

Reincarnated With Three Unique Skills

- Chapter 15 – 20

Chapter 15: Chapter 15: Misunderstanding

Chapter 15: Chapter 15: Misunderstanding

"Ethan, drink this. It's a C-tier healing potion. It'll help your wounds heal faster," Aria said, her voice gentle yet urgent.

She handed him a small vial, its liquid shimmering with a faint blue glow. The cost of such potions was exorbitant, and Ethan couldn't help but feel grateful for Aria's generosity.

They were gathered in Ethan's cramped quarters—the place he called home within the bustling inn. Aunt Greta stood nearby, her expression a mix of concern and indignation. Her daughter, Emily, hovered at her side, wide-eyed and curious.

"How cruel!" Innkeeper Greta exclaimed, her voice filled with sympathy. "I can't believe they beat you up like this. It's abominable!" Her gaze shifted from Ethan to Aria, as if seeking answers or perhaps reassurance.

Emily looked at Ethan's bloody wounds, hiding at the corner of her mother's clothes. "Big brother, get well soon," she said softly.

Ethan smiled at her, despite the agony. Thanks to Aria, his wounds were healing fast. It was possible that these wounds might be healed by the end of the day.

"Aria, will Ethan be alright?" Aunt Greta's worry spilled over.

"Yes, he will be alright. There's no need to worry," Aria assured with a smile.

"I am worried about something else," Aria said, her expression shifting to deep contemplation. "Ethan has killed a hunter inside the city, and this could lead to serious consequences."

"Although I threatened them not to reveal about the killing outside, who knows what happens next. What if they don't keep their promise? Then what? We might need to go for another long trail. "

"Aunt, you know how strict the rules are about killing a human inside the city. On top of that, in our case, it was a hunter. The city lord doesn't take these kinds of cases kindly. He is very strict in this regard," Aria added seriously.

As Ethan frowned, contemplating the worst-case scenario, Aunt Greta and Emily's expressions shifted to concern. Within this time, they had grown close, considering themselves not just friends but almost like family.

Their worried faces weighed on him, and guilt settled in. "I'm truly sorry, Aria, Aunt Greta, and Emily," he confessed, his voice laced with newfound emotion. "I hate that you're all concerned about a nobody like me."

Aria's smile was reassuring. "Ethan, no need to apologize. We haven't been able to help you yet."

"Yes, Ethan. Don't think you're just a stranger to us. We are with you," Aunt Greta added kindly, revealing her motherly nature.

"Yes, just like Aunt said, don't dwell on it too much. I will find a way to get help from my clan," Aria replied with a smile.

Ethan's emotions swirled as he shook his head, rejecting Aria's offer. "No, Aria, you don't need to involve your family any further. You've already done so much."

The weight of her favors and kindness already felt heavy on his shoulders. He couldn't accept more of this, otherwise, he would be too reliant on Aria. That's why he said that. However, Aria mistook it for something else entirely.

Aria's expression shifted to anger. "Why, Ethan? Don't you consider me a friend?"

The sudden transformation of her expression caught Ethan off guard.

"No, it's not like that. It's just..." he tried to explain, but her words cut him off.

"Fine," she huffed, her frustration evident. "You don't need my help? I won't talk to you again. Goodbye!" With that, she stormed out of the room.

Exasperated, Ethan called out, "Wait, Aria! I didn't mean it like that." But his words fell on deaf ears as she left, leaving him with regret.

He slumped on the bed helplessly.

Aunt Greta and Emily observed the quarrel with amusement. "Girls are like this, Ethan," Aunt Greta said, her tone amused. "Sometimes you have to give in to them a little."

Emily remained silent, recognizing that the topic belonged to the adult world. Still, her curiosity lingered.

—

Aria walked through the night streets, her figure blending with the darkness. She couldn't help but pout angrily. "Humph! 'Don't get your family involved in this!' What high and mighty words!"

"If I hadn't been there in the forest to help him, where would he have been now?" Anger surged within her, questioning whether their friendship was merely a facade. Unfamiliar emotions churned inside her, leaving her frustrated.

"Was I too harsh?" Aria regretted her words a little after a while. "Sigh! Whatever! I'll go ask my father for help. I can't leave him alone in danger, can I? Although I don't know if he sees me as a friend or a benefactor, I consider him a friend regardless. And a true friend always helps each other," she murmured, recalling her mother's words. Her kind personality was the reflection of her mother's teachings, while her merciless personality result of her clan's teachings.

