

World Mall 86

Chapter 86 Join?

"He really did it." Melody sucked a cold breath. "A Tier 1 human defeating a Tier 3 beast, huh? The proconsul underestimated him at first, but it didn't change the fact that he managed to kill that beast. And what was that atmosphere earlier... It felt like he changed for a while."

Melody let out a sigh. No matter how curious she was, she was too lazy to find out the truth.

"Clovis!" Suddenly, Kanaria's voice echoed in everyone's ears.

Clovis actually fell to his knees as his hands were shaking uncontrollably. While panting, Clovis said, "Get the essence of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 beasts before getting away from here. We don't have a lot of time before the rest of the beasts catch up."

"But you..." Kanaria was worried about him, while Melody grabbed his hand and lifted him up on her shoulder. "I will take care of him."

Kanaria wanted to say something, but considering Melody was the one finding the route, it was better if she left with Clovis first. Kanaria glanced at Jay and said, "You should go too, Jay. I'll take care of the rest."

Jay nodded. However, he didn't walk away completely. He followed Melody for a while and stopped so that he wasn't too far away to help Kanaria in case of an emergency.

They actually entered the building and broke the window to move to the other side, using these buildings as a wall to hide from the beasts.

Meanwhile, Kanaria gathered the essence of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 beasts. There were only two beasts in total, so it didn't take too long.

While waiting for the essence to be filled, Kanaria was looking around. She could hear the series of roars that the beast wave produced, but it was still far enough from her.

But she felt something weird happening on the horizon.

"Hmm? Are my eyes playing with me?" Kanaria squinted her eyes. She could see a stick, probably an antenna or something, moving from its spot.

"!!!" The moment she realized what happened, she hurriedly picked up her sniper rifle, aiming at this stick.

Unfortunately, the scope wasn't big enough to see this person's face, but she was sure that this stick was actually a human.

She had two options. First, she took a look with binoculars, hoping that it was enough to see this person's face. Or the second option was to shoot right away even if the probability of missing was high due to the distance.

Kanaria chose the latter.

Bang!

The bullet flew straight toward this person, albeit the wind slightly curved it to the side, hitting the wall instead of the person.

The figure looked startled and hurriedly hid himself.

Jay raised his sword, ready for another fight.

Even Clovis and Melody stopped and turned around, wondering what had happened.

"The beast wave?"

They moved toward the opposite side of the building to take a look at Kanaria, who had lowered her sniper rifle. Jay came up to her while holding his saber, but it seemed that their conversation lasted only a few seconds before Kanaria pulled out the syringe from both beasts and escaped with Jay.

They left behind all the beasts they had defeated and regrouped with Clovis and Melody.

Because of that shot, the beast wave knew where to go by following the origin of that sound.

"Kanaria? What's wrong?" Clovis asked weakly.

"I saw a figure in the distance. It escaped after I shot." Kanaria reported.

"..." Jay remained silent, thinking that the most troubled person in the group was actually Melody, who got dragged into this without any knowledge.

To his surprise, Melody simply walked again while saying, "Anyway, we are still not safe yet because of that shot. Follow me."

Jay and Kanaria exchanged looks, while Clovis remained silent. At the very least, they had to be in a safe area first before talking about it.

As expected, the beasts were enraged the moment they saw all these corpses. However, the shock of seeing the ruler of the city among the corpses replaced that anger.

And Melody was watching their every movement through the radar.

"It seems that they are pretty confused right now. The Tier 3 beast's essence should fetch pretty high. There is also a mission to kill that proconsul, so we can also get the reward from the city itself," said Melody with a calm expression.

Jay and Kanaria were looking at Melody dumbfoundedly, while Clovis asked, "Are you not going to ask about it?"

Melody shrugged. "A mission is always full of dangers. It's as simple as that. Though, I have to increase my rate accordingly."

There was one reason why Kanaria sounded so confident. Even though she had joined them, she had erased all kinds of information that would lead to them. The only thing others knew would be them bringing a certain 'operator' with them and returning safely. There would be no mention of her.

If Melody revealed this card, Clovis and the others could use it to their advantage to threaten her.

