

World Mall 311

Chapter 311 Serious

Rafael also managed to land with a stable posture. However, his expression turned grim because this made it look like they were equal.

He was still a Tier 4 human, while his opponent was Tier 2. How could he actually accept this?

Both of them stared at each other. The crowd was cheering, but both of them were fully absorbed in the match.

There was only a battle between two men; the others were irrelevant.

Rafael and Jay came at each other again.

They first struck each other's blades. Jay used his speed to make the second swing faster, but this time, Rafael managed to block it completely.

After that, both of them swung their swords again. Jay tried to push forward, but the man before him was like a huge boulder standing in his way.

Their positions gradually shifted as Rafael began to dodge Jay's attack in order to find a gap.

On the other hand, Jay started moving one step after another, adjusting his position so that he would remain faster in the clash.

At one point, Jay positioned himself next to a pillar as if planning to reduce Rafael's strike with that pillar.

However, Rafael simply swung his sword without hesitation, crushing the pillar. Unfortunately for him, Jay had taken a step back, causing the falling pillar to stand between them.

That was when Jay swung his sword, cutting through the pillar, only to be blocked by Rafael's shield.

Rafael pushed forward with his shield, causing Jay to step to the side to avoid his charge.

After that, he spun his body and used the momentum to strike Rafael's back.

Rafael hit the ground with his shield and actually used it to stop his momentum. After that, he twisted his body and swung his blade from above, pushing Jay's sword down.

"The match is going intense. Both Rafael and Jay are trying to overwhelm each other. They are using all of their strength to find a gap in the opposite party. However, none of them is giving up!" Shion explained, feeling the intensity that couldn't be described. She could only understand it after watching their fight.

It felt like they exchanged more than a slash. Even the stadium gradually became silent as if they had become more absorbed in the match.

Jay kept swinging his swords while not letting Rafael injure him. The same applied to Rafael. He had done a lot of things, but Jay simply knew when to advance and retreat.

He even struck the pillar and smashed the rock with his shield to launch it at Jay, but the latter simply showed no opening.

On the other hand, Jay remained unscathed no matter how many tricks Rafael had in his sleeve.

However, the referees noticed one thing. While a beast soul often didn't look much different than a person's normal movement, it was still easily visible.

Just like Jay's top speed that needed the Dire Wolf Beast Soul, there was a significant difference when they were used.

Yet no beast soul had been used in this match. This fight felt like both of them were trying to understand each other through their swords.

Still, they had destroyed more than ten pillars just to test each other.

The center part of the arena had become a mess. The referees couldn't help but wonder when they chose to get serious.

They continued exchanging blows after blows until a full five minutes had passed.

To everyone's surprise, both Rafael and Jay actually jumped back to gain some distance from each other.

Rafael and Jay were staring at each other. No one was saying anything, but both of them seemed to understand each other.

Jay might have been quite aggressive, but he was actually holding back so that he had enough to avoid the shield. On the other hand, Rafael had been playing it safe because that might eventually lead to his victory.

However, both of them knew that this method was the most boring. In the end, they would decide this battle according to their stamina.

If Rafael continued this way, he would be ridiculed after they let Libation Fiesta advance to the finals. After all, it would make him look like a coward. If he wanted to avoid the backlash from the crowd, he had to either overpower Jay or win heroically. During the exchanges, he realized that the former was impossible.

That was why he had no other choice but to do that.

Rafael exhaled a long breath before dropping his shield. He had gathered his resolve.

The people were confused by that action, but Jay actually smiled as if he had been waiting for it the entire time.

"Your Libation Fiesta is strong. You, too, are strong, Jay Havenson. However, I have to win this match no matter what. It's not about competition or pride. I have to fulfill my duty as the protector of the future generation of this city." Rafael held his sword with both hands.

"I know that. But I also have a reason to win... If I can't defeat you, I don't think I will be able to chase that person anymore." Jay raised his blade, his eyes containing a reminiscence of a person's back... his best friend's back.

"In that case, there's nothing to say anymore. We don't need the boring fight anymore." Rafael's expression turned grim.

