

World Mall 36

Chapter 36 Lucky

Bam!

Bam!

Bam!

A series of trees fell to the ground. Clovis looked back while sweating. The snake had been closer than ever. If this continued, he would have been devoured before finding the perfect sacrifice.

On the other hand, Jay used his beast soul to go first because he had to clear up the area in front of him.

In other words, Clovis was left alone to take care of this snake.

Since the pistol didn't work, he had a limited option to halt the snake. The trees around here were a bit too small to stop this snake.

In fact, he had been going left and right to confuse the snake, but it was impossible to trick the snake. His short sword couldn't make a dent either.

Because nothing worked, the snake could finally reach him before they even arrived at Glyptodon's territory.

"Tsk." Clovis clicked his tongue when the snake lowered its head as if it were ready to launch its head at him.

The moment the snake's head moved forward, Clovis hurriedly turned around and jumped toward the head, striking the head before the snake could even open its mouth.

Cling!

Clovis gritted his teeth because his sword couldn't even scratch this snake's skin. He wanted to utilize the springiness of his clothes, but he simply didn't have the time.

Clovis also positioned himself as high as possible so that the moment he stopped, he could see the snake's eye.

He pointed at the eye and shot once, only to find the snake had reacted fast enough to use the eyelid to cover it. At the same time, the snake also launched him back with a little nudge, causing Clovis to fly in the air for a moment before rolling a few times on the ground.

Instead of looking back, Clovis continued running without caring about the snake. At least, he gained a bit of distance.

Realizing that it had been tricked, the snake continued, not letting Clovis escape.

This time, the snake opened its mouth first so that Clovis couldn't trick it anymore.

Unfortunately for the snake, Clovis actually jumped behind the tree, forcing the snake to actually bite the tree instead.

In just a second, the snake actually crushed the trunk with its jaws and continued moving.

"Kh." Clovis was running out of ideas. The snake once again tried to harm Clovis by shooting its venom, but Clovis skillfully used the tree to block the venom, causing the tree to melt.

'Grandfather should have experienced this kind of thing in the past. I wonder how he dealt with it. Did he run? Did he fight? But what if he wasn't strong enough?'

There was one memory that stood out the most.

Back then, Clovis asked, "Grandfather. You must be so strong that you could defeat all your enemies!"

"Not at all. I still consider myself weak. However, I imagine myself to be the strongest."

"Huh?" Clovis tilted his head in confusion. "Aren't you contradicting yourself?"

"Nope. I have told you about image training, right?"

"Un." Clovis nodded.

"That's it. If you can't imagine yourself as a strong person, then you are not capable of anything. Recognize that you are weak, but when you fight someone, you should imagine yourself as someone capable of defeating them. If you aren't capable of doing that, you won't win."

Clovis tilted his head in confusion.

Even after becoming an explorer, he still didn't understand what Grandfather was talking about.

Compared to a Tier 2 snake, he was weak. However, he couldn't picture himself being able to kill this snake. In fact, he would be happy if he could just hurt this snake in one way or another.

"I still don't understand what you're talking about, Grandfather. How do you expect me to believe that I am capable of defeating this monster?" Clovis bit his lips, seeing the snake coming again.

The snake was currently chasing after him, so its movement was a bit limited. If he had to fight the snake head-on, the snake would become even more ferocious since it was able to use its entire body and even its tail.

"Kanaria. Have you found anything yet?" Clovis asked.

"Sorry, I still need another minute to reach Glyptodon's territory. I'm thinking about climbing up a hill to get a good grasp of everything around me."

"Jay. Are you alright?"

"Better than you, Captain."

After making sure that his comrades were fine, he looked around, wondering what he could use next.

There were nothing but trees around him. No humans were in sight, and there were no obstacles that could stop the snake.

"Can my bullets actually hurt it?" Clovis thought for a moment. The outer skin was hard, but how about the inner skin?

If he could injure the snake with his special bullet, it could spread some poison that would at least weaken the snake. This would give him more time to fight this beast.

"It seems that I have no other choice. If I want to stop this snake for a bit, I have to make some sacrifices." Clovis had a plan in his mind, but he didn't know whether he could succeed or not.

He surprisingly slowed down his speed as if he were getting exhausted.

The snake lowered its head again, ready to shoot it. The moment the distance was right, the snake moved its head forward.

This was also the time Clovis sped up so that the snake's head couldn't reach him.

Seeing that it was only two meters away from him, the snake suddenly shot out its long tongue. The tongue was extremely big for a human and it would surely cause some damage if Clovis got hit by it.

But to the snake's surprise, Clovis actually turned around, jumped into the air, and struck the tongue with all his might.

"!!!" The snake was startled, but it couldn't retract its tongue at this point. In the end, the sword and the tongue clashed.

