

## World Mall 231

### Chapter 231 Rough Calculation

"Attack!" Clovis shouted while slashing a few beasts in front of him. However, one of the beasts actually managed to catch his sword, forcing Clovis to change his attack pattern and kill this beast first. In addition, he stepped back and moved away slightly because he had to consider the beasts' strength.

After killing the two Tier 3 beasts, Clovis and the group began their killing spree, eliminating more than a thousand beasts in just two days.

Ragna was obviously shocked by their efficiency. This one trip alone was already equal to what his previous group did in seven days.

In addition, they didn't waste a lot of resources because the main attackers were Jay and Clovis.

They first agreed with his rate per day, but looking at this amount, paying that amount was actually just a pocket change.

Still, Ragna wasn't an ungrateful person. He didn't say anything about his rate, considering he hadn't done much for the group.

It was true that once he got used to the group's fighting style, he began to move to the front line more often, helping Clovis and Jay directly.

However, his effort still couldn't be compared to that of Jay and Clovis. Kanaria and Melody even did more than him by becoming their eyes.

After the long fight, the group finally marched toward their next destination.

Like earlier, Clovis and Jay stood in the front and started cutting down the beasts.

But there was something different about this place. Clovis and Jay noticed it and immediately shifted their positions to be more careful.

They still managed to cut twenty beasts easily, but Clovis was frowning the whole time.

Before them was a forest and a hill that separated them from the freshwater lake, their original destination.

Clovis squinted his eyes as if imagining the beasts that they would have to fight to reach their destination.

"Clovis. Did you feel it too?" Jay asked.

"Yeah." Clovis nodded with a serious expression. He raised his head. The sky was still orange, and it shouldn't go dark for another thirty minutes.

The reason they reached this place so early was because he wanted to check the enemies' strength.

And these beasts had just proven his suspicion.

Clovis fell silent for a few minutes, causing the others to approach them with worried expressions.

Finally, Clovis revealed his decision. "We'll fall back for a hundred meters and set up the camp there."

"What do you mean?" Kanaria was the first to object, considering their plan was to set up at the edge of the woods. This way, it wouldn't take too long for them to restart their exploration.

The one who answered her question was actually Jay. "No. The beasts are much stronger than the ones at our previous destination. If I calculate it roughly, I guess they are 50% stronger."

"!!!" Kanaria raised her eyebrows in shock while Melody recounted the information that Hana gave. It must be the main reason for Clovis's decision.

"I've told you that the beasts here are much stronger. And the third destination will have a beast much stronger than the one here," Ragna explained, trying to make them rethink their decision. At the very least, they shouldn't brush off his explanation since he knew this place better than them.

"Alright." Kanaria nodded her head. Now that she had understood the problem, she agreed with Clovis.

"What is the distance of this place from the base?" Clovis asked. "Also give me the distance for our previous destination."

Melody looked at the map and calculated it. "This place is about 20 km. The previous destination was only 9 km."

"What about the next destination?" Clovis furrowed his eyebrows as if he had noticed something.

"50 km," Melody answered with a serious expression.

"Ah!" Kanaria came to a realization and thought, 'So that's how it is. We don't know if the strength increase will be linear or not. However, one thing is clear: 20 km from the base means that the suppression of the 'tunnel' is reduced by 50%. And there won't be any suppression around 20-50 km.'

Although Hana didn't give them the exact details, they could roughly calculate the distance they needed to travel if they wanted to fight the beasts without any suppression.

With this, they could easily choose one place or another to specifically target them as a challenge.

"Anyway, let's clean up first and retreat from this place." Clovis waved his hand, giving his order.

"Ah! I'll gather the essence." Ragna hurriedly moved to the corpses.

Clovis mysteriously looked at Ragna's back. With the beasts becoming this strong, even Clovis would sustain some injuries if he wanted to challenge the Tier 3 beast one-on-one. He couldn't really risk everything.

In fact, taking on a Tier 4 beast might be a bit foolish.

It seemed that he had to make more preparation than he originally thought. But for the time being, the group retreated and formulated a new plan.

