

World Mall 41

Chapter 41 Argument

"Where is the tube? Let's register your result."

"Here." Kanaria handed the tube carefully, not knowing why her mother was this excited. She wondered what had actually happened in the last three days.

She hurriedly handed the tube to the examiner and said, "Check it right away!"

"Y-yes!" The examiner was a bit overwhelmed. Not only was his superior here, but these important people were urging him to do his job.

He hurriedly scanned everything and couldn't help but gasp. "This is... a total of 13 Tier 1 beasts, 230 Tier 0 beasts, and one... one Tier 2 beast."

"!!!" Everyone's eyes turned to the examiner as if trying to confirm what they had just heard. However, the examiner rushed to upgrade the scoreboard.

1. Libation Fiesta (#24) - 3600X points.

2. Red Hawk (#9) - 2300 points.

3. Fiery Wings (#11) - 2200 points.

4. Not Mohawk (#26) - 2170 points.

5. Xovereign (#4) - 2130 points.

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

Everyone's heart sank when they saw such a high score.

"This is..." They were shocked by the Tier 2 Essence, but the fact that the first place overwhelmed them without the Tier 2 beast alone was enough to show them the current gap.

As for Ivan's group, let alone placing second, they actually failed to get to the top 5.

"Impossible." Ivan gasped. "How could this be possible? How in the world are they able to get those points?"

Even Lovelia couldn't explain this situation. They thought that their score was already crazy high, so there was no way other groups could actually defeat them. And more importantly, these groups didn't seem to be famous and had powerful individuals.

Elina hurriedly asked, "There must be something going on. We ask the examiners to investigate the points."

The commander couldn't help but furrow his eyebrows. He raised his hand, saying, "I'm sorry, everyone. There is one thing that everyone should know first. If you take a look at the score, you will notice that we added a character instead of a number for the Tier 2 beast.

"In the other competition, Tier 2 was worth ten times that of Tier 1. However, this is because the participants are Tier 1 Explorers. When a Tier 0 explorer fights against Tier 2 beasts, their only option is to run away since even preserving their lives is hard.

"That's why instead of using the normal measurement, we are giving a special character as no amount of Tier 0 or Tier 1 beasts can amount to the difficulty of challenging a Tier 2 beast as a Tier 0 explorer.

"With that out of the way, I do feel suspicion about the score. While I'd like to praise everyone who has done a great job, I'd like to know the method that you use to acquire such a high score."

"What is this? Are you pressing these guys?" Kanaria's mother squinted her eyes.

"It's not like that, Madam." The commander gave a wry smile. "I know that I am being shameless for asking their secret. While I can say that this is for the greater good, the military will pay the compensation they deserve."

The groups couldn't help but look at each other. Kanaria also felt the gaze of her mother.

"And what kind of compensation are you talking about, Commander?"

"I can apply for one more super injection for the compensation."

Kanaria thought it wasn't a bad trade. If she pushed him too much, it would definitely affect their relationship with the military. And this super injection would definitely be useful for Clovis.

There was no way Clovis would take everything by himself despite his contribution, so if there was only one super injection, Clovis couldn't reject it.

Besides, the trick itself wasn't a big deal. While it looked unfair at first glance, it wasn't forbidden. In fact, it was what everyone ought to do during the exploration.

Kanaria wanted to ask for Clovis's opinion first, but if she looked at him right now, he would definitely tell her to change the reward so that they could split it.

Hence, she had to make a decision on the spot. "I understand. It's actually a pretty simple secret. We just cooperate with each other."

"Cooperation?" The commander frowned.

"Yes. We share each other's loot so that everyone can take in that one ml of essence. While the syringe will notice the same gene, they won't care if that same gene is in another person's place, right?"

"Ah!" The commander looked down, falling into deep thought.

"That's cheating!" Lovelia raised her voice. "You are cheating. This is not fair. They should be disqualified."

Kanaria smirked. "What do you mean we're cheating? There were groups that tried to kill others who had just taken down their enemies. They attacked their exhausted targets and claimed the beasts these people killed as their own.

"We are simply doing the same thing. However, we do it in the way a proper human being should behave. Instead of killing one another, we should join hands. If the people two generations above us hadn't united and cooperated with each other, humanity would have gone extinct. Don't you think so?"

When the people heard it, they realized that the concept was indeed similar. In fact, there was no rule stating that they couldn't do it.

This kind of competition was something new, so they didn't realize it was possible. In fact, if they weren't urged to create this competition, they wouldn't have one. Due to the limited amount of time, they couldn't ensure that the rules were perfect to stop any kind of cheating.

The commander looked at Kanaria, asking, "Is the idea originally from your group?"

"Yes."

"From the looks of it, there are four other groups that cooperate with you. In that case, I shall reward your group with a super injection for your cooperation and ten thousand dollars for the other four groups." The commander judged fairly.