On the other hand, Clovis offered, "15,000 per day. Along with the initial agreement regarding the reward of the mission, including the mission to kill the overlord of the Severend City. What do you think?"

With this alone, she should have no problem earning a hundred thousand. After some contemplation, she asked a question before agreeing to this arrangement. "Are you still planning to kill the initial target?"

"Yes."

"In your condition?"

"I'm just tired. I can still wield my weapon even with this injury. Besides, Jay will become the main vanguard this time. Because of what happened earlier, I'm thinking about completing the mission as soon as possible and retreating to avoid any further conflicts."

Melody nodded her head. "Alright. You've got a deal. I'll assist you guys as a mobile operator if you want to kill the initial target quickly."

Clovis looked at Melody with a solemn expression as though he were thinking about something.

Melody furrowed her eyebrows, feeling a bit uncomfortable with that stare. "What?"

"Melody. Do you want to join our group?"

Chapter 87 Clovis's Opinion

"Melody. Do you want to join our group?"

"..." Melody didn't answer immediately, but her expression showed everything. Her eyes rolled, and she bit her lips as if she smelled something disgusting.

"You look annoyed." Clovis gave a wry smile. Even though he had expected this answer, he was still surprised that Melody's expression could be that descriptive.

"I don't mind going into danger because it's my job, but I don't want to be a part of a group that will be constantly on the run. It's just too troublesome." Melody shook her head.

Because Clovis had been carried by her, he perfectly understood the reason. Her body was completely drenched by her own sweat. Even he or Jay, who were facing the most brutal fight, didn't sweat that much.

It seemed that she was sweating far too much. Even her lips were dry. If this continued, she would be the first to fall from dehydration.

It was no wonder why she wanted to be a camping operator and remained inside the car the whole time. If not for the special situation, she wouldn't even bother.

However, most operators would simply leave them alone and have nothing to do with them when the beast wave occurred. Only someone like Melody would be insane enough to actually help them despite knowing that this beast wave was artificially created just to kill them.

This was the reason why Clovis actually tried to recruit her.

"What if I give up half of my portion of money and add it to your portion?" Clovis asked.

"..." Melody's eyebrows twitched, but she soon shook her head. "No. It's too much for me. While I can see that you guys are strong, much stronger than the usual Tier 1 humans, you will attract too much trouble, which I don't want to be a part of."

"Alright then." Clovis let out a long sigh. "I thought that it would be fun to do some explorations together. See Kanaria? She became more active because of you."

"What?" Kanaria raised her voice but soon stopped because she felt a bit apologetic for accusing her. "Well, I have to apologize first. I was too harsh earlier."

Melody shook her head. "It's not about that. I mean, just looking at you guys makes me realize that I have been too lazy. And eventually, I will be left behind because of that laziness. It's better if I don't join you to avoid hindering your progress."

Clovis nodded in agreement. "All right. I don't mean to put you in a difficult situation."

"What are you planning to do next then?" Melody asked.

Clovis thought for a moment. "Is there a way to recover those beasts? At least, gathering their essence?"

"Aren't you being reckless?" Kanaria was the first one to stop Clovis, especially because Clovis was injured and Jay was exhausted.

However, Melody nodded her head. "There is, but she has to lead the beasts away. The loud gunshot should be enough, and I will also prepare the escape route."

"Huh?" Kanaria blinked her eyes a few times. The two guys wouldn't be able to do it, so if Kanaria was luring them, Melody would be the one to do the job.

"What?" Melody rolled her eyes. "I told you earlier that I would be supporting you guys as a mobile operator."

It seemed that Clovis had noticed that and immediately took advantage of her statement.

"In that case, this is my plan." Clovis took a deep breath. "We are going to retrieve as much essence as possible. While luring them, I want you to check the beasts to see if there are Tier 2 beasts among them, specifically our target."

"Got it." Melody and Kanaria nodded their heads.

"If our initial target is among them, then we will carefully separate them or wait until they disperse. If not, we will head to our next target immediately. In the meantime, I will try to restore my stamina and recover from my injury as much as possible."

Kanaria and Melody nodded and immediately stood up. Kanaria said, "We'll leave you for now. Can you guys take care of yourself?"