"Yeah. Let our blades speak for us... Let's settle this." Jay nodded.

The audience sucked a cold breath, growing impatient.

Both of them once again rushed forward and struck each other.

The clicking sound echoed much louder than anything they had produced in the entire match.

All three referees knew by instinct. It was coming. The two contestants had finally gotten serious.

At the same time, Jay and Rafael passed each other as if nothing had happened. But a second later, a wound appeared on Jay's right forehead and Rafael's left shoulder at the same time as though both of their swords finally managed to reach each other.

Chapter 312 All Out

"What? Rafael has just dropped his shield?!" Shion explained, "Normally, he drops his shield whenever he believes that his opponent is equal to him. Does this mean Rafael has acknowledged Jay as one of his contenders? Doesn't this mean Libation Fiesta has two people who have the power of Tier 4? This is mind blowing. I've never seen a group as abnormal as them.

"Oh! Rafael and Jay have just clashed. They inflict injury on each other. Is this an equal exchange?" Shion squinted her eyes. It was hard to determine the details of her current location.

Jay and Rafael turned around, glaring at each other as if understanding what that clash meant.

Both of them charged at each other again, this time releasing everything they had.

Clink!

A loud clicking sound shook the stadium. Jay's blade ended up hitting a pillar after clashing with Rafael, cutting the pillar down. Rafael, on the other hand, hit the ground and shattered the floor.

Both of them squinted their eyes and swung their blades again.

This time, Jay's blade was the one hitting the ground. Instead of shattering it, his blade cut through it and Jay could easily pull it out before swinging it at Rafael again.

The two exchanged more than fifteen powerful blows, each bringing destruction to their surroundings.

Before long, there were multiple sword marks and shattered pillars on the ground.

Jay and Rafael began to move to the side, trying to use their footwork to confuse the opposite party.

Jay managed to keep up just fine. In fact, he saw an opportunity to use his beast soul to increase his speed.

He outran Rafael and stopped in front of him. Rafael might still have momentum, but Jay never planned to overpower him in this clash.

Rafael put his sword in front of him while Jay struck horizontally, letting Rafael's sword slide on his blade. Ultimately, Jay's blade was free and he could move it closer to Rafael's body, slicing his side.

Rafael gritted his teeth as his other hand covered the wound.

But to everyone's surprise, Jay was doing the same thing because a wound actually appeared on his knee.

"!!!" Jay frowned, thinking, 'Are you serious? When parrying my sword, he actually lowered the sword down slightly so that the tip would hit my knee? If my reaction was too late, the sword would also hit my calf.'

Both Jay and Rafael turned around.

Rafael rushed forward quicker than Jay. He put his sword on the side and swung his sword horizontally as though it were a beast sweeping its paw.

Jay put his blade in its way to block it, but he suddenly felt an immense strength that couldn't be described by his current power.

'Too heavy!' Jay gritted his teeth as the swing actually launched him into the air.

Rafael raised his eyebrows, noticing the profound technique Jay had. He muttered inwardly, 'He is strong. In the last second, he actually lowered his stance even further to gain additional strength to fully block that attack... I was convinced that I could break his defense with a Tier 4 beast soul...'

While a beast soul could increase one's strength tremendously, they still took a toll on their bodies. Even Rafael couldn't use his Tier 4 beast soul casually or he would be too tired to continue the battle.

But it was the same as Jay, considering he was two tiers lower than him. Even if his strength was the same, his stamina should be much lower.

Knowing that fact, Rafael chose to get even more aggressive.

Both of them approached each other.

Rafael swung his sword from above, using a different beast soul.

"!!!" Jay noticed that beast soul as well as the plan Rafael had in mind. Jay had the strength to fully receive this attack, but he chose a different method as it was the only thing that allowed him to win.

Jay slightly tilted his saber to the side so that Rafael's sword would miss his body. Unfortunately for him, Rafael wasn't that easy to manipulate.

He managed to overpower Jay and slightly changed the direction of his swing, hitting the top of Jay's shoulder. However, Jay managed to lift it up and let it slide to the side.

