

Chaos' Heir 51

Chapter 51 - Trick

Khan could return to the training hall right after the lessons ended. A few members of the special class tried to exchange some polite words, but he didn't have time to waste during that week.

Lieutenant Unchai didn't say anything about the second week. Khan had understood that he would have to face the Ef'i, but he was oblivious to everything else.

One week with the training hall wasn't enough to learn much, but Khan planned to do his best to improve his battle style. After all, he felt that it would be a long time before he obtained a similar chance.

Khan had already developed a faint schedule. He required a bit more info about the training hall to perfect that plan, but he believed that everything would become clear after the afternoon.

'I should be able to test different martial arts today,' Khan thought while entering the training hall and plugging his phone into the floor. 'I must take full advantage of the longer days.'

Khan ordered some food before tapping his foot on the floor and browsing through the menus to select his training program. The system had countless martial arts in store, and it even gave brief descriptions of their style.

The system also described the points of each martial art. Khan immediately found those which had achieved a fifty or slightly lower score and proceeded to pick the first one on the list. Then, he selected the fifth level, and the gears inside the wall activated.

A tall puppet with multiple reinforcements on its arms, legs, torso, and neck came out of the wall and took a defensive stance. That dummy was far bigger than the other, and it didn't appear nearly as fast.

Khan shot ahead and began to release a storm of kicks. The puppet didn't budge and endured all the blows, and his arm eventually shot forward when it found an opening in Khan's guard.

Khan had left that opening on purpose. The puppet finally gave him a chance to pierce its guard with a flying kick that required a horizontal spin.

His leg slammed on the puppet's head and bent its metal, but the dummy seemed able to endure the blow. Its arms shot toward the airborne Khan and tried to grab his feet.

Khan planted his feet on the puppet's chest and performed a backflip to dodge the incoming attack. He landed on the floor perfectly, and the dummy quickly resumed its defensive stance.

'I'll take it down nice and slow,' Khan concluded in his mind before resuming his offensive.

The fifth level appeared far easier now that the system didn't choose good matchups against the Lightning-demon style. Khan could learn to face different martial arts without suffering many injuries. It was perfect for him.

Khan's new schedule soon took form. He practiced inside the training hall for the entire afternoon and gained a general idea of how difficult the fifth level was without data about the Lightning-demon style. He even tested his power against different martial arts, but the list was still long.

The experience gathered during the afternoon made Khan understand that he could use the mornings to continue testing his power against the fifth level since it didn't inflict many injuries. That would allow him to attend the lessons and leave him with an entire day to push his limits.

Khan had the flat for himself, but his friends came to visit him once he returned inside the building. He was exhausted, but Luke, Bruce, and Martha wanted to hear more about the Ef'i.

"Their tail is dangerous," Khan revealed. "They are also quite strong, so I suggest you meditate a lot during this week."

"How did you even get the chance to fight one of them?" Luke asked. "We only saw the Ef'i when we came out of the teleport. They act as ghosts here."

"They must train underground," Bruce revealed. "I've seen a few tunnels inside the mountain. I bet we'll go there if Lieutenant Unchai selects us."

"How strong can the others even be?" Khan wondered. "I should have defeated the best among them. They shouldn't be able to do much in a mere week."

"Maybe they have something in store," Martha suggested. "The Ef'i are an honorable warrior race, but they also aim for victory like every other species. I wouldn't be surprised if they made you fight the second strongest or even less."

"Who is paranoid now?" Khan mocked Martha, but the latter ignored him.

"Well, Khan should be able to improve with the training hall," Bruce announced. "I suspect he'll be far stronger after this week."

The boys and girl eventually left Khan alone and gave him the time to approach his meditations and mental exercises. He still had the eighth lesson to clear, and improvements struggled to arrive.

The week went by quickly. The schedule of the recruits was quite dull and tiring since they had to become used to having thirty hours in a day. Still, their endurance inevitably improved due to Lieutenant Unchai's hellish training method.

Khan felt like he was in heaven. He could use the training hall every day, and his combat abilities inevitably improved. He even got the chance to clear some of the sixth levels when the puppet's martial arts were a favorable match-up for the Lightning-demon style.

