

Vile 51

Chapter 51: Camping Date P3*

Eren took a small sip of the wine. Nina was horrified by his stunt and wanted to stop him. First, he was not used to with alcohol in general. Second, the wine was made from C Rank ingredients. It was basically a C Rank debuff potion. Eren would die if he consumed it.

But before she could do so, Eren stood straight in front of her and lowered his head to kiss her on the lips. Nina could feel the wine that was dripping down from Eren's mouth into her throat.

Eren had not gulped down the C Rank wine. He wasn't suicidal. He only kept it in his mouth briefly before sending it into Nina's throat.

Nina was still sitting on the log. So she had to look up to respond to Eren's kiss. By doing so she had allowed for a gravity-friendly expressway for the incoming wine.

The insides of Eren's mouth were feeling a little burnt because of the wine like he had put a lump of hot coal in his mouth. But he didn't care.

"Erni, stop doing stunts like these. I can drink the wine myself."

Nina was kinda angry at his stunt. But she was also equally impressed by the romanticism behind it.

"Forgive me, M'lady. I was only trying to impress you."

Eren smiled at her and kissed her on her cheeks.

"Consider me impressed. Now give me that."

Nina smiled back and finally took the glass from him. She knew the consequence behind that action. She was practically consenting to Eren's advances by accepting that wine. But now she didn't care. She did want to act liberated. If the wine can help her, so be it.

Eren kept on pouring more wine for her, one sip at a time while their talks went on. They both knew where they were heading. But they wanted to talk about all the remaining subjects before the eventuality hit them.

Nina took out a chainmail armour, leather pants made of mana beast's skin, boots, and a pair of daggers from her storage. They were all upper-grade F Rank items, perfectly suitable for a newbie ranker like him.

Nina had also given him 20 Extols and loads of Eddies (Edinburgh dollars).

"Erni, I've prepared this gift set for you. I bought it from the city of Lauren.

I was going to give it to you on the day of your departure but tonight feels like a good moment to do so. It would also serve as a gift for your rank breakthrough.

The chainmail armour has a simple Lightweight spell inscribed on it. You can wear it under your shirt and it'll go unnoticed. The rest of the objects are also compatible with your F Rank mana. You can circulate your mana through them to enhance their functionalities.

And here's some cash and Extols. For your normal and ranking-related purchases. I know you have some cash on you. But having more wouldn't hurt.

It's good that you broke through into the F Rank and can now use the ID stone. We can stay in touch through it. If you need anything else, just inform me and I'll arrange for you to receive it in the academy. Now tell me, did you like your gift?"

Eren took everything Nina had given to him into his storage. He agreed with her statement. Although he had money, having more of it wouldn't hurt. And the academy was a place where it would be needed the most.

"I liked them all. But there's something else I want from you tonight. Memories, Nina. I want good memories from you that would accompany me in these five lonely years."

Eren looked at Nina with dreamy eyes. Nina understood the wine did not only affect her. Even if Eren had only stored it inside his mouth for a brief period, it was still a C Rank sherry. Eren had gotten half-drunk because of it.

Nina too was feeling light-headed after drinking so many gulps of Madeira. She had decided. She would stock up the wine and keep it in her cellar. And would drink it whenever she felt like remembering Eren.

"Oh, Erni! Let's make some memories then."

Nina took Eren in his embrace and Eren embraced back. They both started slow-kissing first before gradually increasing their pace. Both their hands were now set out as the expeditionary party from them. They touched and explored each other's bodies.

Eren and Nina went on like this for what felt like an eternity and a matter of moments at the same time. Their sense of time had been skewed.

Both of their bodies were on fire. The flames of love, lust, and affection had engulfed them. Soon the duo went inside the tent. They decided that without the need to talk.

Nina laid on the makeshift bed inside the small tent. Eren was on top of her, kissing her neck and twisting her right nipple at the same time.

Nina had started moaning. She had wrapped her legs around Eren who had started dry humping her. His bulge was getting rubbed frantically on Nina's mound.

"Oh, Erni. Where did you learn all this, I still wonder. I checked your room in your absence. There were no magazines in your room that you claim to have read these techniques from?"

Nina wasn't aware she wasn't supposed to say that she had intruded on Eren's privacy. But she was too far gone and curious to care.

Eren was only lightly feeling the effects of wine. He was still in his control. He didn't stop what he was doing at the time while replying:

"Why would I need those magazines when I have your hot bod to relish on? Of course, I threw them after seeing this piece of fine ass."

Eren grabbed Nina's right butt cheek while saying this. Nina was too flattered by Eren's responses to care about his language:

"You are an ass man Erni. You won't like those academy girls' tiny asses anymore after getting the taste of this big booty! Hehe!"

Nina too was swinging it. She too felt like letting go of all her stoppers.

"That's right! What will I do for five years without this booty? I'll have to hit on a good teacher with a figure similar to yours just to curb the feelings I have for you."

"Cheater jerk! You are thinking about screwing other women while you are with me. At least have the decency to not say it while we are at it."

Nina pulled Eren's cheeks as he was busy nibbling on her neck. Eren went up and kissed her on her lips again, inserting his tongue inside. Only after about a minute did he pull his tongue back and asked her:

"Hmm? You are okay with me screwing other women?"

"Of course not, you scoundrel. I said I can deal with it. And that you need to be a little discreet while talking about these things with me.

I know how ravenous a teenage boy's hormones would get. It's five years we are talking about. I won't be allowed to step into the academy grounds unless it's a special case.

I'm not delusional enough to think you'd stay quiet being a good boy for all those years without trying your hand on other girls. And I've only come to accept the eventuality."

Nina looked into Eren's eyes while saying it. Both of their faces were two noses away from each other. They could feel each other's breaths.

Eren smiled and nodded. Nina was right. He wasn't a good guy. And neither would he stop himself from spending passionate nights with good women. But he had to give Nina something to make her the special existence amid those women:

"You are right Nina. That's why I want to give you something that would highlight your importance in my life for both of us."

"What?" Nina asked in anticipation.

Chapter 52: Camping Date P4*

"You are right Nina. That's why I want to give you something that would highlight your importance in my life for both of us."

"What?" Nina asked in anticipation.

"My first!" Eren replied. 'In this life.' He attached the sub-clause in his head.

"Erni. We already talked about this..."

"I don't care about that BS anymore. You'll have my first and that's the end of it."

Eren smooched her from saying anything further. Nina understood Eren wasn't going to listen to her come what may. She might as well make it a pleasant 'first' for him.

Nina was excited after accepting to pick Eren's cherry. It wasn't that she didn't want it. But she thought his first time should be with someone other than herself. But after Eren forced his way on her, it became easy for her to accept it. Now she wouldn't let anyone have Eren's first. The Contradiction Incarnate was living up to her pseudonym.

Eren had already removed Nina's top-dress and bra. The massive jugs were staring at him.

The nipples were erect tight. Eren took a huge bite on her right breast while fine-tuning the left bud.

Nina was ecstatic. Eh grabbed Eren's head from behind and guided him onto her left jug. Then she grabbed Eren's empty hand and placed it on her dripping wet cave, over her panties. The dress had been lifted high enough for him to allow for easy access.

Eren immediately sent his hands into the panties. The first thing he noticed was the lack of pubic hair. He was glad. His suggestion had been followed through.

"Damn, Nina. The Amazon wet tropical has been deforested nicely. The only kinda deforestation I support and love."

Nina blushed a little at Eren's response. She had still followed Eren's advice after throwing a tantrum on him.

"Then what are you waiting for? I've done what you asked. Now go ahead and check the region. It has become ideal for a lot of activities now."

Instead of shying away, Nina decided to throw a cutter ball.

"Aye, aye ma'am."

Eren decided to go down on Nina. but he needed to take care of the obstructions before that. He first took off her dress. Then removed her soaked wet panties. Nina had become completely naked. He too removed all his clothes and jumped right back in.

Eren opened Nina's legs wide with his hands. He then inhaled the musky scent in that mini region before starting his tongue storm. Eren's neck poked Nina's pink bud first. It had already puffed up due to over excitement. The touch of such a foreign object sent the clit on an overdrive.

Nina started producing pussy juices aplenty. She grabbed Eren's head again and pressed it some more against her cave.

Eren decided his Lil guy shouldn't feel left out. So he continued his act and just shifted his groin right over Nina's face. Nina didn't need a guidebook to understand his action. She immediately took his rod in.

"Erni, your dick is growing. Before your rank up, it was an inch shorter. But post you entering the F Rank, it seems this weapon is also increasing its power and potency. Hehe!"

"Rejoice, Nina. Your man still has a lot of potentials to grow."

Eren laughed before resuming his extended licking session. Nina had come twice. It was the same for him.

But both wanted more. Plus, Eren's F Rank body helped him not run on fumes this time around.

