

World Mall 431

Chapter 431 Where Everything Started

"What the hell? Why are there no records about your hunts from the 2nd day to the 7th day?" Jay argued. "Are you pitying us or something?"

Kanaria also didn't like the result. "You're not going to say that you've lost the result because of something, right?"

Clovis' expression turned grim. Melody looked away since she knew everything. Erwin was their driver as a punishment for losing to Jay, while Ragna was the one helping with the navigation.

"I will be explaining everything." Clovis nodded. He revealed everything that happened, from meeting Vina to the information.

The impact of the information was huge, especially for Jay and Kanaria. They were thinking about sending this information to their family.

Ragna knew the importance but didn't have a lot of reaction. His city had been destroyed and his orphanage was no more. He didn't have any attachment to Star City, so he didn't think much about this problem. Libation Fiesta had been his home since that day when he joined the group.

Erwin, on the other hand, couldn't help but say, "That's rather dangerous. If we somehow lose against those beasts, we have no other choice but to escape to the south. However, my city is also there. If they gather more beasts along the way, won't it cause a lot of problems for my city as well?"

"Yeah. That's why I have a plan. And to do that, I want all of you to keep this information a secret, including to your family. Only after we manage to confirm it will I reveal the plan to you guys."

"Hmmm... Will that plan endanger my city?" Erwin asked.

"It would be in your and your city's best interest to accept my proposal."

"I see." Erwin nodded. Even though he didn't trust him completely, Clovis' plan had been rather unique and effective, so he should trust him on this one. "So where are we going next?"

"Silver Moon City."

"Gotcha."

Jay, on the other hand, said, "It seems that we've lost this competition if we add that much money during that side mission."

"What are you talking about? During the competition, it was Melody who should be the leader. But because I broke that rule, there was no way I could include it in the calculation." Clovis shrugged.

"Do you think I like that? This is not fair!" Jay gritted his teeth. Clovis had all the right to include the result, especially since he did it for their sakes.

That was why Kanaria placed her hand on Clovis' shoulder, her voice turning cold. "Are you sure you don't want to include that?"

Kanaria was staring at Clovis with bloodshot eyes. It was a simple threat since Clovis knew what Kanaria would ask in case she won. No, it was for this exact reason why she was the one who tried the hardest during this competition.

Erwin couldn't help but glance back. 'Those eyes... I remember them. They were the same eyes Aileen had when she dragged me away.'

Ragna remained silent, but he was still enjoying himself. He raised both hands, his left hand made an 'O' symbol while his right hand moved toward it with the index finger pointing straight.

Erwin almost burst into laughter and slapped his hands playfully.

Even Jay was silent the moment Kanaria gave an ultimatum.

Now that he had thought about it, Clovis and Kanaria had never taken the final step. Kanaria had mentioned that she would wait, but Clovis had no explanation either.

At the same time, Clovis remembered what Melody said about everything being calculated by the super AI that created this world.

Even Another World Mall had an age restriction, despite 16 years old being considered an adult in this country.

When Clovis thought about it, there might be something that could allow him to break free from the calculation.

That was why Clovis said, "Yeah. I've lost."

"..." Kanaria didn't expect this answer, not that she hated it. She let out a long sigh. "Fine. Let's leave it at that for now. We'll be extremely busy for the next several days."

...

Following Clovis' plan, the first city they visited was none other than the city he used to live in for more than 12 years. It was the city he was born in.

After getting attacked four years prior, the city's condition was horrible.

The sturdy walls that reached as high as 20 meters had almost disappeared. Numerous buildings had been reduced to rubble, and nature had taken over.

Because of the city's situation, they had no other choice but to park the minibus one kilometer away and approach the city by foot.

It turned out the information was correct. Even though they couldn't confirm the number of the beasts, there were already a lot of beasts living outside the cities.

Clovis led his team carefully, making sure not to wake up all these slumbering beasts. After all, it would be bad if the enemies found out that Clovis had figured out their plan.

Clovis approached the city from the west gate even though the gate and the wall were no more. The reason why he was able to escape in the past was because of the location of his house, which wasn't that far from the west gate. As a result, he got picked up by the evacuation team first.

When he remembered all those details, Clovis couldn't help but wonder how much his parents had calculated. They might have realized that they would be attacked by beasts and bought the house over there.