The constant stress and gathering of battle experience sharpened his mind and benefitted his mental training. Pain and struggles could improve the resilience of his brain, especially since Khan didn't forget about the mental exercises when fighting.

Lieutenant Unchai gathered the recruits in front of their dorm on the first day of the second week. The soldier wore an angry expression that didn't seem to target Khan and the others. He was livid, but the kids ignored the nature of that feeling.

"I made a mistake," Lieutenant Unchai suddenly announced. "Teco has tricked me. I showed the strongest of you to his group, but he didn't do the same. I don't like losing discussions, so let's avoid the topic altogether."

Khan shot a glance toward Martha. She had ended up being correct about the Ef'i, but she didn't appear happy about the matter.

"Let's move now," Lieutenant Unchai shouted. "The Ef'i have prepared a surprise for us. I don't want you to be late."

The recruits felt excited, but they remained silent during the trip. It seemed that Lieutenant Unchai would bring all the kids to the Ef'i, but their destination remained unclear until they approached the mountain and a tunnel unfolded in their vision.

The Lieutenant led the recruits inside the tunnel. The red-brown rocks and terrain seemed darker there, and vegetation even appeared.

Khan didn't know what to say in front of the strange plants that filled the tunnel. Even the grass was red, and a few purple flowers occupied random spots in that scenery.

The scent radiated by those plants was quite intoxicating. It made the recruits' eyes red and forced them to shed tears. The mana inside their bodies activated to fend off the negative effects of that odor, but some of the kids with low attunement didn't manage to regain their senses even after a few minutes passed.

Lieutenant Unchai promptly took a series of pills and shoved them inside the mouths of the recruits that had yet to grow used to the scent. Their complexion immediately improved after that event, so the group could proceed on their march.

A large arena eventually appeared after the corridor. A series of Ef'i were already waiting for their opponents on one side of the underground hall, and they didn't hesitate to perform polite salutes when they saw Khan.

Some of the aliens revealed shame when they glanced at a tall Ef'i sitting at some distance from their group. Khan moved his attention on him, and the latter eventually opened his eyes when he heard the arrival of his opponents.

"[They are thinner than I imagined]," The unfamiliar Ef'i announced while standing up and patting his broad chest. "[I hope they can put up a decent fight]!"

Teco came out of one of the tunnels connected to the arena and slapped the unfamiliar Ef'i head. He wasn't pleased about his arrogant behavior, but his focus soon moved on Lieutenant Unchai.

"[I hope this is enough to forgive me]," Teco announced. "[Humans are winning too often lately]."

"[Just show me the goods]," Lieutenant Unchai replied, and the Ef'i took out a small metal sphere from his pocket.

"That's faswite!" Luke suddenly announced at the sight of the silver mineral, and the entirety of his group showed interest in that material.

Chapter 52 - Tournament

"That chunk of faswite should be enough to create five or six synthetic cores," Luke announced while turning toward Khan. "You have to win. Gaining access to training halls back on Earth won't be a problem if you defeat them."

Khan's eyes lit up at those words. He felt interested in facing the unfamiliar Ef'i, but that additional reward made everything far more appealing.

"The rules of the tournament are simple," Lieutenant Unchai suddenly announced. "You will fight every day until you face all the recruits in the enemy group. The side that gets more victories will obtain the faswite."

Tension began to build among the recruits on Khan's side. They didn't expect their role to be so important. Most of them wanted to rely on Khan, but that system would require everyone to do their part.

"There is an exception," Lieutenant Unchai added. "A group will automatically win the tournament if one of their recruits wins every battle. Remain unbeaten, and the Global Army will reward you."

The tension that had accumulated previously quickly vanished. Khan ignored the many glances that landed on his figure, but he realized how important his role had become. The tournament wasn't a matter of personal gains anymore. The Global Army as a whole would benefit from his victories.

Lieutenant Unchai walked toward Khan and lowered his head before whispering something to his ear. "You and the new alien will fight on the last day of the week. I'll also notify you whenever he steps on the arena, so make sure to come back here to watch him."

Khan understood what Lieutenant Unchai wanted him to do. He would need to fight only two times every day since each group contained less than twenty recruits. Khan could go back to the training hall once he completed his battles.