Eren started deep-throating Nina. He inserted two of his fingers into Nina's baby-making hole while working on her pink button. As a bonus, he coated one of his fingers with pussy juices and inserted it into Nina's asshole.

Before Nina could register her surprise, Eren also pushed his dick deep down her throat. This unprecedented attack took the 40 plus years old healer by surprise and she cummed hard on his face.

Eren's face had been covered in Nina's love nectar. The fishy smell was less prominent than before. It had to do with how often the juices were released. Since Nina had resumed her sexual activity, the smell had lost its potency.

But it was still very alluring for Eren. He let Nina catch some breaths. He too needed a pause.

"How was it so far, Nina? Any tips for me to improve on?"

"Haah! You could've fooled me. You've become a sage in this art. I should be the one taking tips from you."

Nina replied with fake anger. Eren beamed at her and kissed her forehead and cheeks.

Eren caressed Nina's butt. And she did the same for his now flaccid-dick. Soon the Lil monster woke from its slumber. Eren knew the fourth hard-on had arrived with a determination to find its rightful place inside something.

The Osan Woods' Butcher adjusted his bearing.

The missionary position was the best for a first try, Nina had thought. So she welcomed him on top of him. He pointed his dick right at the entrance. But did not push in. He kept on rubbing its tip on the crack between the vertical lips.

Now Nina's pussy was craving for some good hard dick inside. She had already spread her legs wide to allow for easy access.

"What are you waiting for?"

Nina asked him in a barely audible, quivering voice. Eren smirked at that response:

"I want you to guide it in."

Nina understood what Eren wanted to say. He was still offering her a way out should she decide to. But guiding his dick inside would mean it wasn't forced on her. This was Eren's way of showing care.

But she had already gotten comfortable with the idea. There was nothing that could change her mind now. She firmly grabbed Eren's dick from the side with her hand and guided it in.

Only then did Eren push it in. and the moment it did, Eren felt like he had accomplished something monumental. One of his dreams from his previous life had been completely fulfilled today.

Nina's pussy welcomed the foreign intruder with a lot of nectar and tightly closed walls. Her vaginal walls contracted around Eren's dick as if they would never let it go outside.

"Aaaaaah... Er... ni.... Keep pushing in baby. Keep driving your dick inside. Screw me. Fuck me hard."

Nina dug her nails on Eren's back but then subconsciously controlled her force. Eren was busy pushing his rod in and out of Nina's love hole. He didn't have time to register pain coming from his back.

"Nina... this was the best first time one could ask for. Your dripping wet, tight pussy is just that awesome.

Everything about you... just drives me crazy.

Your big jugs, your huge butt...

Your slim waist, your eyes, your skin tone, and your musky smell!

They all come together to make you the goddess that you are. My goddess."

Chapter 53: Camping Date P5*

Eren knew the effects of compliments the women would experience on them while they engaged in this act.

Eren didn't want to always take this much effort to fuck Nina.

He didn't have that much time. He wanted to spend his remaining time in effortless fucking sessions. Without having to take her to these formal dates.

For that, he needed to lay a strong foundation in his first engagement. The compliments came easy to him since they all depicted what he truly felt about her. His efforts didn't go in vain.

"Oh... Erni...

How did I become.... aah...!

So important in your eyes?

But I'm glad that I did. If you worship it so much.... This body is your baby... aah!

Praise it. Fuck it. And raveeeeeeege it the way you want.

Don't stop now. Aaaaaah! And don't talk. Keep fucking. Faster. Stronger. Deeeeep strokes, baby!

Your aunt's pussy can take it!"

Eren didn't need any more encouragement. He kept on ramming inside her while he played with her clit.

Nina's body was aching to that touch. She started moaning loudly. Her language had become crasser in her ecstasy.

Nobody in the city of Osan that knew her would relate that voice, tone, or language with the image of the powerful healer they had in their minds.

It didn't take long before Eren nutted inside her. But they weren't satisfied. They took their time to take a small rest. Drink water. And relieving themselves a little before resuming soon after.

Nina was now cow-girling on Eren's dick right now. She kept hammering her huge butts down on Eren's dick which looked small in contrast to those massive masses.

Eren was glad he could rest his back while fucking Nina. he could employ better control in thrusting his dick upwards because his other muscles didn't have to do much.

The sound of flesh meeting flesh was resounding in the small tent.

The smell of wanton sex was strong inside. Both of their bodies had shades of red on them. Aunt Nina wasn't tired at all. She looked like she could go all night.

Eren wasn't sure how long he would last even with his rank breakthrough but he didn't care about lasting long. He was confident about his manhood. He didn't need to prove it to Nina or anyone else for that matter. That's why he only enjoyed the moment.

"Erni baby, how...!"

Did you like your first time? With this, I've taken your cherry! Hehe!"

Nina asked Eren while rocking on his dick. Eren had placed his hands on her butt from either side. And was pressing on the cheeks hard.

"It was awesome. And that was yours to take in the first place. We could have done this from the very moment my dick got hard seeing your butt for the first time.

So come to think about it. My first boner. My first BJ. My first tongue storm. And my first fuck. You've taken a lot of my first time. It's about time I'm given the same deal at least once, you know."

Saying this Eren circled Nina's butt hole around its rim before inserting his nectar-soaked finger. Nina understood what he was talking about. She was okay with it. But decided to tease him a little:

"Aaah... Erni how do you know I haven't done anal? Let me tell you kiddo before you forget about my age in the Aah!

The heat of the moment. I'm more than forty years old. Whatever ... Aaah!

You might think of doing, I've already done it."

Eren laughed at Nina's answer.

"Nina, M'lady. I know you well enough to tell you that you are an anal virgin. See, whenever I insert my finger inside it, it twitches of inexperience.

Instead of arching your back towards me and lifting your butt in the air, you are still rocking on my dick and only slightly parting your butt cheeks.

Go flat on my body while my dick is still inside your pussy. Then instead of spreading the legs, lift your pelvis a little higher. My dick will stay in when I push it to meet with your pussy. And my finger will drive right through your butt hole.

Nina's eyes went wide after hearing Eren's explanation. She was indeed an anal virgin.

"Little rascal, are you sure you've given me your first? How many ladies did you fuck before you gain this knowledge?"

"I just fucked my beautiful goddess in my dreams countless times before I came up to possess this knowledge."

Eren wouldn't lose a chance to send more compliments towards Nina's way to make her drop the subject of his broad experience. And he was glad after realizing it worked. Nina did as Eren told her to do.

Eren could drive his finger through Nina's finger easily now. There was a lot of pussy juice to use as a lubricant. The anal walls only restricted the dual finger entries for a while before the rim muscles adjusted to their girth.

Eren was now sure Nina's inexperienced hole would be able to accommodate his rod easily. He took out his dick from her pussy and aligned it at her rear entrance. Nina and Eren looked in each other's eyes as he sent his dick in to take Nina's only remaining 'first time'.

"Aah... Erni. Go slow, baby!"

"Yes, dear. Your pussy has helped a lot, producing the juice to serve as an ointment. I'll start the pushes now. Rest your head on my shoulder while lifting your pelvic some more and just enjoy the ride."

Nina did as Eren told her to. She first found the anal to be very uncomfortable. But soon she adapted to it. She didn't have to wait long before the ecstasy kicked in.

"Ooooh! Erni dear. Speed up. Fuck my arsehole.

Even I can...aah!

Say that this was the best first time I could have asked for!"

Eren kept on driving his dick inside the ass hole. He nudded inside the ass after a few minutes.

But that still wasn't the end. The night was young and the couple was in heat. Eren kept on ejaculating inside Nina and she kept on asking for more. He had filled her mouth, pussy, and ass multiple times, not necessarily in that order.

Rankers didn't need to worry about using protection or cumming outside the baby-making hole like rankless populace. The ranker ladies could just circulate the mana through their fallopian tubes and eggs to null the chances of any unwanted pregnancy.

The ranker guys could coat their dick with a slim layer of mana that would act as protection.

Eren didn't have sufficient mana to retain that layer around his dick for this long. But he didn't have to. Nina would take care of the problem for him.

The duo never stopped for more than a few minutes the entire night. When Eren felt like he was close to his limit, he chugged down a lot of F Rank mana, stamina, and strength recovery potions.

Nina had told him he didn't need to do that. But Eren just said he wanted to make their first night a memorable experience. He kept on fucking her from various angles and she responded with equal enthusiasm.

The first light of the dawn had to arrive to tell them they needed to take a rest.

Eren's body was sore. Nina too had accumulated some fatigue.

But they both were mentally satisfied. They took some rest before the morning became more apparent.

The duo went home just before noon.

Like this, Eren and Nina had both lost their different first times to each other. And they were happy about it. Eren's ranking journey had started with a good, all-night-long bang.

The duo spent the remaining days before Eren's departure in each other's embrace.

Nina had closed the apothecary during these five days. Eren was her only priority in that period.