To Clovis's surprise, his plan actually worked. The blade was able to cut the softer tongue, but it was still extremely hard as the cut was only half a meter deep. On the other hand, the momentum of the tongue couldn't be stopped and it pushed back Clovis and overwhelmed his sword.

Ultimately, the tongue actually hit Clovis's body. The impact was so strong that it actually felt like he was being hit by a bike.

"Gah." Clovis gritted his teeth. Fortunately for him, the impact had been absorbed by the clothes he bought in the Another World Mall. If not, several of his ribs might crack from the impact.

Still, Clovis hurriedly regained his composure and balance before pointing his pistol at the tongue.

Bang!

That one shot finally hit the snake's tongue and pierced through, leaving the second wound on the snake.

The snake opened its mouth, wailing in pain. The red tongue actually turned black at a rate visible to the naked eye. Even Clovis didn't expect that the poison on the bullet was actually this potent. Then again, seeing how the snake's poison was able to melt the ground, he knew that it wasn't as great as the snake's poison.

It was only as good as a Tier 1 bullet, which was powerful against a Tier 1 beast, but not that potent to kill a Tier 2 beast.

The snake's tongue gradually withered, causing the snake to back up a little bit while wailing in pain.

Clovis had two thoughts after seeing this. On the one hand, this might be a way to kill the snake. He still had seven bullets left, so they might still have a chance to kill this giant snake. On the other hand, it also meant that he had to shoot the inside of the snake. The only exposed area was the snake's mouth, so he didn't know if he could create an opening to destroy the other parts of the snake.

That was why, even though the chance was in front of him, he hesitated to take it.

Suddenly, he got the news he was waiting for.

"Clovis. I've reached Glyptodon territory. It seems that we're pretty lucky since their party seems to be trying to get out of that territory and head to the easier elasmotherium territory."

Chapter 37 Changing the Aggro

"Ha... Ha... Go forward!" Ivan shouted in frustration while striking at the Glyptodon. Glyptodon was a large, herbivorous armadillo that lived around 3.2 million years ago.

It had a bony shell covering its body. Despite striking it at full power, Ivan only managed to graze its surface. The others produced a similar result, so they had to attack this glyptodon in its weak spot.

However, the glyptodon mostly rolled around, hiding behind its hard shell. So, they had a hard time hunting this beast.

They had killed several glyptodons, but they were nowhere near the speed when they hunted the dodo birds. That was why they were quite desperate to leave this territory.

"This is not looking good. Hurry up and leave this place," said Elina with a serious expression.

"We can't afford to lose to those people." Vina nodded in agreement.

"This is because you all are overestimating your attack power. See? We couldn't even do anything to the glyptodons." Lovelia snarled.

"Don't talk about it for now. We have to leave this territory as fast as possible and kill as many beasts as possible. Only after we are done with this competition will we reflect on our choices." Ivan calmed them down so that they didn't argue in the middle of the battle.

Unbeknownst to them, Kanaria was actually watching them from afar.

"I have spotted them. They seem to be struggling against the glyptodons. Do you need me to stop them?"

"Buy me one minute. I will bring the snake to them. Also, make sure that they don't shoot me or anything, Kanaria."

"Got it." Kanaria smirked while aiming at the beast not far from them.

Bang!

Without the glyptodons realizing it, a bullet hit one of them before they could even roll around.

"!!!" The glyptodons and Ivan's group were alarmed, not knowing what happened. The glyptodons obviously noticed Ivan and his girls, who were closer to them. But Ivan couldn't help but raise his head, noticing Kanaria standing not far from them.

"Kanaria?!" Ivan's eyes brightened, thinking that Kanaria had finally accepted his love and wanted to help them.

However, the other three were not so kind to Kanaria's action. She could actually snipe them from there.

With them having a fight with her, they couldn't help but say, "She is not an ally, Ivan."

"Don't be fooled."

"She might be trying to harm us."

Ivan wanted to say something, but the glyptodons that Kanaria alerted earlier ended up moving toward them since they were the closer targets.

"Not good!"

"So, that's her aim."

Ivan didn't say anything but still gritted his teeth. There must be a misunderstanding between them. If only Kanaria could understand them a bit better, they would definitely become good friends.

Unfortunately for him, it was not possible. When he was fighting the glyptodons, Clovis had finally reached Kanaria's position.

A huge snake suddenly appeared in the corner of their vision.

"Huh?"

"Ivan!"

Their group was startled, finding Clovis running with a big snake on his trail. Kanaria didn't help him but still prepared herself to shoot the snake.

"What is he doing?"

"A Tier 1 snake?"

"Is he trying to harm us by bringing that snake?"

The snake noticed the humans in front but still focused on Clovis. It launched its head to kill him, but because of his pistol, the snake didn't dare to release its tongue again.

Before the head reached Clovis, Kanaria shot the snake's eye, which was blocked by closing the eyelid.

The snake looked like it was trying to turn around, so Clovis hurriedly stopped and swung his blade at the snake's body, which caused the snake to turn back.