As she hurried home, Aria couldn't shake the thought: If she had killed those delinquent hunters earlier, this mess wouldn't have happened. She could have buried them underground, and nobody would have noticed. Problem solved!

Yet, something held her back from revealing her cruel side to Ethan.

"What are these emotions I'm feeling?" Aria asked herself, seemingly lost in confusion.

Chapter 16: Chapter 16: Imprisonment

In the afternoon, just as Ethan had recovered from his wounds, a group of knights burst into his room with a thunderous sound, collapsing the door. The wood splintered, and dust filled the air, making it hard to breathe.

Their armor clanked as they advanced, their boots leaving muddy prints on the floor. The leading knight, a stern-faced man with a scar across his cheek, pointed his sword at Ethan. "Murderer," he barked, "get down. You're charged with killing innocent civilians. Don't resist!"

All the knights had drawn their swords, the tips of the blades shining with cruel light. Their expressions were grim, as if he were some kind of heinous criminal. Ethan glanced around, bewildered. When had he murdered civilians? That was utter nonsense! There must be some conspiracy involved.

Nonetheless, for now, he complied, lowering himself to the ground. The cold stone floor pressed against his knees, and he felt the weight of their judgment. These weren't ordinary knights—they were high-level hunters, skilled in combat and relentless in their pursuit of justice.

Aunt Greta was also behind them. The scene unfolded like a twisted plot. Aunt Greta's desperate pleas fell on deaf ears as the knights remained resolute. Their cold eyes bore into Ethan, and he wondered how he'd become the target of such wrath.

The strange belt they used for handcuffs puzzled him. Why not regular metal cuffs? But then it hit him—the belt suppressed his ability to wield Mana. He was completely trapped, powerless.

They dragged him out of his room, the rough stone floor scraping against his knees. The cage they threw him into felt like a coffin, its iron bars closing in around him. As they moved through the streets, curious onlookers watched—their expressions a mix of fascination and disdain.

Rotten tomatoes and rocks flew his way, each impact a reminder of his supposed crimes. Ethan kept his head low, avoiding eye contact, while his mind raced. How had he ended up here? Man's pride, perhaps—he should have accepted Aria's help earlier.

Now, as the prison loomed ahead, he regretted that decision.

"Man," he thought bitterly, "Pride really does come before a fall."

The imposing prison loomed before him, its massive walls stretching in all directions. The sheer size of the place—over 5,000 square meters—left him awestruck. It was a fortress designed to contain the most dangerous of criminals.

As Ethan stepped through the prison gate, his belongings were swiftly confiscated. Well, when he said "belongings," he really meant his Titanium Sword—the one thing they deemed too dangerous to allow.

At least they let him keep his clothes; he half-expected them to force him into some scratchy prison uniform.

But there was no time for wardrobe complaints. The guards hustled him into a dim cellar, their laughter echoing off the cold stone walls.

"Now, rot in here, you vile murderer," one of them sneered, the sound dripping with malice. They reveled in his misfortune.

The cellar was completely dark, with no means of perception. "Is this how a real prison looks like?" he wondered.

"Hello, anybody here?" he shouted to see if anyone was inside the cellar other than him.

The dim cellar seemed to close in around him as he shouted into the darkness, hoping for a response. And respond it did—a venomous, angry voice that cut through the air like a blade.

“Hey, motherf*cker! Why are you being a shouting ass? We’re all here, stupid. Now shut the hell up, or I’ll send you straight to hell.” The words reverberated off the stone walls, and Ethan shrank back, realizing he was far from alone.

These weren’t just ordinary prisoners; they sounded vile and vicious.

Ethan surveyed his surroundings, seeking a corner away from the menacing voices. As he settled down, relief washed over him—they hadn’t tried anything funny with him yet.

But then, a new voice, closer this time, startled him. “Hey, boy, why are you here? What crime offense did you commit?” The question hung in the air, leaving him startled.

“Who is there?”

“Hehe, relax, boy. I am your neighbor.” A chuckle was followed by a creepy smile.