Even though the competition looked unfair, there was no way he could punish them when they were talking about cooperating with their own kin. He would be labeled as a demon if he actually punished them.

"This..."

"The commander has just..."

"Another ten thousand."

"A big bonus at the end. We won't be able to achieve this without their help, so they can get the big reward, I guess."

While they were lamenting the fact that they couldn't get the super injection, their rationality was much higher than their greed.

The commander looked at the examiners and asked, "How is it?"

"We have confirmed that there are same genes on their tubes." The examiner confirmed Kanaria's claim.

Lovelias grandfather gritted his teeth. He never thought that his granddaughter's team would lose like this. If it was only the second place, he might be able to understand it. But they couldn't even reach the top five due to this scheme.

He was trying to hold his anger the whole time, but it erupted the moment Kanaria said, "With this, Lovelia has to leave her group and be unable to join anymore."

"Huh?" Her grandfather widened his eyes as if he couldn't believe what he had just heard. He looked at his granddaughter, whose face was already pale. "What is the meaning of this, Lovelia?"

Lovelias couldn't say anything. It was Ivan's fault for accepting that bet.

Kanaria was delighted when she saw Lovelias expression. She stated, "Their group has come to us with a bet to see which one of us has a higher ranking. In the event that my group loses, I am forced to leave my group and join theirs.

However, because my group only has three people, we demand more, which is to have Lovelia leave the group and can't rejoin as well as Vina become a part of our group for two weeks."

Lovelias was gasping for air. Her grandfather was going to severely punish her even though it was Ivan who proposed the bet.

Ivan gritted his teeth. He wanted to deny it, but he didn't know how to do it in the correct way. If he said one wrong word, he would definitely become the joke of the community.

"Child. There is no proof of that bet. Besides, it's not an official bet."

"If you want proof, I believe there are a few groups who can confirm it." Kanaria looked around, finding several familiar faces. These people were on the same truck as them, so they should have heard about the bets.

However, they looked frightened when she looked at them. It wasn't because of her. Instead, Lovelias's grandfather was warning them with a glare that if they dared to speak up, they would get the consequences.

"See? There is no proof."

Kanaria looked at them while shaking her head helplessly. It seemed that they didn't dare to come out, but she could understand their fear since the opponent was a Tier 5 explorer.

"Besides, after listening to your little scheme for cooperating with each other, I do think that you might actually buy them beforehand. Do you think their words will be credible?"

Kanaria's expression became cold. She couldn't help but sigh. "As expected of someone who has led the Rusth Family for over thirty years, you are rather shameless."

"Is this how you speak to your elder? It seems that your parents don't teach you manners."

"Mom. He is talking about you, you know." Kanaria rolled her eyes, wondering why her mother didn't back her up this whole time. It turned out she was currently fixated on her device, typing a bunch of stuff.

"Well, it doesn't really matter. All I know is that I always teach you one thing, right?" She smiled while extending her hand.

Kanaria chuckled before handing over her device. "Yeah."

Her mother typed a few more things, connected Kanaria's device, and tapped the 'play' button in just a few seconds. In that instant, the broadcasting system got activated and started playing the recording.

Ivan's voice began to echo in everyone's ears.

"Let's have a bet."

Chapter 42 Vania Renvolt

The moment he heard that voice, especially the mention of the bet, he rushed to Kanaria while waving his hand, trying to grab the device.

However, her mother actually took a step forward, matching his speed. She slapped his hand away while asking, "What do you think you are doing, Raymond?"

"You..." The old man gritted his teeth as the recording continued to play.

"This..."

The people exchanged looks, listening to the recording. If the content was true, it was clear that Ivan was the one in the wrong. Kanaria's group never wanted to bet.

Kanaria smirked. "The first thing that my mother teaches me is that the law and the government might be above the people, but in the end, the people in the Skynet are stronger. Get proof, spread it, and let the people judge it."

"Madam..." The commander rubbed his cheek.

"I think this is fair compensation, commander. Well, hacking the military system is hard, but if it's only the broadcast system, I can easily do it. This should be enough for your blunder to allow a Tier 2 snake to enter the competition area, right?"

The commander couldn't say anything. It was true that this was the military's mistake. And he couldn't help but look at the familiar face on the side. While these Renvolt and Rusth families were extraordinary, he was more concerned with the Hacfield.

It was better to step away from this matter.

"To think that these people are so shameless."

"Yeah. They forced others who clearly didn't want to bet into this."

"And when they lost, they actually tried to suppress them."

"These people..."

Raymond was thoroughly angered. Ivan's face was pale, while Lovelia was about to cry. Vina was helpless because she ended up in this way because she didn't stop Ivan, but luckily, she didn't receive that harsh of treatment like Lovelia. Only Elina had an extremely dark face.

The Drake Group's reputation would be affected because of this. While Kanaria had been taking the spotlight the whole time, they all knew that the main reason was Clovis.