Clovis had reminded them that he planned to abandon any thoughts about the Tier 4 snake. Instead, they would focus on killing the Tier 3 Paraceratherium and use this place as a warm up for the third destination.

Jay also agreed. With their current strength, they wouldn't be able to challenge the Tier 4 beast. In fact, the only thing they could do was probably run away just like they ran away from the Tier 2 Yurlunggur when they were only Tier 0 humans.

Now that they had agreed with the new arrangement, Clovis hurriedly excused himself from the team. Since there was such a risk, he had to be much more careful, especially with the fact that Hana wasn't here to stop the assassins from doing something again.

Hence, Clovis searched for a secluded place covered in darkness before going back to the Another World Mall. He even double-checked with the radar since he didn't want the assassins to know about his Another World Mall.

Unbeknownst to them, the exploration this time might be much more difficult than they originally thought.

Chapter 232 Visit

Gilimani Country.

"Hah... To think that my grandfather would call me back to the house. He must be planning to reprimand me because I did something reckless." Hana let out a long sigh while taking off her robe.

"Miss. Your grandfather is waiting for you in the dining room." The butler extended his hand, urging him to go.

"Yeah." Hana nodded nonchalantly, completely missing the slight change in the butler's tone.

Since her grandfather had been waiting for her, it would be bad if she let him wait for too long. She hurried to the dining room, which was guarded by another old butler. His strength was the same as her own personal butler.

"Mhmm? Raka, you're here? Not inside?" Hana tilted her head in confusion. "You're my grandfather's personal butler, right? Aren't you supposed to serve him inside?"

"Welcome back, Miss. Please enter." The old butler didn't answer her not because he looked down on her but because there was no need to answer. After all, the moment he opened the door, Hana would get her answer.

Inside the dining room, the table seemed to have been changed from the usual long tables to a small table for only six people.

Her grandfather was sitting on one side, while another old man sat on the opposite side. To her surprise, her grandmother was the one pouring the tea for both when normally it was either the butler or the maid who would do it.

The old man had a rather thin frame, but it was brimming with youthful energy. More importantly, she noticed that the old man seemed to be muscular. The muscles weren't big but appeared very refined.

Seeing how her grandmother was the one serving them, it seemed that this old man was much more important than she thought.

Hence, Hana entered the room and walked gracefully to her grandfather. "Grandfather. I'm sorry for making you wait."

"Oh, Hana! You're back." Her grandfather smiled and waved his hand as if asking her to come closer.

"So you're Hana Skylark." The old man turned his head toward her, seizing her with just a single glance.

Hana felt an unpleasant gaze for an instant as though she were being stripped naked. Everything about her was revealed, not just her clothes or body, but also the inside like organs or strength.

"Let me introduce you, this is..." Her grandfather tried to introduce the old man, but the latter interjected him.

He stood up and walked to her.

Hana's body shuddered. There were only a few reasons why such a thing could happen. The first thing that appeared in her mind was whether this old man was so powerful that her grandfather was planning to marry her to this old man.

It was something frowned upon in the past, but no one would think much about it in this period, especially if the other party was so strong. It was the same as spreading good genes after all.

However, Hana suddenly felt immeasurable pressure when she was looking at the old man's eyes. Her body was trembling violently as she had a hard time breathing.

"Ha... Ha..." Hana panicked, wondering what was going on.

"Master... Michael... I know you're displeased... by her actions... but if you're... going to punish someone... please let us off with only my head... It's my fault for... allowing her to be reckless..." Her grandfather tried to stop the old man. It looked like he was also short of breath, barely withstanding the pressure.



The pressure suddenly disappeared as if it never existed before.

"Ha..." Hana clutched her neck while gasping for air. Her body was shivering as if she were about to die earlier. At the same time, she noticed what her grandfather had said earlier. She couldn't help but raise her head with a horrified expression. There was only one 'Michael' in this world that could render her grandfather useless.

He was none other than Michael Hacfield, Clovis's grandfather.

Michael stopped and sat back down before saying, "When you do something wrong, you should be punished. That's how I have been teaching my son and grandson. And I have administered the punishment. With this, I won't hold any grudges against you or blame you any further."