The chuckle from his neighbor echoed in the dim cellar, and Ethan squinted to make out his features. A skinny old man, shirtless, with a face etched by time and hardship.

“So tell me,” he probed, “What’s your case?”

Ethan hesitated, then decided to share. “I killed a robber for protecting what’s belongs to mine. What’s it to you, old man?”

His eyes glinted, and he leaned in. “Oh, nothing. But your work was justifiable, not like some disgusting rapists here.”

He gestured toward the other prisoners, their shadows dancing on the walls. “Be careful of them—they’re the real criminals with twisted morality. They hadn’t even spared the kids from their rotten grasps. Disgusting!”

“I understand. But why are you here, old man?” Ethan asked, curious to know the answer.

The old man came close and said creepily, “Because I ate people!” He revealed his bloody teeth.

The old man’s revelation hit Ethan like a punch to the gut. “Because I ate people!” His bloody teeth gleamed in the dim light, and Ethan’s mind recoiled at the thought.

“Eating humans?” he stammered, his stomach churning. The mere possibility of such an act made him want to retch, but he forced the nausea down.

Just moments ago, Ethan thought the old man must be somekind Saint from his righteous speech, but now his true nature was revealed as he unleashed a menacing aura, making Ethan question everything he had assumed about him.

“Hehe!” The old man’s laughter grated on Ethan’s nerves, as if he found his discomfort amusing.

But then, a deeper voice cut through the tension. “Hey, you old coot, why are you laughing again? Don’t you want us to have some peace in here?” Annoyance dripped from his words.

His underlings chimed in, their voices hushed. “Boss, don’t provoke that old man. He was doing some strange stuff ever since he was transferred here. He’s really creepy.”

The boss’s anger flared. “Creepy? Creepy my ass! Are we going to be scared of an old man now? We haven’t fallen that low yet. Old coot,” he hissed, “if I ever hear you making noise, I’ll silence you forever.”

The old man’s smile didn’t wane; instead, it grew more sinister. His aura sent shivers down Ethan’s spine.

The night dragged on, and no help arrived. Regret gnawed at him—he should’ve accepted Aria’s offer. But now, alone in this cell, he wondered if she’d ever come to his aid.

Sighing, he realized pride had led him astray. Perhaps it was time to swallow that pride and seek help, even from unlikely sources.

Chapter 17: Chapter 17: Demonic Movement

Early the next morning, the prisoners were given their breakfast: dried rice balls and a dubious water that smelled faintly of feces. As soon as Ethan saw the state of the food, he felt a wave of nausea.

“Damn, who the hell would eat these things?”

The sight alone was enough to make him vomit, expelling the contents of his stomach onto the ground.

Despite his reaction, the others around him seemed unfazed. They ate with a fervor that suggested they hadn’t had a decent meal in days. Some even reached over to snatch Ethan’s portion, stuffing their mouths with his share of the unappetizing food.

“Hey, you bastards, why are you snatching this young man’s food?” the skinny old man barked at the group, his voice a sharp edge of indignation. He looked gaunt and worn, but his spirit was evidently undiminished as he stood up for Ethan.

Ethan was touched by his gesture, though he didn’t need the food himself. The old man’s defense of his dignity was something he truly appreciated. He gave him a small nod in gratitude but chose to remain silent.

The food was hardly worth fighting over, and the old man’s act of goodwill was a rare and valuable gesture in their current circumstances.

The old man was surely an odd individual. Despite his menacing nature, he had a lot of kindness for a person he had just known. Ethan couldn’t believe he was the same person who had eaten people after seeing this.

“What is the story of this old man? Why did he eat people?”

The leader of the group sneered, clearly unfazed. “What’s this got to do with you, old man? Do you want to get fu*ked up in the ass?”

“Heh, boss, who will fu*k his old skinny ass? Where’s the fun in that?” The group of rapists erupted in cruel laughter, their jeers filling the air like venomous whispers.

“You!”

The old man’s face turned a deep crimson with anger. His eyes, once an ordinary shade, began to glow an eerie red, reminiscent of a vampire’s. The transformation was startling. Ethan watched with growing interest, his curiosity piqued by the sudden change in the old man’s demeanor.

Who was this old man, and what kind of power did he possess? Unfortunately, Ethan’s ability to use [Appraisal] was restricted due to his sealed Mana, leaving him with only speculation.