Still, learning how his final opponent fought was as essential as his training. Khan limited himself to nod at those orders. He didn't like to be at the center of the attention, but having so much value in the eyes of a Lieutenant could only benefit his plans.

"Go in then," Lieutenant Unchai announced before pushing Khan toward the centers of the arena.

Khan turned toward the Lieutenant, and the latter didn't hesitate to explain the schedule that he had prepared for him. "You'll fight early in the morning for the entire week except for the last day. I believe you can handle two battles in a row."

Khan spread his arm before shaking his head. That schedule was quite efficient, so he couldn't complain about it.

"[An honorable warrior should avoid resorting to tricks]," A female Ef'i stepped forward and crossed the circular area marked by a series of purple plants. "[Yet, honor alone can't win wars. Forgive us, but get ready]."

Khan glanced toward Lieutenant Unchai, and the latter promptly translated those words. "She is sorry for tricking you."

Khan scratched the side of his head before ignoring the matter. He didn't really care about that ploy since it wouldn't help the Ef'i. His battle style had improved by leaps and bounds after an entire week spent inside the training hall.

"[Get ready]!"

"In position!"

Teco and Lieutenant Unchai shouted, and Khan and the Ef'i immediately performed their guard. Khan limited himself to raise his arms and crouch forward while the alien lifted her clawed fingers

in front of her head and pointed them at her opponent. Her tail even curved above her shoulder to prepare for the imminent attack.

"Fight!"

"[Fight]!"

The two leaders shouted, and Khan shot forward. The Ef'i's tail promptly shot forward, but Khan spun on the side and went airborne. His momentum allowed him to rotate two times and slam his heel on the alien's head.

The Ef'i flew away and slammed on the wall after the arena. She then fell on the floor as blood began to flow from her mouth and ear.

Everyone fell silent. They expected Khan to be strong, but that instant victory still surprised them. Also, the sheer power released by his kick made all of them reevaluate how powerful he actually was.

Khan's prowess didn't only rely on his speed. He also had a strong body that could overpower aliens in sheer physical might.

"Don't bother stepping out," Lieutenant Unchai announced as a second Ef'i walked inside the arena.

His second opponent was a tall male Ef'i who announced something in his language. Khan turned toward Lieutenant Unchai to get a translation, but the latter limited himself to shake his head. The alien didn't say anything meaningful.

"Fight!"

"[Fight]!"

The Lieutenant and Teco announced the beginning of the battle, and Khan didn't hesitate to shoot ahead. However, his opponent did the same and spread his long arm to prevent movements at his sides.

His tail also shot forward once the two were about to clash. The alien wanted to force Khan into a frontal clash, but the latter promptly slid under him and swept the Ef'i's legs.

The alien lost his balance and fell forward, and Khan didn't hesitate to turn before leaping forward. He jumped on the back of the falling Ef'i and planted his foot on the back of his head.

The Ef'i tried to protect himself with his arms, but the power released by Khan's kick made him faint even if his face didn't directly hit the ground.

Lieutenant Unchai patted Khan's shoulder when he exited the arena and pushed him toward the tunnel that led to the camp. He had to return to the training hall and make the best out of his day.

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Khan didn't have to modify his schedule too much with the ongoing tournament. He still gained experience in other martial arts with the fifth level of the training program in the morning and tested his limits in the afternoon. He only had to run toward the mountain twice a day to fight and watch his fated opponent.

A few doubts had appeared in Khan's mind after he understood how the tournament had to unfold. In theory, the fact that everyone had to fight multiple times rendered the advantage gained with the ploy useless. After all, the human side would see how the new Ef'i fought during that week.

However, everything became clear after Khan inspected a few battles of the new alien. The tall Ef'i seemed unable to suffer damage. His skin could endure every blow. He basically exhausted his opponents without performing any proper technique.

Even the strongest among the human side couldn't do anything against that tough skin. Martha, Luke, and others who had a decent percentage of attunement with mana couldn't hurt him.

"Everything would be different if I could use my hammers," Martha snorted.

"It's all up to Khan now," Luke laughed. "Make sure to bring honor to humankind!"

"I still wonder why you always end up in my flat," Khan snorted while eating a strange soup inside a food can.

