

World Mall 196

Chapter 196 Camp

"Ha... Ha... We're finally here." A few people had come to the camp that was set up by the participants, as well as a few people from the OpenSky company.

There were already more than half the participants gathering in this safe area.

Even Ivan chose to take a rest in this place because he didn't want anyone's help.

There were only two more hours before the sunset, so the people were preparing for their tents and meals.

Hana was already standing outside the camp as she couldn't help but ask, "What is the situation over there? There is no one planning to bother us, right?"

"Yes. I haven't sensed any troublesome people like those assassins or that unique individual." The butler replied.

"Alright." Hana nodded with a serious expression.

Now that she had confirmed their safety, she came out of her hiding spot and walked toward the camp.

"Is that..."

"Yeah. She is the one holding this expedition."

The people were staring at her, finally able to see her up close. Despite being an heir from one of the biggest companies in the world, she looked more adept in battle than they originally thought.

They had seen the news about her and thought she was more graceful in the news than here. Then again, they were in the middle of nowhere. She couldn't really show that side of her in this place.

Hana smiled while waving her hand to them. Once she reached the center, she clapped to gain their attention and said, "I'm sure that you have finally understood the strength of the beasts around us. They are at a level that you've never seen before, right?"

The people looked down. If not for Clovis, they wouldn't have cooperated with each other. In fact, they might have retired already.

Because of that realization, they managed to take down a lot of beasts in this way, even though the enemies were stronger.

"If you go to the major city, you will find a lot of these places. The enemies you're going to fight will become much stronger, and the quality of each explorer is also much higher."

Hana didn't mention anything about the true strength of the beast. The reason why the major city would have a higher standard was because there weren't a lot of holes in their area. This resulted in the beasts around that area being much stronger.

There was only one hole out of twenty cities. Meanwhile, on the outskirts, there were about three to four holes in every twenty cities.

The low number of subterranean gates meant less attack from the beasts, giving huge stability. At the same time, it also made the beasts much stronger, which forced the people inside these cities to be stronger if they didn't want to die.

If they needed materials, they usually headed to this kind of area to hunt. That was also why people from the major cities were respected by the people from this low level area.

Hana raised two fingers. "First, I am glad that you understand the severity of the situation and decide to work together. Second, I hope that you use this kind of experience to evolve your strength even further. If you wish to aim to be a respected explorer in the major cities, you have to be able to fight two or three beasts of the same tier."

The people clenched their hands into fists. They were simply too arrogant for their current level.

"For now, all of you can take some rest here. The people from my company will be the one taking care of the security. Since it's going to be dangerous to hunt during the night, we'll wait for tomorrow. I'll be giving you the plan on how to take down the seven Tier 3 beasts."

The people looked excited, thinking this was their opportunity. Even though they were sure that the people from her company would be the main offensive, they were still able to play a big role and get scouted.

However, a shout broke the silence. The tone was so arrogant that people furrowed their eyebrows.

"Wait a minute. It's not seven, it's four!"

Hana smiled, hearing that familiar voice. When she turned around, she saw Clovis's group entering the camp.

Jay was dragging a giant frog with his bare hand while Clovis and Kanaria brought other supplies.

"That's... Isn't that the Tier 3 Beelzebufo?"

"What? Did they kill a Tier 3 beast?"

"Weren't they only Tier 1 explorers?"

The people were shocked, especially Ivan. Even he had trouble facing a Tier 2 beast. There was no way his group could even hunt a Tier 3 beast.

Yet they all seemed to have heard another clue from his words.

"Four Tier 3 beasts? Wait. Did they hunt three Tier 3 beasts?"

"What?"

The people gasped, looking at Clovis's group dumbfoundedly.

"Oh my." Hana raised her eyebrows even though she was already aware of their achievements.

Clovis and Jay were in tatters after fighting so many Tier 3 beasts. Kanaria was in better shape, but she looked extremely tired.

"Does your group really kill three Tier 3 beasts?"

"If you don't believe it, you can take a look at the essence and the recording later." Clovis harrumphed.