"Even though we are weak right now, we can still fight." Clovis waved his hand, assuring her that everything was going to be alright.

As soon as they left, Jay couldn't help but ask, "Are you sure about it?"

"About what?" Clovis tilted his head in confusion.

"Inviting Melody to the group."

Clovis thought for a moment before asking, "Do you have the same opinion as Kanaria about her laziness?"

"Well..." Jay didn't say it, but as someone who worked as hard as he did, he felt a bit uncomfortable when seeing Melody's character.

"Do you believe what Melody said earlier? About her being a burden."

"Yeah. If she doesn't intend to improve, then we shouldn't really force her. Besides, it will be good for both parties to just walk their own paths." Jay nodded without hesitation.

"Yet, Melody actually stepped out of her comfort zone and turned into a mobile operator. And from the looks of it, she was extremely adept at it. Although it was true that the AI helped her, couldn't you think that she worked hard to make her life more comfortable?"

"In my eyes, Melody is not lazy. She works hard to pursue a comfortable life, which enables her to laze around. If push comes to shove, she will do everything in her power to do it... in fact, she might work harder than any of us here." Clovis smiled confidently.

Jay looked at Clovis for a moment. After those words, he realized that while he could work harder than Clovis, he still couldn't be compared to his eyes for people.

'I guess this is his unique trait. He doesn't have a high evolution rate, but he has sharp eyes for people. If Melody is that good, then I don't really mind.' Jay sighed before saying, "You shouldn't force her though."

"I know. I will try a little bit, but if she still refuses, then I will give up." Clovis nodded.

Chapter 88 Incoming Beast Wave?

Bang!

Kanaria seemed to have begun with their plan. As expected, the beasts turned around and started running back.

After that shot, Kanaria escaped through the route Melody had prepared, allowing her to return to the group without being found out by the beasts.

However, she was still concerned about the hidden enemies. Those humans would definitely not take this matter lightly, considering they were here to kill Clovis.

Meanwhile, Melody was observing the beasts with her camera to capture the beasts that came to them earlier. Whether it was fortunate or unfortunate, the beast was not among them.

Hence, Melody came out of her hiding spot and started gathering the essence after the beasts left the area.

It took them quite a while, but they managed to retrieve everything they had hunted for.

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Main City.

"Sir." A young woman entered an office. Inside was a muscular man who once helped Clovis get his explorer identification, Gregory.

"What's wrong?"

"The situation seems to be unstable right now." The woman showed him a paper. "Please take a look at this."

Gregory furrowed his eyebrows.

"Hmm?" Gregory's expression turned solemn the moment he read the information. "Are you sure about this?"

"Yes."

Gregory let out a long sigh. "Alright, I understand. You can leave the room first."

The assistant politely bowed before leaving the room. Gregory, on the other hand, covered his face with both hands.

The paper contained two pieces of news that seemed directly printed by the news media.

The first one had a title, "Commercialization Battleship." The image contained a giant boat that flew into the sky. However, it had a few engines that let it fly. And it also showed a lot of weapons that would be used to attack the beasts.

The second one was the culprit for his frustration.

"A Beast Wave destroyed Swolden City."

"..." Gregory furrowed his eyebrows. "Swolden City is located not far from us. There are a lot of Tier 5 Explorers in that city. To think they would fall just like this... This is not looking good for our city.

"If this continues, all the bases on the eastern side of our city are going to collapse. And if the cities in the south go down as well, it means that we won't be able to protect them anymore."

Gregory let out a long sigh. He couldn't help but remember Clovis, whom he met not long ago.

"I don't know if I have to say this is fortunate or unfortunate... The reason why those beasts don't attack us right away is because of the existence of Clovis Hacfield. At the same time, the reason they want to attack us is because of him. I don't know if the beasts have reached an agreement with a human organization or not, but I'm sure of one thing.

They are afraid of the third madman being produced."

Gregory thought for a moment. "If I'm not wrong, Vania Renvolt was directing those kids to go on a raid on Starion City Base. Right now, it's only a Tier 3 Fallen Territory, but... I'm not sure what's going to happen there."

