fist weapons tomorrow.'

'I can actually see myself becoming stronger!'

'My goal is actually not impossible to achieve!'

However, when Nick had that thought, his good mood vanished.

For the past four days, Nick had managed to put on a mask that had even fooled himself.

It was a mask that said that nothing was wrong.

But now that Nick had remembered his true face, the mask had become visible again.

In the end, Nick could only take a deep breath.

'I can't get lost in this excitement.'

'All of this is only a means to an end.'

'And I can't forget that.'

Chapter 127 – Julian

The next day, after he had finished his work and got something to eat, Nick returned to Dark Dream.

He was about to meet his other teacher, the one who was supposed to teach Nick about his fist weapons.

When Nick came back to Dark Dream, he saw a new person waiting for him in front of Wyntor's office.

Naturally, Wyntor was also present, and the two of them were talking.

Nick assumed that this was his new teacher, but he wouldn't have guessed that based on the person's appearance.

The person was a very young man. At least, that was how he looked like.

He was about 170 centimeters tall, and he had this extremely bright and innocent smile.

Even more, his stature seemed very thin and agile. It was almost like the person was a sprinter or runner.

His hair was a calm blue, and he seemed like a very relaxed person.

But compared to Manela, this person wore the uniform of an Expert from Kugelblitz, which meant he was much more powerful than Manela.

A level four Zephyx Extractor!

Someone on the same level as Albert!

Yet, he seemed so very different from Manela.

It was almost like their genders were reversed.

Manela was big, powerful, and dominant.

This guy was small, refined, and gentle.

After looking for a bit, Nick walked over.

The man slowly turned to look at Nick with his bright blue eyes and gently waved with a heartfelt smile.

"There you are, Nick," Wyntor said with a slightly excited voice.

Nick could tell that Wyntor really enjoyed talking to this guy based on his tone.

"Julian, this is your new student, my Chief Zephyx Extractor, Nick," Wyntor said, looking at the man and gesturing to Nick.

Julian smiled and offered his hand. "Nice to meet you, Nick. I'm Julian, and I'm going to be your trainer for fist weapons."

Nick looked at the hand for a bit and decided to shake it.

After meeting Manela for the first time, Nick had become a bit unsure whether or not he was supposed to shake the hand.

As soon as Nick touched Julian's hand, his eyes widened.

'So hard and rough!' Nick thought in shock.

It was like Nick had touched the hand of a humongous metallic titan that had been compressed into a tiny shape.

There was so much explosive power in the hand.

Nevertheless, the handshake was gentle, and Nick didn't feel any pain.

After Nick had felt Julian's hand, he actually looked at it.

It was like the hand didn't belong to the man in front of him!

While Julian seemed like a gentle and peaceful small boy, his hand was rough and filled with aggressive and powerful veins that expanded and shrunk in sync with Julian's heartbeat.

Naturally, Julian noticed Nick's reaction, but he only chuckled a bit and slowly pulled his hand back. "I get that reaction all the time," he said with a soft voice. "I take it as a compliment."

"Sorry," Nick said. "I didn't expect such a strong hand."

"Harmony and discord are two sides of the same coin," Julian said.

"Harmony requires gentleness, and discord requires power."

"You can only live in harmony when people don't want discord with you, but when people want harmony, you must be gentle. Otherwise, there is no harmony but only fear."

"Learning this principle will help you with your position," Julian said with a smile.

Nick listened intently and thought about Julian's words.

Nick took these words seriously since they came from an actual Expert.

Experts were the elite of Kugelblitz, and every one of them had incredible power.

'He's probably also far older than he looks,' Nick thought. 'Becoming an Expert would take me many years. Maybe even decades.'

'He most likely knows what he is talking about.'

"Thank you. I will remember that," Nick said.

Julian just nodded and turned to Wyntor. "Do you have a place where we can train?"

"There's a gym about 500 meters from here, but I don't think it is durable enough to withstand you," Wyntor said.

Julian laughed. "That's fine. I can keep myself in check."

Wyntor also laughed and told Julian where he could find the gym.

After a bit more talking, Julian and Nick walked out of Dark Dream to go to the gym.

Nick subconsciously assumed a position behind Julian.

Julian just had this irresistible Aura of reliability, power, and trust.

He subconsciously made people want to follow him.

Julian didn't look at Nick, who was following behind him, and only shook his head a bit with a helpless smile.