As abruptly as it had started, the red glow in the old man’s eyes faded. He stood there, visibly shaking with a mix of fury and exertion, his breathing heavy. After a moment of regaining his composure, he moved to Ethan’s side, his anger still simmering beneath the surface.

He was clearly agitated, but his presence offered a strange comfort. Despite the bleakness of their situation, Ethan found the old man very admirable. He didn’t understand what circumstances could have led him to eat human flesh and get trapped in this cell.

Everything fell into an eerie silence after the old man’s outburst, with the only sounds being the occasional heavy breathing from the criminals, who had slumped into a deep,

unnatural sleep. The stillness of the room felt oppressive, amplifying the tension that hung in the air.

The old man's expression shifted from rage to a sinister grin. He approached Ethan cautiously, his movements slow and deliberate, as if he were afraid of disturbing the slumbering criminals.

Leaning in close, he whispered, "Hey, boy, do you want to flee from here with me?"

Ethan blinked in astonishment. The thought of escaping had never occurred to him. Where would they go after escaping? The fear of being hunted, of living as wanted fugitives, made the idea seem far-fetched and unsettling.

"Flee? How? What about these Mana-sealing belts?" Ethan asked, his curiosity outweighing his apprehension.

From where Ethan stood, it seemed impossible to break free. Their physical strength was insufficient to make even a dent in the heavy metal door that sealed them in.

The old man's grin widened, his eyes gleaming with a dark, confident light. "You don't have to worry about that. Just be prepared to flee after I break the door. I've been preparing to break free from this prison for a while now. Every preparation is complete. You're lucky to have me here, boy."

His words left Ethan conflicted. On one hand, the prospect of escaping was tempting. On the other hand, the risk of capture and the unknowns that lay beyond these walls filled him with dread. If they were caught, would they face execution or worse?

The anxiety gnawed at Ethan, but the old man's confidence was oddly reassuring.

The old man seemed to sense Ethan's trepidation. His smile softened, and he said, "Just wait for my signal."

Without waiting for Ethan's response, the old man pulled out a small vial of red liquid from a hidden pocket in his tattered robes. The vial itself was unremarkable in appearance, but the liquid inside shimmered with an ominous red glow, casting eerie reflections on the old man's face.

He drank the entire contents of the vial in one swift motion, his eyes narrowing as the liquid disappeared down his throat. Almost immediately, he began to mutter incantations in a language that sounded ancient and alien. If there were any experts present, they would have recognized it as the language of demons—an unsettling realization that Ethan was entirely unaware of at that moment.

As the old man chanted, a transformation took place. His frail, wiry frame began to swell with muscle, his once-weak appearance now giving way to a formidable figure. The

change was both awe-inspiring and horrifying. He seemed to draw power from the vial, his aura radiating a sinister, dark energy.

Moving with newfound strength, the old man approached the rapists who were still lying in their drugged stupor. With a wave of his hand, a crimson light enveloped them. The air crackled with malevolent energy, and the light seemed to pulse with an unnatural rhythm.

“Ah! What’s happening? My body...” One of the rapists cried out, his voice trembling with fear as he felt his body start to deteriorate.

“Oh, no! Demon!” another screamed, his face contorted in terror as he realized the source of the horror.

The scene that unfolded before Ethan was nightmarish. The rapists and their leader began to wither and shrivel at an alarming rate. Their bodies, once full of life, now appeared as grotesque, desiccated husks. The transformation was swift and gruesome; within moments, what had been healthy humans were reduced to lifeless, skeletal forms.

Ethan stood frozen, his heart pounding in his chest. “Hey, what are you doing?” he managed to stammer, his voice trembling as he watched the horror unfold. The sight before him was beyond anything he had ever imagined.

“What kind of demonic magic is this?” he wondered aloud, his mind racing to grasp the reality of what he was witnessing. Was this old man a demon himself, or was he wielding powers beyond comprehension? The sheer scale of the magic and its effects left Ethan in stunned disbelief.

His face turned pale at the thought. “Will he eat me as well?”

After consuming their essence, the old man transformed into a grotesque figure from his earlier muscular build.

The grotesque monster then approached Ethan slowly, one step at a time. Ethan pressed himself against the wall, trying to stay away from the monster.