After some contemplation, Gregory muttered, "I don't think the Rusth family and the Drake Group will be silent for long."

It seemed that Gregory had made his decision. "Yuna."

"Yes, sir?"

"Investigate the Rusth family, especially the flow of their money. And track down that genius Ivan."

"But doing this will..." She looked worried. The action had a simple meaning. Their group would stop being neutral, which would cause a conflict with these people.

"I won't say it the second time."

"I understand." She had no choice but to do it when the leader asked her to do so.

"To think that they would kill tens of thousands of people just to eliminate a single kid." Gregory sighed.

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Rizben Underground City.

Vina was training her body until she heard her device ringing.

"Mhmm?" She was confused at first since no one was supposed to call her during this time. But her doubt was cleared the moment she saw the word 'Master' in the call.

"Teacher?" Vina hurriedly picked up the call. "Is there anything I can do to help you?"

"I've heard about it." The voice looked playful as though he didn't mind what happened not long ago.

"I apologize for causing trouble for you, Teacher."

"It's alright. In fact, this Clovis piqued my interest. To think that he would be capable of defeating a Tier 2 beast..."

"Actually..." Vina told him about everything she could figure out from the corpse of the snake.

"So, you're saying that it was due to Ivan leaving a few wounds on the snake that allowed them to plant poison inside the beast?"

"According to what I saw, yes." Vina thought that this information would make her teacher less excited.

On the contrary, it seemed that he was becoming more interested in this guy called Clovis.

"Interesting. No matter what everyone says, it doesn't change the fact that Ivan is the loser now. I never thought that there would be another interesting guy in this city."

Vina fell silent for a moment. "Teacher. Why did you send me to Ivan?"

"What's wrong? You don't like it? He's helped you, hasn't he?"

"I do admit that he has helped me, but most of the time, he is the cause of the trouble." Vina wanted to say Ivan was foolish, but without actually saying the words.

"In that case, you may go back to the surface. There is no need to follow that kid anymore. I'm sure that the current situation is going to change."

"Alright. Since I've got your permission, I'll return to the surface immediately."

"You don't really need my permission. Why are you so stiff? You should be more flexible."

Vina sighed. "I'm hanging up."

"Wait, wait. There is one more thing."

Vina paused, waiting for him to tell her about it.

"Before completely cutting off from Ivan, you should tell him about the raid that will be happening in a few weeks. He will definitely go there to restore his reputation."

Vina didn't understand the last request, but she still said, "Alright. I'll try."

Chapter 89 Killing Melody?

"What do you think?" The mysterious guy asked his partner.

"To think that she was able to spot me and almost hit me... it seems that the Renvolt is not lacking any successor. Still, we have tested the machine. Since it works, we can prepare for the next plan. We now know that Tier 3 Beast is not enough to kill him."

"Well, the Drake Group and the Rusth are supporting us. We can definitely have a blast next time. It's just..."

"Are you concerned about the operator?"

"Yeah. That operator is pretty talented. Erasing the data and removing herself from the equation while still helping them."

"In that case, let's eliminate her."

"I agree. Killing her is not related to the warning of that old madman, so it should be fine if we target her. However, the problem is that... there is a chance that killing her won't change anything."

"Are you saying that they don't have that relationship?"

"Yeah. That's why I have a suggestion. We will eliminate her while involving him. In fact, we can even pull that genius Ivan to mess with him. This way, he won't have a lot of time to hunt."

"Oh?! Wait a minute. Isn't that brat a charmer? Why doesn't he make that operator his girlfriend or something? We can see their reaction to measure how much he wants that operator."

"That's a good idea. It'll definitely annoy him. And if the conflict between them rises even further, there will be a huge chance that they are going to kill each other."

"We have to stop that, right?"

"Yeah, but after they cut his limbs. Then, we just feed him to the beasts. Technically, the beasts are the killers."

"This is going to be interesting." The guy smiled. He remembered the conflict between Clovis and Ivan. With just a little spark, the immature Ivan would definitely take the bait and provoke Clovis.

"In the end, he might be a genius as an explorer, but he is certainly not smart."

It seemed that both of them had reached an agreement. They didn't bother to fight Clovis anymore after the death of the Tier 3 beast. Hence, they retreated to prepare for the next plan.