After that, Jay waved his saber skillfully, trying to take Rafael's arm.

Rafael threw his upper body to the side to avoid the blade, but Jay managed to cut the upper arm a little bit.

Rafael spun his body and jumped in the air, swinging while jumping to get a boost of strength. He even used the Tier 4 beast soul he had.

Jay knew that if he received this attack like earlier, he would be in trouble. So he chose to confront it head-on. He targeted the sword itself.

"!!!" Rafael was quite surprised by his choice, but he managed to get a little advantage by targeting his sword. Unfortunately, there was still a gap in their strength due to the Tier 4 beast soul.

Rafael overpowered him and launched him ten meters away.

Bam!

Jay's back hit a pillar. Rafael rushed forward, trying to take him down before Jay could recover.

Jay fell on his butt, avoiding the blades.

After that, he held the sword with both hands as Rafael struck him from above. It was quite powerful, as the ground underneath him started to crack. If this continued, he might not be able to sit for a while after this match.

Jay used his current position to kick Rafael in the stomach, blowing him away.

"Haa..." Jay started panting. It started getting hard to follow Rafael's movement now that he began using his beast soul again and again.

Rafael's condition wasn't any better. His nose was filled with a pungent smell, making him realize that the kick almost made him vomit. He just swallowed it back so that he didn't look weak.

Jay stood up while Rafael stabilized his stance before they jumped at each other again. This battle had just begun.

Chapter 313 Surpassing One's Limit

"This..."

"The battle..."

The people were made speechless by this battle. They first thought that Jay should lose and Libation Fiesta should concede.

However, Jay and Rafael had just shown that each of them had the will to win. This wasn't just a matter of competition for them.

"Please win, Rafael!"

"Eight Swords!"

Still, they were the citizens of this city. They needed to cheer for their group. However, they didn't say bad things to Libation Fiesta anymore.

After all, in the arena, Jay shed as much blood as Rafael. He continued to persist no matter how much he got overpowered by Rafael's beast soul and continued inflicting damage on Rafael's body.

Both fighters had crashed into the pillars, destroyed them, or even used them as additional weapons. Their swings didn't become weaker as time passed. Instead, their will to win continued to increase.

There was only one thing on their mind. It wasn't how to win against their opponent. It was how they should remain standing the longest.

Although it wasn't visible from afar, the screen was zoomed enough to let them see their bodies shaking due to the injuries.

"From a contest of wits to a full brawl! Libation Fiesta has shown their determination and strength. Jay Havenson is also carrying the torch that his teammates pass onto him.

"On the other hand, Captain Rafael has a reason they can't afford to lose. Even I am able to feel his determination from here. He is fighting not only for the sake of his team but also for this city.

"Both fighters have been covered in injuries that would normally take people down. Yet, they haven't let out a single cry of pain.

"This is a clash between two individuals, carrying the weight on their shoulders."

Shion slightly toned down her words, knowing that Rafael's victory wasn't guaranteed with Jay as his opponent.

That was why she tried to word it in such a way that even if Jay ended up winning, there wouldn't be a lot of backlash to Eight Swords and this city. It wasn't that the Eight Swords were weak. Their opponent was simply too abnormal.

In the arena, Jay and Rafael clashed for more than a hundred rounds. Wounds had covered their bodies.

There were a lot of strikes that could become fatal, but both of them were still sharp enough to avoid them even though they would receive some injuries after that.

The referees were already on edge because Jay and Rafael had bled so much that their clothes had been dyed red.

However, those two remained sharp, their expressions showing that they weren't going to concede.

"Haaaa!" Rafael and Jay roared as their blades clashed once again.

"Kh!" Jay gritted his teeth as Rafael overpowered him again with his beast soul, causing him to bounce on the ground a few times.

However, Jay stood up and headed back to Rafael purely out of instinct. He used the beast soul to give him the speed that allowed him to regain his stance in less than a second.

Rafael bit his lips when he looked at Jay's stubborn face.

'Why don't you go down? You can still win this match even if you lose. You have shown more than enough. I have a city to protect, so I have to win! Your determination is lower than mine,' thought Rafael while swinging his sword, blowing Jay to the pillar. 'Just go down after that!'