Eren had to drink a lot of potions and herbs to maintain his well-being. Others might consider it a waste to use potions lavishly. But neither Eren nor Nina cared. If these potions could let them stay close to each other for an extended amount of time, so be it!

Nina was going to stock these experiences as provisions that could be consumed during her lonely five years. And Eren was going hard to fulfil his dreams. Both seemed desperate and hardly took any rest.

They also talked and discussed a lot of stuff during their breaks. Nina guided him about various stuff related to academic potion-making lessons. These five days were fruitful for both of them.

But everything that has a start comes with an end. Eren's departure arrived. Nina's eyes had become a little moist but she tried controlling herself, a task she was failing miserably at. Eren just smiled at her and kissed her on her cheeks and forehead before opening the door to head out.

Jake and his father were waiting for Eren to show up. Nina hugged him for the last time before rushing inside the shop. She was about to cry and didn't want Eren to bid her goodbye with her crying face. Eren pulled the door in himself to close it before approaching the father-son duo.

Eren kept thinking about the past timeline in which he had gone to the academy as he approached the pair in waiting. It was very different from his current situation.

First, aunt Nina was downhearted when he had left for the academy in the previous timeline but she didn't cry. Second, he went alone, unlike today.

And third, he didn't have Reen with her. Nor did he have to worry about the kingdom's big-league that was still on his trail.

Plus, he didn't know what to expect from the academy or how he would be treated by the students if he allowed it.

But this time, Eren came equipped with that knowledge. There were so many things he wanted to do inside the academy. Many wet caves to screw. Many scores to settle. And much to gain from everything else.

Furthermore, he now knew the academy's lecturers were more than their teaching jobs. They had a much wider portfolio than he gave them credit for. Maybe he could make use of this knowledge to benefit from them.

With evil plans crafting themselves in his mind, Eren met up with Jake and gave him a 'ssup. This guy could help him in a lot of his shady deals.

A carriage soon rushed out the trio from the city of Osan. It was headed to the city of Lionheart, which was close to the academy. The journey was long but Eren enjoyed the ride.

Eren didn't know when he would return to this place. But return... he would. At least this time. As a better adventurer and not-so-better human being.

Chapter 54: Ghost from the Past

Eren Idril was on his way to reach the Lionhearts Adventurers' Academy.

He was travelling in a carriage that had him, Jake, and Jack Sullivan as its patrons. It would take a little more than a week to reach the city of Lionhearts from the city of Osan with the carriage's current speed.

The trio would have to change their carriage services often across various cities en route in their journey. These cities would also serve as their resting spots.

One of the cities en route was the city of Laurel. It would take a little more than two days for someone to travel from the city of Osan to the city of Laurel at a decent pace.

It was the same city that Nina had visited to get some of the herbs unavailable to her at that time.

Even with a travel time of up to two days, the city of Lauriel was considered to be one of the few major cities close to the city of Osan. Because the cities were connected by many roadways. There were many colts and other types of rental transportation services available between them.

The city of Laurel was especially famous within the potioners' communities for its rich availability of potion-related ingredients. The city cultivated a huge garden full of herbs, potion-related trees and medicinal plants right in its centre.

Or to be precise, the city was formed around the already existing green space.

Laurel was a preferred resting spot for people travelling to the city of Lionhearts from the city of Osan and any other colonies nearby to it.

During this time of the year, Eren would see a lot of students who had either gotten into the LA through a reserved quota like them. Or they could be someone who had passed the academy's harsh entrance exam.

Of course, these students will travel with their guardians like Eren and Jake with the latter's father.

This will result in the creation of a fleet of carriages heading towards the Lionhearts from Laurel and other such gathering spots. This fleet would be organized and maintained by various carriage services working together.

It was natural for Jack Sullivan to travel with the boys since he often had to travel across cities for his business. He also had a small shop in Lauriel. A businessman like Jack would have his fingers dipped in all kinds of pies.

Jack was also looking to open his business in the city of Lionhearts. He was going with his son and his son's friend to do a reckon regarding the same.

It had already been more than two days since Eren had started his journey. The carriage was closing in on Laurel. Jack asked Eren to change the deafening silence spread in the carriage:

"Tell me, Eren. What are you aiming for during these academic years? And what are your plans?"

Eren stopped looking outside the carriage's window and focused his eyes on Jack. Jack had honed his instincts judging people for a living. Therefore when Eren looked at him, felt like he was being stared at by a slumbering monster whose intentions weren't clear regarding its prey.

"My aims? I wish to complete my academic years in peace and harmony. Maybe major in potion-making and close-range combats.

I wouldn't mind serving the kingdom if the position and benefits that come with it are good. But I will probably dabble in businesses related to potioneering as a side hustle."

Eren concluded like he had things figured out. Jack was expecting an unclear or far fetched answer from a teenager. But he could never guess that the kid who gave off such laid-back vibes would have these ambitions.

"That's a good and flexible goal to have. But potion-making and close combats usually don't gel together.

You might want to rethink your goals when you get to the academy and spend a year there. Your specializations would start from the second academic year. So you'll have ample time to make a decision.

Jakey, what about you?" Jack turned his attention to his son.

"I'm also thinking about majoring in potioneering. I'm not sure about the rest. I'll figure things out by next year after having a look at things in the academy."

Jake Sullivan didn't experience the academy life like Eren. So his approach to setting his aims was cautious. This was the most natural response a kid his age would have. It was Eren who had acted differently.

The trio discussed a few other things before they arrived at Laurel's city gates. They entered the city soon after. Jack had already booked an inn for three of them.

Jack and Jake would have one room to themselves. Eren had insisted on having a dedicated room so he was offered the other one.

They were all tired after spending two days on the road and sleeping half-assedly on the ground during the night. So they all slept off as soon as they found their beds.

Or so the trio's pursuer had thought.

This pursuer was none other than Matt from Dom's Raiders. The only surviving member of his wiped out party.

Everything had gone south after the team Dom's Raiders was met with SR snakes' incident. Matt had to be hospitalized for a week. And Dom did everything in his power to save him.

But later on, Matt was informed that Dom Walker had been the mass murderer of his entire party as well as Isaac's party. That he was in cahoots with Osan Woods' Butcher.

Matt refuted that claim entirely. He had a lot of conflicting information that would at least be enough to question the authenticity of Dom's involvement in the whole thing. But nobody entertained him.

When he tried to make some more noise, Matt's hunting license was revoked by the OB and he was prevented from forming a party with the association's members. All of a sudden, Matt was out of a good job.

Matt was as confused as he was angry. Everybody had seemed like they were hell-bent on making Dom Walker the only guilty person in the entire case.

But that was not all. They had even stopped discussing or investigating the OWB's role and identity entirely. Even a non-scheming guy like Matt could understand that this was a cover-up for something bigger he wasn't aware of.

Matt had nowhere to go or no one to count on. His party was his only family during all these years. And he wouldn't accept Dom as the mastermind behind everything even if someone were to beat him to death for it.

What was a guy like him supposed to do now to get to the bottom of things?

Matt kept on thinking about various possibilities. And his mind finally zeroed in on one detail that everyone seemed to have missed.

Apart from Matt's party itself, only one other group of people knew about what had happened to Dom's Raiders at first. It was through that group the city's various organizations came to know about the incident.

That small group of people was Nina and Eren.

Even Matt kept rejecting the idea of their involvement. They had no motive. But that idea would always sneak back into his head, probably because he didn't have any other lead.

Questioning Nina about it was a suicide Matt didn't want to commit.

But what if Matt could scare a kid into telling him everything he knows about the case?

Chapter 55: Matt's Seppuku

What if Matt could scare a kid into telling him everything he knows about the case?

Matt was only placing a small bet on a hunch. He didn't have high expectations from this investigation.

Matt wouldn't have acted on this hunch had Eren not left the city of Osan where Nina's influence was strong. But it all changed when the kid decided to head to the academy.

Matt came to know that the group would halt at the city of Laurel. He decided to question Eren at that time.

Matt was going to find a chance to get some alone time with Eren but the latter only made the job easy for him when he decided to book a separate room.

It was past midnight. The city of Laurel was asleep. Matt had also booked a room in the same room to gain entry into the establishment. He found Eren's room and used his thieving skills to unlock the door.

When Matt entered Eren's room, the latter was seen looking right at him.

Matt immediately got the creeps after he realized Eren was staring at him with a 'different kind of anticipation.

Eren jumped on his bed as soon as he found his room in the inn. An extended trip in the small box, drawn by powerful colts who don't care about the bumps on the road, ought to give you a sore back, even when you are an F Rank ranker.

But as soon as he laid on the bed to straighten his back, Eren was reminded of his nights in bed with Nina.

Would they still do it after suffering through a long journey like this, had she been here with him? Eren thought of that and answered affirmatively.

Eren tried to sleep. And he succeeded in sleeping for a few hours. But when he woke up and looked at the moon outside, Nina's naked visage was all he could see over it.