Meanwhile, Clovis and the others had actually returned to the car with their loot.

"So, we're going to this area?" Kanaria pointed at the map.

"Yeah. That's the spot opposite the jamming device, so I think they are not affected." Clovis nodded.
"Let's just kill our target and leave the city right away."

"A good choice." Melody nodded.

"By the way, did you find anything, Melody?" Clovis glanced at Melody, whose eyes were glued to the screen. It seemed that she was processing something.

"Yeah. I am currently calculating everything, especially the electromagnetic wave that came from the jamming device as well as the sound wave that came from a different direction. It seemed that there were two parties that wanted to kill you. I didn't find them on the radar after all this, so they might have retreated." Melody explained.

"Sound wave?" Clovis frowned. He didn't know anything about this.

"Yes. I think the sound wave was the culprit for that beast wave." Melody nodded. "I'm not very sure about this, but there is a rumor that an item that can attract beasts will appear in the market."

"What? Are you serious?" Kanaria widened her eyes.

"Yeah. I don't know the back story, but it's pretty clear that there is a mule in the city, and this thing can do good or bad depending on the owner."

"If it's used by the military, they can direct the beasts and eliminate them. But if it's the bad guy, what happens to us will happen to others." Clovis's expression turned serious.

"You are not trying to be a hero, right?" Melody's eyebrows twitched.

"Of course not." Clovis shook his head. The reason for his change of expression was because of what happened in his previous city. There was a chance that the beast wave was artificially created by this machine.

Melody suddenly projected a 3D image of their previous location. There were two red dots that were releasing waves. The first one was the suspected jamming device while the second one was the device Melody was talking about.

"Hmm." Clovis contemplated. "To think that you would be able to do all this. Why do you even get that bad rating?"

Melody pointed at Kanaria, which was enough for an answer.

"I'm sorry for being too harsh." Kanaria sighed.

"It doesn't really matter." Melody shrugged. "Anyway, I will change my location so that if your enemies are still coming, I can find them first and prevent us from being surrounded like before. Then again, without the Tier 3 beasts, I don't think the rest will be a threat to us."

"Mhmm. I don't have any problem with the arrangement, just make sure you don't underestimate any beasts. There is also a chance that the jamming device will mess with us again. So, don't go too far."

As soon as they reached the area, Jay and Clovis began to look around the area. They didn't engage the beasts for the time being, avoiding any ruckuses.

The area looked like a shopping district. There were a lot of shops around the area, but the beasts were nowhere to be found.

Eventually, they reached a shopping mall that had been abandoned. Clovis wanted to look around this shopping mall since this might be a reference for future updates of his Another World Mall.

However, his time was cut short.

"I spot our target." Kanaria looked at the beast through her scope.

In that instant, Melody sent the data to Clovis and Jay before creating a route for them.

"I will be stopping the beast. Jay will take it down. This will be our last battle, so do your best." Clovis held his swords with half of his original strength, rushing toward his spot.

"Let's see whether this mutated beast is stronger or not than the Tier 3 beast." Jay smiled, excitedly.

Chapter 90 Easily Killing Their Target

As Kanaria described, the Tier 2 Thylacoleo was a large predator with powerful jaws and large, retractable thumb claws. The color of its fur was quite dark, adapting to the mall's environment, which had no light.

Because of the mall's structure, it was hard to see the beast if they didn't focus.

"Melody?" Clovis frowned. Fortunately, there was some light outside, but the sun was about to set soon, so they didn't have a lot of time.

"The AI will assist you in identifying the beast," Melody replied as she remained on the third floor.

Kanaria was standing on the fourth floor while Jay and Clovis remained on the first floor, ready to engage the beast.

"There are no beasts around us, so you are free to get wild."

"Roger." Clovis and Jay exchanged nods.

Now that they had gotten the confirmation, they went to the section where they found the Thylacoleo.

As expected of the marsupial lion, its instinct was pretty sharp. Before Clovis and Jay could ambush him, the lion turned around and pounced on Clovis.

Clovis wouldn't be able to stop the lion in his current condition. However, it didn't mean that he would be useless.