"Can I ask you something?" Nick asked after some hesitation.

"Sure," Julian said, turning to Nick with a smile.

"You're an Expert, right?"

Julian nodded wordlessly.

"Don't take this the wrong way, but why is someone as powerful as you teaching a Newbie like me?" Nick asked. "I don't think Wyntor has the funds to hire someone like you."

Julian laughed a bit. "Of course he does."

Nick raised his eyebrows in surprise.

"After all, my services are not very expensive."

"In fact, I'm not getting paid at all."

This surprised Nick even more.

"But then, why?" he asked.

"I'll tell you when we are there," Julian said with a playful smirk.

Nick was still confused, but he followed after Julian.

After some minutes, the two reached the gym and entered.

The gym was a huge hall that was nearly a hundred meters long.

Gyms like these catered to normal people and Zephyx Extractors.

After all, where was a Zephyx Extractor supposed to find a place to exercise?

If a Veteran accidentally kicked a wall, the wall would break into pieces and fly away.

Of course, since this gym was in the Outer City and not the Inner City, it only catered to normal people and Newbies.

As soon as the two of them entered, the trainer at the counter looked at Julian like he was a Specter.

The trainer immediately told Julian that he was so sorry, but he couldn't offer a training room for someone this powerful.

Julian just assured him that he wasn't the one training and that he wouldn't damage anything.

Eventually, the trainer relented and gave the two of them a room for free.

He was using the opportunity to get some publicity.

Chapter 128 – A Wager

The two of them entered the room and closed the door.

This was the biggest room the gym had to offer, and it was over ten meters wide and long, with many different small pieces of equipment in a couple of closets at the side.

Julian walked around and tested the ground a bit. "If you're careful, you can probably use almost all of your power."

The ground and walls were made of extremely dense and cold metal.

In fact, the wall felt almost identical to the wall of the first Containment Unit Dark Dream had bought.

Nick nodded. "Sounds good."

Julian turned away from Nick and smiled.

He remained silent for a while.

Nick raised an eyebrow in uncertainty.

"I'm not here because of Wyntor," Julian said.



"You're not?" Nick asked in surprise.

Julian shook his head while facing away from Nick.

The next moment, Nick's ability activated.

It seemed like Julian could no longer perceive Nick.

Two seconds later, Nick's ability deactivated again.

Julian hadn't moved.

A second later, Nick's ability reactivated.

And deactivated.

And reactivated.

And finally, deactivated again.

Julian just chuckled a bit and shook his head in helplessness.

"Wow," he said. "It's really impossible to perceive. No matter what I do, I can't see any sign of it."

Nick's eyes widened, and his heart rate shot up as he realized what these words meant.

"You know?" Nick asked in shock and nervousness.

"I'm here because of Albert," Julian said as he turned to face Nick with a smile.

"Albert and I are close friends, and he told me about you."

"Yes, that includes your ability as well."

Nick became nervous.

An Extractor's ability was their deepest secret.

After all, if an enemy knew about the Extractor's ability, they could counter it, and Nick's ability was especially weak to counters.

Of course, Nick also felt betrayed by Albert.

How could Albert tell someone else about Nick's ability?

"Don't worry," Julian said with a chuckle. "While I am employed by Kugelblitz, I don't belong to them. I am not allowed to tell you the specifics, but I won't tell your secret to anyone, even if you were to somehow threaten Kugelblitz."

Of course, Nick didn't completely believe Julian, but there was nothing he could do.

Julian knew Nick's secret, and that was that.

"So, you're here because of my ability?" Nick asked.

"Partially," Julian answered. "I'm also here because of your personality."

Nick raised an eyebrow.

"Albert described you as very idealistic and altruistic. While there are many people that are idealistic, people from the Dregs don't tend to be."

"The darkest facets of humanity are proudly on display for all the people in the Dregs to see while the good facets hide far away."

"A brutal and lawless arena breeds cynical people and idealistic corpses."

"Idealistic survivors are rare. Especially when they have essentially grown up without any parents in such a place."

Nick had an expression of uncertainty on his face.

He agreed with Julian, or he would have, at least.

Sadly, things were a bit different.

This entire thing with Pator and Horua made Nick feel like all the happiness and magic of the world had vanished.

"You don't agree?" Julian asked, looking at Nick.

Nick sighed. "I used to be like that, but not anymore."

"How come?" Julian asked.

"Some things happened," Nick said.

Silence.