Eren's thoughts about Nina invoked a reaction down there. His dick woke up from his slumber as a result.

Eren started stroking it. Not for nutting with self-help. But soothe it while he thought about her. He had already decided that he would never nut in vain in this life.

What if Nina were to come into his room now?

Eren had this thought and chided himself for it. Why would Nina follow him here?

Or maybe she would?

Eren was lost in his fantasy while stroking his Lil guy when Reen, who was sleeping on his chest, informed him about an intruder. Eren immediately thought of Nina.

'Did she really follow me here?'

Eren was excited and started looking at the door. His pace of strokes also increased in anticipation.

Eren's furore was at its peak when the door was unlocked and a person walked in sneakily.

“Brat, what the hell are you looking at? And stop masturbating while looking at me? My preferences are straight.”

Matt forgot that he was supposed to sneak in. A feeling of ‘declaring his stance’ had overwhelmed him.

“Who the FUCK are you old man? And why does everyone keep thinking that MY preferences are not straight?”

Eren had already forgotten about the emergency patient he had at the apothecary. He wouldn’t care about a guy like him even if he could remember him.

And the guy’s timing had to be the worst thing about him.

It was Matt who had arrived at Eren’s doorstep unannounced when the latter was about to have his ‘talk’ with Nina.

Eren would have progressed much faster at the very beginning when the proverbial iron was hot had it been not for this guy.

But that wasn’t enough.

Matt had to barge into Eren’s room to not let him think about his ‘good times’ with Nina in peace.

Eren didn’t even feel this much anger on Isaac when the latter had stopped him on his whims.

“I see that your hormones are raging. I can sympathize. But I’m not here to be the object of your skewed fascination.

What I want is simple, kid. Answer my few questions and I’ll let you go.

And don’t even think about shouting to call for help. I’ve already used an F Rank sound isolation artefact.”

Matt had accepted his cover was blown. He closed the door and walked in slowly. He took the only chair present in the room, which was placed right in front of Eren’s bed.

Matt had deployed a sound isolation artefact before coming here as a precaution. Now he was glad that he did.

“Are you sure the artefact works fine? What if someone were to circulate their F Rank mana through their vocal cords and use a mana-induced voice?”

Eren asked just as calmly. Matt had to admit the kid had a good bearing.

“This is an upper-grade artefact of F Rank. No amount of your efforts can allow you to surpass the artefact’s limitations.

Now answer my question. You probably don’t remember me. But my name is Matt from Dom’s Raiders.

I was the one Dom had brought to your apothecary as a case for severe SR snake poisoning. Did you talk to someone after we left your place? And did you give information about...”

Eren had stopped listening to Matt. He was talking to Reen in his head. He first confirmed that the artefact Matt had activated the way he claimed to be using Reen's mana sense.

He checked for any potential eyewitnesses in the vicinity. And lastly, Eren checked for any audiovisual artefact on Matt's person that could transfer what was happening here to any remote place.

Eren finally looked at Matt who was still talking about something. But Eren had stopped caring.

The guy could live as the last living survivor of the tragedy that had befallen his party. He could have a family and lived to tell the tale to his grandchildren.

If Eren was in Matt's shoes, he would have relocated to a different kingdom instead of risking his life getting to the bottom of this cover-up that looked all kinds of muddy even to a blind person.

But Matt didn't want the easy life. Eren didn't waste any more time. He didn't even get off his bed to get rid of this idiot.

"Reen. Go have your late-night snack."

Reen ironically morphed into naked Dom. Since Matt was talking about Dom, Reen thought her food's last wish before it would get consumed was to see Dom.

Matt had aimed his monologue at Eren. He had so many questions that were growing like a spider's web inside his head. His heart had been filled with injustice. In his need to vent out these feelings, he had forgotten to check on his listener.

And suddenly naked Dom appeared in front of him.

The word 'surprise' was an understatement.

The word 'puzzled' only touched the surface.

And the word 'shocked' barely covered it.

What Matt felt was a concoction of these emotions, and then some more.

"Wh.. what? H... how? Why?"

Matt couldn't form coherent sentences. But before he could, he heard Eren's answer and everything went dark in front of his eyes:

"Just die in mystery!"

Eren said this and dropped hard on his bed. His Lil guy had already fallen asleep. It was about time he did too. He drew the sheets on him and shut his eyes.

The Osan Woods' Butcher didn't even spare a glance at Matt who was struggling inside a slimy ball of mass. The struggle stopped soon after.

Reen sneaked inside the sheets to take her usual spot after turning into her usual form.

Like this, Matt had joined his party in its afterlife adventures after committing a seppuku.

One could imagine his soul getting welcomed by his friends, who would then take their time cursing Eren to his past and future seven generations.

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Author's Note: Hello. Please check Important Notice placed in auxillary volume.

Chapter 56: Small World

Eren woke up the next day feeling refreshed. He was holding a palm-sized pebble with inscriptions on it. It was the F Rank sound isolation artefact kind-hearted Matt had gifted him last night.

Eren stored the artefact in his ID. He had plenty of uses for it. Eren got ready to explore the city a little before leaving it in the afternoon.

Eren had a lot of herbs in his storage that he had collected from the Osan woods. Some of them had no immediate uses for him. He might as well sell them to make a profit.

And what other city would be better to sell these herbs than the city of Lauriel?

Eren opened his room's door to head out. But he found four people were waiting by his door.

"Sir Lin, what are you doing here?"

Eren recognised Lin Karr among them. He realized these people must be here looking for Matt.

"Oh? Isn't that madam healer's nephew? Why are you staying here?"

We came here following the traces of a suspicious person named Matt. He had come to your apothecary a few days back, so you should know him. Did you see him here anywhere?"

Lin Karr gave Eren a piece of brief information about his reason for being here. He had told the OB to assign someone to keep an eye on Matt.

The informer had relayed to them that Matt was still fixated on clearing Dom's name. He confirmed that Matt had left the city of Osan for the city of Laurel.

Lin Karr was heading to the academy anyway. The city of Lauriel was a natural gathering spot for a carriage fleet heading to the Lionheart.

It was in Lin's interest that he travels in masses, lest he gets ambushed by Isen Osan's forces. So he decided to check up on this liability named Matt on the way.

Lin was going to try one more time talking sense into Matt. He had already told the guy to drop the whole subject of Dom as one bad deal in his life. But the guy wouldn't listen.

Lin can't always keep tabs on Matt in case he does something to resurrect the case of Osan Woods' Butcher, which they had buried after so many efforts. He had decided to silence Matt for good if he didn't listen this time.

"Sir Lin, I haven't seen Matt. I'm going to attend LA as a first-year student. So I came with the Sullivans. They are staying in the room next to me.

We will join the carriage fleet in the afternoon that leaves for the city of Lionheart.

But why is Matt a suspect? Wasn't he a victim of the woods' disturbance?"

Lin was surprised Eren was going to attend the LA. But it made sense after he thought about it. The boy must have been offered a reserved seat.

"Oh! That's a nice coincidence. Then you should start calling me professor Lin, boy. I'm also heading for LA.

Let me introduce three people to you who are assigned under me. They will be joining the academy as the assistant professors."

Lin then introduced LA's new assistant professors under him.

They were Peter, Ela, and Julie.

Peter and Ela were the same party members from Lin's party that had found Isaac's body. And Julie was the one who had recorded fake Dom's footage that had him testifying to his alleged crimes.

Julie Ekheart's name had gotten pretty famous for this event despite her attempts to remain hidden.

Peter and Ela were also at risk because of their involvement in the OWB case that was connected to the kingdom's big league.

Peter, Ela, and Julie would have never involved themselves in this mess had they known the OWB was connected this deeply. Even when they had buried the case after knowing about the killer's background, their involvement had become public knowledge by now.

They were in the same boat as Lin. They needed a sturdy shelter that could save them from any possible "accidents" happening to them until the heat dies down.

Lin could understand their situation and empathize. Therefore, he gave them the same option he was going to make use of.

A D-Rank professor of LA academy can hire three E-Rank entities to serve as the assistant professors under them.

That's why D-Rank professor Jaime had Ronald, Linda, and Verna serving as his assistant professors.

Lin had already left the LA academy thinking he wouldn't go back to being a professor there anytime soon. His previous assistant professors have either been accommodated in the academy's administration or hired by another professor to serve under them.

Therefore, Lin offered the trio to serve him as his assistant professor in the academy. All three of them accepted the lifesaving offer quickly before it could get snatched away.

Lin didn't tell Eren the inner details. But he informed the latter of his professorship at the academy.

Lin also told Eren that his hunter status in the OB was more like an honorary responsibility due to his relationship with the OB. He was supposed to take a break from his academic duties. But the circumstances made him resume them for the time being.

“Hm? Julie Ekheart? Aren’t you the one who took Dom’s footage that served as conclusive evidence against him?”