"Is that so? I will certainly do so. It's a surprise that a group is able to hunt three Tier 3 beasts. Even the people in my city can only hunt Tier 2 beasts. It's quite amazing." Hana smiled.

"The only difference we have is how used we are to these beasts. Once you get used to it, the great explorers will make an even more powerful technique and the overall strength of the entire city will leap to a whole new level." Clovis shook his head. "I believe that the people in this city won't be losing to the people in the major cities at that time." technique,

When they heard Clovis's words, they were stunned. Normally, the first thing they would do was feel proud of themselves after hearing such praise. Yet Clovis prioritized praising their city and ensuring that they wouldn't lose to those in the major cities.

They couldn't help but remember what happened on that deck and realize they had made a mistake. Clovis might have been secretly put in by the government so that their city didn't lose any face. It wasn't like the rumor at all.

Chapter 197 Information

Hana got the recording from Clovis and acted as if she wasn't the one dealing with such a thing. After that, she spread the video to others so that everyone who doubted him would find out that Clovis managed to do it without her help.

"Is this for real?"

"They are truly able to kill all these Tier 3 beasts by themselves."

"There isn't any support in this recording. And it doesn't look like it has been edited heavily."

Of course, the video had gone through the editing process, which was Melody's job. She had to make sure that they didn't show too much information about their group and fighting style.

After all, this video would be spread widely, not just to them but also to other people in the city.

While they were focused on the video, Clovis and his group actually asked for the help of the people from the OpenSky company, not for fighting the Tier 3 beast but for cooking the frog.

"Woah, this looks delicious." Hana sat down next to them. Her subordinates gave her a few skewers so that she could enjoy. They also shared it with other participants, making sure they had their bellies full with some good meat today.

"What are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be elegant and graceful young lady?" Clovis glanced at her. The only one who could talk casually to her was probably Clovis

"Isn't that fine? If I'm here with you guys, the tension will drop." Hana shrugged. "Besides, I originally wanted to hunt this frog first since the meat is so amazing. Unfortunately, we don't have a good chef here."

"Indeed." Clovis nodded. "Having delicious food is a part of a good adventure."

Hana looked at him for a moment before saying, "You're misinterpreting my words though."

"What do you mean?"

"A good cook doesn't produce only good food. They are rare, but there are chefs who can actually retain the nutritional value of the meat. You might not know about this, but a chef is actually as wonderful as a doctor.

"I've gone to several famous restaurants. In one place, the chef is able to create a food that can boost one's recovery by processing the meat in a special way. In another place, there is a food that can help develop your muscles. And in the last restaurant, I'm actually able to have food that can enhance my vision."

"Is the chef really that good?" Clovis raised his eyebrows.

"Yeah. You should know that the stronger the beasts, the more their meat, right? I mean, they are like us, evolving as well. Brain, Heart, Blood, Muscle, and Bones... the beasts also have this kind of system."

"So, that's how it is." Clovis looked down, falling into deep thought. If that was the case, it seemed that he had to carefully find a good chef in the future. The same applies to a doctor.

"Yep. So, you need to find a good chef. They're pretty rare." Hana nodded.

"Thanks for the information."

"Before thanking me, I'm going to tell you two other things. First, there is no one observing you right now, so you can go all out without worrying about their presence."

"!!!" Clovis understood the observers she was talking about. Considering this was a raid she created, it seemed that those assassins didn't really want to provoke her.

"The second thing is about your current team. While your team is extremely good right now, you are currently lacking a guardian."

"A guardian?" Clovis raised his eyebrows.

"Yes. If you have someone who is able to take on the beast's attack, you would have an easier time launching all your attacks."

"..." Clovis couldn't really deny it. He and Jay had been taking that role intermittently when the requirement was met, but if there was indeed someone who could stop the enemy's attack, he and Jay could easily kill the enemy.

"I will think about it." Clovis nodded with a serious expression.

"Alright. That's all. Take it as a payment for the frog." Hana stood up and brought a bag of skewers for herself.

Clovis's experience turned serious as he was thinking about their future. Meanwhile, Kanaria came to him after Hana left.