Yes, she remembered that Clovis was the one luring the snake to them.

In desperation, Lovelia screamed, "They lured the snake toward us. Even after telling the people how humans should cooperate with each other, they wanted to kill us."

Kanaria couldn't help but smile when she heard this. She instantly used it to her advantage by saying, "What are you talking about? We were simply running away from that snake while trying to find an opportunity to defeat it."

"Just remember, we didn't run away after meeting you. We wanted to cooperate with you, thinking that we could share this glory. Unfortunately, you actually ran away." Kanaria shook her head helplessly.

"Seriously?"

"Their group didn't take that chance."

"I would have done it."

"Then again, they were the ones proposing that bet."

"Shameless indeed."

"Even though I am a bit reluctant to accept the fact that we can share our loot, I actually dislike these people more."

"Yeah. Do they think they can do anything with their strength, money, and talent?"

"If I have a 99% evolution rate, I will still be humble unlike him."

Raymond was glaring at Lovelia as if telling her not to make this even worse. Raymond wanted to say something, but no matter what he said, it would just cause more misunderstanding.

Raymond turned around and glared at Ivan.

"S-Sir..." Ivan's face became pale.

"You've disappointed me." Raymond snorted and walked away. If he stayed any longer, these people would just do more damage to his reputation.

So, walking away like this was indirectly telling them that he didn't know anything about this and had nothing to do with them.

The commander didn't know what to say. The first time Raymond came to the base, he had been showering him with praise, believing that Ivan's group was the one who took down the snake. Then, the reality was different.

The commander looked at Kanaria's mother, asking, "Madam. Since the competition is over now, why don't you stop this?" The commander was pointing up, implying that she should stop repeating the recording.

"..." Kanaria's mother remained silent for a moment before snorting. "Fine."

With just a press of a button, the place became silent, creating an awkward atmosphere.

"Now that the time is up, the competition is over. The score is as you can see in the scoreboard, so I'd like to congratulate the Libation Fiesta Group for their victory," the commander announced the winner with an awkward tone.

Kanaria's mother waved her hand to her daughter, saying, "Let's talk in another place."

"Mhmm." Kanaria let out a soft acknowledgement before walking to Jay and Clovis, asking them to follow her.

But it turned out that Clovis and Jay were actually watching the entire thing while eating. There was indeed some ration left, but she never thought that Clovis and Jay would watch the entire scene as if they were watching a movie.

"Oh, you're done?" Clovis immediately devoured the entire biscuit and tidied himself up.

"Hey. I haven't finished yet." Jay complained.

"..." Kanaria gave a wry smile. She whispered, "Let's get away first. It's going to be troublesome if we stick around any longer."

"Fine." Jay pouted while Clovis picked up his bag.

While walking, Clovis couldn't help but notice the expressions of these four people.

Ivan looked like he wanted to kill him for all this embarrassment. Obviously, the people would remember this for the rest of their lives, turning Ivan into a walking joke. At the same time, he was angry that Kanaria dared to do all this to him. And it was clearly because Clovis was meddling in this matter.

On the other hand, Lovelia's face was white like a ghost. Tears were streaming down her eyes as if she knew that she would be finished once she returned home. She couldn't imagine what kind of punishment she would receive from her grandfather.

Vina was the one who remained calm the whole time. While she knew her mistake, it didn't change the fact that she had to join them for two weeks. She was steeling her heart to all kinds of tortures she would go through in the next two weeks.

However, Elina was the most concerning. Unlike the other three, her face was natural. It was clear she was thinking something, but no one could really read her expression. There was no telling what she wanted to do after witnessing all this. One thing was for sure, the Drake Group would know about this. Their lives would definitely be in danger.

Still, Clovis could see a big smile on Kanaria's face. It was clear that the competition truly had a lot of impact on her life. "Are you satisfied?"

"Very satisfied. Thank you very much, Clovis." Kanaria lowered her head. She knew that everything wouldn't be possible without him.

"In that case, I'm glad." Clovis smiled.

Kanaria felt moved. Clovis should have known that there would be a huge conflict after this, yet he didn't say anything or blame her.

He truly would shoulder all the responsibility as the captain and protect her. All that was left was for her to work hard for the group.

She swore herself to make this group even bigger to the point where no one could go against them.

And she didn't know why, but Clovis looked kind of cool when he just remained silent and stayed mysterious. It was as if everything was according to his plan.

They were walking to a building not far from the camp.

Clovis, Jay, and Kanaria were sitting next to each other.

"First of all, I'd like to thank you for helping my daughter. I know that my daughter is the one responsible for this." She lowered her head to express her gratitude. "Let me properly introduce myself. I am Kanaria's mother, Vania Renvolt. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"It's not a problem. We are simply protecting each other." Clovis smiled. "I am Clovis, the captain of Libation Fiesta, the group that your daughter is currently in. I know that this is late, but I formally ask for your permission to have your daughter in my group."