Eren quickly “figured out” Julie’s identity after they were introduced to him by Lin.

Eren knew about Julie beforehand. After all, he was the one who had allowed the lady to record fake Dom’s speech.

Eren would have never guessed he could meet her again after leaving the city of Osan. ‘Small world!’ Eren thought.

So Julie was going to be an AP (assistant professor) at the academy along with two others. He would see them for the next five years.

At least Julie looked hot among them. Eren thought he should try his luck with her. He knew Julie could be swayed with money and resources, thanks to her interaction with fake Dom.

Peter and Ela’s names were known by the hunters as the prime investigators behind the OWB case. But they were still lesser known than Julie among the common populace. Therefore Eren neither covertly nor overtly knew about them.

Julie smiled mirthlessly as Eren identified her. She couldn’t wait to reach the academy now. She felt like the so-called ‘accidents’ might come from anywhere and anytime if she keeps on getting identified like this.

Even a mere brat had recognised her. It was about time she disappeared from the public and concentrated on being an AP at the academy.

“Kid, I’m a ranger. I tracked Matt’s presence to your room and then it vanished. Maybe he had entered your room while you were sleeping.

Why don’t you step aside and let us conduct our investigation? We can consider that we owe you one.”

Peter stepped forward and declared his intentions. Eren nodded and stepped away, letting them enter the room.

Eren had already confirmed that whoever gets killed and eaten by Reen becomes difficult to track post their death. Their presence almost completely fades away from existence.

It seemed like Reen would also ingest and digest a part of her victims’ auras. And that would somehow negatively impact the tracking and other such spells.

It becomes nigh impossible for rangers and historians to make sense of the residue aura and traces if they get left behind at all that is. Eren could only associate that with Reen’s special existence for now.

Reen was a perfect killing and body disposal machine for him. He had nothing to fear from an E-Rank ranger.

Just like Eren had thought before. The ranger couldn't find anything conclusive. He confirmed that there was an artefact used here or in the vicinity. But that was it. Peter gossiped with his party and Lin had to conclude their investigation at the site.

"Thanks, Eren. We'll take our leave now. See you in the afternoon. We'll be travelling together."

Eren smiled and nodded his head. His smiling face immediately turned serious right after shutting the door behind them.

Eren had to watch out for Jaime's group in the academy. Another group had been added to that list. Lin's group was more dangerous for him than Jaime's in many ways.

Lin knew him personally. His group had been deeply involved in the OWB case. It knew inside information about the case that might not have been released to the public.

Of course, Eren knew that Lin and his assistants were far from knowing his involvement in the case. But one slip from his end was all it needed for them to start connecting the dots.

Eren needed an insider in this group to keep tabs on them. He had another reason to hook up with Julie now.

Of course, Eren knew that Julie wouldn't want anything to do with a kid like him even if she acted like a gold digger. He needed a different approach to come close to her. Money alone wouldn't cut it.

Eren waited for a while before heading out. He was going to meet up with Jake and explore the city. Jack must have already left by now to handle his business.

Chapter 57: Ivor, Jason, & Veronica

"Jakey, my man. Your father left?"

Eren greeted Jake casually. The latter nodded to his question.

"Yepp. Father left as soon as he woke up. It's just us. So where are we heading now? We should probably get some snacks for the road first."

Jake prioritized the food. He and Reen would get along quite well, Eren thought.

Jake was also an F-Ran entity like Eren. He had started his ranking journey much earlier than the latter. He liked eating and making friends.

Jake's body subconsciously stored some amount of fat as a result despite him being a ranker. No amount of bodily cleansing could make that go away if it treated the fat, not as an impurity.

"We'll do that. But not before we find some shop to sell some herbs my aunt has given me. I also want to get a bunch of ingredients for potion making."

"Alright. I've been to this city many times. I know a herbal shop that is linked to our business. We can go there for your exchanges."

Eren and Jake went to the shop. Eren sold all the unwanted but expensive ingredients he had collected from the forest and found them inside his victims' storages.

Eren demanded the payment in Extols. He received more than 50 Extols in the transaction. He now had around 150 Extols on him. He had officially left Isaac behind in his current account money.

Jake was shocked after witnessing the magnitude of the exchange. He would have never thought Eren had so many stocks of rare ingredients. But then he thought of Nina, and it all made sense.

Of course, an apothecary would certainly have this much amount. Jake thought Nina had given him something like her savings to liquidate and support Eren in his academic life.

Eren then gave a list of ingredients he wanted from the shop. They were all F-Rank materials. But he paid for them in Eddies. His kingdom currency dropped by a huge margin as a result. But his Extols were left untouched.

Eren and Jake were on their way to a general store to stock up on snacks when the latter saw a group of people heading their way. He recognised them instantly.

Jake was active in socializing. Unlike Eren who acted as a shut-in while he was in the city of Osan in both of the timelines. So he didn't recognise any of them.

"Yo, Jake. Knew we could find you here outside the snacks shop. You should cut down on the carbs, man. Even being a ranker is not helping you out."

There were three people in that group. Two boys and one girl. The one who spoke and body-shamed Jake was a young girl in her early teens years.

"Aah! If it isn't miss Veronica Garcia! Hello. Good day to you as well, friends. Ivor Osan and Jason Storm."

Jake didn't mind the light taunt. He knew Veronica was foul-mouthed. It was better to ignore her than engage with her.

"Who is that guy with you? Is he also going to attend LA?"

Veronica zeroed in on Eren rudely, looking at him from top to bottom and asked. Her gaze spoke that there was something that she didn't like about him.

Eren of course didn't mind being stared at by a bratty girl. Why would he care about a flat-chested lass when all he was interested in was some jiggle physics inducing bods?

"Oh! Let me introduce you guys to the fifth reserved seat student from our city. His name is Eren Idril. He is nephew to Osan's top healer, madam Nina.

Eren, these three are the remaining reserved seat students from our city. Meet Ivor Osan, Jason Storm, and Veronica Garcia."

Jake introduced Eren to the three people in front of him. He didn't care about the first and last personnel. But one in the middle was someone that piqued his interest.

Jason Storm. Eren didn't know him personally but he had heard about his name in the past timeline. Eren had a tinge of shine in his eyes after he connected the Jason he heard of from his past to this Jason.

Your personal and family background as well as your previous connections kinda become less important when you enter the academy. So although he had heard that Jason was from the same city as him, he didn't approach or try to make acquaintance with him.

'These guys must be leaving the city for LA with us,' Eren thought while he introduced himself cordially to the three. Eren acted just like Jake, easy-going and friendly.

"Ivor, weren't you going to join another academy? Why change to LA all of a sudden?"

Jake asked as he kept on buying snacks from the snack shop. They all had entered the shop. They were buying something or the other. Eren was quiet. He knew Jake would pack things for both of them.

"Haah! Me joining a different academy was my grandfather Isen's decision. And to be honest, this decision of joining LA is also not mine.

I was going to join the Royal Ren academy. But that all changed when my brother Isaac died. Now grandpa Isen wants me to graduate from LA instead."

Ivor replied while getting himself a packet of tangy chips. He was as tall as Eren but his expensive clothes made him more dignified and charming than him. He had shoulder-length white hair and grey eyes, like his dead brother.

"Oh. Sorry for asking. Hope you can make your family proud like your brother."

Jake replied with formality. But he wasn't expecting a violent reaction from Ivor.

"Watch your mouth fatass. You don't know a thing about my family or my brother. And don't believe in everything that is general knowledge about my family.

Isaac was an asshole king among the assholest of assholes.

['I'll drink to that!' Thought Eren when he heard an apt description about his former kill straight from his younger brother.]

Isaac would have been kicked out of the academy as soon as he entered it if it wasn't for my grandpa's support. He squandered money and resources. He was still an F-Rank even after all the efforts my family put into him.

I blame grandpa for not being strict with Isaac when he needed to. But to be honest, him being the firstborn son of our generation had blinded my whole family, not just my grandfather.

So stop comparing me to an ideal image of Isaac which he himself couldn't possibly hope to match up to even in his seven lifetimes."

Ivor was strict and loud with his words. It was like he had enough of being compared to his waste of a big brother. Even the snack shop owner stopped doing what he was doing and looked at the group of young kids.

Jason was the one who recovered quickly from that tense atmosphere. He placed his hands on Ivor's shoulders to calm him down and spoke to Eren and Jake on a different matter to change the subject:

"Ah sorry for that, Eren and Jake. Ivor didn't mean that. Are you going to leave with today's carriage fleet as well? It'd be better if you do so today and not delay it any further.

I heard from my sources that a guy named Matt who might be involved with the OWB has gotten into this city. He might target someone from our group, especially Ivor for his relationship with Isaac or Eren for his relationship with madam healer."

Jason looked connected with the information network. Eren thought only he knew about Matt's appearance here in the city among them. But apparently, he was wrong.