Hana obviously understood what he meant. She just never thought that Michael Hacfield would visit her family personally.

"Th-Thank you very much, Master Michael. I'd like to apologize for my reckless action." Hana's voice was still shaking, but she seemed to have regained a bit of her composure. She acknowledged that she was wrong after all.

"Well, because of you, the situation will become much more volatile after this." Michael looked at Hana before extending his hand. "Please take a seat first."

"Y-yes." Hana hurried to her grandfather's side and sat next to him.

"So, have you gotten anything from him?" Michael asked with a serious expression.

Hana's body tensed up, wondering if she should tell the truth or not. After all, this was a top secret. Then again, Clovis and Michael's relationship was extremely good, so she thought it would be alright.

"Yes." Hana nodded weakly.

Michael fell silent for a moment. "Is that so? Is it related to the Beast Soul?"

"!!!" Hana raised her eyebrows, surprised that Michael knew about it. Did he have the information already? Or was it his research?

"You don't have to think much about it. The ones conducting that research were my daughter-in-law and her student, so of course, I know about it." Michael glanced at Hana's grandfather. "Here is the deal, Jeremy Skylark."

He raised his head with a grim expression. "Yes?"

"Because of your granddaughter's reckless action, those people have begun to move. Hence, I'll distract them personally. In exchange, I want you to do two things for me." Michael raised two fingers. "It seems

that my grandson has deemed your granddaughter to be worthy of an ally. I won't say anything about it, but please don't do anything reckless for the time being. And the second thing is..."

Chapter 233 Call

"It seems that my grandson has deemed your granddaughter to be worthy of an ally. I won't say anything about it, but please don't do anything reckless for the time being."

"Yes! I'll lay low for now. I'm sorry for the inconvenience I've brought you," Hana hurriedly replied.

"The second thing is..." Michael paused for a moment. "I want you to give Clovis something. It'll be an inconvenience if I'm the one sending the message, so send him this."

Michael gave a chip to them.

"I understand." Hana nodded furiously. She had Clovis's contact, so it shouldn't be a hard thing to do. Still, she might need her grandfather's cooperation to secure the connection.

"In that case, there's no need to talk about it anymore." Michael looked up as if he remembered something. "What was its name again? Resurrection Mercenary?"

"!!!" Michael widened his eyes in shock. "Sir... you..."

"While I'm at it, I'll eradicate them for you." Michael shrugged. "Consider it a gift since you are my grandson's ally."

"T-thank you very much!" Jeremy politely bowed to him.

'Resurrection? Isn't that the mercenary group that has been attacking us recently?' Hana didn't expect that Michael would actually remove this group for them.

"Oh. I almost forgot this one..." Michael raised one finger. "I'm not going to dictate what you're going to do to my grandson as long as it doesn't lead to his death. Harm is inevitable in the pursuit of strength after all.

"However, I'm sure that he is doing one thing. He might be hiding his identity, but he is not going to hide his achievement. You won't get anything if you hide your achievement after all. But I don't want you to make it bigger than it is, unless he is the one asking you to spread it."

"Yes. We understand." Jeremy nodded furiously. "But are you sure it's fine?"

"What? My grandson will surpass me sooner or later. If he can't handle this low level problem, I will be disappointed. Don't help him excessively just because he is my grandson. I believe that he can build a connection and influence surpassing what is mine with his own strength." Michael waved his hand. "So do you have any questions?"

Jeremy didn't say anything, thinking that he shouldn't question him any further since it might end up annoying him.

However, Hana looked at Michael with a determined expression. She looked like she wanted to ask something, but Michael had reprimanded her not to do another reckless thing for the time being.

Amused by her reaction, Michael said, "I'll allow one question."

Hana's expression brightened. She hurriedly asked, "Do you know a way to increase the evolution rate?"

Michael raised his eyebrows, not expecting this kind of question. Clovis was supposed to have a low evolution rate, but his determination would continue pushing him forward.

Even he, who had been following Clovis's news from afar, didn't know the exact strength Clovis currently had.

This question was like an indication that Clovis's progress was actually much more rapid than he originally expected.