However, when it came close, it revealed its big bloody teeth. Instead of hurting Ethan, it broke his Mana-sealing belt with one of its tentacles, freeing him from its effects.

Without wasting any more time, the monster started to slip away from the cellar. Most likely, it knew that the guards might arrive at any moment.

As if on cue, two guards arrived before the monster could get away. However, the monster remained unbothered.

“Bang!”

“Puchi!”

With a casual swing of its tentacles, the guards became meat paste on the wall.

In the midst of the carnage, Ethan managed to activate [Appraisal] on the monstrous figure before it disappeared. The screen in his mind provided the following details:

[Appraisal:]

[Name: Kylian Dilo (Demonised)]

[Age: 59]

[Level: —]

[Affiliation: Demon Faction]

Chapter 18: Chapter 18: Demonic Movement (2)

The name and affiliation only deepened the sense of dread that enveloped Ethan. Kylian Dilo was no longer merely an old man but a demon of some sort, with an association to the Demon Faction that suggested far darker origins and motivations.

As the demonized creature’s form became a retreating silhouette, Ethan was left in the aftermath of the violence it had wrought. The guards were dead, the prison walls smeared with their remains, and the escape route now lay open.

The gravity of the situation sank in—the monster had acted with brutal efficiency, clearing the way for its escape, and now it was up to Ethan to decide what to do next.

The Mana-sealing belt was shattered, giving Ethan a glimpse of the power he could access now that his restraints were gone. However, the sense of urgency was clear. The guards would soon be coming to investigate the commotion, and Ethan had little time to figure out his next move.

Should he follow the monster, try to find another way out, or wait and see what would happen next? Each option was fraught with its own dangers and uncertainties.

But one thing was clear: the old man’s actions had irrevocably changed the nature of Ethan’s predicament, and he needed to act swiftly to navigate this new and perilous situation.

“Boom! Boom!”

“Bang!”

“Ah! Demon!”

“Emergency!”

“Huala...!”

As the demonized old man wreaked havoc in the prison, Ethan seized the distraction to escape his cell and run far away from the chaos.

He didn't want to be seen as a perpetrator with the demons, so he had to get away from there as soon as possible.

In the distance, he could hear the miserable screams of guards and the sounds of magical energy clashes clearly. The fight could be described as a one-sided massacre.

It was as if the demonized old man was becoming exceptionally powerful as he devoured the blood of the guards one after another. It was a terrifying curse power!

The prison's warning bell rang constantly, reminding Ethan that he was not out of danger yet.

Although most of the guards were distracted by the demonized creature, a few were still at their posts.

Ethan cautiously surveyed his surroundings. Finding a narrow gap, he crossed the main gate somehow, mostly because he was using [Muscle Enhancement] to raise his physical capability to the limit.

Along the way, he picked up his sword from the storage room. He had previously noted where it was kept, so it was rather easy to find.

After a while, he finally crossed the main gate, heaving a sigh of relief. “Phew!”

“Hey, wait!”

However, just when Ethan was about to relax, someone called him from behind.

His heart skipped a beat, assuming he had finally been caught.

“Huh, Ethan?”

But when he turned, he noticed a familiar face along with two others he didn't recognize.

It was Aria, with her bright smile lighting up her beautiful face.

Ethan's mind unconsciously eased seeing Aria in front of him. A few minutes ago, he was still doubtful if she would ever talk to him again. But here she was once again, coming to his help.

"What are you doing here, Ethan? Did they release you from the prison or something?" Aria asked, stepping forward. The anger from the previous day's misunderstanding was already gone.

"I-I..." Ethan was about to explain, but an unexpected voice interrupted him.

"Boy, did you just break out of the prison?" an imposing man asked, his eyes sharp.

He was wearing a military uniform embedded with the Araknis Kingdom's crest. He must be some kind of official.

"Do you know it's a serious crime to escape from here? Wait, did you also somehow cause the uproar behind?" The officer's tone turned accusatory.

"No, I didn't," Ethan replied calmly. "It was the work of a demonized human, and I have nothing to do with it."

"Uncle! Help..." Then, Ethan noticed Aria signaling the other man beside her.

"Demonized human? That's a different matter. But why did you get out of there? You should have just stayed there obediently, not causing problems for us. Now let's go, I will take you back to the prison," the official said sternly, leaving no room for argument, as if his words were law.

