

The Sun 151

Chapter 151 – Running

As Nick rolled into the training area, his ability activated again.

Even though it had seemed that Nick had only blindly moved around, he had actually approximated the sniper's location.

Since Nick had been coming here for months, he was very familiar with the area, and he knew how to get there.

And he also knew that it would be very difficult.

'It will be extremely difficult to get close to the sniper without them noticing me,' Nick thought with furrowed brows as he slid down the building.

'There are too many even and low rooftops.'

'The sniper is probably at a high location, and I can't get to them without being seen. Even if I run through the streets.'

BANG!

Nick rammed the blade on his right hand into the wall in front of him.

Naturally, Nick had his fist weapons with him due to the upcoming war.

Nick's blade easily punched through the wall, and Nick used it to create a huge hole, allowing him to enter the home.

It was quite loud, but the sound was too distant for the sniper to properly hear.

As Nick slipped into the building, the map of the surrounding areas shot through his mind again.

There was no good way to get to the sniper.

But then, Nick got an idea.

BANG!

Nick rammed his blade into the floor and created a circular cut around his position, which resulted in him falling down a floor.

One had to remember that Nick was incredibly powerful right now and that his blade was extremely sharp and durable.

Cutting a circular hole in some metal flooring wasn't difficult.

Nick did the same thing another floor lower.

After that, Nick grabbed the edge of the floor he had just fallen through.

Below him was darkness.

The sewers.

Luckily, some light came through the holes, and Nick could see a bit.

When Nick saw a rooftop that came out of the water, he immediately jumped onto it.

As soon as Nick landed, he took out a spear and threw it into the distance with all of his power.

DING!

The spear hit something in the distance, and Nick pulled a bit on the Ghost Wire.

If he really wanted to, he could pull the spear back, but that was not what he wanted.

As long as the spear could withstand a bit of pull, it would work.

The next moment, Nick narrowed his eyes and jumped forward with all of his power.

CRK! CRK!

Nick quickly hit the dark ceiling, but he used his two blades to cut into it in a diagonal fashion.

Now, Nick hung from the top of the dark sewers.

His two blades were stuck in the ceiling, and Nick used their flat sides to support his body.

A moment later, the world around Nick transformed.

One person wearing a black cloak after the other appeared, and they were all targeting Nick with long rifles.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

All the shots hit Nick and tore parts out of his body.

However, Nick just closed his eyes and pulled one of his blades out before stabbing it into the ceiling a bit further away.

"YOU'RE GOING TO DIE!" Updated from novelb(i)n.c(o)m

"DIE!"

"I HATE YOU!"

"DIE!"

The dark voices that the Nightmare created shouted at Nick with hatred.

Nick was in the darkness, and the darkness was the Nightmare's domain.

But Nick just gritted his teeth and moved forward.

The pain was almost unbearable, but Nick's desire to prove to himself that he wasn't worthless was just too strong.

After moving forward a bit, Nick pulled slightly on the Ghost Wire of the spear and noted that he was facing in the wrong direction.

A moment later, corpses began to fall from the dark sky, screaming at Nick to come with them.

Trevor and Jenny were disemboweled in front of Nick, and their organs covered his body, constricting it.

But Nick just continued moving forward.

It was horrible, but Nick just kept going.

Finally, Nick realized that he had arrived at the location where his spear was stuck in the ceiling.

Immediately, Nick started to dig through the ceiling, and a moment later, he saw a bit of light.

It was still pretty dark, but the light made it far more difficult for the Nightmare to fool him.

Nick retrieved his spear and went through the hole he had created, appearing on the ground floor of a building.

When Nick realized that he had arrived, a fire of determination appeared in his eyes.

Now, he would be the attacker!

The last shot from the sniper had happened not even 30 seconds ago.

That was how fast and determined Nick had moved through the buildings and the sewers.

The sniper should still be in the same area as before.

'They're most likely surveying their surroundings while looking at the training area,' Nick thought.

'They think I'm still there.'

'Maybe one of their colleagues is currently searching the places where I should be while the sniper keeps an eye out.'

Nick looked back at the hole and approximated the direction he was facing.

He remembered in which direction he had thrown the spear, and by looking at the rooftop in the sewers through the hole, Nick could tell with quite some confidence where the sniper was.

'I moved over 50 meters forward, which means I passed the low spot where the sniper could see me.'

Nick silently ran through the building and rolled out of a window.

The streets were in horrible condition, but not everything was broken.

Right now, Nick was in an alley with more holes than street, surrounded by tall buildings on both sides.

Nick looked up and saw some kind of metallic flag hanging from one of the buildings.

'So, I'm here,' Nick thought.

Naturally, buildings all had their own special marks that identified them, and Nick remembered that strange metallic flag.

He knew exactly where he was now.

With narrowed eyes, Nick looked down one way of the alley.

Ding! Ding!

Nick jumped forward and buried his two blades in one side of the building to grab onto it before jumping forward to the other wall.

Like this, Nick moved forward through the alley.

Chapter 152 – Sneaking

Nick silently jumped from building to building.

Whenever his blades stuck into one of the buildings, they made a little sound, but the sound was barely noticeable.

Ding!

Suddenly, Nick silently jumped through a window into a house.

He had heard someone.

As Nick looked through the window of the house he was in, he could see a person wearing a black cloak carefully jumping from place to place as they were passing through the alley.

Nick narrowed his eyes as he looked at the person.

'No rifle,' Nick realized. 'That's not the sniper.'

A moment later, Nick saw the person's hands, and he saw a gun in each of them.

That was when Nick remembered that woman with the two guns he had seen during the meeting, the one that had exploded more than once.

'Most likely her,' Nick thought.

For a moment, Nick thought about killing her.

After all, she was an enemy.

'No,' Nick thought. 'If I kill her, the sniper will know where I am.'

'The sniper is far more dangerous than her.'

As Nick watched her pass, he thought about something.

'If I were the sniper, would I let her just run through an alley without any supervision?'

Nick narrowed his eyes.

'No, I wouldn't.'

The next moment, Nick held one of his hands out of the window.

The sunlight reflected off Nick's polished blade, and Nick saw the silhouette of the end of the alley.

That was when Nick saw a bright spot on top of one of the buildings, and he immediately pulled his arm back.

Nick's ability immediately deactivated!

However, Nick didn't move, and his ability quickly reactivated.

'They probably saw something glimmer in the alley and looked over,' Nick thought. 'They think I'm just a random piece of metal that reflected some of the light.'

'That means they still don't know I'm here!'

Nick quickly shot away from the window and silently ran through the house until he arrived at the other side.