"I am Jay... Well, Auntie should know me already. As he said, he is the captain of the group and I believe he is capable of that role. I, too, ask Auntie's permission to allow Kanaria to join this group."

Kanaria panicked as he looked at their actions. She also bowed to her mother, asking her to be allowed to remain in this group.

"It doesn't matter. I have heard about the incident where she ends up getting exiled from the group I personally created. I can see her improvement when she is in your group, so I personally don't mind it.

"However, you do know that you need strength if you want to protect your little group, right? The Drake Group, the Rusth Family... those two are large influences in the city. And that child, Vina... might not be

from a big group, but she is also connected to a lot of things. This incident will definitely direct their anger toward this little group.

"Well, I don't think they will kill Kanaria since it would become a declaration of war with my Renvolt. Jay will be the same since your father will definitely go insane if you die.

"But it's different for you, little guy." Vania put her hand on the table while leaning forward to take a closer look at Clovis. "There is one way to protect you from all this. In fact, this is the simplest solution to stop the madness. Do you want to hear it?"

"If there is such a method, then I'd definitely like to hear it. Getting another option is not bad after all." Clovis remained calm even though Vania's stare was intense.

And this was when Vania dropped a bomb.

"You just need to... marry me... Wait, I mean, my daughter!"

Chapter 43 Warning

"You just need to... marry me... Wait, I mean, my daughter!"

"Hah?" Clovis dropped his jaw, not understanding her words or probably not wanting to understand them.

Cough! She coughed lightly to restart the conversation and said, "Ah. My apologies. It was a bad habit."

Kanaria couldn't help but make a wry smile, not knowing what to say in this situation. She had been so influenced by her mother's stories that the first time she learned about his identity, she was also like this.

"With all due respect, Ma'am, I believe that something like this can't be forced. Marriage without love or just because of intercourses won't last long. Every marriage should be based on love, so—"

To his surprise, she actually said the same thing as him.

"The relationship has to be built first before talking about marriage."

"Eh?" Clovis blinked his eyes a few times in disbelief. Kanaria and Jay also couldn't believe that she would say the same thing as Clovis, like she knew what Clovis wanted to say.

Vania continued with a smile. "As expected, you are his grandson. I thought only your appearances were similar, but I guess your characters were the same as those of your grandfather. I simply recited what your grandfather said to me."

"..." Clovis was speechless.

"It seems that my daughter has told you something about me and your grandfather." Vania chuckled.
"Anyway, I just want to tell you three things. First of all, I'm not joking about earlier. Second, you don't have to worry about the Drake Group or the Rusth family for the time being because I will take care of them. Last but not least, I don't have any problems with Kanaria joining your group.

So, please take care of her."

Clovis was a bit overwhelmed. Vania brushed it off like nothing, but it seemed that she was still idolizing his grandfather.

"Mom!" Kanaria, on the other hand, felt embarrassed when her mother put it that way.

"Don't worry. I have put that thought away after marrying your father." Vania shook her head, assuring her.

Clovis gave a wry smile as he chose to ignore the embarrassment and say, "As the leader, I will definitely protect my group even if it costs me my life. I am thankful for your help with the Drake Group and the Rusth family.

"Although I can talk big like this, I still don't have enough strength to fight against them yet. So, I am thankful that you are going to help us."

"Of course, this is going to be hard for us as well. So, I can only stop them for one year. If you don't want to be attacked by these people, you have to find another Tier 5 explorer as your backer. Or you need to at least become a Tier 3... no, Tier 2 Explorer within a year. Can you do it?"

"I can't say for sure, but I believe they are doable." Clovis nodded with a solemn expression.

"Alright then." Vania looked satisfied. "Also, you might want to be wary of that Ivan's guy. While he is considered the most talented and has bright potential, his personality is slightly questionable."

"I am aware of it and will be careful of him. As much as I want to get rid of him right away, I think that the Drake Group will spare no effort in killing us the moment I do that."

"Yep. If you understand that, then I can feel assured. You don't seem to be the reckless type, so I think I can give this to you." Vania took out a pink card and placed it on the table.

"This is..." Clovis observed the pink card.

"One month from now, there will be a raid on Starion City Base on the surface. I hope that your group can join that raid. This pink card is actually an access card for a certain facility there."

"Starion City?" Kanaria gasped. "Are you talking about Tier 3 territory? The Starion City that has become a fallen base on the surface?"

"Yep. However, the raid itself is commanded by a few Tier 3 Explorers. They only intend to explore the outskirts of the city, specifically the southern part."

"I feel like we're going to fight against a Tier 3 beast when we're there." Jay sighed, feeling that the battle with the snake would repeat again.

"I am not going to tell you how to act. It's fine to be scared, it's fine to reject something. All I want you to know is that if you want to become stronger with your group, then delve into strife and carnage. That precious experience will definitely get your group stronger."