Jason lived up to his achievements from the previous timeline. He was a tall boy for his age. He had black hair and black eyes. The most prominent feature about him was the above-than-normal thyroid protrusion of his neck.

Jake wasn't aware Isen had created a larger than life image of his dead grandson. What he said to Ivor about Isaac was only a perfunctory greeting.

How was Sullivan Jr supposed to know these details? But his father's business was connected to the Osan's city administration. He couldn't afford to offend Ivor in any way. Therefore, he quickly tried to lessen the damage with his words:

"Oh! Alright. Although I didn't mean to offend, I apologise to friend Ivor for my words. Of course, we will be careful and I'm sure you will do the same as well."

"Hehe! Ivor, stop scaring a spineless coward. It's no fun doing that. How about a friendly duel if you really want to vent out your anger?"

You. Eren or something. Why don't you spar with Ivor? I'm sure you'll learn a lot even before entering the academy. We'll become your teachers and professors free of cost. What do you say?"

Veronica Garcia marched verbally forward with her haughty attitude without anyone giving her a cue to do so. She was exceptionally porcelain-skinned and had golden hair and green eyes.

Her body was slim and undeveloped. But one could tell she was going to grow into a bitchy yet beautiful lady.

Veronica gave a naked challenge to Eren even without the latter saying anything in retaliation to Ivor's rude behaviour.

Chapter 58: Ivor's Aspirations

Veronica gave a naked challenge to Eren even without the latter saying anything in retaliation to Ivor's rude behaviour.

Eren was in a dilemma!

Should he kill this little bitch first before chopping down her tongue from its base? Or should he perform the chop first before killing her?

But then Eren remembered Lin and his panel of professors in the city. They might take action if one of the first-year students of LA disappears while travelling. Therefore, he had to drop that idea.

Reen condemned Eren for being a wuss. She was going to have another snack for the road. Her kind. Not the kind Eren and Jake were buying.

A girl gotta eat after all. But suddenly her Lil human nugget was taken away from her.

Reen tried to assure her master that she'll not leave any clue behind. If push comes to shove, she would even digest her victim's clothes to eradicate any form of a trace.

But Eren shut her up with an unflinching no in his head.

Even if she could eliminate the traces, this wasn't the right time for Reen to leave her inorganic form amid so many ranked entities gathered in the city.

Reen had assumed the shape of a pendant around Eren's neck. Eren wanted her to remain that way for as long as she could.

"Miss Veronica, surely you jest. I'm a simple wannabe potioneer. I don't even know how to kill a mouse.

All I've ever done till now is make elementary potions. So I have no choice but to refuse your friendly offer."

One could imagine Dom Raiders' members coughing blood after hearing Eren's claim about him being unable to kill a mouse. That indirectly meant they were even less worthy than a mouse as prey.

Eren said his bullshitery and bowed ever so slightly. They could all see that the bow was only done as a formality.

"Hmph! A coward's friend is another of his kind. Why was I expecting anything different?

Someday I'll have to straighten you guys up so that you can at least stand up for yourself."

'Should I eat her now?'

Reen asked in a suppressed excitement. Maybe a mere food ridiculing her master will change his mind and he'll allow her to take a bite? The demoness slime was very optimistic.

'No!' Said Eren to his pet before replying:

"Jason is it? Thank you for informing us about Matt. We will go to our inn soon afterwards and stay there until the carriage fleet gets ready.

Now, if you'd excuse us. See you soon."

Eren quickly changed the topic and treated Veronica's words as passing wind, invisible and inconsequential.

That triggered the bratty girl even more. But before she could speak, Ivor looked at Eren before saying:

"Hold on a minute, Eren. Speaking of Matt. How well do you know him? I read in one of the reports my grandpa kept on his study table that your apothecary had treated the guy before he was hospitalized.

Do you think he is also involved with the OWB? If yes, what else can you tell me about him?"

Ivor asked with a solemn face.

His eyes were deadly serious. His aura had become calm and collected. It was like something wanted to resurface from within him at that time.

"Hmm? I don't know anything else about Matt that isn't already there in the report. I just know that he was very loyal to Dom and will do anything to clear his name.

But why are you so keen on knowing about the guy? Don't tell me you want to kill him.

Forget about the feasibility of doing something like that at our age or the thing being right or wrong. Didn't you hate your brother?

That Matt guy, if he is involved with the OWB, must have done you a favour by making sure that Isaac doesn't create trouble for you ever in the future. You are now the heir apparent to the baronet. Why are you so angry with him?"

Eren normally would have let things go. He wouldn't have bothered asking anyone anything because he already had so many of his past life experiences, however, restricted they were.

But there was something else in Ivor that wasn't there in Isaac.

Eren asked Ivor that question because he felt the guy was too unstable when it came to Isaac. And it wasn't due to brotherly love. It was something more driven and ambitious.

Eren could feel that Ivor thought highly of himself. But he also felt that the kid had the skills to back that feeling. Eren lived less than a mediocre life in his previous lifetime.

So Ivor's persona, the special light in his eyes, intrigued Eren. It invoked certain greed in him.

Eren felt like he should rob Ivor of that light in his eyes. He felt like he should wring the boy dry of his ambitions so that he can use them to forge his own set of ambitions.

That's why Eren asked Ivor this question. And he asked him provocatively. So that the latter would give an honest account of his inner feelings. And it worked.

"Haha! Favour? What kinda fokin favour are you talking about? Royal Ren is better than LA in every possible way.

You know why there's the word "Royal" placed in its name, right? It's because Royal Ren mostly houses the FOKIN royal kids of the kingdom along with the kids of bureaucrats and other crucial positions.

Only when a royal scion from any of their royal family branches fails to secure admission in Royal Ren does he reluctantly get into any other of the top four academies of the kingdom. The same is the case with bureaucrats' kids.

LA in the south, specialising in berserkers, close combat experts and potioners.

Lufthansa in the west. It specializes in historians, rangers, thieves, and other combat dicentric professionals.

Artemis in the north is famous for giving stellar long ranger fighters to the kingdom.

And Sansara Sage in the east, which is renowned for producing scholars in runes, inscriptions, arrays, artefacts, and more.

But do you know why Royal Ren stands at the top among these academies? It's because it specializes in everything.

It HAS everything. It stands above the top four institutes.

It's like all the knowledge the Edinburgh kingdom has to offer is condensed into a single place we know as Royal Ren. It receives the biggest grant among all the top academies from the kingdom. And it boasts of the most qualified and famous professors.

Sure, the four academies are at their top in their respective zones. And they produce countless experts.

But Royal Ren offers ordinary students something that other academies can't, even if all of them were to receive the same amount of resources as the former.

You know what that is, right? It's the chance to make connections with the royal scions. They are the ones who are going to get appointed to the most important places available in the kingdom, whether they fall into the civilian, bureaucratic, or military categories.

After all, the other mainstream positions in the kingdom are going to get taken by the students of Royal Ren.

Agreed, other than royal scions and the children of bureaucrats, the ordinary students in the Royal Ren aren't treated well. Even someone from the house of a baron won't be able to exert much of their influence.

Plus, Royal Ren places certain restrictions on students who aren't part of the royal branch. Ordinary students who graduate from the Royal Ren have to serve the royal house exclusively for a certain period.

A binding mana contract will have to be signed by these students that would attest to the same.

Still, I had a chance to attend Royal Ren. My future would have been much brighter if I could attend the most resource-rich academy of Edinburgh. But now I ended up in LA.

What will I even do after I graduate from LA? Become an adventurer? A hunter?

Even if I somehow manage to secure a place in the royal court's bureaucracy, civil offices or military, the position won't be high.

My promotion will always stagnate. Students from Royal Ren will be prioritized over me for higher, better paying, more important positions.

What good are your skills if someone with connections gets appointed over you because of their royal contact?

That's why students from the top four academies become famous adventurers and hunters. It's because they can not help but become only that.

The students from the top four academies choose not to struggle for these positions because they know their struggle to grow will be futile in the end.

That's why they turn to become normal soldiers, city guards, adventurers, and hunters rather than trying their luck for those positions.

At least after staying active on the field, they can hope to progress further in their ranking journey while earning a decent amount. That's what they think when they opt for those professions.

But that's just the brute way of handling things if you ask me.

Royal Ren contains much easier, safer ways with which you can progress rapidly in your rankings. The information about those ways is heavily restricted. The binding contract will make sure that those ways stay limited to the students and teacher bodies of the Royal Ren.

In short, becoming a student of Royal Ren is your ticket to success in life. Whether it is social standing, monetary growth, or ranking journey. You will progress much ahead, much faster, and much better in all walks of life if you become a Royal Ren alumni.

Why would someone who has a chance to attend Royal Ren will find joy in attending LA?

But the thing I dreaded the most happened to me. My loser brother had to die just before my entrance to the Royal Ren.