"Okay. Come." Clovis smirked as he rushed toward Ivan and the others.

"What are you doing?"

"Oi!"

"Why are you coming here?!"

The people from Ivan's group shouted, but they couldn't really escape because of the glyptodons that Kanaria sent them earlier.

"Hello, guys. It seems that you are free." Clovis saw their weapons. While he had to be aware of their long-ranged weapon, it didn't seem that the plan wouldn't be so hard to complete.

Elina was trying to reach for the pistol on her waist, but Clovis moved in the opposite direction, avoiding her. Only when he was close enough did he suddenly turn to them.

"What?!" Ivan gnashed his teeth and tried to push back the glyptodons so that he could help his team.

Unfortunately for him, Clovis was faster. He moved between them skillfully, causing the snake to have no choice but to push away all the obstacles in front.

"Gah!" Ivan got slammed by the body's zigzag movement, knocking him to the ground. Some glyptodons were the same. In fact, some of the glyptodons had their shells cracked because of this.

The only person who was able to react was actually Vina. She struck the glyptodon with her sword before moving back, allowing her to reach Elina with her shield.

When the snake's body reached them, Vina blocked it with the shield, getting pushed back for two meters. Elina got dragged and tripped to the ground, but it didn't hurt her much.

The worst one would be Lovelia. She got the full brunt of the attack, causing her to be launched several meters away.

"Kya!" Lovelia rolled a few times on the ground while gritting her teeth. She couldn't feel her left hand, but even Tier 1 wouldn't be this powerful. Because of the damage done to her body, she was the first to realize that the snake wasn't a Tier 1 beast. "Run away! That snake is not Tier 1. It's Tier 2 or higher!"

"!!!" Ivan and the others widened their eyes in shock. They couldn't believe that a Tier 2 snake would appear here.

However, seeing Lovelia injured this way, Ivan couldn't help but roar while swinging his blade at the snake. "You bastard!"

His muscle convulsed violently as he struck the snake with everything he had... and finally, the skin was cut.

Shaaa! The snake abruptly stopped, noticing the sharp pain in its body. The wound that Ivan inflicted was not high, but it didn't change the fact that it was the first attack that penetrated its skin.

The snake's attention immediately shifted from Clovis to Ivan.

"!!!" Both Clovis and Kanaria widened their eyes, noticing the change.

"Did I succeed?" Clovis looked back.

"Clovis. Are you going to retreat now?"

Clovis couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows. On the one hand, this problem might be related to him, so he didn't really want to kill anyone else. On the other hand, these people were his competitors and might do something to him in the future.

In fact, the conflict between them wasn't that big. It only started with this Ivan acting all mighty just to get Kanaria. Then again, Kanaria was preparing to die in this competition.

"Jay. Where are you?"

"Finishing the last two beasts before going on my way to catch up with you guys."

"Kanaria. Get ready to switch things up. We will kill this snake."

"Are you going to help them?" Kanaria couldn't help but frown. She was quite happy to see Lovelia injured, so she thought that this would be the end of them. Then again, she also thought about her family as a whole, which would definitely be affected by their deaths.

"No. They won't be able to kill the snake, but we can. We'll use it to kill this snake, so I want you to remain in your position."

"This will definitely create a rift between our group and theirs, you know." Kanaria knew that if these people were alive after this ordeal, they would definitely report this matter and do whatever they needed to do to eliminate Clovis. Jay and Kanaria might be able to escape with their family power, but not Clovis.

On the other hand, if they died, this matter would be investigated and traced back to them in one way or another. So, either way, the moment they chose to do this, their relationship would be irreconcilable.

However, this was actually what Clovis wanted. At first, he wanted to create a rift between them so that there was enough reason for them not to uphold the bet.

And with this grudge, even Ivan wouldn't think much about Kanaria anymore. All that was left was how they should solve this issue.

If they died, the people behind them would send powerful people to kill them. However, if they were still alive, Ivan would definitely take his revenge by himself.

With this, the only thing Clovis needed to do was stall for time until he was strong enough to fight the people behind them.

Of course, this wouldn't have happened if there was no Tier 2 snake and they just competed fairly. Still, it wouldn't change the fact that they would be targeted after that.

Hence, Clovis believed that the snake would be a good excuse to harm them. He could say that they were also surprised that they stumbled upon their group when they were running away from the snake.

And they were indeed pretty lucky since Ivan was also planning to head to the elasmotherium territory.

With this thought in mind, Clovis moved back carefully, avoiding angering the snake again until Jay returned. He was pretty sure that Ivan would also run away from this snake sooner or later.

But for the time being, Ivan went berserk.

"You bastard!" He kept shouting the same thing while waving his blade, giving one superficial wound after another.

As one would expect from the so-called number one genius in the city, he indeed had the strength to back up that claim.