Since it wasn't far, Clovis managed to reach the place where everything started.

His house had been half-destroyed, but surprisingly, there was no beast around this area. In addition, Clovis remembered that his current house had a basement, so the important things might be located in the hidden basement.

He just had to find it.

Meanwhile, the others were quite amused. This was where the Hacfield family lived. Even though they were a mighty family, Clovis' house was rather normal. It was only twenty meters wide and thirteen meters long. It was quite big, but it was affordable to most families.

'Is this really the Hacfield family's house?'

Chapter 432 New Store

Clovis entered the ordinary house while saying with a nostalgic face, "To think that I would be returning to this place. Please come in."

Clovis invited them all in as he opened the door. Even though it had been years since he last lived in this house, he still remembered everything vividly.

Once opening the door, he would find the small couch for guests. However, what was left was a half-destroyed wall and a bitten sofa.

When he walked in further, he would find the living room for family and kitchen with an open space concept. It wasn't small, but it felt cozy and warm in the past.

On the left of this room was actually their training room, but all of it had been completely destroyed. That room was where he first held his weapons.

"You guys can go around as you like. I don't think there is anything left behind. I'll just check that room." Clovis pointed at the door right at the end of a small corridor. It was my parents' room.

They exchanged looks. It was probably good for Clovis to look into his parents' room by himself, so Kanaria waved her hand while saying, "Sure. Take your time."

As soon as Clovis entered the room, Melody couldn't help but say, "So this was where the Hacfield family used to live? It was only a bit bigger than my former house."

Jay didn't say anything, but this house couldn't be compared to the mansion where he was raised. At the same time, he wondered if that glamorous life was wrong.

Ragna came from an orphanage. Seeing that even the mighty Hacfield family didn't have such a spacious mansion somehow put a smile on his face. He might be evil to think that way, but the humility that the Hacfield family had was something he couldn't help but admire.

"Just look around, I guess. We might find a hidden thing in this house," Kanaria explained. They had once found a hidden room in Clovis' current house, so she suspected this would be the same.

Meanwhile, Clovis looked at the nostalgic room. It was a surprise that the room wasn't harmed at all. At the same time, there was nothing he could see inside this room. The room itself wasn't that big. It only had a king-sized bed, a small path for walking, and a dressing table on the side. There was a bathroom inside, but that was all.

The biggest reason why he wanted to come to this room was to go to Another World Mall. Yes, he didn't have the time where he could be completely alone during the trip, so it was time to check what he could buy.

'Let's go to Another World Mall.' Clovis muttered inwardly as he closed his eyes. The moment he opened his eyes, Blue was there to greet him.

[Welcome back, Master.]

"Oh! I'm back, Blue. It seems that I've made you wait, but we will proceed as planned."

[Upgrading the membership and increasing the visit limit, correct?]

"Yeah. Do it!"

[Processing.]

[The visit limit has been increased. You are now able to visit the mall three times per day.]

[Upgrading the host's membership.]

[Membership: Level 18 (Peak Expert)]

[Upgrade Requirement: 10,000,000 Otherworldly Coins.]

[Reward: Item Upgrade, New Store, Super Discount.]

[Membership has been upgraded to level 19. You are now a special customer.]

[The items will be upgraded.]

[A new store is opening.]

Clovis could see the ruckus far away. He couldn't see what kind of store had just opened from here, but a new store would definitely be good.

[Super Discount can now be accessed. Would you like to check the Super Discount, Master?]

"Super Discount also has missions, right? Do I have to finish the mission first?"

[To commemorate you becoming a special customer, we'll be giving one Super Discount Coupon so that you can try it.]

"Let me check the Super Discount first then."

A wheel of fortune suddenly appeared in front of him. There were several sections, indicating their own names.

However, he noticed that the bookstore had a smaller section compared to others. "Blue... What is the meaning of this? And the new store doesn't have a discount?"

[The latest store will not have a discount. Each store has their own portion, depending on their impact on Master's life to balance everything.]

"..." Clovis' eyebrows twitched. He thought he would get the benefit, but it seemed he was wrong. "So I have to open another new store before I can get a discount for this one?"

[Yes.]