It would have been perfect if Isaac were to become the heir to Osan baronet. But now I have to carry that responsibility. Only because he had to kiss the angel of death at the worst possible time.

Now Grandpa won't allow me to sign the binding contract anymore. So I'm stuck in LA. Without a contract. And without a prosperous future.

So you tell me. How did you manage to concur that Osan Woods' Butcher or any of his accomplices must have done me a HUGE favour by getting rid of the only ticket I had to escape mediocrity?

The fokin OWB... err... the accomplices of OWB are my mortal enemies. Not because they killed my brother. But because they killed my dreams."

Ivor vented out all the load in his heart that was weighing him down. He gave voice to his dreams, his aspirations, and his despair. In front of four LA students, one emotional-for-no-reason snack shop's keeper, and a few customers.

Chapter 59: Targeted Banditry and Assassinations

Ivor vented out all the load in his heart that was weighing him down. He gave voice to his dreams, his aspirations, and his despair. In front of four LA students, one emotional-for-no-reason snack shop's keeper, and a few customers.

The heir apparent to the Osan baronet had realised he had lost his senses to his emotions. He had told these guys many crucial things that weren't privy to common folks. Like the binding contract of Royal Ren. And the kingdom-controlled ways to progress smoothly in the ranking journey.

But it was too late. Ivor had already said those things. And he couldn't take them back. Furthermore, he had expressed his true feelings regarding his brother Isaac to the people outside his family.

Ivor started looking around himself. He was thinking about exiting this zone of weird silence that has been created by him. Everyone was looking at him with blank stares and sealed lips.

That's when the snacks shop owner, with his moist eyes, came to him and gave him another pack of chips. 'On the house', he said. Ivor could only muster a stuttering thanks as a response. Probably the owner of the shop shared the same kind of brotherly bond with his sibling.

But that interaction finally broke the zone of weird silence and everyone around Ivor started returning to their tasks.

"Aah! Forgive me, Ivor, for asking something like that. I just didn't know it was this personal.

And thank you for sharing your thoughts with us. We two feel closely quietened to you now. But it's about time we take our leave. We have some work we need to take care of, you see.

So catch you later, maybe? Goodbye and stay alert."

Eren grabbed Jake by his hand and dragged him from that place. Ivor, Jason, and Veronica were still stuck in their place.

Veronica didn't seem unfazed like she knew about these details and dilemmas that Ivor had mentioned already. She was just waiting for her group to move on. But Jason on the other hand was seen thinking deeply.

"He baited you into saying those things."

Jason finally concluded and said what he came to realize lightly.

"Haah! You are giving too much credit to that wuss. He probably wasn't aware of what he was asking of Ivor.

It was Ivor who had lost control. You are trying to overread these things like always, Jason."

"No. I don't have any valid proof regarding this. But the way Eren changed his tone, his body language, and the way he looked at Ivor while asking that question subconsciously affected him to say what he was truly feeling at that time.

The guy's no wuss. I didn't feel any fear emanating from him. To be honest, I didn't feel anything from him that was directed at us. Like we weren't worth his time.

But that all changed when Ivor asked him about Matt. If you ask me, he probably knows something about the guy. Or maybe he was just fishing for information from us. And he used Ivor's curiosity on him.

In any case, Eren isn't like Jake even when they seemed to act the same way. He has drawn a sheep's clothing over him, alright. I just don't know what he is underneath it."

Jason said those words to nobody in particular. But Ivor understood what he was trying to say. He was played like a fiddle by Eren in that short interaction. The Osan junior couldn't help narrowing his eyes on Eren's departing figure.

"Why are we rushing? Can't we walk normally? We still have time to do things, you know!"

Jake said those while being dragged hurriedly to somewhere by Eren. He just didn't understand why they were in a rush all of a sudden.

"Jakey, you and Ivor would be clueless. And that brat Veronica just doesn't care enough. But Jason isn't like any of you.

He must have figured out by now that I baited Ivor into saying those things. Had we stayed there any longer, more complications would have risen. Just trust me when I say this. But we don't want to be seen as his friends. Especially during the trip to the academy.

It's better for us if we stay away from those guys for a few days even during our travels together. I've completed my transactions. You've got your snacks. There's nothing important in the city of Laurel anymore.

I don't think we need to check out of the inn since we had a prepaid stay. Let's go to your father and wait for the carriage fleet to start its journey."

Jake finally understood what was happening. But he thought Eren was overreacting even if that were to be the case.

"You just met Jason today. Why are you talking like you already know about him?"

"Haha! I also have my sources, you know. I'll tell you about these things later on. Right now let's go meet up with your father."

More than a week later!

Eren's carriage arrived in the city of Lionheart. The academy was going to conduct an induction ceremony for the first-year students at the grand sized city square in three days.

The city of Lionheart was established after the academy was founded. The place that was used for students' temporary accommodations before their induction ceremony later became known as the city of Lionheart.

The city of Lionheart's economy was based on these students and teacher bodies. It would welcome loads of first-year students at this of the year annually. Therefore, it had all the things a student would require, no matter which academic year they were in.

Eren already had plenty of artefacts collected from Isaac's party. Plus, Nina had given him a complete set of upper-grade F-Rank equipment that was perfectly suitable for him. He didn't need anything else.

But Jake needed them. He had prevented his father from buying random things so he could pick them on his own. The guy was very particular about his snacks and belongings.

Eren roamed the city market with Jake. The latter bought a couple of items and stuff suitable for him. He again stocked up on snacks.

And he also bought some adult magazines covertly from a shady shop. What could a slightly chubby guy like Jake do? He had his needs! And he wasn't aiming to get laid in the academy anytime soon like a certain fellow who was roaming with him at the time.

Eren and Jake made sure they didn't meet up with Ivor's group during their exploration and purchases. They would keep on changing places. And would leave their current positions immediately if they saw any group of students approaching them.

Eren and Jake had been avoiding meeting with Ivor's group during all their travels. They would always tell the carriage driver to slow or speed up their carriage at seemingly random moments to pull this off.

Eren told Jake that avoiding Jason meant avoiding the spies and any other entities hidden in the shadows, protecting him. AND hunting him. Sullivan Jr finally shared Eren's worries after knowing that only Ivor's carriage carrying Jason had been getting targeted by the group of bandits en route.

Of course, the bandits would target other carriages as well. But they would all have Ivor's carriage as their common target. Furthermore, Jake observed that both the bandits and the protectors of the carriage fleet were more powerful than usual.

The nightly assassinations started taking place on Ivor's carriage when the indirect banditry didn't work. But Ivor's carriage and people inside would always stay safe. It was the other carriages running nearby that would suffer the consequences.

Till now, the carriage fleet had four student casualties as a result of these attacks and assassinations. There were a lot more injured. But everybody treated it like it was business as usual.

Attacks on carriage fleets and business caravans by the bandits were common occurrences. So nobody questioned anyone or found someone to blame on. But Jake had understood there was more than meets the eye when it came to Jason after witnessing the events.

Most ranked entities, including Lin's group, later on, assumed the targeted attacks were aimed at Ivor because of Osan Woods' Butcher. They thought that the OWB had some score to settle with the Osan household for interfering in his work or getting his info out in the public.

Therefore, Lin's group didn't actively participate in protecting Ivor's carriage even when they were supposed to protect their students. What a joke? Take on the royally connected OWB for an Osan kid? Isen Osan was probably planning to kill Lin for his so-called 'transgressions.'

Lin, therefore, had two distinct reasons not to interfere in the OWB's work. He had already offended the guy enough. He didn't want to risk it anymore. It was easier to handle Isen even after he lets Ivor die in the incident. Once he reaches the academy grounds that is.

But all of them didn't know was the fact that the OWB himself was travelling with them and was running away from these attacks even before they took place. Eren was adamant about constantly changing the carriage's position in the fleet while maintaining a safe distance from a particular carriage. The Sullivans thought the elementary potioneer was acting weirdly at first but they changed their mind as they travelled further.

Jake started trusting Eren even more than before. He had already figured out that he knew something about Jason that he hadn't told him yet. But Jake didn't force him. It would be better if Eren told things of his own initiative.

Eren and Jake finally breathed a sigh of relief when they reached the city of Lionheart. The academy's protectors were enough to safeguard the citizens of their turf from any form of danger.

Three days later!

The induction ceremony for LA's first-year students was going to take place today. The grand city square was packed with students and their guardians. Eren and Jake could be seen standing with Jack Sullivan at a certain corner.

The audience was looking at the elevated stage in the middle of the city square. A serious-looking man was seen standing firmly on that stage with his hands behind his back. There was a panel of people accompanying him on either side, standing a step behind him.

The man opened his mouth to speak when the city tower's clock located right in the middle of the square produced a half-deafening bell sound, indicating that it was 10 AM...

Chapter 60: Induction Ceremony

The man opened his mouth to speak when the city tower's clock produced a half-deafening bell sound, indicating that it was 10 AM.