"Gah!" Jay's back and head hit a pillar as he spat a mouthful of blood.

Jay squinted his eyes. His left pupil had started to turn red and its vision became blurry, probably due to the blood that entered his eye.

'He is strong indeed, but...' Jay had seen the back of someone stronger than him. When Clovis entered that mysterious state, he became a god-like figure. The speed of his swing surpassed anything he had seen so far. The strength in each swing was equal to that of him, who focused everything on his muscle.

There were supposed to be a lot of other things he benefited from. More importantly, that person only had a 15% evolution rate. If it were him, could he have the heart to become an explorer with that evolution rate?

Clovis was growing stronger at a much faster rate than him. He knew that it was impossible to gain the captain's position. However, he would never give up.

'I know that compared to him, I'm more talented. He has nothing but a stubborn heart that refuses to accept his fate. That's why I'll continue swinging my sword. If I can't beat him in one swing, I'll do it in two. No matter how many swings I need, I'll stand back up and swing my sword!' Jay charged forward while roaring. "Rafaeel!"

'Just get down already!' Rafael was screaming in his mind as he swung his sword downward, planning to knock Jay's sword off his hand. This was a perfect chance as Jay once again came with a horizontal swing.

But in that instance, Jay instinctively changed his approach in using the beast soul, especially after getting that knowledge of the new utilization of beast soul.

Normally, he would use the beast soul on his arms, increasing the speed of his swing.

This time, however, he used it on his arms at first, gradually moving it toward the tips of his fingers and causing the momentum to move from his arm to his fingers. Of course, it also meant that the momentum continued moving to the very tip, specifically his blade's tip.

That change actually increased the momentum of his sword by twofold.

"!!!" Rafael was shocked by the burst of power that actually overwhelmed his Tier 3 beast soul.

It launched Rafael more than twenty meters as his body crashed into not one but two pillars in rapid succession.

Jay coughed up blood a few times after that. He didn't know what happened earlier since his instinct took over.

He gritted his teeth as his head started ringing.

Rafael spat a mouthful of blood. He didn't understand what was happening, but he immediately stood up even though his legs were already shaking, barely supporting his body.

To his surprise, he actually saw Jay stand on his feet once again. His face looked pale and his eyes seemed to have lost his focus. But Rafael could see the desire to win emitting from his body.

Rafael felt goosebumps. Without him noticing, his own spirit felt fired up, acknowledging his opponent.

'So strong.'

Chapter 314 Stubbornness

"Ha... Ha..." Jay panted heavily. He had a hard time regaining his focus. His vision had deteriorated so much that he couldn't even see Rafael's face anymore.

'My vision is already blurry. If he relies on speed, I won't be able to follow his movement. Still, I have to swing my sword. As long as there is an opponent standing before me, I have to keep swinging my blade. I can't stop yet!' Jay muttered inwardly.

It was already hard to even stand up at this point.

However, Jay still pointed his sword at Rafael.

Rafael didn't realize it yet, but he was actually smiling, acknowledging Jay.

Rafael could see that the talent Jay had might not be comparable to Clovis. He had no hidden trump card because he was a rather straightforward guy. He just kept working hard until he could do it.

But because of that reason, he wanted to settle this match in a straight way. Whoever was knocked out earlier would be the loser.

He paid respect to that hard work and planned to defeat him in this battle.

Rafael rushed forth. He only had a few swings left in him, so he better defeat Jay before he runs out of steam.

Jay remained in his position, looking at the blurry figure. Seeing the sword coming from above, Jay did the same thing as earlier using his beast soul.

Clink!

The clicking sound echoed, but the previous strike might just be luck or Rafael had gotten used to it, but Rafael was only pushed back by three meters.

"Kh!" Jay gritted his teeth. His arms had gone numb. Knowing that the strike was too weak compared to the last one, Jay approached Rafael this time.

Rafael waved his sword diagonally this time, noticing that Jay's movement had slowed down. This strike would definitely throw him off balance.

However, Jay suddenly fell right before the sword could reach him.