"I presume you don't want to talk about it?"

Nick looked to the side with uncertainty.

"It would take too long. Also, we are supposed to train, right?" Nick said.

"Getting to know you is important to me, Nick," Julian said. "If you are fine with it, I am willing to listen."

Nick took a deep breath.

He wanted to tell someone about his troubles, and Julian seemed very trustworthy.

Somehow, Nick felt like Julian was a person worth trusting.

"Okay," Nick said.

Then, Nick told Julian about Horua and Pator and how all of this had impacted and changed him.

"So, you are idealistic but no longer naïve," Julian said.

Nick furrowed his brows. "I'm not sure anymore."

"You want to improve the lives of others, right?" Julian said. "You want to help all the people of the Dregs, even though they have never done anything for you."

"I don't think many people would want to do something as selfless as this."

Nick looked with uncertainty to the side. "I don't know," he said.

By now, Nick felt deflated again.

The hole in his chest had returned.

He might distract himself every day, but in the end, that was what life was for him.

A distraction.

In the end, the suffering and guilt still consumed his insides, and feeling better on the outside didn't help.

"How old are you?" Julian asked.

"16," Nick answered.

"Still quite young," Julian said. "How strong is your conviction? How much do you want to help others?"

Nick looked at Julian calmly. "It's the only reason why I'm still alive."

Julian looked at Nick with interest. "What if you change?"

"What do you mean?" Nick asked.

"What if you get a lover, a high status, a child, or something similar?"

"If all your life's wishes have been handed to you, will you still continue holding onto this altruistic dream of yours?"

"When people betray you again and again, will you still try to improve the lives of humanity?"

Nick didn't answer immediately as he thought about his answer.

"Yes," Nick said. "I owe as much to Horua. He would have wanted me to help others."

"And your feeling of duty is so strong that it will even hold firm decades in the future?" Julian asked.

Nick nodded. "Yes."

At that moment, Julian turned away from Nick, and a grin appeared on his face.

"Care to bet on it?" Julian asked.

Nick looked with surprise and confusion at Julian, who was looking away from Nick at that moment.

"A bet?"

"Yes, a bet," Julian said.

Nick furrowed his brows as he wasn't quite sure where that had come from.

Meanwhile, something horrific was happening.

Julian's eyes vanished, and several smirking mouths filled his face.

"A wager, if you will," the mouths spoke in unison, creating a layered voice that rippled through the room.

Nick's eyes became unfocused.

"A wager?" Nick repeated with a distant and confused voice.

"Yes," the many mouths answered.

"Of course, a wager is boring without any stakes."

"Are you interested?"

Nick's blank eyes looked at the back of Julian's head.

"Sure, why not?"

Chapter 129 – He's a Great Guy

"I had a lot of fun today! Sorry for taking up your time," Julian said with a friendly smile.

"No problem, you helped me a lot!" Nick said with a grin.

After Nick had told Julian about his issues, Julian talked with Nick for a couple of hours about what to do.

Julian told Nick that he was trying to atone for something that couldn't be atoned for.

Nick was still young, and he hadn't been ready for such a big responsibility.

Julian said that Nick had to live his own life and that Horua's fate was because Wyntor hadn't properly informed Nick about everything.

After all, if Wyntor had told Nick about what would happen if Horua refused to become an Extractor after seeing the Dreamer, Nick wouldn't have made Horua sign the contract, right?

Therefore, Nick wasn't the one at fault.

It was Wyntor.

So, why was Nick trying to atone for something that wasn't his fault?

Additionally, Nick had always only lived for himself since the people of the Dregs always shunned him.

Julian said that it seemed like Nick was just trying to help all these people because he wanted to belong to a community.

Nick was desperately trying to be a part of a community, which was why he was willing to sacrifice everything he had to help people who only despised him.

The things that Julian said made a lot of sense, but Nick just couldn't accept them emotionally.

Sure, maybe he was actually trying to help people who didn't deserve it, but his emotions were telling him that a human should help other humans.

The instinct to help others was inherent to every human.

So, wasn't helping others just being human?

Was it wrong to be human?

Julian told Nick that he was free to do whatever he wanted but that he should always consider all sides.

After such a long talk, Julian had also confessed something to Nick.

He wasn't actually Nick's trainer.



He was someone higher up in Kugelblitz who simply wanted to meet Nick and talk to him.

The actual trainer would come tomorrow.