Instead of focusing on the snake, Clovis moved toward the glyptodons while thinking, 'They have to die first so that nothing can intervene when I want to kill the snake.'

Chapter 38 Killing a Tier 2 Snake

"Kyaaa!" Lovelia screamed. Her face was pale as she couldn't get up, staring at this snake.

Lovelial had a hard time regaining her composure after she was hit earlier. It seemed that her injury was also quite heavy.

After getting hit by Ivan, the snake realized that these people were more dangerous than the ones he had chased the whole time. Hence, the snake was searching for the weak link of the party, which was none other than Lovelia.

It was staring at Lovelia, wanting to kill her.

"No!" Ivan roared and struck the snake once again, cutting the snake's flesh.

"Ivan!" Lovelia cried.

"You bastard. I won't let you hurt the girls." Ivan shouted in anger as he continuously struck the snake, leaving one shallow wound after another.

Elina hurriedly grabbed Lovelia, dragging her away. "Hurry up. We have to leave."

"I will be helping Ivan stop the snake. We can't fight a Tier 2 snake." Vina stomped her shield on the ground as if trying to get the snake's attention.

"Hurry up and go!" Ivan ordered out loud, knowing that they were a burden in this fight.

Vina gritted her teeth and pointed at the forest. "We should go there. If we continue like this, we will just be a burden."

"But..." Lovelia, who was injured, was the one wanting to help him. However, Elina hurriedly dragged her away.

As soon as they were far enough, Ivan jumped back, activating his beast soul. He jumped forward, closing their distance in a single leap.

This meant that he had more distance than Clovis, who was trying to hide behind the glyptodon's corpse.

Unbeknownst to him, everything was going according to Clovis's plan.

In fact, Kanaria was looking at their party pitifully, specifically Lovelia.

'Ivan, huh? I don't have a grudge against you, but I don't want to be a part of your group. You are indeed the number one genius and your reputation is well-deserved. However, being a part of your group means that I'm going to be dumber in the name of love, not being able to see that I'm just a burden while trying to help. In the end, it will just cause more problems.

In the end, this group suits me more. I have my independence, I have an amazing captain, and I have a vision that this group will be an extremely powerful group.'

Kanaria thought while shaking her head helplessly. She hurriedly turned to the snake, asking, "Clovis? Do you need a hand?"

"Help me until Jay is here. We'll be taking down this snake."

"Got it." Kanaria released the first shot.

Bang!

It still failed to penetrate the snake's skin, but the bullet was actually close to the wound that Ivan created earlier.

Even the snake realized what her aim was. Even though the wound was small and hard to hit, it would be a problem if she managed to hit the exposed flesh.

The snake hurriedly turned around, trying to stop her. This was when Clovis came out of his hiding spot and jumped on top of the snake's body, shooting the wound with his poisonous bullet.

Bang!

Shaa! The snake felt the excruciating pain, not from the bullet but from the poison. It jolted its entire body, causing the snake's head to fall to the ground.

"!!!" Ivan and the group couldn't help but turn their heads around. On the one hand, they were confused about how Clovis was able to do it. On the other hand, they didn't believe that Clovis was strong enough to kill the snake.

They should get away first, treat Lovelia's wound, and finally find out about what happened.

While they were running away, Clovis continued moving around, using the glyptodons as his shield.

Shaa!

Bam!

The snake kept slamming its head, trying to crush Clovis. Fortunately, he was still able to avoid every single attack, albeit barely.

When the snake was about to launch another attack, Clovis tossed the short sword to the other side of the snake. He put the pistol in his mouth before jumping as high as possible, using the chain to climb the snake's body.

In the end, the snake hit its body, inflicting its own injury.

Shaa! The snake wailed in pain, but before it could launch another attack, Clovis had shot another bullet. It was a different spot since Clovis wanted to kill the snake with the poison.

When he took another look at it, the poison seemed to be more potent than he originally thought. The poison had slightly spread to the snake's right eye as Clovis could see several gray-colored veins on it.

It was at this time that Jay appeared in the corner of his eyes. It seemed that he had killed all the monsters he had stopped earlier and finally made his way toward him.

Jay used the Dire Wolf Beast Soul to amplify his speed. He actually closed the distance between them in just three seconds.

The moment the snake slammed its head again, Jay struck the wound, trying to widen it. "Haaaa!"

His strike was filled with momentum, causing the power to be amplified severalfold.

Shaaa! The snake didn't know that Jay was coming. It recognized this human as the person who ran away from it earlier.

But the moment Jay grabbed its attention, Clovis moved toward another wound and shot the poisonous bullets.

At the same time, Kanaria's bullet finally landed on one of the wounds after several tries.

Clovis smiled, thinking it was possible to kill this Tier 2 snake. 'The sign of poison can be seen on the snake's skin. If this continues, I should be able to completely spread the poison all over the snake's body with another three bullets.'