His knees slammed on the ground as though they were refusing to move anymore.

"!!!" Rafael widened his eyes in shock. He didn't know what happened, but he couldn't move his body as much as he wanted due to these wounds.

"Haaaa!" Jay roared, pumping all the remaining strength he had. He twisted his body, dragging the rest of his body to complete that swing. It didn't matter if he couldn't stand up anymore, he just had to swing his sword toward the opponent next to him.

Rafael gritted his teeth, trying to block them, but the wound had prevented him from putting a lot of power into that block.

In the end, Jay's strength overwhelmed him, pushing his sword back as his saber struck the side of his chest.

"Gah!" The blood spurted. Rafael threw himself to the side before the wound reached his organ.

But because of that wound, he also fell down to the ground, struggling to get up.

Both participants had definitely gone past their limits.

Yet, to everyone's surprise, Rafael used his sword to support his body so that he could stand once again. His action was showing that he hadn't given up on this match and would win against Jay no matter what because he carried the will of this city.

Jay actually did the same thing. He stood back up with his eyes half closed. He hadn't given up either.

The stadium became silent. They were completely astounded by the determination of the two competitors.

Some people started crying when looking at Rafael. This competition was held for the sake of encouraging the people, so they had the strength and courage to fight against the beasts.

However, the reason why they needed to encourage them in the first place was due to the doubt that crept in the people's hearts. There were already a lot of bases falling to these beasts, so could they really survive? When people thought about that, despair started to take over.

But Rafael showed them that for the sake of their city, he would continue to fight. As long as he still had the strength to stand up and swing his sword, he wouldn't go down no matter how serious his injuries were. This was his determination, and it was certainly transmitted to the people's hearts.

That was right. Why did they give up when they hadn't tried their best? If they were going to die anyway, they better die trying. They would drag as many beasts as possible before that.

People were clenching their fists, realizing the most important thing.

His opponent was the same. Jay showed similar determination. People believed that Clovis was more talented than Jay. People thought that Clovis had more trump cards.

Yet despite his 'mediocre' strength, he still chose to fight. People couldn't help but want to ask, 'Why would you go for such length? You are less talented, so why push yourself so hard? You won't be able to keep up with your friend.'

Everyone wanted to believe it was normal for them to lose to people more talented than them.

However, Jay only showed one thing. It was his stubbornness. Just one swing. If that wasn't enough, he would swing once more. Then another swing... another swing... He would swing his sword so that he would be one swing closer to his goal.

Everyone could do it.

'Why did I give up back then?'

'Could I be in a higher position had I not indulged myself in other things aside from improving myself?'

'I should have practiced more...'

Various thoughts appeared in everyone's mind. Jay's action had made them realize it was obvious why they couldn't compare themselves with the abnormal Jay. They simply didn't do enough.

A guy bit his lips before shouting at the top of his lungs. "Win, Jay!"

The others started cheering because of him.

Jay could only hear a ringing sound in his head. But it didn't matter. He only had one job.

The opponent was still standing.

"Haaa!" Jay rushed forward, swinging his sword.

"I won't lose!" Rafael also roared and leaped forth.

Chapter 315 Result

"Haaa!"

A series of roars and clicking sounds filled the arena as Jay and Rafael exchanged one blow after another.

Jay struck Rafael's sword before punching his head.

Rafael fell to the ground but kicked Jay's stomach in his position, causing Jay to fall on his butt.

Both of them stood up again.

Their blades clashed as Jay was pushing his entire body weight to pressure Rafael.

Rafael gritted his teeth, releasing all the remaining strength he had to actually knock the sword away.

Jay's body was being pushed back and his sword was already above his head.

Rafael finally saw the gap he had been waiting for. He desperately swung his sword to end this match, believing that his swing earlier had knocked the saber off Jay's hand.

Unfortunately for him, Jay refused to let go of his sword and swung downward with all his might.

None of them could defend themselves anymore. Rafael's sword struck Jay's left chest, running all the way to Jay's right shoulder. On the other hand, Jay's saber hit Rafael's left shoulder and went all the way to his stomach.