However, Nick wasn't angry at Julian.

After all, Nick felt a bit better after talking to Julian.

Maybe Julian was right about some things.

For example, Julian had also said that Nick's imagination of what Horua wanted sounded too idealistic.

Would a boy truly want to save the place that would have thrown him out of his house as a last wish?

It sounded more realistic that the boy would want these people to pay for all the things they had done.

Nick didn't like that thought, but it actually sounded possible.

Of course, they had talked about more things, but for some reason, a huge part of his talk with Julian had become blurry.

'We have talked about so many different things that I can't even tell how much we have talked about and for how long. I feel like I already forgot half of what we talked about,' Nick thought as he rubbed his head.

After a minute, Nick managed to focus again, and he looked up.

Julian was gone.

'He probably already went home,' Nick thought as he walked out of the gym.

As Nick walked down the streets, he just kept rubbing his head.

It was like all his memories and thoughts were jumbled up.

In the end, he decided to ignore it and got some food.

During his sleep, Nick dreamt of many gigantic mouths surrounding him and talking to him.

The voices were so loud and droning, and he felt like what they were saying was something that he couldn't possibly do.

He tried to run from the mouths, but new ones just kept appearing around him.

For an eternity, Nick just kept running.

While he was running, Nick became angrier and angrier.

It was like all the people around Nick were telling him that they hated him and that they wanted him to die.

The mouths hurt Nick.

They represented all the people of the Dregs who had ridiculed him when he was younger.

Eventually, Nick woke up and went to work.

"Hey, Nick. How was training?" Wyntor asked from his office.

"He didn't tell you?" Nick asked.

"No?" Wyntor answered in confusion.

"Julian isn't my trainer," Nick said. "He acted like he was my trainer so that he could talk to me alone."

"Oh, that's understandable," Wyntor said with a dismissive wave. "Julian is a busy man, but he's very trustworthy."

"I know," Nick said. "By the way, where did you meet Julian?"

"I don't know," Wyntor said casually. "Maybe he led me around Kugelblitz or something like that."

"Oh, that could be it," Nick said, accepting the answer. "Who is my actual teacher, by the way?"

"It's someone called Reynold," Wyntor answered. "He was supposed to come yesterday, but Julian said that he had told Reynold that he would do your training."

"But since he won't do it now, I should probably call Reynold again. I'll get back to him and tell him that he's your teacher again."

Nick nodded. "Great. By the way, do you know how I can reach Julian?"

"No idea," Wyntor said.

"You don't know where he lives?"

"No."

"Can't you just contact him via Kugelblitz?"

"Julian doesn't work for Kugelblitz," Wyntor said.

"Oh," Nick said. "So, I can't reach him?"

"I don't know where he is," Wyntor said, "but when we need him, I'm sure he will pop up."

"Probably," Nick said with a nod. "Anyway, I'm going to work now."

"Good luck," Wyntor said, returning to writing on a piece of paper.

Nick entered the Dreamer's Containment Unit, and two minutes later, he was asleep.

As soon as Nick started to dream, all the mouths returned, and they kept telling Nick that he should kill everyone.

But just a couple of moments later, all the mouths vanished, and two dead eyes from an owl appeared in the sky of Nick's dream world.

For just a moment, the dead eyes focused on the vanishing mouths.

And then, Nick was transported into a torture room where he was forced to torture Horua.

Chapter 130 – Reynold

Eventually, Nick was woken up by Jenny, and he left the Containment Unit.

When he checked the produced Zephyx, Nick realized that the amount had dropped just a bit.

'If my suffering in the nightmare is what produces Zephyx, it means that I have not suffered as much.'

'I'm sure that the Dreamer is still trying its best to squeeze as much suffering as it can out of me, but the drop in Zephyx means that it just can't make me suffer as much anymore.'

Nick released a sigh of relief and let out a tiny smile.

'Thank you, Julian. You really helped me.'

But then, Nick shook his head and took a deep breath.

'That doesn't change anything,' Nick thought. 'What's the point of feeling good? I'm not a slave to my emotions, and I have an actual goal that I want to achieve.'

'Suffering.'

'Happiness.'

'Both are irrelevant.'

Then, Nick nodded with conviction and dealt with the Zephyx that was produced.

Wyntor said that Reynold had agreed again to train Nick, and he would be here in an hour.

Nick got some food and grabbed his weapons.