Nick knew exactly on which building the sniper was now, and he also knew how to get there.

After jumping out of the window, Nick put his blade into-

Nick stopped moving.

Just five meters away, on the rooftop of the neighboring building, someone wearing a black cloak had stopped running.

The person was looking at Nick from just five to ten meters away.

Nick looked back.

None of them had expected to see someone here.

And they were just looking at each other.

Three seconds of silence passed, during which nobody moved.

Clink! Clink!

Two small gauntlets fell onto the roof of the building as the cloaked person lifted their hands in surrender while also falling to their knees.

Nick furrowed his brows.

A moment later, Nick put his finger to his lips and gestured for the other person to stay quiet.

The other person rapidly nodded several times.

Nick slowly nodded as well.

Then, Nick quietly jumped to the building where the cloaked person was.

The cloaked person became terrified when Nick came close to them.

However, they had already committed to their choice, and their life was now up to Nick.

They only hoped that Nick would consider accepting them into Dark Dream instead of killing them.

Luckily, Nick quickly ran past them.

"Nothing will happen to you," Nick said as he passed them. "Don't look at me. If you see my ability, I will have to kill you."

The heartbeat of the person became even faster, and they didn't dare to say anything or do anything.

Right now, they were just on their knees, looking away from Nick.

Nick rapidly ran along the roof with all of his speed.

A couple of seconds later, Nick arrived behind the building where the sniper was on.

Very quietly, Nick climbed up the building.

There he was.

Right in front of him was a cloaked person, lying on their huge belly while aiming towards the training spot with a huge rifle.

Nick immediately knew who that was.

He remembered the fat man with the eyepatch, whom he had seen during the meeting.

'This should be their Chief Zephyx Extractor, the second John,' Nick thought.

Nick narrowed his eyes and slowly moved forward.

"I can't see Jonathan!"

At that moment, a female voice shouted from the other end of the alleyway.

"Jonathan, report!" the fat guy in front of Nick shouted as he turned to look towards his left.

Silence.

Stephen, the fat man, furrowed his brows.

Did the enemy get Jonathan?

However, the enemy should still be within the training ground.

The only way to get here without being noticed would take at least two minutes.

A moment later, Stephen suddenly lay in the shade.

Something had covered the sun.

Stephen's eyes widened in shock.

CRACK!

A metallic blade violently rammed through the fat man's thick neck, decapitating him.

Stephen's last thought was, 'Why didn't my Barrier activate?!'

Well, Barriers without an AI chip weren't that great in dealing with surprise attacks.

While Stephen had a Barrier that could activate and deactivate itself on its own, it didn't have an intelligent way to deal with a subtle attack.

Stephen's Barrier was definitely more expensive than Nick's, but it still wasn't good enough to save Stephen.

Nick knew how to exploit these Barriers since his own Barrier had the same fault.

If something moved very slowly through the Barrier's proximity, the Barrier wouldn't view that as an attack.

So, Nick had simply moved forward very slowly, entering Stephen's Barrier.

When he was directly on top of Stephen, Nick slammed his blade down.

Stephen was dead.

Nick just looked at the corpse for about a second before he jumped down the building.

A moment later, Nick saw Jonathan, who didn't dare to look in Nick's direction.

Nick quickly arrived behind Jonathan, and he could tell that Jonathan had noticed him.

"The fat guy is dead," Nick said.

Jonathan's body shook, but he didn't dare to move.

"How many are here?"

"Three," a scared male voice answered.

"Including the fat guy?" Nick asked.

"Yes," Jonathan said.

Nick nodded.

"If you can convince the girl to surrender, she doesn't have to die," Nick said.

Chapter 153 – Fear

Jonathan, who was still wearing his black cloak, felt like he had made the right choice.

When he had seen Nick coming out of the window almost beside him, he had been frozen in fear.

The three of them had thought that Nick was still inside the training area or leaving via the other side to take a detour.

After all, it was impossible to get close to them via the direct route since Stephen could see everything.

Kiara and Jonathan had been sent by Stephen to advance. If Nick were hiding somewhere close to the border, they would be able to get him out of this hiding place, which would allow Stephen to kill him in one shot.

Kiara was walking in a more hidden area, but she would have Stephen's oversight.

Meanwhile, Jonathan would walk on top of the buildings, which would make it easy for him to keep a lookout and to notice Nick if he decided to advance.

And then, Nick had come out of the window beside Jonathan.

Several thoughts had shot through Jonathan's mind at that point.

'Oh, fuck!' had been the first one, quickly followed by, 'I'm going to die!'

Jonathan knew that Stephen hadn't been able to see him since he was watching over Kiara.

When Stephen had asked for volunteers, Jonathan jumped forward, eager to take revenge for Sarah.

In Jonathan's mind, he had imagined himself fighting the enemy with his fists, beating them back.

Then, Stephen would take the shot, and everyone would thank him for keeping the enemy occupied.

Finally, it was his time to shine!

Finally, he would prove to Futuma and Selina that he wasn't just blowing hot air as they claimed he was doing!

He hated how Selina always told him that he would run at the first sign of danger, while Futuma always ignored him whenever he was trying to say something!

But when Nick actually showed up, it became very different from Jonathan's imagination.

When Jonathan had seen Nick's narrowed and focused eyes as he confidently and quietly came out of the window, he felt like he was looking at a Veteran.

Everything inside Jonathan shouted at him that he was going to die.

This was not someone he could fight!

So, Jonathan had surrendered.

The next minute was a blur.

He remembered Nick walking past him and saying something.

Then, a blank.

Finally, Nick had returned, talking to him.

Jonathan wasn't sure if a second or an hour had passed.

At this moment, Jonathan was just trying to come to terms with his survival.

"If you can convince the girl to surrender, she doesn't have to die."

When Jonathan heard that, he felt his heart rate increase again.

Die.

Everyone always talked about death, but when death was this close, the word felt very different.

Jonathan's body shook, and he slowly rose to his feet.

"I still can't see Jonathan!" Kiara shouted from the end of the alley.

Jonathan's heart beat in his ears.

"Tell her that the fat man is dead and that you lost. If she comes peacefully, I promise that she won't die," Nick said.

Jonathan breathed heavily as he heard Nick speak from behind him.

"K-Kiara," Jonathan spoke. "S-Stephen is d-d-dead."

In the alley, Kiara's eyes widened in shock as she looked in the direction where Jonathan's voice came from.

Dunk!

Nick shoved Jonathan forward to tell him to move.

Jonathan kept his arms raised as he walked across the roof.