"Gah!" Both of them widened their eyes, realizing that the last strike was actually dangerous.

Their bodies couldn't move anymore as they collapsed to the floor at the same time.

They shocked the stadium again. After all, who won this duel? Would the referee declare it a draw?

The two referees were already going to the side so that the medical team could move faster. The last referee came to the center of the arena to announce the result. "It's—"

Before he could announce it, he heard a small groan coming from one of the participants.

"!!!" The referee looked shocked and stared at the person who was struggling to get up.

Even with such a tattered body, that person didn't allow him to stop this match.

The referee felt goosebumps, having no choice but to change the word that he was about to speak.

"It's... Libation Fiesta's victory!"

"Uooohhh!"

Yes, the one who managed to stand again was Jay, or probably he just refused to go down.

A cheer erupted, shaking the entire stadium. At first, those people were booing Jay. But now, they had nothing but respect.

It was a fair battle.

However, there was one more pressing matter. Both referees had come with the medical team. In fact, they actually brought blood bags for first aid. After all, the entire arena had been smeared by the blood of these two.

After that, they rushed both of them to the medical room to at least close their wounds with the recovery pods before sending them to a hospital.

There was one person happier than any other person about this result. It was Clovis.

Indeed, Clovis was happy for their victory. However, he rejoiced when he saw all the efforts Jay had put in.

This was his best friend. He was simply proud of him and knew that there was no one better than Jay to be his best friend.

Kanaria couldn't help but tear up after seeing Jay's performance. She had thought she had witnessed everything about her childhood friend. But this battle still inspired her to go even harder.

The stadium was on fire from the excitement.

It was true that Libation Fiesta advanced to the final with such an overwhelming gap. It was a complete defeat for Eight Swords.

But no one really cared about it anymore.

Seeing their excitement put a smile on Clovis' face as this was what Jay had achieved. He closed his eyes while saying, "I'm going to get some air. You guys should go to Jay."

"You're not going as well, Clovis?" Kanaria asked while wiping her tears.

"I will come later." Clovis waved his hand and walked outside. "This is a chance that he has given us. I should make sure that we don't waste it."

Kanaria exchanged looks with Melody and Ragna. It seemed that they needed to go ahead.

Clovis walked down the corridor. As Clovis said, this was the opportunity Jay had created for them.

At the same time, it didn't change the fact that Jay wouldn't be able to participate in the final.

That was why Clovis chose to do something first as the captain.

He was messaging someone while walking to his destination. It was still inside the arena, where not a lot of people could enter, but this was the only place he could meet that person.

In that hall, two people were already waiting for him, considering they were closer to this place.

"Yo, Clovis! To think that you would ask me to bring this girl with you. Should I leave?"

"I don't mind you hearing it since you've done me a favor, Erwin." Clovis shook his head.

Yes, the one he messaged earlier was Erwin. And obviously, the girl he brought was none other than Bloody Rose's captain, Aileen.

Aileen understood why Clovis asked Erwin to set up a meeting. With Jay's condition, Clovis only had four people to participate, while Aileen had six people in her group.

Aileen said, "I don't mind sitting out one or two members of my team for this match. It will also look good for my reputation anyway."

Erwin just looked away, thinking it was what Clovis wanted as well since Jay could be considered more than one person.

However, Clovis actually raised his hand as if saying she was mistaken.

"Mhmm?" Aileen frowned.

"You guys should fight with all six members. That's the highest respect you can show a fellow competitor. Still, even though I'm ashamed to say this, I do have a request."

"!!!" The more they heard about Clovis' request, the more bewildered they became. They never thought that Clovis would ask for such a thing.

But when they thought about it, his request was actually more reasonable than what they had in mind.

It didn't take long for them to agree to his request.

Clovis thanked them and immediately left. He was worried about Jay's condition after all.

But when he walked back to the medical room, he actually encountered another person.

"Ouch!" That person simply fell on her face. Not many people could access this place, but there were still more people than the waiting area.

And the one in front of him was wearing a rather formal suit. With a recorder in her hand, it was obvious who the person's identity was... a reporter.