She whispered, "We might have to be careful. Ivan doesn't seem like he is going to swallow his pride in this raid. Or maybe this is your plan? You provoke Ivan by killing three Tier 3 beasts. This way, the people will acknowledge our strength.

"Then Ivan will get jealous and try to replicate our achievement. He will end up dying or at least his teammates will suffer because of his reckless decision. If he dies, we don't need to watch out for him anymore."

Clovis shook his head helplessly. What Kanaria said was true. One of his objectives was to rile up Ivan. However, he didn't plan to kill him.

He whispered, "I think I've told you this, but I have no intention of killing him. It's not because I'm too soft, it's because I want him to still be used as our enemy instead of an unknown enemy appearing out of nowhere. With him, we're able to at least predict what he's going to do. So, if he is in danger during the expedition, we will help him."

Kanaria fell silent. She couldn't deny the fact that Ivan was easy to manipulate.

And if they actually helped him, with his ego, he would definitely flare up and do something bad, tarnishing the Drake Group's reputation.

With this, the advantage that the Drake Group got from preparing land for the OpenSky company to land would have gone to waste.

Kanaria nodded in understanding. "Alright. If that's what you're planning..."

"Yep." Clovis waved his hand, assuring her that everything was going to be alright. If he wanted to handle all those powerful enemies, he needed to manipulate an easier target like Ivan.

"Go get some rest. We'll start our hunt early in the morning."

"You too." Kanaria stood up before walking back to their tent.

Clovis looked at the sky for a moment before observing everyone's expression as if trying to understand their intention. He felt tomorrow's hunt would be much more dangerous than he originally thought.

Chapter 198 Ivan

'Why? Why? Why? Why?' Ivan bit his lips when he saw Clovis bringing the frog back to this camp.

For as long as he remembered, he was the one in the center of attention.

"You're very good, Ivan! How do you even learn that technique?"

"Can you teach me your technique?"

"Ivan, I love you. Will you go out with me?"

The people had been flocking around him before he even awakened. He had learned a lot of techniques, which impressed people.

Eventually, he reached sixteen years old and officially awakened.

"What? 99% evolution rate?"

"Impossible."

He still remembered the shocked faces of all the people present during his awakening. He already had a genius reputation since he managed to learn all kinds of techniques. So, when people knew the true value of his evolution rate, his reputation turned to a whole new level.

There were some people who had evolution rates close to his, like Jay. However, they couldn't surpass the rising star, especially an orphan like him.

People could relate to him and use him as an inspiration.

He had gotten used to people flocking around him, but during his first exploration, he met Kanaria.

His first exploration was a mess because he lacked experience. The supplies, the route, and other things were not prepared.

However, in the second exploration, he met her. Kanaria single-handedly took care of everything and became the key to the success of the exploration.

Unlike the others, Kanaria had never bothered with him. In her eyes, he looked like a normal stranger, not related to him.

Even people like Lovelia would lower themselves to him, so this kind of equal relationship struck his heart.

Unfortunately for him, no matter what he did, she never looked at him that way. It was as if she already had someone in her heart.

It might be because of all the praises sung about him that all of it has entered his head. He thought it wouldn't be that hard to make her his.

But that was his biggest mistake.

A few months later, there was this man, Clovis, who ruined everything he had built so far. He appeared out of nowhere, ruined all his plans, and got all the glory.

After the first humiliation, Ivan started hearing all kinds of bad things about him.

"What is this? I guess he has become too complacent about his ability."

"Hahaha. He is too arrogant."

"Is this what they call Star Syndrome? He has been the most talented person in this city, but he has finally found his match."

"That's probably the best description of his current situation."

Ivan didn't care much at first, considering this might be just their lucky day because of that Tier 2 snake.

However, it all changed when President Thomas told him not to do anything to Clovis. For the first time, he was rejected.

He never thought that the president, who had always backed him up no matter what, would actually stop him. Their conversation even turned into a threat.

The seed of hatred began to grow. It then bloomed during the second raid. He was completely obliterated. All the plans failed, and Clovis even forced him to endure the humiliation in front of other explorers.

Even Elina's uncles berated him.