"May I know what kind of facility this pink card leads to?" Clovis asked.

"Do you know Professor Waod...lineath or something? His name is so hard to pronounce."

"Ah! Professor Waod was supposed to be one of the leading scientists in charge of the super injection project. If you're talking about his facility..." Kanaria looked at the access card.

"Yeah. You can probably find a lot of essence there. And there might be a new clue about the utilization of the beast soul. So, it should be a good experience for you guys." Vania ended the explanation with a smile.

Clovis looked at the access card for a moment before asking, "I am thankful that you're doing all this for us, but is there a reason why you gave us this chance?"

"Can't I do something for my daughter?" Vania wanted to brush it off, but Clovis didn't have any change of expression as if he knew there was a hidden intention.

Vania raised a finger. "One thing. I want you to get stronger as quickly as possible. If you take a look at the situation around our base on the surface, all bases in the west and north have been destroyed. I heard that the bases on the east are also being attacked in one way or another. I'm afraid that the beasts are coming for this city sooner or later.

I want you to at least have the strength to protect yourself."

Clovis closed his eyes for a moment before accepting the access card. "I understand. We'll follow up on that raid in one month. Before that, we'll do our best to become Tier 1 explorers."

"Good." Vania smiled.

"By the way, Mom. Why did you come here?"

"Mhmm? I got information about the Tier 2 snake. Seeing that you were one of the participants, I came to check," answered Vania with an innocent face.

"Really?" Kanaria squinted her eyes. In the first place, how could she know Clovis's identity? Her mother must be coming for him. She was just the second thought.

"What do you mean? It's the truth. Well, I should get going soon since I'm satisfied that I can embarrass that old snake." Vania stood up, feeling satisfied.

The others also stood up, planning to see her off.

However, she seemed to remember something. "By the way, Clovis. Do you know that there is another facility underneath your house?"

"Huh?" Clovis tilted his head in confusion.

"Well, if you don't know it, that's fine. I just found out about it when I was stalk... walking around the city. It seemed that there was another facility that was running for twenty four hours a day underneath your house."

'She just admitted she was stalking, didn't she?' Kanaria's eyebrows twitched.

Clovis looked down, remembering what Gregory had said to him previously. There were people eyeing his house. It seemed that they were looking for a way to get their hands on this facility, but didn't dare to enter.

They might even wait for him to sell this house so that they could buy it.

"I understand. Thank you for the information, Ma'am." Clovis nodded. "I will check it when I go back to the surface."

"No need to be so polite. Call me mom if you want."

Clovis just ignored it, knowing why his grandfather avoided her.

"By the way, you should stay in this room for a bit longer. I'm sure the commander is going to look for you in a bit to discuss the reward."

"Yes."

Vania waved her hand with a gentle smile before exiting the room. Her face soon turned cold again as if she didn't have any emotion.

As soon as the door was closed, Clovis couldn't help but look at Kanaria, saying, "Your mother... how do I say this..."

"No, no, no. Don't say it!" Kanaria clutched her head as if she didn't want to hear it. No, she refused to believe her mother's actions.

"Pfft." Jay laughed out loud. "Your chastity is in danger, captain."

"..." Clovis's eyebrows twitched. He let out a long sigh before saying, "We're still too young. It's not the time for that."

"Other people of the same age usually have a partner or two. Unlike your grandfather's generation, which is still sticking to the old morals, it's better if the younger generations have a wife or two to repopulate the world... or at least, make sure the population doesn't go into decline after a lot of people die to the beasts."

"How about you? Just go matchmaking right now." Clovis snorted.

"Me? As the heir of a big family, I have to search for my spouse carefully." Jay smiled while Kanaria rolled her eyes, saying, "Your father told my mother that he is questioning your ability, thinking that the lineage will end in you."

"What?!" Jay was taken aback.

However, their little chat soon stopped because the door was opened again and the commander came in.

Chapter 44 Agreement

"So, we have confirmed your result and you are truly the victor this time." The commander presented a few documents as well as a card. "This is the card for the cash prize, while these documents are for the super injections. There are a total of seven documents that will act as a voucher for you guys. You just have to go to Essence Bank to exchange for the super injection."

"Thank you, Commander." Clovis politely nodded his head.

"Also, this is the compensation for the snake." The commander took out a small glass cylinder.

They noticed a small crystal inside the cylinder. "Isn't this a Beast Soul?"

"This is Tier 1 Beast Soul coming from Thylacine Species. You have to wait until you are Tier 1 to utilize it properly, but once you reach Tier 1, you will unleash an extraordinary grip strength that could actually tear apart your opponent. I hope that this is enough to compensate you guys for the snake.

After all, I have to admit that the snake's appearance is because of the military's blunder for failing to protect the competition arena."

Clovis also lost the remaining special bullets that his grandfather left behind, meaning that he wouldn't be able to do anything if he encountered another problem like this.