Clovis took another look at the wheel of fortune. "So I just have to press here. I do have one ticket, so I might press it. Nah, let's check the new store first and see how much money I'll have left."

[That's a wise choice, Master.]

"By the way, this is only a wheel of fortune for the shop. What about the discount?" Clovis asked.

[It'll only appear after the store is chosen. However, it'll look like this.]

The wheel of fortune turned blank for a few seconds before multiple sections appeared. It seemed that it was a 10% interval from 30% to 90%. However, he saw a small one with a 99% discount on it.

"Oh. I thought it would start with a 10% discount."

[Another World Mall is a mall where everyone can get stronger with a smile on their face. We are not stingy.]

"..." Clovis smiled wryly. He could say nothing, so he just walked toward the new shop. "Follow me, Blue. Let's check the new shop."

Blue's wheel started rolling, following quietly from behind.

While walking, Clovis opened his status.

[Name: Clovis Hacfield.]

[Membership: Level 19 (Special Customer)]

[Money: 6,211,400 Otherworldly Coins.]

[Item Limit: 17/Visit]

[Visit: 2(3)/Day]

"I still have enough money to buy everything I want from the discounted shop. At the same time, I can't spend my money just because I fear I'm missing out on some great deals."

Clovis crossed his arms, contemplating.

[Master. We have arrived.]

Blue suddenly warned him.

"!!!" Clovis raised his head, checking what kind of new store he had. "Isn't this..."

Chapter 433 Choice

Clovis raised his head, seeing a board above the store. There was a dog image placed on the board, which only meant one thing.

"This is a pet shop?" Clovis gasped. He was joking previously, but it turned out a pet shop was real. "This is truly a pet shop? Can it even do something to the beast out there?"

[Please check it out first, Master.]

Listening to Blue, he stepped inside. The inside wasn't that much different than other stores except for the items they sold.

The first item that greeted him was food.

Name: Universal Pet Food (Tier 2)

Description: Pet food made of magical wheat and a magical core. Very nutritious for an animal. All animals will like it.

Effect: Pet talent +0.01%

"What is this overpowered item?" Clovis gasped. "No. It doesn't really matter if we're talking about a normal animal. I don't think a normal cat can go against a saber-toothed cat even with all this."

[Please check this item, Master.]

Blue brought him a watch.

"What is this?" Clovis grabbed it. "A smart watch?"

He looked at the screen that got activated after he touched it. There was something similar to his status, but it seemed to be for animals.

Name:

Race:

Grade:

Talent:

Affinity:

These five were the ones shown on the screen. "I can understand the name, race, and affinity. What about grade and talent?"

[Please check this item as well, Master.]

Blue brought another item, which was a choker.

Name: Adjustable Choker.

Description: A magical choker with a special material that can stretch for more than fifteen meters.

Effect: Tame any Tier 1 animal or lower, giving 10% affinity from the start.

"This is... Isn't this an enslavement choker, but for an animal?" Clovis frowned. "Now that I think about it, a dog was actually a beast in the past. But after thousands of years, humans tamed it and reduced it to a pet. Then again, it was said to be a human's best friend. Should I feel bad for the pet?"

"But what if I offer it a chance to become stronger? A lot of people will definitely frown upon a tamed beast since it'll be the first one to appear. And people want to know about this."

"Still, a beast is extremely different from animals. People might kill it simply because it's a beast." Clovis looked down for a moment. "Even though this is just a simulation world, I feel a bit conflicted."

[It will be Master's choice whether you would like it or not. Please scan this with that watch.]

Blue showed an image of a wolf.

When Clovis did it, the smart watch started giving more information about the wolf.

Name: Tuska

Race: Great Wolf

Grade: 5

Talent: B (68.12%)

Affinity: 90/100

[This is Tuska. He was a normal wolf in the past. He has evolved to a 'Great Wolf' after upgrading both his grade and talent. His affinity gradually increases, and he chooses to trust its master.]

"Grade 5? Is it similar to the Tier system? If that's the case, it's easier to understand. And talent... What is the range for talent?"

[Talent is divided from E class to S class. The higher the talent, the higher the possibility of the pet learning unique abilities.]