"I-if you come peacefully, he promises that you won't d-die," Jonathan said.

Kiara didn't know what she should think and looked at where Stephen should be.

She couldn't see him.

At that moment, Kiara's emotions went wild.

Fear, disbelief, rage, frustration.

After a bit, Jonathan appeared at the edge of one of the buildings that Kiara could see.

When she saw Jonathan, her heart almost stopped.

Even from this distance, she could see Jonathan's body shaking like a leaf, and the bit of his face that she could see through the cloak was wet with tears.

Even more, the fear and panic in his voice was overwhelming.

The next moment, Nick stepped forward from behind Jonathan and looked at Kiara with an even look.

"Step to the side and turn away," Nick spoke quietly and coldly.

Jonathan complied, took a couple steps to the side, and looked away from Nick.

Kiara's fight-or-flight instincts kicked in, and she became ready to react.

"If you run, you will die," Nick spoke coldly.

"If you stay, you will survive."

"I already killed the fat guy after he ambushed me with a number advantage."

"Taking care of you will not be difficult," Nick said.

Kiara gritted her teeth.

Shing!

In an instant, one of Nick's spears appeared in his hand.

"Don't do anything stupid," Nick threatened in a dark and deep voice.

Kiara's clenched fists shook.

She was so frustrated!

They were supposed to win!

Even more, they were two while he was only one!

If they fought together, they might be able to take him down!

But when she saw Jonathan, she immediately threw that possibility out of the window.

Jonathan looked far too terrified to fight right now.

'I should have believed Selina!' Kiara thought.

At that moment, Kiara hated Jonathan so much!

"What will it be?" Nick asked.

Kiara gritted her teeth and slowly retrieved one of her guns.

Then, she threw it to the ground beside her.

"You can keep your guns," Nick said with confidence.

"Having them or not having them makes no difference."

Kiara's clenched fist shook even more as she retrieved the gun she had dropped.

Nick lowered his spear.

"Come up," he commanded.

Kiara looked at Nick with humiliation and frustration.

She didn't move.

"I said, come up," Nick said with some aggression in his voice.

Kiara gritted her teeth.

"How?" she asked.

Nick raised an eyebrow.

"How am I supposed to climb such a tall building?"

Nick furrowed his brows in confusion.

What was her problem?

Like, just climb?

Was she scheming something?

Chapter 154 – Peddler Storage Token

"Turn around," Nick said.

"Why?" Kiara asked, taking a more defensive stance.

"I will create a staircase for you with my ability, but I don't want you to see my ability," Nick explained.

Kiara furrowed her brows, but a couple of seconds later, she turned around.

Since Jonathan also wasn't looking at Nick, Nick's ability reactivated.

DING! DING! DING!

Nick threw his three spears rapidly at one of the buildings, creating a stairway.

"Turn around and come up," Nick commanded.

Kiara looked back and saw the three spears stuck in the building at different heights.

Without waiting, she jumped onto the first one.

When she felt how heavy and durable the spear was, her eyes opened wide in shock.

These spears were way heavier than she had expected!

And he had thrown them this accurately and quickly?!

How powerful was his ability?!

After a couple of jumps, Kiara arrived at the rooftop of Nick's neighboring building.

SHING! SHING! SHING!

Nick pulled his three spears back with his Ghost Wire and pocketed them.

Kiara once more became shocked.

As a Newbie who had never truly fought another Extractor, she had no idea that something like this was possible.

She knew exactly what that meant.

Nick had infinite ammo!

Kiara moved closer to Nick while completely ignoring Jonathan.

When she arrived, Nick nodded.

"Follow me," Nick said as he turned around.

Jonathan complied without any resistance.

When Kiara saw Jonathan so compliant, she couldn't help gritting her teeth.

She was so disgusted with this coward!

After a bit of walking, the three of them climbed onto the building where Stephen's corpse lay.

When they saw Stephen's decapitated corpse, reality once more hit them.

Kiara's fear increased a lot.

This was not someone she could mess with!

"Search his body," Nick commanded.

Kiara gritted her teeth while Jonathan's face became even whiter.

"I don't know if there is a kind of trap that Cycle has planted on his body, and I'm not the one that's going to find out," Nick said.

Kiara glared at Jonathan while Jonathan gulped.

Jonathan slowly moved towards the corpse with a shaking body.

BANG!

Suddenly, something heavy hit Kiara's back, and she fell onto the fat man's corpse.

Kiara couldn't breathe for a long time, and she was in strong pain.

"I said, search his body!" Nick shouted.

Just now, Nick had punched Kiara's back.

Jonathan just looked with terror at Kiara, and his shaking hands moved to the fat man's corpse, quickly rummaging through his pockets.

When Kiara could finally breathe again, she turned to look at Nick and glared at him.

Nick's eyes narrowed.

Kiara could only grit her teeth and search the fat man's corpse.

The two of them found a couple of credits, a bank card, some tools, his Barrier...

"Wait, give me that," Nick said suddenly.

Kiara and Jonathan turned to look at what Nick was pointing at.

It was some kind of coin or emblem.

Jonathan grabbed it and held it out to Nick.

Nick looked at it and furrowed his brows.

"A Peddler Storage Token?" Nick said.

The two didn't know what Nick meant.

They were not from the Dregs.

When Nick saw their confused expressions, he held the token up. "The Peddlers are one of the four gangs that run the Dregs. They deal in all kinds of trade."

"Now, my question is, why would a level two Extractor have a token from the Peddlers? If he wanted to, he could just store his stuff in a more secure storage. As a level two Extractor, he could even enter the Inner City."

"Why store his things in the Dregs?"

"Unless it's something that he can't store anywhere else," Nick said.

"Do you know what this could be?" he asked as he looked at the two of them.

Both of them shook their heads.

"Seems like it's not only Ardum that has you two fooled," Nick said.

Jonathan looked with worry at Nick while Kiara narrowed her eyes.

However, Kiara didn't dare to complain.

"Why don't we take a look?" Nick asked with a confident smirk.

Next, Nick moved forward and grabbed the fat man's head before stuffing it into a sack that was hanging from the fat man's belt.

Then, Nick just lifted his corpse.

"Let's go. It's not far from here," Nick said before jumping from one building to the next.

The fat man was extremely heavy, but Nick still managed to move with confidence.

Additionally, the silence with which he moved made him even more terrifying for the two people accompanying him.

Jonathan just followed Nick, while Kiara took a deep breath before doing the same.

After a bit of jumping, the three of them reached the part of the Dregs that actually had humans.

When the people of the Dregs saw Nick pass them with a huge corpse, they stepped to the side in fear.