Jay always positioned himself on the opposite side so that the snake had to choose whether to go for him or Clovis. If the snake focused on Clovis, Jay could widen the wound with his momentum. If the snake focused on Jay, Clovis could shoot another bullet.

Kanaria also helped from afar. But looking at the damage they could have done, it seemed that Clovis had to be eliminated first.

Shaa!

'Seriously? How smart is this snake? I thought we could confuse it for another one or two bullets.' Clovis clicked his tongue and hurriedly ran toward the glyptodons' corpses.

Still, Clovis had experienced a lot of fights with the beasts. Even a Tier 0 beast actually knew how to separate their forces so that they could flank their enemies from different directions. When he thought about it, he shouldn't be surprised that the snake realized its true target.

The snake chased after Clovis. Jay hurriedly backed up and ran straight to the snake with all his momentum, striking the wound.

Kanaria also shot another bullet but missed because of the snake's movement.

The snake pushed away the glyptodon's corpses so that it could find Clovis. However, Clovis skillfully looped around the corpses so that the glyptodon's corpse blocked the snake's vision, allowing him to reach the snake's body.

He pointed his gun at point blank range and shot it.

Shaa! The snake realized that the end part of its body couldn't move anymore. The poison had spread so far that it sensed a deep crisis in fighting these three people.

It even stopped chasing after Clovis and tried to escape.

"Do you think you can escape?" Clovis smirked, knowing this was his chance. He climbed on top of the snake's body and ran toward the next wound.

Bang!

The snake had his middle body paralyzed. Its head was already enduring the pain and the right eye had become blind due to the poison.

Clovis's last target was the wound near the snake's head that Ivan created earlier when trying to protect Lovelia. Without hesitation, he rushed forth, taking this chance.

Jay also looped around with the beast soul, waiting for a perfect chance to help Clovis.

Kanaria released another shot toward the snake, hitting another wound. However, that part of the body had been paralyzed by the poison, so the snake didn't react as much.

On the other hand, Clovis tossed the short sword, letting it pierce his next target. The short sword penetrated the flesh and Clovis began to climb the snake's body to launch the last attack.

"This is finally over." Clovis smirked, pointing his gun at the last wound. But to his shock, Jay's voice echoed in his ears.

"CLOVIS!"

Clovis was startled and noticed that they had stopped moving. When Clovis raised his head, he saw the snake's head right in front of him.

Clovis shot the head in desperation before detaching himself from the short sword.

The snake's head hit his body. Luckily, Clovis was fast enough to drop the short sword and raise his long sword. Both of his hands held the sword at the edge as the snake knocked Clovis to the ground.

The impact was so massive that it created a small crater underneath Clovis.

"Gah!" Clovis spat a mouthful of blood. In fact, his body felt like it was being flattened, causing some of the blood to flow out of his nose and eyes. The snake kept pushing Clovis to break his arms, but luckily, the bones on his arms didn't break immediately, allowing the ground to support his body to withstand this attack.

"Clovis!" Jay shouted. On the one hand, he wanted to be surprised that the sword actually didn't snap after being hit that way. On the other hand, he had a job to do. "Oi, you bastard snake. That's my captain over there!"

Jay struck one of the wounds near the head to widen it.

Shaaa! The snake's head retreated due to the pain and Kanaria even shot another bullet, which caused the snake to flinch.

Seeing Jay's position, Clovis gritted his teeth and grabbed the pistol he dropped earlier, tossing it to Jay.

"Jay!" Clovis shouted at the top of his lungs.

"!!!" Jay was startled, but when he noticed the gun, he hurriedly caught it and saw the chain hanging on the snake's wound. He didn't hesitate to climb the snake's body and release Clovis's last bullet. "Die, motherfucker."

Bang!

Chapter 39 Misunderstanding

Bang!

Shaa! The snake let out the last wail before its head fell to the ground. From the looks of it, the snake didn't die immediately as the poison only killed a part of the snake. But now that the poison had spread into the snake's body, the snake couldn't do anything other than accept its fate.

"Ha... Ha..." Clovis panted a few times before he laughed. "Hahaha...hahahahaha! We did it!"

Jay was also exhausted because he had been continuously exerting his beast soul. If the battle continued a bit longer, he might not even be able to stand up.

Kanaria couldn't help but smile, feeling proud that their group could actually kill a Tier 2 snake. And because she was the least exhausted, she immediately surveyed the area, making sure that not a single person dared to steal their part.

"Jay!" Clovis pointed at the side, specifically at the glyptodon's corpse. "I hid my bag over there. Immediately get all the snake's essence and retreat from here. Although I want to bring the materials this snake has like its venom or something else, I don't think we have that kind of leeway."

"Understood." Jay nodded with a serious expression. That was right. While they had killed the snake, it didn't mean that they were safe yet.

Clovis couldn't really get up, so he could only let Jay do the rest by himself.

"Kanaria."

"Don't worry. The area is secured for now."