That was when he couldn't leave Clovis alone anymore and chose to take this matter into his own hands. He asked his own connection to eliminate Clovis and set up a position where he could take all the glory.

Sadly, all his efforts were futile. Clovis managed to overcome all the problems presented to him and even got the praise of the people.

When Clovis was pushed off the truck and surrounded by beasts, he was happy. This time, the threat had been removed.

Yet Clovis proved him wrong once more. Not only did he survive, but assassins appeared and disfigured his face.

The people started looking at him in disgust or disdain. They never thought that the greatest genius of the city would be reduced to something like this.

Even if he managed to gain new members, they were just trying to get a ride before dumping him once they got what they wanted. More importantly, those people were also interested in Clovis but chose to settle on him.

His pride couldn't take it anymore.

That was when Hana appeared.

Such a beautiful, rich, and graceful lady blessed the city with her presence. He thought this might be his next chance to shine.

He was happy when Clovis wasn't included in the list. Yet Clovis somehow managed to enter the expedition team.

Even President Thomas was frustrated of his existence. He tried to stop him from going by using the police, but to no avail. For some reasons, his evolution rate changed.

Hence, they resorted to the backup plabyby spreading the rumor about him. At first, it looked like the rumor succeeded as the people were suspicious of Clovis.

However, it all changed the moment he dragged the Tier 3 Beelzebufo into the camp. In addition, he even shared the meat and the video, changing everyone's opinion.

Clovis even roused the spirits of the participants by helping them.

Because of these, they began to suspect the rumor. Obviously, their first target was him, who had a grudge against Clovis.

"He might be the one who did it since he had a grudge."

"Yeah. What a shame. To think that the genius has fallen this low."

"Unlike him, Clovis is actually a good person who is strong and generous. He is able to see the bigger picture and doesn't care about the rift between us."

He kept hearing all those praises and comparisons.

When he saw Clovis's nonchalant expression, it was like a slap on his face. It was the same as others. Those expressions were implying that he didn't care about him like a significant ant.

Ivan couldn't help but clench his fists.

'Just you all wait. I will show you all tomorrow...' Ivan's eyes were filled with bloodlust as he was planning to hunt these Tier 3 beasts no matter the cost.

Chapter 199 Earthquake

"Haa... I'm tired." Clovis looked at the tent's ceiling while muttering in a low voice. He didn't sleep that much because of the Tier 3 beasts. He came out of the tent while yawning.

Kanaria couldn't help but notice him while bringing some equipment to Jay. "What's wrong with Clovis? He looks more exhausted than yesterday."

Jay glanced at Clovis and said, "He probably didn't get enough sleep."

"Huh? Wasn't he the first one to sleep?"

"Not really. He was probably training all night."

"What do you mean?" Kanaria tilted her head in confusion.

"Our training methods are the exact opposite. I am training my muscles by swinging my blade. Meanwhile, he practices with his imagination."

"Imagination?" Kanaria raised her eyebrows, thinking that usually people would go with Jay's method.

"Yeah. Clovis once said that his method was simply recreating an enemy in his mind and simulating the battle. That was what probably kept him all night."

"Can you even get stronger like that?"

"He can. It's just that instead of focusing on strength or muscles, he is sharpening his intuition and fighting intent. He is probably swinging his sword thousands of times in his own imagination, getting the perfect feeling. That's why his slashes are always so precise. That's why his training is taking a toll on his mind instead of his body. I can't do something like that." Jay shrugged.

"Is that so?" Kanaria rubbed her cheek, not knowing what to do.

"Just let him be. He should know that he needs to take care of his own health. Besides, he will probably ask you if he needs anything."

"Alright." Kanaria nodded. Since Clovis didn't need any help, she turned around, observing all the people inside the camp.

Most of them had just woken up and started preparing themselves. However, one group was already ahead of the rest.

It was Ivan. He forced his group to get up early so that they could start right after the sun was up.

Vina and Elina looked a bit distressed as if they knew what they would do and had a bad premonition about what would happen. The other girl didn't know anything yet.

"Let's go." Ivan glared at them as he started walking toward the woods.