Ironically, they were more afraid of his uniform than the corpse he was carrying.

Eventually, the three of them reached a tall building with two people standing in front.

When they saw Nick approaching them, one of them quickly ran to the side.

"Stop!" Nick commanded.

The second guard immediately froze in fear.

"Is there something you need, sir?" the first guard asked.

"I'm going to ask you a couple of questions," Nick said to the guard, "and you better not lie."

"I'm from the Dregs myself, and I know how these things work."

"I've already harvested a couple of corpses from the Riker Strikers some months ago for one of my Specters. If you try something on me, I might decide to go for the Peddlers next."

"Got it?" Nick asked.

The two immediately knew what Nick was talking about.

After all, the Riker Strikers had taken a brutal hit when a Zephyx Extractor had entered their headquarters and killed almost ten people!

The amount of people who wanted to join them dropped significantly after that event.

The guards looked at each other.

Then, one of them looked with worry at Nick before looking at his colleague again.

Lastly, they looked at the headless corpse.

"What do you want to know, sir?" one of them asked.

Chapter 155 – The Storage

Nick dropped the corpse onto the ground.

Then, he took out the Peddler Storage Token and showed it.

"I found this storage token on him," Nick said. "I presume you've seen this guy before?"

The two looked at the token with worry.

They were not allowed to give out any data from their customers.

Although...

This customer was dead.

"Yes," one of them said, eliciting a nervous glance from the other one.

Nick nodded. "I want to access the storage, and I don't want to get led to a fake room. I am from the Dregs. I know what you guys deal in, and if a level two Extractor is storing something here instead of the Inner City, it must be bad."

The two guards looked at each other in nervousness.

"Please, follow me," one of them said, opening the door behind him.

Nick nodded. "I'll leave the corpse here. If anything is missing from it when I return, I'll go home with a second corpse. I can afford to spend 15,000 credits on a tantrum."

The guards swallowed again, and one of them called a couple of colleagues to watch over the corpse.

The other guard then entered the warehouse while being followed by Nick and his two "companions".

"You're sure we took the right turn just now?" Nick asked coldly.

The guard swallowed.

He turned around and looked at Nick's narrowed eyes.

"M-may I see-see the token again?" he asked, holding out his shaking hand.

Nick slowly placed the token in the guy's hand.

The guy looked at the token.

"Ex-excuse me. I made a mistake just now," the guard said carefully as he handed the token back.

Nick glared at him.

Nick had used the storage service of the Peddlers in the past, and he knew that they would never store important things upstairs, which was where the guard had just wanted to lead Nick.

Something stored by an Extractor had to be stored in the basement.

Sure enough, the guard led Nick and the others into the basement.

After a bit of walking, everyone stopped in front of a metallic door.

"This is the door," the guard said, his body still shaking. "We value our customers' privacy. So, we don't know what's behind this."

"Open it," Nick commanded.

"Of course," the guard said with a polite but nervous smile as he took out a couple of keys.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

As soon as the door opened, the panicked voice of a small child came out of the room.

Nick narrowed his eyes.

Jonathan and Kiara became shocked.

"Please," the guard said with a polite tone as he gestured to the door.

Nick unceremoniously pushed the door open and walked inside.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Please! I'll do anything! Please! Please! Please! Please! Please! Please! Please!"

When the three of them saw what was in the room, they had to take deep breaths, and even Nick's heart sank.

In the back of the room was a rickety bed.

On the left side of the room were some pieces of bloody metal and some bloody scissors.

The corner of the room had some piss and shit in it.

And in another corner was a cage.

Inside the cage was a little girl with several wounds on her body.

Right now, she was looking with pure panic and terror at the three people as she did her absolute best to stretch as much of her body out of the cage as she could.

It was like she was absolutely terrified of staying in this cage.

Or, more precisely, in the place where the cage was located.

The cage was put in a darker corner of the room.

It wasn't fully dark, but it was quite dark.

Everyone knew what that meant.

The Nightmare had been whispering in the little girl's ears for who knew how long.

"I won't bite you anymore! I swear! I'll do whatever you want! Please! Please! Please! I'm sorry!"

"This shouldn't be in here," the guard said with fake outrage. "I swear, we would never-"

"Shut up," Nick said.

The guard didn't say anything anymore.

Jonathan and Kiara looked with absolute terror at the girl and the cage.

Then, the stench of the feces-filled cage hit them.

Kiara turned to the side and puked.

"You can confirm that this is the fat guy's storage unit?" Nick asked evenly.

"Y-yes, sir," the guard answered. "If we had known what-"

"Shut up," Nick commanded again.

The next moment, Nick turned to Jonathan, who just looked at the girl with pure terror.

"Let her out," Nick commanded.

Jonathan's body shook, and he looked at Nick.

After that, he turned to the cage and moved forward.

As soon as he reached the cage, the girl's little hands grabbed Jonathan's body with all their strength, refusing to let go.

"Please! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" she shouted in panic.

"I-I'll let you out!" Jonathan shouted back in panic.

However, the girl was completely delirious and just kept shouting at Jonathan while grabbing his body.

Jonathan quickly found the lock, but it was made of metal, and he wasn't strong enough to break it.

When Nick saw that, he was annoyed.

Nick stepped forward.

"Out of the way!" Nick commanded.

Jonathan stumbled quickly out of the way.

Then, Nick looked into the little girl's eyes.

"Move back!" he commanded with a dark voice.

The little girl stopped moving when she heard Nick's voice.

"I said, move back!" Nick shouted.

The girl quickly fell back.

Nick grabbed one of the bars and put his foot on the edge of the cage.

Then, he pulled.

CRRRRRRRRRRRK!

The bar bent, and Nick snapped it off.

Then, he did the same thing to a second bar.

"You can come out," Nick said with a calm voice after taking a deep breath.

The girl quickly moved forward and stumbled out of the cage before she bolted to the door to escape.

Nick just grabbed her.

"Calm down!" Nick shouted. "I'm not here to hurt you!"

"I'm here to free you!"

Chapter 156 – The Truth

After a lot of persuasion and talking, the little girl finally broke down and started crying.

The guard kept looking around with nervous eyes.

Jonathan just sat in the hallway, looking at the ground with dead eyes.

Kiara just looked with terror at the crying girl and the room.

"How are you with kids?"

Kiara was taken out of her thoughts when Nick addressed her.

Kiara just looked at the girl nervously.

"I have a little brother," she said.

Nick nodded. "I want to know what happened here," he said.

Kiara looked at Nick nervously.