After thinking for a while, Michael shook his head. "If it's the data, I can simply change it with my connection. If it's the actual evolution rate, I have no way to do it. All I know is that sometimes... he is excluding strength that no one has ever seen before."

After answering that question, Michael started walking away, leaving them alone in this room.

Hana looked like she had found the answer she was looking for.

"You..." Jeremy let out a long sigh while shaking his head.

"Ah!" Hana scratched the back of her head, knowing that she was the one causing this trouble.

"Whatever. It seems that the Hacfield family is not lacking a successor... Surpassing Michael Hacfield, huh? A Tier 9 quality... strength that no one has ever seen before?" Jeremy muttered before turning to Hana. "Whatever you do, just don't annoy him. If possible, become his reliable ally."

"Yes, Grandfather." Hana nodded with a serious expression. It was an obvious thing to say, considering there were a lot of people who wanted to have a connection with a Tier 9 human but never got their attention. Hana pointed at the chip. "I'll take a look at this first."

...

Clovis didn't know anything that had been transpired so far. After all, he was busy inside Another World Mall.

Clovis looked at the robot before him. "Blue. Can you give me suggestions based on a complicated situation?"

[I will give you the best answer according to all the data you input.]

Clovis looked down for a moment, choosing his words. "Alright. Let's test it out. First of all..."

Clovis gave all the information he had so that Blue could process it. It took a while for Clovis to finish explaining everything since he had to ensure that all the information had been taken into consideration.

"What do you think about it?"

[I am a robot that assists you in managing this mall. I'm unable to give you a definite answer regarding your problem, but I can give you a list of items you need to buy.]

Blue immediately gave him the list of items based on his information. Considering it was a robot, he thought the AI wouldn't be that much different from what Melody had.

Hence, he had expected this kind of answer. Instead of getting fixated on his desired answer, he should understand why Blue gave him such a list.

Clovis took a look at the list and contemplated. "Is this the list for a worst-case scenario?"

[I apologize. If you want to prepare for the worst case scenario, this will be the list.]

The list changed slightly. There were a few accessories that piqued Clovis's interest.

'Looking at these items, it seems that Blue has considered the Tier 4 beast as a threat. The problem would be whether they're trying to kill my friends or not,' Clovis thought before coming up with a plan.

He decided to buy several items, increase the membership's level once, and even upgrade the item limit. He had to thank the mayor for giving him the money. Once he reached Tier 2, the mayor would give them more money. So, he could be a bit bold in his approach.

Clovis finished his purchase and hurried back since he didn't want his friends to be suspicious.

To his surprise, when he came back, his Skyphone actually vibrated. He couldn't help but glance at the caller's name.

Hana Skylark.

Chapter 234 Message

Clovis couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows. He didn't expect that Hana would be calling him so suddenly. He thought there was nothing more to be discussed, but it seemed he was wrong.

Clovis picked up while walking back to the camp.

"Hello?"



Hana's voice echoed, having a mix of anxiety and excitement.

"Is there something wrong?" Clovis frowned, thinking a problem had occurred in their partnership. The most worrying thing would be the leak of the research.

However, he had prepared for it. There were a lot of people who wanted the Hacfield family and their secret after all. It wouldn't be weird if there were some greedy people who wanted the research.

To his surprise, the situation didn't turn out the way he had predicted.

"Clovis. This is Hana. I'd like to inform you that your grandfather just visited my household a few hours ago."

"My grandfather?" Clovis raised his head. It was hard to pin down his grandfather in a single place. It had been years since he last saw him. So, it was quite surprising that his grandfather would go all the way to visit Hana.

Then again, this showed that Michael still cared about Clovis. Even when he was hidden, he still followed his news. It made Clovis happy.

"Yes. I can't talk for a long time on the phone, so I'll just give you the summary. Your grandfather knows about the research and doesn't seem to mind about our partnership. And you don't have to worry about outside influences that might come to you because of me for now."

"That's good." Clovis nodded with a serious expression. This way, the only ones he had to worry about were the assassins and the Drake Group.