Still, Clovis smiled at him and received it. "I understand. Let's not talk about the snake anymore."

"Thank you." The commander nodded, satisfied. "Since it's already dark, I believe you guys should go to Essence Bank and make an appointment for tomorrow. After that, condition yourself for the injection. It's going to be hard for you guys after all."

"There is something that I'd like to ask before we close this matter for good." Clovis raised his hand. "I'm sure that the snake's appearance is not a natural one, right? Is it related to the military?"

The commander shook his head. "I can understand that you suspect us, but I can assure you that this is not related to the military. We believe that the egg of this snake was the cause, but we couldn't find more. We suspect that there is a great power or powerful group that is trying to mess with the competition.

"I think I can tell you this... The competition was urged by the higher-ups. That was why we couldn't make a perfect rule to avoid your kind of way of 'cheating,' since we didn't have a lot of time. Unfortunately, it wasn't my jurisdiction to know everything behind the scenes, so I could only say, 'Please be careful.'"

Clovis let out a sigh. It seemed that his suspicion was correct. The snake was coming for him, and this competition was a bait.

For one reason or another, it didn't seem that these people took action personally. After all, if they sent an assassin to him, there was no way he could do anything.

So, from the looks of it, there must be a reason why they had to kill him by using beasts.

"I understand. Thank you for the information, Commander." Clovis nodded with a smile.

The commander stood up and said, "Congratulations for winning the competition." Without wasting any more time, the commander left the room.

His behavior looked a bit suspicious, considering it would be more normal if he actually chatted about some useless stuff before leaving.

Clovis said, "I guess we're done here."

"Yeah. We will get 2 super injections each, but you have to get 3 injections, Clovis. You surely won't reject, right?" Kanaria stared at him as if she didn't want to receive a 'no' for an answer.

Even Jay nodded his head, agreeing with her.

"Alright, alright. I understand." Clovis sighed, having no other choice but to accept it. "By the way, let's go to Essence Bank right now and make an appointment. I also want to sell the essence I got from this competition."

Jay couldn't help but recall his conversation with Kanaria yesterday night.

Clovis and Kanaria were sleeping in the tent with a curtain separating them. After a while, Kanaria woke up and sneakily came outside to meet Jay.

"Kanaria? Can't sleep?" Jay raised his eyebrows before noticing Kanaria's serious gaze.

"Jay. I want to talk about something."

While wrapping himself in a blanket, he listened to Kanaria's request. "So, you want to sell the essence in a way that Clovis could utilize it?"

"Yeah. Clovis tried to divide it evenly despite his contribution being the highest. But since he doesn't want to accept it, I'm thinking about accepting it evenly but with a little trick.

"Elaborate."

"We currently divide our loot into four, right? Us three and the group's fund. I am thinking about splitting half of our portion for the group fund, meaning we will only get an eighth of the original portion while the group fund gets a total of fifty percent."

"I don't have any problem with it. If needed, we can use the group fund to buy some essence for us to improve." Jay nodded in understanding.

"Yeah. That's what I'm thinking about. Special bullets, medicine, and other things have to be restocked as well. Instead of arguing with him, let's just accept the money and put it into the group fund."

"Sure. Even an eighth of our loot is currently enough for me to advance to Tier 1 explorer. However..." Jay looked at Kanaria with a grim expression. "I want you to remember Kanaria. He is your captain too. Never ever pity him or his evolution rate.

I'm going to beat anyone who dares to pity him, even if it's you, my childhood friend."

Kanaria's body trembled, sensing the seriousness in Jay's words. Jay knew that Clovis would have a hard time advancing. At the same time, he also held Clovis in high regard.

Kanaria waved her hands and said, "I'm concerned about his evolution rate, but I don't pity him. Please don't misunderstand. The reason I suggest this is because if we have enough group funds, he will think that he doesn't need to put his money into the group funds anymore and use it to upgrade himself. You should remember that he puts almost all his money into the group fund, right?"

"Well... That's fine." Jay nodded in understanding.

Kanaria couldn't help but smile. "Our captain... is unique, isn't he?"

"Yeah. I'm glad that I met someone like him."

...

Remembering that conversation, Jay looked at Kanaria as if reminding her about the agreement.

Kanaria gave an 'OK' hand sign to Jay while saying, "Right? Let's go to Essence Bank. By the way, please sell all the essence for our share, Clovis."

"Huh? All of them?" Clovis frowned.

Kanaria panicked, thinking Clovis was misunderstanding her intention. "After two super injections, our evolution progress will be close to the maximum. So, instead of absorbing these random essences, we are thinking about using the money to buy essences that will increase the attributes we need."

"Oh!" Clovis nodded in understanding. "That's not a problem. Let's go to Essence Bank then."

The group hurriedly left the room. While walking, Kanaria sent a message to Jay. "Oi. After making the appointment, we're going to leave right away and ask for the money tomorrow. If we stay with him when he sells the essence, it will make it awkward for him."