"Ah, Chief Lionhart, cut him some slack. You know, he is the boy I was talking about earlier," Aria's uncle said, smiling.

Chief Lionhart furrowed his brows. "So, he is the one who was wrongly accused of murdering civilians? Rather, he killed a rogue hunter out of self-defense. I understand!"

"So, tell me, boy, what exactly happened at the prison? Who is the reason behind all this abominable act?" he asked, his expression turning gentle.

Chief Lionhart became very cordial as soon as he heard Ethan had some kind of close connection with the renowned Silvermoon Assassin House.

He had no choice but to do so. The pressure was immense. Who didn't know the history of the Silvermoon Assassin House?

They were creatures of the night, specializing in assassination. They even completed personal missions from the king himself. The king valued them greatly because of their unparalleled skill in assassinations. They had finished off many opposing noble parties for him, after all.

So, Chief Lionhart had no choice but to compromise a little.

“Ethan, explain clearly to Chief Lionhart about the incident. Then he will let you go from here unhindered,” Aria told gently in hushed voices.

Ethan nodded and began narrating the whole incident, leaving out the fact about the real person who had become demonized. The old man helped him, even if it was unwanted; he couldn't be an ungrateful ingrate, could he?

“So, someone used demonic art in the cellar, and you don't know him? The situation is really critical, it seems. The demons are becoming more proactive nowadays. I need to inform the city lord as soon as possible,” Chief Lionhart muttered, looking worried.

“Okay, you can now take him with you, Lord Astrid and Lady Aria. I have more urgent matters at hand. Please excuse me a little!”

“It's no matter, Chief. Thanks for your gracious help. We can't be grateful enough,” Aria's uncle replied curtly.

Chapter 19: Chapter 19: Newfound Resolve

Upon leaving the prison, they made their way to the inn where Aria and her uncle would drop Ethan off. His heart swelled with gratitude toward both of them.

They traveled in an opulent horse carriage, its luxurious interior offsetting the occasional bumps in the road. Aria's lively chatter kept him engaged, her long silvery hair flowing behind her in the breeze.

Aria and her uncle bore a striking resemblance to each other—their build, eyebrows, and even their smiles were almost identical. Their shared silver hair further emphasized their kinship.

However, her uncle's demeanor toward Ethan was far less warm than Aria's. He observed their interaction with a cold, disapproving gaze, clearly uncomfortable with their closeness. Nevertheless, Ethan's gratitude remained steadfast despite the uncle's stern demeanor.

After a little more than an hour, they reached their destination, where they would part ways.

“Aria, I’m very sorry for refusing your help earlier. Thank you so much. I will never forget your kindness,” Ethan said sincerely, looking directly into her eyes.

Aria frowned slightly. “Ethan... that again... Am I no friend to you?” She seemed down as she said that.

“Uh, yes, yes, of course we are friends!” Ethan replied, flustered, not wanting to upset her once again.

Aria revealed a soft smile after hearing his reply.

“Hey, boy, come here,” her uncle called out from a distance, impatience evident in his voice.

Ethan hurriedly left Aria to hear what he had to say. From his expression, he could guess it wouldn’t be anything good.

Aria stayed where she was, pouting. Her uncle had interrupted their conversation, but she couldn’t complain. She had to beg him to help Ethan since her parents had refused outright, insisting she shouldn’t associate with commoners, let alone use their precious resources to help one. Fortunately, her uncle had agreed after much persuasion.

“Thank you so much for your help, sir. I am really grateful,” Ethan said to her uncle, trying to convey his earnestness through his tone and posture.

“Yeah, yeah,” he dismissed Ethan with a wave of his hand, annoyance clear in his voice. “Listen, boy, you should thank my niece. You have no idea how much she had to plead with her parents for your sake. They were furious—all because of you.”

As Ethan listened, guilt gnawed at him for the trouble Aria had endured. Her genuine efforts had stirred unfamiliar emotions within him. Was this how close friends felt for each other? He wasn’t sure, but he knew he owed her more than just gratitude.

But then her uncle’s expression darkened, and his next words made Ethan’s mood turned sour.

“Listen, boy, don’t try to get closer to Aria. Otherwise, you wouldn’t know how you even died. No one would ever accept a romantic relationship between you two because you’re just a commoner.”