Kanaria couldn't help but furrow her eyebrows. She didn't care about what was going to happen to Ivan, but it was rather pitiful for the people who followed him. Even if Clovis was challenging something, he would always consider his strength first and plan an escape route in case something went wrong.

She didn't know why, but she thought that Lovelia was rather lucky that she left the group.

When Ivan was about to leave the camp, they suddenly heard birds flying into the sky. Not only the normal birds that originally inhabited the surface, but also flying ancient beasts. They all soared into the sky.

Their chirping and cries were filled with anxiety as if something big was going to happen.

Not long after, the beasts began to let out a series of roars into the sky.

"What is happening?" The people panicked after hearing them. They thought they were under attack, but none of the beasts were actually coming toward them.

"What is going on?" Hana emerged from her tent with a serious expression.

The other explorers from her company immediately gathered around her to protect her.

Clovis looked up. His eyes observed the birds while his ears picked up the roars. He muttered inwardly, "Ah this... Isn't this an..."

Before he finished his words, the ground started to shake.

"What?"

The people suddenly lost their balance and fell to the ground. Clovis fell on one knee and used his hand to support his body, muttering, "We are in trouble."

"!!!" Kanaria gasped, understanding what had happened. "An earthquake?"

Hana hurriedly turned to her guards. "Spread around the area and check all those beasts. They're more likely to cause a ruckus after this."

"Yes!" They answered, but none of them could move. It took their all to just not fall.

Hana gritted her teeth before her butler appeared on the screen.

"Miss. An earthquake has occurred. According to the news, the scale is lower six and the epicenter is not that far from here. What do you want to do?"

"What do you think we should do in this situation based on your experience?"

"Organizing an immediate retreat. The beasts will definitely get enraged because of this."

"Do you think it's possible?"

"The scale of the expedition is too big. And I believe that the first place they will go is your location. In that case, would you like me to go over there?"

Hana thought for a moment before shaking her head. "Not yet. I think this is also a perfect chance to test these people. I want you to remain there and protect our battleship for now."

"Understood." The butler nodded. Although the beasts would go frenzy, it didn't change the fact that she was a Tier 4 human. Killing several Tier 3 beasts shouldn't be that much of a problem.

When the shaking stopped, Hana hurriedly shouted, "Richard, Reyes. Protect our left and right. I will be the one taking care of this side. Also, inform Libation Fiesta to take care of the opposite side. Prepare for incoming beasts, especially Tier 3 beasts. We, four, will be responsible for killing them."

"Yes, Ma'am!" The people began to position themselves accordingly.

"Saul. Spread your men and scout the area around us. The rest will form a square formation to prepare for all incoming beasts."

"Ha!"

When they were about to lead their people, including the participants of the expedition, Ivan suddenly came to them and said, "Wait a minute."

"Huh?" Hana looked annoyed.

"Please leave one of the Tier 3 beasts to us. We promise we'll kill that Tier 3 beast."

Hana didn't understand where his obsession with killing a Tier 3 beast came from. However, it shouldn't affect the result too much even if she gives it a chance.

So, she said, "Richard. Change with them. Get ready to step up if something is about to happen."

"Yes." Richard nodded without hesitation, but he also looked annoyed that his job had been taken away. He was glaring at Ivan's group.

Chapter 200 Encouragement

Clovis hurriedly went back to the tent to grab his weapons. The same applied to all people in the camp. They all prepared for a big fight.

"Is this going to be fine?"

"We have so much trouble with lower tier beasts."

"What will happen to us?"

The roars of the beasts made them anxious, which caused them to tense up. If this continued, they wouldn't be able to fight at their full power.

When Clovis was this, he might need to do something. Although it was extremely embarrassing and felt out of character, Clovis shouted to all of them. "Goddammit. Shut up!"

"!!!" The people raised their eyebrows and turned their heads around. Even Ivan looked shocked. Hana was actually smiling as if she thought this entire thing was amusing.

"Think for yourself. Are you going to fight for survival or for glory?"

Clovis's words echoed in everyone's ears. It was a vague message, so the people couldn't help but ask each other.

"Is there any difference?"

"I think what he means by fighting for glory is how we fought when we first came here."