Then, she walked up to the girl and softly started to talk to her.

Meanwhile, Nick walked out of the room and looked at Jonathan.

Jonathan didn't even turn to look at Nick.

Just the mental image of the room was too much to process for him.

The cruelty...

He knew how it felt to be in the darkness.

It was probably the most terrifying experience imaginable.

And this girl had been in the darkness for maybe even days.

Jonathan just couldn't comprehend what he had seen.

"This is who you're working for," Nick said.

Jonathan didn't look up.

"Where do you think the fat guy got this girl from?" Nick asked. "Getting something like this requires some connections."

Jonathan didn't answer.

"When we met Ardum for the first time, he tried to frame one of my people as a spy while we didn't even have any issues with each other."

"At the same time, he had a true spy in our midst."

"It was a 14-year-old boy named Pator."

"Ardum planted Pator on Wyntor's side two years ago."

"Ardum used a little boy as a spy, knowing fully well what happens to spies in the Melfion family."

Nick looked at the wall absentmindedly.

"I was tasked with doing the deed."

Jonathan turned to look at Nick.

"I found Pator crying and talking to a statue," Nick said. "He was saying that he regrets everything and wants to stop but can't because he's already in too deep."

"If he continued, he would feel like he was betraying his friends."

"If he stopped, he would die."

Silence.

"What did you do?" Jonathan asked.

"A spy is a spy," Nick said.

"I did what I had to do."

Jonathan looked back at the wall.

"The girl from Cycle has been spying on us for three months," Nick said.

"We noticed her three months ago already, but we didn't do anything since we were not ready for an open conflict with Cycle yet."

"For three months, she just randomly showed up in the night and in the early morning."

"A week ago, we were ready to do something about the spy, and I found her on our rooftop."

"She took out some kind of glass jar and was fidgeting around with it."

"I threw two spears at her."

"The first one shot through her body."

"The second one shot through her head."

"When we looked at her corpse and found the green substance, we knew why she was here."

"She was meant to act as a reason to go to war."

"Arduum keeps putting on a fake persona, and in order to get your support, he needed to unite you under a common cause."

"Think about the following questions."

"Why did she arrive during the night, in secret, for several months?"

"If she wanted to help us, would there have been an easier way?"

"Why is the little girl here?"

"Go think about these questions."

Silence.

Nick just kept looking forward without saying anything.

Jonathan just kept looking at the ground.

Several minutes passed.

"Her name was Sarah," Jonathan said.

Nick didn't answer.

"Sarah was always happy and helpful. She even taught me how to take care of our Specters."

Silence.

"Her shifts changed about three months ago, and her hours in the company got reduced," Jonathan said.

"Was there someone else that Ardum could have sent to do the same thing?" Nick asked.

Jonathan furrowed his brows.

"Neron was our spy," Jonathan said. "His job was to go undercover and gather information."

"Was?" Nick asked.

"He was also a spy for you," Jonathan said.

Nick snorted. "No, he wasn't."

Jonathan furrowed his brows.

"Wyntor said that to confuse Ardum," Nick explained.

After that, Nick explained in detail why Wyntor had confirmed that there was a spy and what Wyntor thought Ardum was actually doing.

Jonathan had difficulties believing Nick.

However, the things he had seen today made it difficult to ignore Nick's words.

Was it true?

Had Ardum actually played them for a fool?

The more Jonathan thought about that possibility, the more signs he saw that confirmed Nick's statement.

At some point, Kiara walked out of the room.

The girl clung to Kiara's thigh.

Nick just looked over at Kiara.

Kiara took a deep breath. "Her family sold her to a group of strangers," Kiara said with difficulty.

"They put her in this room."

"A couple of days later, Ste- the big man showed up."

The little girl started to shake.

"He did horrible things, and when she fought back, he put her in the cage to punish her."

"That was two days ago."

The girl continued shaking, and Kiara kept stroking the little girl's hair.

Jonathan took a deep breath.

Nick nodded and stopped leaning on the wall.

"Let's go. We're done here."

Kiara furrowed her brows.

"Just like this?"

"Yes," Nick said. "If you want to find justice, you are free to do so. It's 15,000 credits per corpse."

"But keep in mind. All of these guards also have families, and not everyone knows exactly what is going on at all times."

Kiara gritted her teeth.

"What about her?" she asked, gesturing to the little girl.

"I can leave her to you if you want."

"Keep her. Let her go. Hand her to an orphanage. Bring her back to her family. Do whatever you want."

Kiara furrowed her brows.

She was stuck with the little girl now?!

However, when she looked at the girl's scared eyes, she just felt pity.

She earned enough money to support another person...

Chapter 157 – Going Back

Nick left the Peddler's building with Kiara, Jonathan, and the girl following him.

Jonathan and Kiara hadn't noticed it, but their dynamic with Nick had already changed.

Earlier, they had followed Nick because he had essentially threatened them with their lives.

But now, they just naturally followed him.

Naturally, that was because of what they had just seen.

Stephen had harbored such a dark secret, and most likely, Ardum must have known about it or, even worse, actually supported it.

It was still very difficult for them to accept that the nice boss they had known for months actually had such a dark secret.

Kiara, especially, wanted to deny that Ardum knew about these things.

But the only way this would be possible was if all of this had been set up by Nick.

However, that was just too unrealistic.

It would have required so much work, and Nick would have even needed to fool a small girl into lying very convincingly.

It was a fact that Stephen was a monster, and Ardum most likely knew about it.

Some people might be able to come to terms with this and continue working for Ardum, but Jonathan and Kiara were not part of this group of people.

Kiara and Jonathan both grew up in the Outer City.

While life hadn't been smooth sailing for them, it wasn't nearly as bad as growing up in the Dregs.

The earliest one of them had seen a corpse was when they were 14 years old, which was nothing compared to children who grew up in the Dregs.

The two of them knew that life was cruel, but looking past such a vile act was still impossible for them.

Nick led the three of them into the Outer City again.

They were walking far slower than before due to the additional presence of the little girl.

During their travels, the little girl didn't say anything and simply hung on Kiara's thigh.

Some minutes later, the three of them reached the Outer City, and Nick turned to Kiara.

"We're going to your home. You can leave the little girl there while we deal with other matters," he said evenly.

Kiara took a deep breath and nodded.

Showing Nick where she lived was making it impossible for her to turn back.

If she decided to betray them, they knew where she lived, and they would be able to assassinate her easily or even take her family hostage.

However, it didn't actually make a difference.

Kiara had already decided to just go with the flow.

Yes, she still hated Nick for killing Sarah, but she wasn't willing to throw her life away for revenge.