His cold, piercing gaze bore into Ethan as he continued. “Don’t ignore my advice, Ethan. Don’t make trouble for Aria. It won’t be good for anybody. With your meager power, you wouldn’t be able to protect yourself, let alone Aria.”

Frustration grew within Ethan as he listened to her uncle's condescending words. Are commoners not human? Although he didn't know if he had fallen for Aria, he disliked their belittling attitude.

Perhaps, social classe exists in every worlds. Earth was divided by money and this one was by only sheer power.

Aria and he hadn't even touched hands, let alone any relationship. The thought of a relationship hadn't crossed his mind yet. But he had started to feel closer to her, that was all.

Her uncle continued, "Aria's marriage has already been arranged, though she doesn't know it yet. So, don't get your hopes up. The other party is much more powerful than you can imagine."

"Okay, I've said my piece. Now, you need to decide for yourself, boy."

Saying that, he gripped Ethan's shoulder with overwhelming force, causing his joints to crack. From this, Ethan knew he was a true monster. He couldn't even gauge his strength using his [Appraisal] skill.

Afterward, her uncle released his shoulder and gave Ethan one last warning look. His sharp eyes left Ethan breathless.

Ethan clenched his fists, frustration boiling within him. He hadn't even been in this world for a week, yet it had already shown him there is no peace without power.

If he had enough power today, they wouldn't have dared to look down on him. Power... he wanted more power than ever. He desired overwhelming strength to pave his path forward without hindrances. He would gather enough power to turn this world upside down.

As Ethan stood alone in the silent evening, his determination soared. The setting sun cast long shadows, mirroring the resolve growing within him.

This world would learn to respect him, not for who he was, but for the power he would wield. No longer would he be the one looked down upon—he would rise above them all.

—

Aria and her uncle set off on their journey, crossing the noble district with its towering buildings and extravagant luxuries. The area was a showcase of opulence, with houses and villas designed in a grand European royal style—ornate facades, intricate ironwork,

and manicured gardens all spoke of an elite society that was worlds apart from the common folk.

Inside their plush carriage, Aria turned to her uncle with curiosity. "So, Uncle, what did you talk with Ethan about?"

Her uncle dismissed the question with a casual shrug. "Uh, nothing much. Just some routine advice. I reminded him how to stay safe, that's all."

"Is that so?" Aria's tone was light, though her eyes betrayed a hint of concern. She accepted his answer without further question, not knowing that her uncle's seemingly benign words had only ignited a fierce determination within Ethan.

As the carriage rolled smoothly over the cobblestone streets, the rhythmic clatter of hooves provided a steady backdrop to their conversation. The golden light of the setting sun bathed the district in a warm glow, casting long shadows across the luxurious surroundings.

Aria looked out the window, her mind wandering back to Ethan and the troubled expression she had seen in his eyes.

Chapter 20: Chapter 20: Cheat Like Ability

"Mama, look! Big brother Ethan is back," Emily said cheerfully, her voice ringing through the inn.

Innkeeper Greta looked up from her work, surprise lighting up her face as she saw Ethan approaching from the streets. "Ethan, you're back!" she exclaimed. She hadn't expected Ethan to return from prison so soon.

"Yes, Aunt. I'm back!" Ethan replied with a warm smile. Seeing their familiar faces brought him a wave of comfort, a reassuring reminder that he was cared for.

"Did that girl help you finally? I knew she wouldn't leave you alone," Aunt Greta said with a teasing smile. "Now, come inside and have dinner, Ethan. You look so skinny. Emily, sweetie, go and get something good for your brother."

Emily beamed and dashed off, eager to fulfill her mother's request.

As Ethan stepped into the cozy inn, the familiar scents of home-cooked meals and the warmth of the hearth enveloped him. Aunt Greta fussed over him, brushing imaginary dust from his shoulders and leading him to a seat by the fire.

"You must have been through so much," she said, her voice softening with concern. "But you're safe now at least."

Ethan nodded, grateful for her kindness. “Thank you, Aunt Greta. It’s good to be back.”

Emily soon returned with a plate piled high with steaming food. She set it down in front of Ethan with a proud smile. “I got the best for you, big brother!”

Ethan ruffled her hair affectionately. “Thank you, Emily. This looks delicious. You’re the best.”