"Doesn't that mean fighting for survival is by banding together?"

"That's true. If that's the case, we might still have a chance for survival. Or at least, our chance of survival will be significantly higher."

"But shouldn't the OpenSky company guarantee our survival?"

"Then again, no one could predict an earthquake."

"That's true." They looked at each other, realizing that the circumstances had reached a point where the OpenSky company couldn't guarantee their survival.

When they looked at how Hana got worked up in assembling her subordinates, it looked like they had to protect each other's backs.

"I think I'm going to trust you with my back. Since we're also together with those people from OpenSky, we should stand a chance," said one of them.

Seeing such trust from a stranger, the other party also nodded his head. "Alright. Let's do it. Glory is something we can enjoy if we are still alive. Let's fight together."

Both of them shook hands, reaching an agreement.

Their agreement caused a chain reaction from other groups. They began to form an agreement.

Ivan couldn't believe what he saw. In this raid, they were competing with each other. Their goal was to get picked up by the OpenSky company and head to a higher place.

Yet they actually lowered their pride for the sake of survival.

Hana couldn't help but smile when she saw this unity. Normally, this wouldn't be able to happen.

'To think he is able to do it... I have seen multiple times when people betray each other for the sake of their survival. But this one is different. No, should I say that if it's not because of him, this won't happen?

'First, he is uniting them and allowing them to form bonds with each other so that these people know how to kill the beasts by working together with other groups. That serves as a basis.

'Then, the Earthquake adds to the foundation and makes them think about the original enemy of mankind, which is the beast. Uniting people under a common enemy... The more I look at him, the more I realize that he is different from the normal Hacfield family, who are known for their craziness. Or maybe this is the reason why he is hidden away from the public?'

Hana's expression turned serious as many possibilities entered her mind. However, she soon shook her head as she had to focus on the enemies first.

Ivan, on the other hand, gritted his teeth. Clovis once again was able to do something for the entire group.

"Hey. Do you want to team up as well?" A captain from another team came to Ivan. Since Ivan was strong, it would be good to work together with him.

However, Ivan shouted, "No. My focus is to kill a Tier 3 beast!"

"Huh?" He was confused, not understanding why Ivan was so angry. He saw Elina restraining him before politely speaking, "Sorry. We have been assigned to deal with a Tier 3 beast. I believe not joining hands with us is much safer for you guys."

"Well, if that's the case..." He nodded and walked away.

Richard couldn't help but turn grim when he saw such a reaction. The anger within him had subsided. Instead, it was replaced by something more concerning.

Unlike Ivan, when someone approached Clovis, they were received very well.

"I'm sorry, but you're going to kill the Tier 3 beasts like yesterday, right? If you don't mind, we can help you create a path so that you can fight the Tier 3 beasts easily."

Because of what happened yesterday and the video, they knew that Clovis would be aiming for them, so they were more straightforward.

"Is that so? We're planning for a speedy advance. If you can just peel off several beasts from our left, we can focus a bit more."

"Yes. We'll do that!" The guy nodded furiously, feeling excited.

"But are you sure you're alright alone? Killing a Tier 3 beast because of someone's sacrifice doesn't feel good."

"Don't worry. We are working together with another group. After hearing your speech, I feel the need to repay your group for encouraging us."

"In that case, I'll leave our left to you." Clovis smiled while extending his hand.

"Yes." The guy shook Clovis firmly before returning with a big smile on his face.

If Hana were here, she would definitely think, 'This is the reason why people pay so much money for PR.'

Kanaria raised her head when she heard some roars around the area. Even Hana got the report and announced out loud, "They're coming! Get ready!"

The people raised their weapons and faced the woods.

Roar!

Roar!

Roar!

The enraged beasts came out of the woods, charging at them.

Jay stepped forward and headed to a Tier 1 beast. The latter pounced on him, but Jay simply cut its legs and sent this beast to Clovis.

Clovis pulled out his swords and slashed the Tier 1 beasts ten times before they reached the ground, completely crushing this beast. The first kill was the most important after all.

When the people saw how easily Jay and Clovis defeated a Tier 1 beast, they felt fired up.

"Attack!"