Instead of hitting the lion with the sword, Clovis actually jumped to the side as if he were struggling.

The lion immediately rotated its body so that it could land feet first while facing Clovis.

Clovis tossed the short sword to the Tier 2 lion, albeit the latter skillfully dodged it. Seeing that the beast was about to make another leap, Clovis ran to the giant opening where there was a void leading to the floors above them. Kanaria was waiting over there.

Seeing how Jay was approaching him from the other side, the lion had no choice but to chase after Clovis, planning to kill him first before Jay could catch up.

Clovis retracted his short sword before pulling out his gun, aiming at the beast.

Out of reflex, the beast leaped to the side to avoid the bullets, but it turned out Clovis was playing with him. The pistol was just a fake to create a bigger gap between them, allowing him to reach the mall's entertainment zone.

When the beast noticed the change of scenery, it sensed a danger that didn't come from Clovis. However, it was already too late to return as Jay was straight behind him.

Hence, the beast pounced on Clovis, planning to kill him first before anything happened.

Clovis waved his long sword with all the strength he could muster, but the beast's sharp teeth actually caught the sword, preventing Clovis from completing his swing.

At the same time, the two paws pushed Clovis to the ground.

"Tsk." Clovis held his sword as hard as possible, but the lion was shaking its head to take the sword away from him. As a result, Clovis let it go while raising the short sword. If he could pierce the head, everything would be over.

However, the beast pressed Clovis's hands, knocking the short sword away. With this, Clovis had no other item to protect himself and the lion only needed to take a big bite on his head.

When the situation started getting awry, Clovis actually smiled.

After all, his aim was only to buy time.

"!!!" The lion's instinct kicked in as it suddenly leaped to the side as Jay's blade suddenly flashed above Clovis. Unfortunately, it didn't hit the lion.

Ro—! The lion wanted to let out a roar to scare them while calling reinforcement, but a bullet suddenly hit the beast's jaw.

It was Kanaria. While the beast's instinct should be able to sense the danger, it was still not fast enough to avoid the bullets. When the beast dodged Clovis's gun, it was looking at and matching the gun's movement. On the other hand, the beast didn't know Kanaria was on the fourth floor due to the shorts' camouflage ability.

The lion turned its head around, seeing Melody pointing her gun at him.

There was only one thing to do. The beast turned around, trying to escape. However, Clovis took advantage of the distraction to shoot the beast from behind.

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

The lion's right feet went limp as the balance shifted abruptly. Jay hurriedly closed in and slashed the beast's back before jumping away.

This Tier 2 Thylacoleo tried to growl, but Kanaria released another shot on its stomach.

Without hesitation, Jay closed the gap once again and swiftly severed the beast's head.

This was a Tier 2 mutated beast, yet Clovis and the others hunted it easily.

Although Jay wanted to fight this beast by himself, he knew that the situation was a bit urgent and they had to leave the city as soon as possible before another beast wave happened.

After killing this Tier 2 beast, Melody came down and extracted the essence, while Jay walked to Clovis and extended his hand.

"How is it? Getting pushed down by a beast instead of a woman?"

Clovis chuckled while taking his hand. "If you want to know the answer, try it yourself."

"There is no sign of disruption in the area. I see no beasts on the radar, so I believe that we have accomplished our mission." Melody explained. "We also have completed two other missions: one related to the Tier 3 overlord, and the other is another Tier 2 beast. I will provide pictures of them as well to make it easier to claim the reward."

"Got it. Thank you, Melody." Clovis nodded.

"Then, are we going back now? Or do we camp for the night?"

"If we leave right now, we should make it in time. Though, Jay has to drive it a bit faster. Travelling in the dark is dangerous after all," Kanaria replied while going down the stairs.

"In that case, let's go back immediately. I take it that you are not too tired to drive, Jay?"

"Sure." Jay nodded. "But I'm not dealing with everything after we reach the city."

"Of course. You can even stay in my house today and I will bring out the chicken nuggets again." Clovis gave him a thumbs up.

"I'm in." Jay smirked while Kanaria said, "You better not forget about me."

Clovis chuckled. "Still, everyone, thank you for your hard work."