"And your grandfather would like to convey something to you," said Hana while looking at the screen. The chip only contained a single file. In fact, it didn't have a lot of words in it to the point where she wondered if his grandfather should have just written it down instead of putting it inside the chip.

Clovis's expression turned grim. He had learned a lot from his grandfather, so if he told him something, it was better to listen to it.

"Have you ever felt that you were becoming stronger all of a sudden?"

"!!!" Clovis widened his eyes in shock. That question struck deep into his heart because that was what happened whenever he was fighting against a strong beast or surrounded by a lot of beasts.

"If you have any doubt, just look at the stars. The stars are born for you, so make sure to grasp all the stars."

Clovis couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows. He couldn't understand the meaning behind that message.

"That's all for the message. Before I hang up, I'd like to tell you that the research is going smoothly. We're still working on everything to ensure safety, and we should be able to finish in another seven or eight months. By the time you are here, we can immediately sell them."

"Alright. Thank you for the message." Clovis sighed.

"Mhmm. Be careful out there. I can't have you dying on me."

"Hahaha. Aren't you supposed to be the one in danger? Or did my grandfather not do anything to you?"

Hana sounded surprised, but she still said, "True. I thought I was going to die. Anyway, I'm going to hang up. Take care, will you?"

"You too. Bye."

Clovis couldn't help but raise his head, looking at the stars in the sky. "Stars, huh? The stars were born for me? I don't think he's talking about the actual stars. Or is he? This world is just a simulation, right?"

"But he mentions about my sudden surge of strength. And the way he talks like there are multiple stars..."

Clovis looked down for a moment while muttering, "What stars are born for me?"

No matter how hard he thought about it, no answers came to mind. In the end, he returned to the camp with a troubled look.

When he raised his head, he noticed that there were only Kanaria and Melody sitting in front of the camp.

"Jay and Ragna have gone to sleep." Kanaria pointed at the tent.

"Mhmm..." Clovis nodded and just took a seat without saying anything.

Noticing his trouble, Kanaria couldn't help but ask, "Is there something wrong?"

"Well, there is something." Clovis scratched the back of his head. He didn't immediately share it with Kanaria, wondering if he should ask or not so that she could help with the riddle.

Seeing Clovis's expression, Kanaria decided not to continue.

Melody was focused on her screen as well, reviewing the information they had. She only took a glance and thought that it would be fine to leave them alone.

Clovis just kept looking down, trying to figure out the riddle. He even drew a star to help her think about it. Even if Kanaria saw it, he could simply say it was his habit or something.

Instead of Kanaria, Melody was the one who actually noticed it first. "Hmm? Clovis..."

"Yes?" Clovis raised his head as he was about to explain the misunderstanding.

However, Melody asked an unexpected question. "Are you going to teach it right away?"

"Teach?" Clovis tilted his head in confusion, not understanding what she was talking about.

"You're drawing a star, right?" Melody asked while pointing at the symbol Clovis drew with a stick.

"Ah?!" Kanaria came to a realization, finally seeing through the problem in Clovis's mind, even though it was just a misunderstanding.

Seeing Clovis was still confused about it, Melody said, "I'm talking about the technique you've taught me."

"Technique?" Clovis still didn't understand what she was talking about for a minute before remembering that one technique. "Technique?!"

Clovis looked down, thinking, 'Yes. Technique... There is one technique that I have related to the word 'star,' the Star Method. There are five points: brain, heart, blood, muscle, and bone. Wait. Aren't those points the tips of a star? Why does my grandfather refer to each of them as a star?

Do I actually understand the Star method correctly?'

## Chapter 235 Realization

'Do I actually understand the Star method correctly?' Clovis's expression turned grim.

'This is the technique my parents created. If I trust my grandfather's words about them being born for me, that means my parents created this method for me, specifically for those special circumstances of mine.

'Now that I think about it, I do feel much stronger whenever that mysterious strength appears. While I still don't know the details, it's clear that this strength is actually something I have.

'If this is what my grandfather means about the stars... then the chronology will be like this...'