"OK," Jay replied.

Clovis didn't realize their scheme. Then again, it actually put him in a better position since he could get the money first and register it in his Another World Mall.

It seemed that the reason why Kanaria's mother left first was because she knew that there might be danger on the road. They knew that these three people had won the super injections after all. So, there was a chance to steal it or threaten them to direct the appointment.

That was why Vania eliminated all the threats while watching these three from afar. She couldn't help but smile, muttering, "I hope that you become a great man, Clovis Hacfield, just like your grandfather. Whether you want it or not, the people who want your grandfather's life will come to you sooner or later. And some of them are already in this town."

Once she saw the group almost reach Essence Bank, Vania disappeared.

To their surprise, Vina was actually waiting for them at the entrance of Essence Bank. As soon as she saw them coming, Vina hurriedly stopped them.

"Ehm?" Clovis remembered about the bet while Kanaria said, "Clovis. She is ours for the next two weeks. We can get someone to bring our luggage. Her strength is also quite good, at least better than the other two girls."

Vina lowered her head. "I will be in your care. Do whatever you want to me."

Clovis was quite amused by her action. She didn't know when they would come to Essence Bank, yet she still waited for them. And because she wasn't the one who decided to make the bet, she could back away. Even Vania didn't mess with her as much as Lovelia because of her mysterious background.

So, if Vina wanted to get away from this bet, it shouldn't be a problem. Yet she actually waited for them here so that she could say all this.

Clovis let out a long sigh before saying, "If that's the case, as a member of our party, your role is simple. Just stay in this city and don't participate in any raids or activities with your previous group for two weeks. This should be simple enough, right?"

"!!!" Both Kanaria and Vina couldn't help but raise their eyebrows, not expecting this kind of order. It was the same as him nullifying the agreement.

"Why? Do you think that I'm not strong enough to be in your party?" Vina asked while clenching her fists.

"No. You are strong. From your reaction alone, I know that you have the ability to keep up with us. However, being strong doesn't mean that you suit our group. It's as simple as that," Clovis explained before walking past her without any expression.

Chapter 45 Jay and Kanaria

"Alright. Seven super injections in total: three for Mr. Clovis and two for Mr. Jay and Miss Kanaria. We will prepare for the super injections tomorrow morning at nine. Please come thirty minutes before that."

"Thank you." Clovis nodded with a serious expression.

The manager who handled the super injections gave him seven digital certificates and sent them to Clovis. "Once you arrive tomorrow, you can immediately head to this room and just show these certificates. They will guide you to the room for the super injections."

"Understood."

Clovis and the manager shook their hands as the manager led Clovis out.

When they reached the main lobby, Kanaria couldn't help but say, "By the way, Clovis. We have something to do after this. Can you sell all our portions? Just send the money tomorrow. We'll be evolving to Tier 1 Explorer soon, so we will buy the essence that will be required for our evolution."

"Alright." Clovis nodded in understanding. "I will also check about the beast soul."

"Yep. We'll be off then. See you tomorrow." Kanaria waved her hand before dragging Jay out.

Clovis tilted his head in confusion, not knowing what they were planning to do.

Since they were done, he immediately went to the receptionist to handle the essence.

Clovis looked at his evolution progress before making his decision.

Name: Clovis Hacfield

Tier: 0

Evolution Rate: 15%

Brain: 17.1%

Heart: 16.9%

Blood: 19.3%

Muscle: 30.4%

Bones: 18.2%

'With three super injections, all of these attributes will increase by 60%, with the highest being my muscle with over 90% evolution progress.

'Since Kanaria and Jay handed over their portion for me to sell, I could probably register the money in the Another World Mall first. If that's the case, I might not need to sell as much as I originally intended.

'This way, I could reach a certain level with my muscle progress, which should be close to 100%. The rest should also be above 80% after this. Tonight, I can also increase another 24% through the Another World Mall. No, with all that money, I could probably increase the purchase limit.

'In that case, should I just be satisfied with only sixty thousand... No, I will just sell everything up to seventy thousand. This should be enough to last for a while. And with this, I should be able to evolve to Tier 1 Explorer the day after tomorrow, hopefully.'

With this thought in mind, Clovis began taking out the essence he wanted to sell to the receptionist. Unlike Jay and Kanaria, he didn't have to buy specific beast essences to match his progress since the Another World Mall has a lot of priority.

Then again, it would be weird if they found Clovis being able to become a Tier 1 Explorer just one day after them. They would definitely question him.

Clovis was wondering what kind of thing he should say and how he should utilize the Hacfield family to his advantage.

Ultimately, he planned to share what he could get from the Another World Mall with his teammates so that the entire group would grow along with him.

It would definitely slow down his progress a bit, but they could definitely help him a lot more if they became stronger.

Hence, Clovis had to prepare a few things.

...