"Unique ability, huh? In this world, it probably means beast soul." Clovis pondered. "If you think about it, the wolf must have hated his master originally for 'enslaving' him, but the wolf is also an intelligent species that is capable of understanding the thing that its owner is giving him. The strength and the future potential..."

"Should I do it as well? But what's the difference between me and a slaver? What if I do it for a while and if the beast's affinity is low, I'll just release it to the wild once again? I'll probably be judged to be inhumane, but a beast's ability will increase the group's strength..."

Clovis scratched the back of his head. It was a hard decision between morale and power. "Blue. How many collars can I actually purchase?"

[Only one. Just like items from accessory shops and clothing shops. The items you have purchased will disappear forever.]

"I see. Only one, huh?" Clovis fell into deep thought.

[Yes. But there is a possibility that the limit will also increase once you increase your membership level.]

"That means I can have more than one in the future. While I do trust my teammates completely, I think it won't be that bad to have animals protecting my group. Their senses are also much sharper. No, they might be able to communicate with other beasts? Can they do that?"

[There is a high chance it won't work.]

"Why? The beasts will follow one that has the higher tier, right?"

[But the beasts can also see and smell. Master has provided that the beasts in your world have such high intelligence that even a Tier 0 beast has the instinct to attack in a formation. If that's the case, the high-intelligence beast will deny that call.]

"If that's the case, it might be possible to create an initial distraction. At the same time, the beasts will also follow their local lord, so there's a high chance it won't succeed as well. While this can be extremely overpowered, it might also not work." Clovis scratched the back of his head.

"What if I just go with a normal animal? Will it become stronger?"

[Yes. But if their initial form is weak, it might not have the chance to compete against the strongest out there.]

Clovis wanted to hold onto that hope, but it seemed impossible. Besides, the choker only allowed him to get a Tier 1 beast or below. If he increased his tier, it might be possible, but that didn't seem possible as of now.

Because the schedule had been moved much faster, even I couldn't become a Tier 3 in time.

Clovis glanced at his own evolution status.

Name: Clovis Hacfield

Tier: 2

Evolution Rate: 15%

Brain: 50.1%

Heart: 57.8%

Blood: 70.6%

Muscle: 79.5%

Bones: 60.6%

"Our team should be able to handle one Tier 5 assassin, but if it's like this, having a beast... a Tier 2 beast equipped with items from this mall might allow us to fight those two assassins."

It seemed that he had no other choice. Before purchasing it, Clovis asked, "Blue. Is there an item that allows me to see whether they're close to Tier 2 or not?"

Chapter 434 Items

"Fuuu..." Clovis exhaled. He had returned from Another World Mall after making a big decision.

He took out a few items with a tired face. As expected, he bought the items and planned to turn a beast into his pet. It might cause a lot of problems, but this would be their chance to deal with the situation.

In addition, this was also a perfect time to do it. But because he had spent too much money to buy all this, he didn't have enough money left to use the Super Discount.

Still, Clovis didn't leave the room immediately. Just like the others, he was searching for any clues inside this room. He didn't expect much from this place.

He thought that his parents wouldn't leave anything special here, fully aware that the enemies might investigate this place.

After two hours, he finally opened the door, finding his teammates who had gathered in the living room. They also couldn't find anything, so the moment they saw the items Clovis brought out, they realized that his parents had left it in their bedroom.

"You found something?" Kanaria looked surprised.

"Yeah." Clovis nodded and brought it to them.

"A watch?"

"A choker?"

"What are all these?"

They were confused, inspecting the items one by one. They couldn't help but think Clovis was just trying to bring everything that brought some memories.

They misunderstood that Clovis took so much time inside because he was crying. His parents and grandfather had left him for a few years after all.

However, Clovis explained, "This is a special collar that can tame a beast."

"!!!" Kanaria, Erwin, and Melody widened their eyes in shock.

"What do you mean?" Ragna asked in disbelief.

"You heard it right." Clovis confirmed it with a nod. "We might be able to tame a beast with this and groom it to be stronger than its original form."

"What? Is that even possible?" Kanaria raised her voice.

The others agreed with Kanaria since they had never heard anything about this.

"Yeah. You should know that my grandfather is currently roaming around the world just to hide, right? Where do you think is the safest place to hide?"

"In the danger zone?" Kanaria gasped. That was right. If they wanted to escape, they only needed to go to the beast area. The enemies had to kill those beasts before reaching him.