Half an hour later, they reached a small house at the edges of the Outer City.

"We'll be waiting here. Don't take longer than ten minutes," Nick said evenly.

Jonathan looked with worry at Kiara.

He hoped that Kiara didn't decide to do something stupid.

Kiara nodded and led the little girl inside.

A moment after the door opened, Nick heard the voice of a young teenage boy.

He guessed that this was Kiara's brother since she had said that she had a younger brother.

A couple of minutes later, Kiara came out of the house and nodded at Nick.

Jonathan sighed in relief.

After that, the three of them ran towards Dark Dream, and since the little girl was no longer with them, it barely took them five minutes.

When the two of them saw the warehouse, they furrowed their brows.

That was it?

Cycle was inside an actual office building, which was several stories high.

Meanwhile, Dark Dream was just some shitty warehouse.

Their future seemed a bit more uncertain.

Nick opened the door and motioned for them to enter.

When the door opened, the three of them saw several people.

Jonathan and Kiara immediately noticed the guards and realized that working in a warehouse wasn't actually so stupid.

Guards needed to patrol through office buildings, but in a warehouse, they could keep watch over everything easily.

Even more, it was quite difficult to get to the guards.

The next moment, they noticed a beautiful woman with brown hair sewing something in the corner, which was a bit strange.

Did someone live here?

Was that an employee?

Next, they noticed a tall man sleeping in the corner, and they quickly realized that this was one of Dark Dream's employees.

This was the one called Trevor.

But why was he sleeping here?

Naturally, the people who were awake also noticed the newcomers, and they became careful.

After all, they were all on edge due to the current situation.

Nick just walked towards a desk where a young woman was sitting.

Since Pator was dead, his position had been filled by three people who worked in shifts.

When the young woman saw Nick approaching, she respectfully stood up and performed a quick bow.

"Good evening, sir. What do you need?" she asked.

"Get Wyntor down here immediately," Nick said.

"Of course, sir," the young woman said before running out of the warehouse.

It was almost eight p.m. by now, and Wyntor had already gone home.

Nick walked back to Kiara and Jonathan, who just awkwardly stood around, not knowing what would happen to them.

Then, the three of them went to the side and waited.

"Why is he sleeping here?" Jonathan asked after a couple of minutes of silence as he gestured to Trevor.

"Because of you," Nick said.

The two of them furrowed their brows in confusion.

"What if you attack him on his way home?" Nick asked.

Then, he gestured to the beautiful woman sewing in the corner. "She's also here because of you. She's a family member of one of our Extractors. She's living here so that you can't use her as a hostage."

Kiara and Jonathan felt a bit insulted.

They would never stoop so low and involve the family members of their enemies.

But then, they remembered Stephen's and Ardum's true faces, and they realized that such a worry was actually not unfounded.

However, at the same time, a question appeared in their mind.

Why didn't their family live in the office for the same reason?

What was different?

However, before they could find an answer, the main entrance opened.

Wyntor was here.

Chapter 158 – Financial Situation

As soon as Wyntor entered, Jonathan and Kiara became anxious again.

Wyntor had a powerful presence, and he was the leader of their enemy.

Their lives would be in his hands.

When Wyntor saw Kiara and Jonathan, his expression didn't change.

It was almost like he had expected them to be here.

Wyntor walked up to them, and the anxiety of Jonathan and Kiara intensified.

"Let's talk inside," Wyntor told the three of them as he walked past them towards one of the Containment Units.

Nick gestured to follow Wyntor.

Jonathan and Kiara became scared.

Why were they going to a Specter?!

Were they about to get sacrificed?!

When they entered the Containment Unit, Kiara and Jonathan became terrified.

There was a horrifying coffin walking around in the Containment Unit on white bandages!

The two of them had seen a couple of Specters before, but seeing a new Specter was always a terrifying experience.

Especially since they didn't know what that Specter could do.

"Perfect timing," Nick said.

Nick walked up to the coffin.

BANG!

And kicked it.

The coffin hit the wall, and all its bandages went back inside.

Kiara and Jonathan took deep breaths.

Sure enough, Nick was terrifying!

BANG!

Then, Nick dumped the heavy corpse of Stephen onto the ground.

Naturally, Nick wouldn't forget such a valuable corpse.

After a couple of seconds, the bandages slowly came out of the coffin again, and they quickly found Stephen's corpse.

Slowly, the wound around the corpse.

And then, the coffin opened.

SCREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

Kiara and Jonathan became absolutely terrified at that point and didn't dare to move.

This was the most horrifying scream they had ever heard in their lives!

A moment later, the corpse was consumed by the coffin, and the lid closed again.

"That should keep it busy for a while," Nick said. "Sad that Possession Specters don't grow more powerful."

Nick turned to look at Jonathan and Kiara, seeing that they were terrified of the coffin.

"That's all it can do."

The two looked at Nick like they had just been pulled out of their thoughts.

"What?" Kiara asked.

"That's all it can do," Nick said. "It screams and eats corpses. It looks scary, but it's actually very weak. A good kick will scare it and shut it up."

The two of them looked back at the coffin, which wasn't moving anymore.

That was it?

"When it has food, it just lies on the ground. When it doesn't, it searches around. As long as you don't stand still while it tries to jump onto you, nothing will happen to you," Nick explained.

"It's called the Screaming Coffin, and it barely requires any maintenance. I'm the one dealing with its food supply."

The two of them calmed down for multiple reasons.

First of all, the coffin didn't seem as scary anymore.

Second, the fact that Nick explained how to work with the Specter meant that they most likely weren't about to get killed.

"Tell me what happened," Wyntor said as he looked at Nick.

Nick nodded and narrated the day he had.

Naturally, since Jonathan and Kiara were here, Nick didn't explain how he managed to sneak up on them.

When Wyntor heard about the young girl, he didn't seem surprised, which shocked Jonathan and Kiara.

It was almost like Wyntor had expected something like this.

"I was wondering how Ardam managed to pay a level two Zephyx Extractor with that money sink in his facility," Wyntor said. "That explains it."

"Money sink?" Jonathan asked nervously.

Wyntor glanced at Jonathan evenly. "The Dung Heap," he said.

This confused Jonathan. "Why is that a money sink?"

"It eats food," Wyntor said evenly. "Food is scarce and very expensive. The Dung Heap probably makes less money than this coffin."

Jonathan and Kiara were quite surprised when they heard that.

"Seems like Ardum didn't tell you," Wyntor commented.

The two of them looked at each other with complex expressions.

"No, he didn't," Kiara said, turning back to Wyntor.