Meanwhile, Vina had gone back to the hotel, as she couldn't help but remember what Clovis said to her.

"You are strong. From your reaction alone, I know that you have the ability to keep up with us. However, being strong doesn't mean that you suit our group. It's as simple as that."

Vina couldn't help but grit her teeth. She was mostly silent whenever she went outside, but the moment she returned to her room, she couldn't help but release all her frustration.

"What do you mean that I'm not suitable for your group? Am I truly strong enough? It's clear that I can't do much, let alone kill a Tier 2 snake.

"This was because of Ivan. What did even Master see in him? Was it simply because he had a 99% evolution rate? While he was talented at learning all kinds of techniques, it didn't change the fact that he was too rash.

"Even when I tried to suggest something, he didn't even bother to listen and kept doing rash things. He was lucky most of the time, but that luck would run out sooner or later."

Vina slammed her fists on the bed a few times, releasing her frustration.

Vina couldn't help but recall how Clovis behaved most of the time. While Kanaria was the one in charge of that bet, it didn't change the fact that Clovis trusted his people and would listen to them. When necessary, he would be the one leading them and making the decision.

That was what differentiated between a genius and a leader. Clovis was a born leader, while Ivan was a born genius. The genius might reach the peak, but they would end up becoming someone's subordinate without a good quality as a leader.

Vina couldn't help but look at the bed before muttering, "I wonder what kind of man this Clovis is? Then again, what can I do now? I can't even go out because of that stupid bet."

Despite having the ability to ignore that bet, Vina never thought about it as if that way of thinking had been ingrained in her.

"Whatever. I'm going to stay here for two weeks. In the meantime, I am going to see what kind of surprise they could bring. I might have to ask my master to reconsider her judgment."

...

Unlike Vina, this pair of childhood friends was actually in a happy mood.

"How's that? I think he will be selling a little of his portion. If this works, what do you think about continuing this way?" Kanaria asked.

"If this does work, then I don't mind. We just have to find one excuse after another." Jay nodded in agreement. "But won't he be angry if he finds out about this?"

"I'm thinking about doing this a few more times before breaking the news. Getting angry is understandable, and I will take full responsibility for it. After all, this is my plan."

"Hmm..." Jay thought for a moment. "I am not sure. It's just that whenever he talks about his evolution rate, he doesn't seem to care. It's not that he doesn't know what a low evolution rate means. It's like he seems to have a way to get stronger fast."

"What do you mean?"

"During the competition, I could finally see him from afar, observing his improvement. And I could see that he had gotten stronger much faster than I originally thought. You said that he often sold a lot of his essence, right?"

"Yeah." Kanaria nodded while furrowing her eyebrows.

"In that case, how is he able to become that strong? The progress is simply too much, to the point that I believe his evolution attributes are much higher than what I originally saw."

"Do you mean he has a way to hide his evolution attributes?"

"Probably." Jay closed his eyes for a moment. "Or maybe his evolution is much higher than what we know."

"Huh? Are you serious? Then again, if that's true, how high is his evolution rate? But the evolution rate is controlled by the chip." Kanaria fell into deep thought, remembering one thing. "His family?"

"I believe they are related to this. His grandfather is one of the top explorers in the world. Even his parents are quite strong... stronger than our parents."

"That's..." Kanaria couldn't deny it.

"Well, I won't think much about it. If he is going to reveal it to us, then it's good. If it's not, I won't talk about it. We all have a secret that we don't want others to know, so I can understand it. However, I still don't have any intention of losing to him. I will still be aiming for the captain position."

Kanaria nodded with a serious expression. It seemed that Clovis was a greater man than she originally thought. If that was the case, she might have to make another plan for the group.

"By the way, how many people do you think our group will have?" Jay asked.

"I am not sure. He wants an elite group, so six? But I don't think that's enough." Kanaria doubled that number to create two groups. "How about twelve?"

"Twelve, huh? That sounds good enough. Even if I can't become a captain, as a vice captain, I will be leading the second group." Jay smiled. "Though, what do you think we need the most right now?"

"Do you mean a member?"

"Yeah."

"Hmm... If it's my group, I will definitely need three types of people. A cook, an operator, and a scout. While I am acting as an operator and a scout right now, I can't unleash their true potential. In fact, I'm more like a sniper or support."

"An operator and a cook, huh? It's true that it will be much better if we have a cook in our party since we don't need to endure canned food. An operator sounds more reasonable to me, but what do you think about a doctor?"

"A doctor? Now that I think about it, Clovis is injured a lot because of the way he fights. If we have a doctor, we can be more assured if we want to handle a bigger exploration."

Jay nodded in agreement. "Yeah. I'm thinking about suggesting this to Clovis. Well, how he wants to recruit them will depend on him though."

"Fair enough. You can leave this to me. I'll give him some proposals regarding this matter."

"Sounds good. In that case, see you tomorrow."

"Yep, see you tomorrow."