Clovis smiled. "I hope that this is enough to make them stop pursuing you. Though, I think that there will be some conflicts in the near future."

"This is better. At the very least, I believe that this group can get stronger and stronger, unlike their group. I bet that the three girls will be left behind sooner or later."

"I'm glad. In that case, continue monitoring the situation."

"Okay. But are you alright? Do you need some medicine?"

"It's fine. I don't think my bones are broken. But let me lay down here for a bit." Clovis sighed. He never thought that he would be saved by the shirt he bought from Another World Mall.

At the same time, this was also proof that Another World Mall had that much potential.

Jay, on the other hand, grabbed all the essence, including the glyptodons.

However, they got another surprise when Jay extracted the snake's essence.

"Eh?" Jay found a small purple cube. "Isn't this a beast soul?"

"What?" Both Kanaria and Clovis widened their eyes as if they couldn't believe their luck. "Are you serious?"

"Yeah. This must be the beast soul. I don't know what kind of beast soul it is, but it should be something powerful. We have to identify it at the base."

"Alright. Even if we have that, I don't think any of us is strong enough to absorb the essence." Clovis sighed.

"That's true."

Jay kept extracting the snake's essence. Due to the size of the snake, they got an abundant amount of essence. In fact, it was more than the Tier 1 short-faced bear.

"Oi, Clovis. We are about to get 1 liter of Tier 2 essence. I bet that we can get at least a couple of tens of thousands from selling this alone. If we add our haul as well as the prize money, we should have no problem getting eighty or ninety thousand. If we're lucky, we might get a total of one hundred thousand, along with the super injections." Jay smirked, feeling excited.

Clovis's face brightened. "For real? Money, money, money..."

Kanaria couldn't help but chuckle, looking at his reaction. She perfectly knew that Clovis's heart must be bleeding after spending all the special bullets he had. The bullets were so special that they couldn't be easily acquired, so there was no way Clovis would be able to get one anymore.

Instead of showing any remorse, Clovis tried to lighten the mood by making them laugh. That action actually made Kanaria overwhelmed by gratitude.

It only took Jay ten minutes to get all the essence. After that, he picked up Clovis, who still had a hard time moving. It couldn't be helped, considering Clovis just took the full blow of a Tier 2 snake.

At the same time, Jay couldn't help but look at Clovis's blade, wondering what kind of material it was made of. To think that even with such force, it didn't snap.

"Sorry. I still have a hard time moving. We'll go back to the Elasmotherium Territory. Although I won't be able to join you guys in the fight, we still need to fulfill our side of agreement and meet those people again."

"Got it." Jay unfortunately couldn't join the transaction, while Kanaria had to make sure that no one dared to rob Clovis in his current condition.

...

As expected, the moment they heard the potential of a Tier 2 snake appearing in the competition area, the soldiers were ordered to evacuate the people and investigate the trace of the snake.

Because of Clovis's constant running, the trail was extremely long. They were even occupied with the egg.

"Commander. We suspect that there are people trying to use the snake to murder someone." One of the investigators couldn't help but make a conjecture.

"What do you mean?"

"We found several corpses. One of them seemed to be responsible for bringing the snake's egg. As a result, the snake came to this place to bring back its offspring. Unfortunately, the egg had been destroyed and the snake was probably chasing after their targets."

"Several corpses? Did the snake kill them?"

"Judging from their wounds, their targets probably fought back and defeated them."

"Have you found the snake yet?" The commander asked while wondering who was trying to kill the participants. In fact, there was no way those corpses were responsible for luring the snake. Someone must have given them the snake. The person who could toy with a snake of this level should be extremely powerful.

"Not yet. We're still following the trail in the forest."

"Continue. Even if the target is killed, I want you to find their corpse. If you find the snake and confirm it's Tier 2, you have my permission to kill them."

"Do you want to stop the competition?"

The commander frowned. On the one hand, stopping the competition would probably be what he should do. On the other hand, this kind of thing was bound to happen sooner or later in everyone's life. If they couldn't overcome such a thing, they would die in one way or another.

In the end, the commander came to a decision. "No. We won't stop the competition. Just find the snake and kill it if it's still alive."

"Under—" The report stopped as the investigator had reached the field where the battle transpired. He could see the giant corpse from afar, making him realize that the snake had actually died.

"What's wrong?" The commander felt weird since the report ended so abruptly.

The investigator gulped down before confirming, "The snake is dead."

"What?" The commander sucked a cold breath. "Did you say the snake is dead? Who killed it?"

"We are not sure. I can't imagine that the participants, who are only Tier 0 explorers, could actually achieve this." The investigator squinted his eyes as if he saw a few shadows moving around the snake's corpse. "Wait a second. I think I see a few people."

"The participants? Or are there any intruders? If they are intruders, you have my permission to engage." The commander panicked. There was someone daring enough to bring the snake into the competition area, so it wouldn't be weird if there was a group of people that dared to enter their competition area.