Of course, the beasts would also come after them if they entered their territory, but what if his grandfather had a way to tame the beast? What if his grandfather could turn them into friends? If that was the case, it could be said that Clovis' grandfather could easily hide inside a Tier 9 beast territory.

"This..." Kanaria looked down, falling into deep thought.

"Are you serious?" Erwin sucked a cold breath. This idea would change everything.

"This is the choker that is able to tame the beast. I don't know how he is able to do it, but there is only one." Clovis pointed at the choker. He was indirectly implying that even if they caught a beast, it would only be one beast. He added, "Also, we could only catch a Tier 1 beast or lower."

"That's too weak." Erwin squinted his eyes.

"Didn't you say that you could train the beast? Does this mean they'll become much stronger and upgrade a tier? How does that even work?" Jay asked, paying full attention to this new concept.

"Do you remember when I told you that I couldn't use beast souls?"

"Yeah." Jay nodded. Kanaria also confirmed it. Clovis indeed said that he couldn't use beast souls because his grandfather told him not to.

That was why Clovis could say, "I would need to buy pet food and mix it with my own blood. It's said to have the nutritional value to enhance the beast's strength."

"!!!" Jay dropped his jaw.

"Does that mean everyone can do it as long as they don't have a beast soul in their body?" Kanaria frowned.

Meanwhile, Erwin noticed an even more troublesome possibility. "No. If that's the case, doesn't it mean people can use children to grow beasts?"

"I'm not sure how it works, but maybe I'm different?" Clovis pointed at himself, shifting their thoughts to only focus on him.

The others couldn't help but fall silent. They couldn't deny that Clovis was different.

For Erwin, Clovis was the one with the Hacfield family's bloodline. For Ragna, Clovis had unique antiques that somehow boosted their abilities. For Melody, Clovis was someone who might be able to reach Tier 9 in the future.

Kanaria thought no such thing since Clovis' safety was what she had in mind, but Jay was different. Jay considered Clovis his rival.

And because of that, he thought about one thing.

"The fact that you are different... No, the thing that makes you different... Isn't it the ability to reach Tier 9?" Jay asked. "If we eliminate all possible scenarios, we might reach that answer. To reach Tier 9, you need a unique ability. What if your unique ability can actually do something for the beasts?"

There was tension inside the living room. On the one hand, if what Jay said was correct, it gave a reason why they wanted to get Clovis. On the other hand, this also meant that Clovis' unique ability was much different than they originally thought. Even Erwin, who thought he had seen everything about Clovis, doubted his own eyes at this point.

Jay's misunderstanding actually helped him. Looking at their shocked faces made him feel guilty, but he couldn't tell them about Another World Mall for the time being.

"Maybe... Maybe not. I don't know much either." Clovis shook his head helplessly. His team thought that Jay's reasoning was feasible and chose to believe it.

"Well, if this is truly the case, you are able to change the world. But if your blood is that precious, I'm afraid that there will be a lot of people coming for us." Erwin's expression turned grim.

"It doesn't matter. Our goal remains the same. We'll just become the best exploration team out there." Ragna shrugged.

"True." Melody also didn't care much. Clovis would definitely check about it with his mother, so at that time, she could also ask his mother to help her brother.

Kanaria finally understood the burden that Clovis carried. She wondered if this was the reason why Clovis never accepted her invitation.

Jay, on the other hand, became even more fired up. For him, the unique ability had to be awakened, meaning that he might have one but had yet to awaken it. He didn't plan to drop the competition between them just because he didn't have the unique ability right now.

Clovis smiled wryly, never thinking that the bullshit would actually work this well.

Chapter 435 Persuading the Team

After they calmed down, Clovis turned to Melody, asking, "Is there a beast that is only Tier 1 but has a useful physical ability like a dog?"

"Ah, you mean their sense of smell?" Melody looked at the data. "Let me check for a second."

"So we're going to fight with a beast next? Not that I don't mind, but I have never taken care of a pet, let alone a beast." Erwin scratched the back of his head.

"But if you think about it, having a beast to assist us is actually quite helpful. If they can track or something, it's going to be extremely useful in several cases. In addition, they are not easy to die, and their value will soar the moment they become stronger," explained Jay.