Wyntor nodded and started to break down what the Dung Heap was most likely producing and costing.

After about five minutes of explaining everything, Kiara and Jonathan realized that the situation was really dire.

The Dung Heap could probably only pay for about three Extractors.

Then, Wyntor told them about the other two Specters of Cycle, which surprised them.

"Didn't you say you had no spy in Cycle?" Kiara asked Nick.

Wyntor snorted. "I don't need a spy for that. Some of you carelessly told the normal staff about the Specters, and I simply had to bribe them for the information."

"When Extractors can't keep their mouths shut, it's easy for the enemy to get all this information."

At that moment, Jonathan gulped nervously.

He had talked with one of the guards about the Specters he was working with.

Jonathan was most likely part of how Wyntor found out about all of this.

Wyntor continued breaking down what Cycle was most likely earning, and it didn't look good at all.

Cycle was earning about as much as Dark Dream.

Yet, their rent was several times higher.

They had double the number of Extractors.

They had far more normal staff.

"Depending on what you earn, Cycle should only make between 50,000 to 150,000 credits per month, and that's assuming that the Chief Zephyx Extractor and Ardum don't get paid," Wyntor said.

"Nevertheless, I doubt that Ardum was paying you well."

Jonathan and Kiara looked at each other.

Actually, they were pretty happy with what they were earning.

"How much were you earning?" Wyntor asked.

The two of them became uncomfortable.

However, they didn't have a choice and answered.

"I'm a Late Newbie," Jonathan said. "Because of that, I was earning about 6,000 credits per month."

"I'm a Mid Newbie," Kiara said. "I'm earning about 5,000 credits per month."

Wyntor didn't seem surprised, but Nick felt shocked.

That was barely anything!

"That's what Trevor and Jenny make in five days!" Nick said in shock.

Jonathan's and Kiara's eyes widened in shock as they looked at Nick.

"What?" Jonathan asked.

Nick nodded. "Our Extractors get 10% of what they produce, and the Dreamer produces around ten grams of Zephyx per shift on average."

This shocked the two of them.

"The Dreamer is producing that much Zephyx?!" Kiara shouted in shock.

Nick nodded.

"It produces about 30 grams of Zephyx a day," Nick said.

Kiara and Jonathan took a while to come to terms with that.

Chapter 159 – Useful Ability

Jonathan and Kiara almost couldn't believe that the people in Dark Dream were earning so much more.

However, after thinking about what they had just heard from Wyntor, they realized that it actually made sense.

It was not that Wyntor was paying his employees very well.

It was that Ardum was paying them horribly since he was barely earning any money.

In terms of pure profit, Dark Dream was probably earning a lot more than Cycle, which meant that they could also pay their employees far better.

"You will be working for me from now on," Wyntor said, evenly looking at the two of them.

Jonathan and Kiara looked at each other with uncertainty.

All of this was so sudden.

However, they remembered that they didn't really have a choice.

They had already betrayed Cycle by walking in here.

There was no going back.

"What about our families?" Kiara asked.

"Since you are my employees, the security of your families is my responsibility," Wyntor said. "As soon as you've signed the contract and the release fee has been paid, you can get your families and let them live in here for the time being."

Earlier this day, the two of them would have thought that something like this was being too paranoid, but after witnessing Stephen's and Ardum's true faces, they accepted it.

"Then, thank you, boss," Jonathan said with a careful smile.

"Nick is the boss," Wyntor said before looking at Nick with a grin. "At least, that's what all the Extractors call him."

"You can refer to me simply as sir," Wyntor said.

Nick smiled awkwardly.

He had gotten used to Jenny and Trevor calling him boss, but with two new additions, his nickname felt official.

"Of course, sir," Jonathan said with a polite bow.

Wyntor nodded and looked at Kiara.

Kiara only sighed and nodded. "I'm looking forward to working with all of you."

"Good," Wyntor said before he walked to the door. "I will be drafting the contract and dealing with the release fee. Nick, you show them around."

Nick nodded.

Usually, when Extractors signed a contract, the contract said that they had to keep the specifics of their old workplace a secret, and a release fee had to be paid when they decided to work for another Zephyx Manufacturer.

Funnily enough, the contract these two had signed didn't have such a clause.

Instead, the contract stated that they were not allowed to quit without the CEO's consent.

However, that clause wasn't legally enforceable.

Wyntor would just pay the standard amount of money to purchase the two of them, and if Ardum had an issue with it, he could sue Wyntor.

But both of them knew that he wouldn't get anywhere with that.

Ardum simply wrote the contract like this to make his employees think that they weren't allowed to join another Manufacturer.

After Wyntor left, Nick looked at the two of them, who looked at Nick nervously.

"Welcome to Dark Dream," Nick said with an embarrassed smile. "I guess I'm your boss now."

When the two of them saw the innocent smile on Nick's face, they were taken aback.

Nick had seemed so dangerous and powerful, but now, he seemed more like an inexperienced and shy boy.

"By the way, my name's Nick, and I'm 16 years old," Nick said with a smile.

"You're 16?!" Kiara asked in shock, which was mirrored by Jonathan.

"Is that strange?" Nick asked with a smile as he scratched the back of his head.

"It's just... that's very young to be a Chief Zephyx Extractor," Kiara explained.

"I guess so," Nick answered awkwardly.

Kiara and Jonathan were still confused and shocked.

As soon as they had joined Dark Dream, Nick's entire demeanor had changed.

But after a while, they decided that this was a good thing.

Wyntor's Aura was already oppressive enough.

"Anyway, what are your abilities?" Nick asked. "I kind of need to know."

The two of them looked at each other.

Asking an Extractor about their ability was a taboo.

However, it was also normal for the Chief Zephyx Extractor to know the abilities of their employees since they needed to assign them to the Specters.

"I can show you," Kiara said as she slowly moved her hand to one of her guns.

Naturally, Nick noticed Kiara's movements, but he didn't stop her.

Kiara slowly pulled out her gun and pointed it at one of the walls.

BANG!

She fired a bullet, and the bullet hit the wall loudly.

The bullet bounced off the wall after being dented into an unrecognizable form.

Meanwhile, the wall only got a bit discolored.

"That was a normal shot," Kiara said.

Nick nodded as he watched with interest.

Even though the person in front of him had a gun, Nick wasn't nervous in any way.

Kiara was barely a meter away from Nick, and if she tried anything, Nick would reach her very quickly.

The next moment, a red glow appeared around Kiara's gun.

When Nick saw the red glow, he became very interested in the ability.

It seemed like Kiara had an ability that was actually useful for combat.