"They are..." The investigator used the binoculars to check them from afar. He was shocked when he recognized these people. "They are Ivan Reagen and his team."

"Ivan Reagen? That genius child who has a 99% evolution rate?"

"Yes, sir. I shouldn't mistake his appearance. The three people should be the women in his party." The investigator opened his device and checked their identities and appearances. "I have confirmed that they are Elina Woo, Lovelia Rusth, and Vina."

The commander sucked a cold breath. "I see. So, that genius even managed to kill a Tier 2 snake."

"I saw a lot of sword wounds, so yeah, I believed he was the only one who had the strength to injure the snake."

"Got it. Don't leave yet. Observe them from a distance for another fifteen minutes, making sure that they don't die. They should be quite exhausted after the fight. If they have any signs of giving up on the competition, make sure you escort them to safety. We can't allow such brilliant potential to die."

"Yes, sir."

...

While they focused on Ivan, Clovis's scheme had begun to take place. Once the sun was about to set, Clovis came to the designated place.

This time, he found not only the people he saved earlier but two more groups. It seemed that they were enticed by the potential of the trade.

Clovis was happy because his plan to defeat Ivan's group overwhelmingly could come to fruition. Even Kanaria was feeling excited as if she wanted to see the face Ivan and Lovelia made when they lost.

Clovis waved his hand with a smile.

"Hello everyone. Thank you for coming and believing me. I won't bore you with any speech, so I will just tell you two things. First, we will conduct everything fairly. If you are cheating us, we will stop the trade. Second, with everyone's agreement, we can do another trade right before the competition ends.

If no one has objections, let us begin."

Chapter 40 Result

Drake Group.

On the top floor of the Drake Group's office, a middle-aged man was leading a meeting attended by more than twenty people.

"Sir!" Suddenly, a young secretary came to the room.

"What? Can't you see that I'm in a meeting right now?" The middle-aged man looked annoyed.

"But I believe you should take this, sir. The call comes from the commander of the underground city."

"Mmhm?" The middle-aged man squinted his eyes. The people in the room were also quite curious why such a person would contact them. He ended up tapping his device a few times, projecting a screen that identified the commander.

"Mr. Eric. I am the commander of Rizben Underground City, Steiner. I apologize for disturbing you all of a sudden, but I think you'd like to listen to this."

The commander briefly explained the situation and ended it with, "And from what we saw, your group was present when our team investigated it."

Eric couldn't believe what he had just heard. "Are you sure it's Ivan? There might be someone else who killed them."

Although he knew Ivan was extremely talented, he still didn't think he was able to kill such a powerful beast.

"We could only confirm it when the competition ended. However, judging from the time we found out about the snake and their appearance..." The commander didn't continue, but the message was pretty clear.

"I see. Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention, Commander Steiner. If you have some free time, let me invite you for a drink."

"It's not a problem." The commander hung up.

Eric looked astounded for a moment while the others couldn't help but stand up.

"Congratulations, Mr. Eric."

"Congratulations for getting an extremely talented individual, Mr. Eric."

"Haha... Haha... Thank you, thank you!" Eric couldn't contain his smile. Although the commander had specifically said that they couldn't confirm it until the competition ended, he didn't think there was anyone else that could harm a Tier 2 beast other than Ivan in the competition.

He was overwhelmed by the news that he didn't care about the blunder the military had made and simply thought this was actually an opportunity for their Drake Group.

Little did they know, what truly happened couldn't be any more different.

...

The third day.

The commander stood at the west gate personally because he wanted to see the hero who managed to take down the Tier 2 snake.

He was looking at the scoreboard that had been updated by the examiners.

1. Flying Guard (7#) - 870 points.

2. Severity (12#) - 850 points.

3. Undying (39#) - 840 points.

"Hoho... There is still one hour left before the competition ends, but these people have submitted their results." An old man smiled, looking at the scoreboard. "Isn't it good, Commander Steiner?"

"Well, each of the top teams has killed one or two Tier 1 beasts. Meaning that they manage to kill twenty to thirty beasts every day. And seeing that all of them manage to return, the result is indeed pretty good."

"Still, the top scorers usually use as much time as they can, no?" The old man smiled.

"Indeed. It seems that you are pretty interested in this, Mr. Rusth." The commander glanced at the old man.

"Hehehe. Of course, I am quite excited. I want to see the result of my grandson-in-law." The old man looked excited, obviously looking forward to seeing a score higher than any other competitor because of the news about the Tier 2 snake. "This is why you're so shortsighted."

The old man turned his head to the side, looking at a woman in her late thirties sitting on the sofa.

She had long brown hair gently resting on her back. Her bang covered her right eye and her small eyes made her face look cold and distant.

Unlike the old man, she was wearing a leather shirt and skirt as if this were a formal visit.