Clovis imagined himself born with these special circumstances. His parents and grandfather knew about it. His parents finally created this technique for him and hid it in that house. The one who predicted the place and the time would definitely be his grandfather.

'If that's the case, then does that mean I'm able to actually harness the power of five evolutionary traits? But if I'm too greedy, won't I have a rough time in the future? All the experts always say that it's better to master one thing than becoming a jack of all trade.

'But my parents created this technique for me. Back then, they made me choose whether to go alone or with my friends into that room. Even if I got there alone, they would definitely still give me the Star Method.

'No. Because I entered with Kanaria and Jay, they couldn't really say it directly. What if sharing was just meant to conceal these special circumstances of mine?

'Considering it came from my parents, it wouldn't be weird if I learned the other traits as well. After all, I had to 'teach' the technique to my friends.'

Clovis's body shook, finally understanding the bigger picture. It turned out everything had been planned carefully.

'Then, should I try learning others as well? No, I need to understand why my grandfather refers to them as stars instead of tips of the star first.'

Clovis looked at the star on the ground while muttering inwardly, 'Each trait can allow you to become the strongest in the world. I mean, my grandfather has Muscle Affinity. From the videos of other Tier 9 humans in this world, they should have a different affinity from my grandfather.

'Is that the reason why my grandfather thinks each of them is equally important? And when I'm in that mysterious state, I already become stronger, especially my raw strength. Does that imply that my muscle trait has undergone a change during that time?

'I don't want to be too complacent, but because my grandfather tells me to learn all the stars... is he telling me that I have special circumstances that can allow me to learn all five traits?'

Clovis shuddered. It was only his speculation, but if it was true, then he finally understood why his parents and grandfather were gone. 'The reason I've got to be separated from my parents and grandfather is actually myself. They're leaving me so that they can distract the enemies' attentions from me.

'No. I can't be too complacent. Even if I have this special circumstances, I will do what I have been doing this whole time. I'll take one step at a time without being too greedy. My decision doesn't involve only my life...

'Still, if I'm the reason for our separation, then I'll get stronger and become the reason for our reunion as well. With these special circumstances, I'll surpass my grandfather and become the greatest explorer of all time. I'll find out the truth about the simulation.'

Clovis found a new resolution, feeling a bit more excited. His goal might not be just a pipe dream.

At the same time, there was one question that remained.

'Now that I think about it, it doesn't seem that my grandfather knows anything about me having Another World Mall. If that's the case, I can shift their attention from Another World Mall to these special circumstances.

'And with this Another World Mall, I'll also create the strongest group in the world. If this world is indeed only a simulation, I shall become a variable so big that it turns into a 'bug' in that simulation... something that can't be fixed. And that the one who creates this simulation world has no other choice but to meet me.'



Still, he realized that this Another World Mall was actually much more mysterious than he originally thought. Discovering the truth of Another World Mall might also become the second goal he would like to achieve next.

A smile appeared on Clovis's face. In the past, his goal as the greatest explorer of all time might just have been a superficial one without concrete vision.

But with this new thought, he could finally visualize the path and the goal. It wasn't just a dream anymore. It was a goal.

Clovis clenched his hands into fists. When he raised his head, he said, "Thank you, Melody."

"Mhmm?" Melody didn't understand why Clovis thanked him since she was assuming that Clovis was wondering whether to teach Ragna the Star Method or not.

Clovis chuckled, brushing off that confusion. Instead, he asked, "If it's not too much for both of you, would you be so kind as to tell me about your experience with your affinity?"

Clovis opened a note on his Skyphone, making sure he didn't leave any important information behind.

Of course, he would ask Jay about the muscle trait later.

Considering the most noticeable thing whenever he entered that special state was the increase in his raw strength, Clovis planned to learn the Blood and Muscle traits first. Only after he got a good grasp or mastery of those two would he begin to learn another trait.

They had no objection since they received the Star Method from Clovis. Hence, Melody and Kanaria began recounting all their experiences. Melody retired first, while Kanaria helped him check the content of his note so that there wasn't any misunderstanding.

But because they were too focused on it, they ended up being too tired that night and just fell asleep after entering the tent, causing a bit of ruckus in their sleep.