BANG!

Kiara shot another bullet, which hit the wall as well.

Just like the first bullet, this one couldn't penetrate the wall, but there was one difference.

A very small crevice was left in the wall.

The crevice was around 15 centimeters long, barely a couple of millimeters wide, and not even a single millimeter deep.

"Interesting," Nick said.

Kiara nodded. "This is the ability that Extractors receive from one of our- Cycle's Specters. Most of us have this ability since it is very useful for combat."

"With this ability, we can empower a weapon or parts of our bodies with a cutting effect, and the best part is that it barely costs any Zephyx to use," Kiara explained.

"Jonathan also has this ability," Kiara said as Jonathan nodded.

Nick was very interested in the ability.

If they won the war, they would gain access to the Specter that granted people this ability.

This meant that Dark Dream would finally get a Specter that granted their new employees useful abilities!

Chapter 160 – Teaching

After talking a bit more, Wyntor returned with the contract.

The two of them signed the contract, and they finally officially belonged to Dark Dream.

Wyntor sent the two of them out to get their families to come here and told them that they would be working with the Dreamer tomorrow.

Depending on their result, one of them would take over Nick's shift.

As the Chief Zephyx Extractor, Nick didn't need to work with a Specter to earn money.

Additionally, Nick also needed time to find new Specters and to manage all the Extractors.

Jonathan and Kiara left to get their families after thanking Wyntor.

After the two of them left, Wyntor and Nick talked about their future plans for a while.

With Stephen dead and two of Cycle's employees gone, Cycle had just barely enough employees to keep their Specters.

Now, they only needed to deal with one more person.

Eventually, Wyntor went home while Nick waited for Kiara and Jonathan to arrive with their families.

As soon as the families arrived, Nick showed them where they could stay.

Naturally, the little girl was part of Kiara's family.

By now, Trevor had woken up since his shift was about to start, and Nick introduced him to everyone.

Finally, at ten p.m., Nick left Dark Dream to get something to eat.

Not many places were open at this hour, but Nick could still find something.

An hour later, Nick fell into bed.

After waking up the next day, Nick got some food and went to Dark Dream.

It was silent.

The families of the Zephyx Extractors had all been sleeping since it was so early.

However, as soon as the door opened, a couple of them woke up and looked at Nick.

After all, sleeping in such an open space made people nervous, and their sleep was light.

Sadly, there wasn't much they could do.

At least it was only a temporary arrangement.

Jonathan was one of the people who got woken up by Nick, and he quickly stood up when he saw him.

"Wake Kiara up as well and get something to eat," Nick whispered to Jonathan. "In an hour, you guys are going to work with the Dreamer."

Jonathan nodded and went over to Kiara.

Meanwhile, Nick went to the Containment Units and retrieved the gathered Zephyx.

And then, Nick waited for the hour to pass.

As he looked around the warehouse, Nick felt like Dark Dream had transformed into a shelter.

There were almost ten people sleeping in here.

Things were getting crowded.

'We really need a new place,' Nick thought.

Eventually, it was time to go to work.

Jonathan and Kiara weren't in the mood to eat something since too much had happened yesterday, but they still had to work.

When the two of them walked to the big Containment Unit, they gulped.

Coming into contact with a new Specter was always scary, and they were quite sure that this Specter wasn't as harmless as the Screaming Coffin.

After entering the Containment Unit, the two of them saw the Dreamer.

Right now, the Dreamer was looking intently at Jonathan and Kiara while Trevor lay in front of it.

When Kiara and Jonathan looked into the Dreamer's eyes, they both took deep breaths.

It felt hollow and creepy.

Its Aura was different from Cycle's Specters.

The Dung Heap was essentially just a rotting pile of stink, which didn't make it very scary, while the other two Specters were more direct with their Aura.

In comparison, the Dreamer felt threatening but in a subtle way.

However, it wasn't as scary as their Specters, actually.

The Lover looked horrifying, and the Bleeding Lady put terror into every watcher.

But the Dreamer just seemed creepy.

"These are two new employees," Nick told the Dreamer. "They are Zephyx Extractors and already have experience in working with other Specters. Depending on how they do, they will be working with you from now on."

Naturally, the Dreamer showed no reaction whatsoever.

"Can it understand us?" Kiara asked.

The Dreamer didn't look at her.

"It feeds on mentality," Nick said. "It can understand us."

After that, Nick walked over and woke up Trevor.

"Morning already?" Trevor asked with a yawn.

"Yep," Nick said with a smile.

Then, Trevor turned to Jonathan and Kiara. "Don't worry. Working with the Dreamer is easy. You just gotta dream a bit."

Trevor laughed a bit before walking out.

"You two will do my shift today," Nick said. "You both get four hours each and if you produce enough Zephyx, you get to work with the Dreamer from now on."

The two of them nodded.

"Jonathan, you go first," Nick said.

Jonathan took a deep breath and walked over to the Dreamer.

"Just lay down or sit down somewhere," Nick said. "The Dreamer will put you to sleep."

Jonathan nodded, took another deep breath, and sat down near the wall.

When Jonathan saw the Dreamer walk over to him, his fight or flight instinct kicked in, and he started to sweat profusely.

Being in a vulnerable position in front of a Specter was a terrifying experience.

However, Jonathan had worked with scarier Specters, and he didn't panic.

After a bit, Jonathan felt his mind shifting, and a minute later, he was out.

Kiara watched nervously as Jonathan's head lost its strength and sank.

"And that's it," Nick said. "Four hours later, we'll wake him up, and you will take his place."

Kiara gulped and left the Containment Unit with Nick.

Nick talked with Wyntor for a while before he talked with Jenny and Trevor a bit more.

Four hours later, Nick checked the amount of Zephyx that Jonathan had produced in four hours.

'Five grams,' Nick thought with a nod. 'About average.'

Kiara and Nick entered the Containment Unit.

Nick told Kiara to wake Jonathan up and to take his place.

When Jonathan woke up, he was confused, but he quickly realized what had happened.

"Huh, that was easy," Jonathan commented. "Easier than working with the Bleeding Lady and far easier than working with the Lover."

Eventually, Kiara also fell asleep, and four hours later, Nick checked the Zephyx she had produced.

'Six grams,' Nick thought. 'I guess it makes sense to turn this from three eight-hour shifts into four six-hour shifts.'

Nick planned a bit and nodded.

From this day forward, all four employees would be working with the Dreamer each day.

And for the first time, Nick had time to actually do his actual job since he didn't need to work with the Dreamer anymore.

Nick's team had grown from two to four.