"That's true." Erwin couldn't deny it.

"No. What if the beast can become as strong as us? I mean, Clovis' family has artifacts. Are they effective for beasts as well?" Ragna asked. The impact of artifacts changed his life, so he was more sensitive about these accessories and clothes.

"I'm thinking about finding it myself." Clovis scratched the back of his head. "How about you guys go ahead and investigate the next two cities? Meanwhile, I'll be staying here to look for the beast."

"Isn't this too dangerous?"

"Indeed."

Clovis had expected this reaction, so he added, "I mean, the beast will certainly not be too big. At least, it should be able to hide inside the car. Unless necessary, I don't want to show it to others for the time being."

"True. It will make an uproar if people realize that a beast is fighting alongside a human." Jay nodded.

"How about letting one of us accompany you here?" Melody asked.

"Well, it'll be a bit troublesome because we need to hurry up with the other investigation. I used to live here for more than a decade, so I know this city very well. I could investigate the city and find a beast even if I go alone." Clovis smiled wryly, indirectly implying that there was another reason that he couldn't disclose.

Kanaria squinted her eyes. "Give me a reason."

"I want the best beast for our team. You should know that because the beast wave is coming much faster than our original schedule, no one is able to reach a higher tier, right?" Clovis asked.

"True." Jay nodded. "I'm still a bit too far... probably need another one month if I want to reach Tier 3."

"I'm still too far." Melody shook her head helplessly. Ragna also felt the same. Both of them were Tier 3, so they didn't have the help of Clovis' food.

Meanwhile, Erwin had just gotten to Tier 4, so there was no need to think much about it.

"Although I don't want to admit it, our current strength is not enough to go against two Tier 5 humans." Clovis indirectly mentioned the two assassins. "Even if Erwin somehow is able to stop one of them, buying us a precious time to take down the other one, do you think it'll be enough?"

"Ragna and I can stop the frontal assault, but..." Jay suddenly fell silent, almost forgetting the fact that they managed to do it because they managed to catch the assassins off guard. If it was a head-on fight, the result would be similar to fighting the Tier 5 spider.

Kanaria, Melody, and Clovis had to work together to somehow beat the Tier 5 assassin. But there was no assurance that it would work or that Erwin was able to stop the Tier 5 assassin by himself.

"It's not that I'm looking down on you guys, but I think that having a strong beast will increase our chance to win," explained Clovis.

"The beast can help me or help you guys when necessary. And if it has a special sense or something, it'll also be helpful in another way. So that's why you want to choose a beast yourself? Then again, this is what your family has left behind, and you're the only one who can train the beast." Erwin dropped the case. It wasn't his position to actually intervene.

Unlike Melody, Kanaria didn't bother to argue anymore. She chose to respect his decision and stood up. "Alright. We understand. We'll go ahead without you. However, you only have two days to do it.

Two days later, we'll be meeting in a certain spot and returning to our city for the last preparation against the incoming beast wave."

Kanaria chose to trust Clovis, knowing full well that Clovis did it for the sake of the group.

"Thank you." Clovis nodded with a solemn expression. He felt bad for lying and hoped that there would be a time he could share it with everyone, but that would probably be far in the future.

"Well..." Jay couldn't say anything since Kanaria had agreed. Ragna was the same. Melody smiled wryly, wondering if she could say the same thing during their time in the wasteland. Erwin wasn't convinced, but he had no other choice when the others had agreed.

"In that case, we'll take our leave here. You should be able to see the beast's information through the Skyglasses, so get what you want." Melody closed the screen as if she had finished all the necessary work.

"Thanks."

"Alright. Let's get going!" Kanaria waved her hand.

Clovis waved back. He watched them leave.

He was fortunate that Hana wasn't here. If she was here, she would do anything to dig up more information. The value of taming a beast was much higher than the beast souls after all.

But if she found out about Another World Mall, it would become even more complicated.

Nevertheless, his team was already gone. It had been a while since he was alone, but this way, he could really find all the beasts he wanted. Clovis took out a small lens that he bought. Blue said that he could find a beast close to Tier 2 with this. "If I can somehow make the beast reach Tier 2 in one night, it'll be wonderful. I wonder what kind of beast I will get."