After hearing the old man's voice, she couldn't help but sip the tea while saying, "If you think you are so great, then feel free to brag. In the end, I'm merely trying to watch my daughter's progress."

"Hehe. I heard that your daughter left the group you created and joined a shady group recently. Your daughter is simply too foolish, not knowing what is right." The old man kept looking down on her.

Even she started to get annoyed but decided not to engage in a longer conversation with this old man.

"Oh, another group has returned." The commander noticed the tension in the room and shifted their topic.

A group of six returned to the base with a lot of materials in their bags. "Please check our essence."

The examiners hurriedly processed their essence, calculating their result.

In an instant, the scoreboard changed.

1. Phoenix Talon (#29) - 1010 points.

"What?"

"One thousand points?!"

The camp became a bit noisy when they saw the new result.

"Hoh? A thousand points? They could kill at least thirty beasts each day. Quite good." The old man smirked, not thinking much about this group.

He soon noticed that another group had returned. "There!"

The commander's expression turned solemn, watching them closely. He was quite curious about the results of this team.

Ivan instantly shocked the entire camp with a new score.

1. True Thorn (#25) - 2120 points.

"What? Two thousand points?!"

"It's one thousand more than the second place."

"How in the world did they cut down so many beasts?"

"Did you hear that there were 6 Tier 1 beast essences?"

"Seriously?"

"It took us everything just to kill a single Tier 1 beast, but they could actually kill so many Tier 1 beasts."

While they were shocked, the three people in the VIP room, who monitored everything from afar, couldn't help but furrow their eyebrows.

"Where is the Tier 2 essence? Have you told your examiners about the Tier 2 essence? Do they know how to rate it?" The old man glared at the commander.

"Maybe they simply don't have one." The woman snorted.

The old man gritted his teeth while the commander couldn't help but say, "I have mentioned the Tier 2 essence to the examiners. I will check it again."

The commander decided to go to the examination place to check whether the Tier 2 essence was with them or not. The other two ended up following the commander.

"That's... that's the commander of this base, Tier 5 Explorer, Commander Steiner!"

"But isn't the one next to him the famous Snake Lord, also a Tier 5 Explorer?"

"No way. Just look at that beauty, she should be the famous Tier 5 Explorer known as the Beast Queen... Ah, I want her to step on me."

"No one wants to hear the last remark."

"What is happening? Why are these people gathering here?"

"Grandpa?!" Lovelia was startled to see her grandfather appear here.

"Lovelias." The old man nodded and came to her, wondering about the essence. At the same time, he was staring at this Ivan.

"Hello, sir." Ivan politely greeted him.

"Mhmm. A promising young man." The old man smiled. "Please take care of Lovelias."

"Yes, sir. I will definitely protect her."

The old man then whispered to her, asking, "Lovelias. Where is—"

Before he finished his words, another wave of cheers erupted in the camp."

"Oi. Look at that! The first place changes again!"

"What?!" The old man raised his head, gasping in disbelief.

1. Xovereign (#4) - 2130 points.

"How? How did they..." The old man couldn't believe what he saw. "Who are they? How could they achieve such a place?"

He couldn't believe that the number one position was actually taken by a nameless group. However, it didn't stop there.

More and more groups shocked the camp.

"2170 points!"

"Hey. It's 2200 points!"

"How in the world do they get 2300 points?!"

Every single group couldn't contain their shock because the people in these four groups were not really famous. In fact, their evolution rates weren't that high.

Yet, they could actually defeat the most promising group in the competition.

"What is this? Where is the group you're proud of?" The woman grinned, finding enjoyment in the result.

"You..." The old man gritted his teeth and turned to the commander. "Where is the Tier 2 essence?"

The commander was looking at the screen, wondering the same thing. Did he make a mistake? Was it someone else who killed the Tier 2 snake? But the time frame was so small that it shouldn't be possible.

"Tier 2 essence?"

"What the hell is he talking about?"

The people were confused, never hearing anything about Tier 2. However, Ivan and the others became tense as if they knew something.

It was at this time that Kanaria's voice echoed in everyone's ears.

"Are you talking about this, old man?"

"!!!" They all couldn't help but turn around, seeing Kanaria walking with her group. Since this was a competition Kanaria had to win, both Jay and Clovis allowed Kanaria to take the spotlight.

In that instant, the cold woman suddenly appeared in front of Kanaria, looking at her.

"Eh? Mom?!" Kanaria blinked a few times. "What are you doing here?"

"I am worried about you." The woman shook her head helplessly. "It seems that you are fine."

"Yes, of course, I'm fine." Kanaria tilted her head in confusion. "Is there something wrong?"

"Did you mention Tier 2 essence earlier?"

"If you're talking about the snake, then I have it with me." Kanaria nodded with a serious expression.

The woman couldn't help but make a satisfied smile. She immediately dragged Kanaria to the examiner and asked, "Where is the tube? Let's register your result."