He left his spears at home, which made him feel a bit naked, but he still wasn't strong enough to wear all of his weapons at once.

At least not as long as his ability wasn't active.

With his ability active, carrying all his spears and fist weapons would be like a normal adult carrying about eight to ten kilos on their person.

It wasn't nice, but it was definitely manageable.

About ten minutes to three p.m., Nick walked into Dark Dream, and he quickly noticed his new trainer.

Nick already knew that he was called Reynold since Wyntor had mentioned his name.

Reynold was a little bit smaller than Manela, but he seemed double as wide.

While Manela was thin and tall, Reynold was filled with explosive muscle.

However, even though Reynold was quite wide, Nick could easily tell that there was no unnecessary fat on his person.

Just like Manela, Reynold wore the uniform of a Veteran of Kugelblitz.

In a way, that relieved Nick.

Julian had seemed just too powerful for a trainer, and Nick had felt like he was wasting Julian's time.

As Reynold talked to Wyntor, his boisterous, casual, and friendly voice echoed throughout Dark Dream.

His voice was very deep, and he laughed a lot.

"Well, we'll see about that!" Reynold said to Wyntor with a boisterous laugh.

Nick could hear Reynold from over five meters away.

"Oh, Nick, my boy!" Reynold shouted with an excited smile. "You came at just the right time. I was just making a bet with Wyntor about when you will crack under my tough training!"

Wyntor was smiling, but Nick could tell that he was a bit uncomfortable with the loud and dominant presence of Reynold.

"A bet?" Nick repeated as his eyes glazed over.

'A bet?'

'A wager?'

Nick felt like he had forgotten something important, but he quickly shook his head to regain his bearings.

Getting distracted in front of his new teacher wouldn't leave a good impression.

"Oh?" Nick said as he approached Reynold. "What do you two think?"

"I have full trust in you," Wyntor said.

Nick smiled a little.

"Ahahaha! Good! Good!" Reynold shouted as he loudly clapped in his hands a couple of times. "True companionship and trust. I love it!"

"But we can't just ignore the facts," Reynold added with a smirk as he bumped Nick's shoulder with his fist.

Nick didn't rub his shoulder, but he was in quite a bit of pain.

However, he could tell that Reynold genuinely didn't mean it.

He was just careless and was living in the moment.

"I'll say you won't get to the tenth day," Reynold said with a smirk. "Sorry, Nick, my boy, but that's just genuinely what I think. You're just 16, and you still need to experience a couple of setbacks to truly attain the grit to put your everything into your goal."

Nick raised an eyebrow.

In a way, he was a bit insulted by Reynold's words, but he could also tell that Reynold wasn't trying to put Nick down.

He was just very confident.

"So, you agree? Ten days of training?" Wyntor asked.

Reynold looked at Wyntor with a smirk. "Aren't you greedy? Yes, I agree!"

The next moment, Reynold and Wyntor shook hands.

"You're about to lose a lot of money and dignity, Little Wyntor," Reynold shouted happily with a laugh.

However, there was also a smirk on Wyntor's face.

"Nick," he said, making Nick look at him, "could you please tell your new teacher about your other teacher?"



At that moment, Reynold became quiet and looked at Wyntor with a serious and evaluating gaze.

Nick was taken aback by how quickly Reynold's demeanor had changed.

Just now, he had seemed like someone who went out to party all the time with the boys, but now, he felt like a serious and reliable warrior.

'Sure enough, Extractors that can get into Kugelblitz are outstanding,' Nick thought before answering.

"Manela," Nick said, looking at Reynold.

Reynold blinked a couple of times.

"Which one?" he asked with a slightly nervous voice.

"What do you mean, which one?" Wyntor said with a confident chuckle. "There's only one Manela."

Reynold took a deep breath as he looked at Nick differently.

"And you managed to get through four days of training under Manela?" he asked.

Nick nodded. "Her training is amazing. I would have never thought I would learn so much in just four days."

Reynold grabbed his hair with two of his hands and looked up in a melodramatic pose of tragedy.

"And yet again, I fell victim to my own confidence," he said before taking a deep breath.

Then, he loudly laughed again. "Well done! Well done! You managed to pull one over me, Little Wyntor," Reynold said to him. "Seems like you will get some free training out of me."

Wyntor just smiled. "Thank you."

Reynold chuckled a bit and shook his head.

"I was sure that the other teacher would be William. To think that you managed to convince Manela."

Then, Reynold sighed.