As he ate, the worries and tensions of the past days began to fade.

After having dinner and chatting with the mother and daughter duo, Ethan left the inn for the market specialized in hunters’ needs. He couldn’t afford to waste any more time. He was far behind his peers and needed to work harder than anyone else.

Ethan entered a hunter’s resource shop to find out about mana orbs. Mana was essential for increasing his strength, the only barrier to him getting stronger.

The shop was beautifully decorated with various hunter equipment—swords, spears, shields, skill books, monster body parts, and more. The weapons section looked luxurious, with many high-tier weapons displayed neatly.

The place was bustling with hunters buying and inspecting different items.

“Hello, Sir Hunter. What can I do for you?” A beautiful woman greeted him warmly.

Ethan cleared his throat and asked, “Hello, do you have mana orbs here?”

The shop assistant looked interested and replied, “Yes, sir, we do have a few mana orbs. How many do you need?”

“Can you show me the price list for mana orbs first?” Ethan asked, feeling a bit embarrassed. He didn’t have a penny with him; he was just there to gather information.

“Sure, Sir Hunter,” she replied professionally and handed him the information.

– “Grade-F Mana Orb – 30 Gold Coins. Mana capacity increase: 20.”

– “Grade-E Mana Orb – 50 Gold Coins. Mana capacity increase: 50.”

(AN: 100 bronze coins = 1 silver coin, 100 silver coins = 1 Gold coin,)

– “Grade-D Mana Orb – 100 Gold Coins. Mana capacity increase: 120.”

– “Grade-C Mana Orb – 220 Gold Coins. Mana capacity increase: 260.”

– “Grade-B Mana Orb – 500 Gold Coins. Mana capacity increase: 550.”

After carefully looking at the list, Ethan was shocked. "So expensive!"

They had the highest B-Grade Mana orbs in the shop. Grade-A and above must be even more expensive. One Grade-B Mana Orb cost 500 Gold/ 50,000 Silver Coins.

Ethan had only a little more than a few hundred silver coins, which was nothing compared to this.

Now the question was, "How should I earn so much money?"

He could do some guild missions, but it would take months to buy one B-Grade Mana orb. Dungeon loot depended on luck, so that was out of the question as well.

The shop assistant lady looked awkwardly at me, seeing him spacing out. She must have already taken him for a penniless bumpkin already.

But he ignored her completely because he had a more pressing matter at hand. "What to do? What to do?" Just as he was racking his brain, a brilliant idea came to his mind.

"Why didn't I think of this earlier? I am so stupid!" He scolded himself.

He turned back to the shop assistant and said, "I want six silver swords. Can you get them for me, please?"

The shop assistant was dumbfounded by the sudden change. The boy who had wanted to buy mana orbs now suddenly wanted silver swords.

But her professionalism was commendable as she composed herself and nodded. "Sure, sir, I will get them for you."

...

He bought six silver swords for 600 silver coins, afterwards, he left the shop. Then he entered an old alleyway to do something miraculous.

"Synthesis! Synthesis! Synthesis!"

He synthesized all the silver swords, transforming them into 3 titanium swords. All of them were D-grade and sentient, equipped with special skills. They would definitely fetch a good price in the market, as sentient swords were rare.

"Now time to sell you guys. Do forgive me."

He went to a different weapon shop to sell them and got nearly 18,000 silver coins. The shop owner was enthusiastic about buying them from him, so the deal was done quickly.

With the money, he bought a few more silver swords and synthesized them again.

After a few trips at night, selling and buying swords in different shops while wearing a black cloak to avoid recognition, he made a profit of an astonishing amount: a total of nearly 500,000 silver coins.

“Oh my goodness!”

He looked at the coins piled up in front of him in shock. It was like a small mountain of silver and gold coins—a breathtaking sight.

Not even a noble family might be able to take out this amount of money from their treasury at once.

It was truly a cheat-like ability. But because his mana ran low, he had to quit for the night.

Still, it was more than enough for today.

If this continued for a few days, he would become the richest man in city quickly. Not that he had any plans for that. Without strength, staying in the limelight was not a good choice.

He had read similar phrases in the novels many times, so he understood this fact well at least.

Now that he had enough money, it was finally time to buy the mana orbs he really wanted.