"Hello, dear first-year students of the Lionhearts Adventurers' academy. My name is Rufus Rodriguez. I am one of the vice-principals of LA and head of everything that relates to first-year students.

First of all, let me extend a sincere welcome to each one of you. You've made it till here. Either due to your hard work or connections. It doesn't matter anymore.

There's nobody superior or inferior amongst you. You are all equal to each other.

This might sound perfunctory to you now. But you'll come to realize how true these words are when you start living on the academy grounds.

I'll come clean by saying this right off the bat. I'm rooting for those who've gotten inside the academy with their merits over who got inside with their reserved seats. There are two reasons why I feel like this.

First, I too had to get inside the academy through my skills and perseverance. So I can empathize with them. And second, those who had to pass the test to enter the academy have a certain mindset that gives them an edge over most reserved seat students.

But let me clear this before you draw any conclusions. The students who progress further and quicker in the academy at the end are still mostly those who entered the institution through reserved seats. Therefore, I can't find it in me to dislike this way of selecting the students.

You might think my statements are contradictory. So let me clear them for you. The edge ordinary students have over the reserved quota student stays intact while they all are in the first year. Your current academic year.

But this edge soon becomes blunt as the students progress through the academic year. Why is that? It's because although the first-year students mostly have the same starting point, the amount of resources they can avail themselves of overtime to progress further makes the difference. If the efforts put in by all of the students are on the same level that is.

The first year sees the reserved seat members taking less effort than their other peers. And that difference in efforts becomes the force with which the ordinary students dominate the first year.

But this domination results in the reserved seat members feeling jealousy, dissatisfaction, rage, and a cocktail of similar emotions.

The first-year ordinary students become the reason for the reserved quota students to have that edge they lacked at the start of the first year.

When the field of effort becomes even for everybody is when the real battle begins. At that time, the abundance or shortage of resources plays an important role.

It is what it is!

The reserved category students are mostly financially stable whereas those who had to enter the academy through the test are not. Plus, the reserved category students would probably have higher-ranked entities as their guardians. These guardians will guide the students in their ranking journey and other similar aspects.

Whereas, ordinary students will have low ranked or even rankless guardians as their pillar of support. This can become a handicap for students who allow it.

Therefore, the first year becomes special for everyone, irrespective of your background.

Have a test of defeat, shame, and guilt if you are from the reserved category. Feel the exhilaration that comes with dominating the class that has lorded over you if you are an ordinary student. The academy will only stand as a bystander.

Never forget those feelings that you are going to have in your first year. They are the most primal feelings one could experience in their life.

Draw power from these feelings to advance further at all costs, at any cost. The opposing forces will sharpen each other. And that's how the academy manages to give this kingdom the experts that they need in all fields.

I'll be honest with you. We will pit you against each other.

Not just reserved seats vs the ordinary.

It will be first years vs seniors.

It will be you vs the magic beasts.

And it will be you vs the instructors.

In short, it will be you vs everyone.

We will make you struggle with every resource that is available in the academy. Even the special lectures and practise sessions organized by professors will have to be paid for with your hard work.

Nothing worth your time ever comes free in this world. You'll have to earn the resources through everything you can draw from within you.

Therefore, the reserved seat students should focus on putting in as much effort as the ordinary students if they want to stay on top from the first year itself. And ordinary students should start putting in twice the effort as they are used to.

Just remember, the day you take rest will be the day you might get left behind by your peers. But also ensure that you don't burn out yourself. Otherwise, it'll be even more detrimental for you.

Now let me tell you how LA was founded. Most of you already know this, but we must revisit the roots we came from and remember the history that birthed us.

The Lionheart Academy is as old as the Edinburgh kingdom itself. It was established around 700 years ago. Almost fifty years after the Edinburgh kingdom was founded.

The first king and founder of the Edinburgh kingdom, Emil Edinburgh von Renar had four loyal followers. They had achieved tons of feats for King Emil and therefore were as respected as the king himself.

King Emil had given absolute authority to these four retainers. The kingdom of Edinburgh only ever had four grand dukes. King Emil had granted these grand dukedoms located at four corners of the kingdom to his loyal retainers with their titles.

The berserker Ivar Ironside was given the title of Lionheart. He was given the grand dukedom located in the southernmost region.

The assassin Yuffie Loxley was saluted with the title of Lufthansa. He found his grand dukedom in the westernmost region of the kingdom.

The title of Artemis was given to the exceptional archer of her time Nira Nightshade. The northernmost region of the kingdom was assigned as her turf.

And finally, Lin Lehan was given the easternmost region to rule. He was the one hailed as Sansara Sage.

After the kingdom was stabilized post its foundation, king Emil ordered his retainers to establish institutes in their respective turfs to cultivate the upcoming generations of the kingdom and cultivate within them an unwavering love for this soil.

This was how the top four academies were established!

Ivor Ironhide was the founding dean of our Lionheart academy. He was a ferocious berserker of his age.

Later on, he became an equally exceptional close combat expert. Therefore, the academy too focused its curriculum on being a berserker and close combat expert.

The path of a berserker is heavily dependent on the berserk potions. Therefore, our academy also specializes in potion-making.

But that doesn't mean we don't teach and promote other paths. We admit that we don't have many resources available in those fields compared to the paths of berserk, close combat expert, and potioneer.

But rest assured, the academy has plenty to offer throughout the academic years in all paths a ranker can tread on.

LA won't ever become a bottleneck in any path that you choose during the five years. It will be up to you to progress on the paths you've decided to tread.

After entering the academy, the students will be tested for their aptitudes and will be offered a consultation with qualified experts. The students can select the path they wish to tread on after listening to the said advice.

Let's get to your enrollment now that the formalities are over. We will divide the students into two groups after confirming their identities.

The first group will contain the students who have started their ranking journey while the second group will contain the ones who haven't.

Those who have entered the F-Rank, they'll just need to submit their ID stones. Their mana signature will be recorded.

A mana array will be drawn upon their ID stones that will serve as the access key to enter the academy grounds. Those who have entered the F-Rank but haven't gotten their ID stones will be provided one.

We will also help the students bind their respective ID stones to them using blood ritual and spatial magic. That way, their ID stones will get absorbed into the palm of their hands and won't be stolen or get used for illegal purposes.

The ID stone will let you see a spectral screen stating your base stats once it is blood-bound to you. It will help you keep track of your progress and do a few things within the academy that you will come to know later on.

The ones who haven't started their ranking journey will be given an ID token drawn with the same array. The ID tokens will have some restrictions. You'll come to know them when you enter the academy.

There are around five hundred first-year students. They will be divided into five divisions after their ID inscriptions have been drawn.

You'll be taken to the academy grounds right after we complete these procedures. Say goodbyes to your guardians now. You'll only be able to see them during long annual holidays."

The students started forming various cues after Rufus' speech was over. Lin's panel was also seen regulating the crowd.

Eren submitted his ID stone to a counter. The academy staff at the counter placed that stone at the eye of the array drawn over a 1 square foot white page, which was laid open on a work desk.

The array lit up and started contracting before it vanished from the page, turning it blank. But that too didn't last long as the white paper crumbled to dust.

The same array appeared over the surface of the ID stone in its miniaturised form. Then it got even smaller before seemingly vanishing from the surface.

The academy staff then laid another array over the desk and kept the ID stone right at the eye of the array. He grabbed Eren's hand and punctured one of his fingers using a needle-like artefact to draw the drop of blood.

The blood was dropped over the ID stone. The array lit up right after it before facing the same destiny as the previous array. Eren's consciousness experienced a connection with that ID stone at the time. He placed his right palm over it and it was absorbed into it, only leaving a black inked tattoo of the stone.

The enrollment procedure was complete for Eren. Other students also went through the same experiences. They started bidding adieu to their guardians after that.

Soon, a giant platform could be seen hovering over the skies of the city square. One could see a huge array that had been lit up at its base.

Almost every student and even a few students marvelled at that sight. Some were mesmerized. Others were shocked. Especially all the low ranked entities and ordinary students who hadn't seen or imagined anything like this.

Jake had his mouth left open at that site. But then he saw Eren looking at this flying wonder casually.

Eren had already heard the same speech in his previous life. That time he didn't understand in depth what Rufus was talking about. But this time he did.

There was only one rule in the academy. Survival of the fittest. He was too busy crafting his plans to care about a giant artefact that he already knew to exist.

Eren had seen this flying artefact previously. That time he acted like Jake. This time he didn't see the need to.

People looked at the flying artefact with fascination in their eyes as it was settling down on the ground. They had such fascination because they thought they'd never be able to use that artefact personally. They were content in seeing that thing work.

But Eren wasn't like them. He knew he'll have something much better than this oversized flying turtle in the future when he reaches a high rank.

That's right. That giant flying platform was an A-Rank artefact.