"I have similar doubts about your stomach," Bruce announced while pointing at the food can. "You do realize that you are eating alien food, right?"

"It's good," Khan exclaimed. "And they made sure that humans can eat it, so I don't see the problem."

The four of them had gathered inside Khan's room. It was the night before their last day on Onia. Khan would have to fight that seemingly unbeatable alien tomorrow.

"How can you be so relaxed?" Bruce asked.

"I've finally managed to defeat the sixth level of the training hall," Khan announced as a broad smile appeared on his face. "The matchup was also even, so I guess I'm good. I did my best in these two weeks."

"Sixth level?!" Luke shouted. "Didn't you practice your martial art for less than six months?"

"So?" Khan asked while shrugging his shoulders.

"That's an outstanding achievement, Khan," Martha explained. "No wonder you are the best of our group."

"My grandfather would kill me if he learnt about you," Bruce laughed. "I'm still stuck at the fourth."

"Maybe it's a matter of attunement with mana," Khan said while trying to move the attention away from him.

"That definitely helps," Martha exclaimed, "But the proficiency with the martial art is undeniable. You must have trained like a madman."

The four continued to talk for a few more minutes before leaving Khan to his training. Tomorrow would be an important day. Khan and the seemingly unbeatable alien would finally face each other.

Chapter 53 - Mana

The next morning the two groups gathered inside the mountain as usual, but they only held meaningless battles since most of the focus was on Khan and the new Ef'i.

The two of them were the only recruits who had yet to face a loss, so they could both aim to win the tournament without counting the victories of their sides. Of course, the matter was far more important for Khan since his group had often lost against the aliens.

Khan and the Ef'i had to fight one last time against different opponents that morning, and they both achieved overwhelming victories. Still, the alien appeared far stronger due to his apparent immunity to direct blows.

"How can he be so tough?" Khan asked Lieutenant Unchai when his group left to attend the lessons.

"I'm not sure," Lieutenant Unchai sighed. "The Ef'i are a warrior race. Some of them can develop a higher muscle density due to a lucky combination of genes. The issue might even be mana-related due to the rules of the tournament."

"What do you mean?" Khan promptly asked.

"It's not forbidden to use spells or techniques before a battle," Lieutenant Unchai explained. "He might be able to reinforce himself with mana before jumping into the arena. It would still take a genius to perform a flawless execution every time, but it's a possibility."

'That might be troublesome,' Khan thought as his group moved toward the building that would hold the lessons. 'I don't have techniques with mana that I can prepare beforehand.'

Khan wanted to win, but he didn't know how possible that feat was. He even felt unclear about the alien's power since they had never fought.

"Just focus on doing your best," Lieutenant Unchai said when he noticed Khan's conflicted expression. "I didn't expect their course to have such a strong recruit either. It seems that Earth will have some problem securing enough faswite in the next years."

"Can a single soldier affect the tournaments so much?" Khan asked as curiosity inevitably seeped into his voice.

"I already told you that the Ef'i are generally stronger than us before the evolution," Lieutenant Unchai explained. "The arrival of a new talent can turn the previous balance upside-down. Also, our soldiers fight here to obtain rewards while the Ef'i only want to defend their natural resources. None of us remains on Onia for too long."

Khan nodded as his understanding of the political environment on Onia grew. The Lieutenant then left the group of recruits since their lessons were about to begin, but none of them seemed in the mood to pay attention.

Most of the boys and girls shot silent glances toward Khan during the lessons. They could sense the anxiety of that situation, and they couldn't help but express their feelings through their gestures.

Even Luke and Bruce decided to ignore Khan to avoid breaking his concentration. Their friend was their most valuable asset on Onia right now.

Only Martha continued to treat Khan normally. She knew how thickheaded he could be. She would actually feel surprised to see him getting anxious.

"They shouldn't put so much pressure on you," Martha whispered during the lessons.

"Let them do it," Khan said while giving voice to a faint laugh. "I'm not fighting for them anyway."

"Let me guess," Martha smirked. "You want the Credits connected to this achievement."

"I only want more training halls," Khan whined. "They are so cool. I can fight so often against so many different opponents. They don't even stink of smoke like Lieutenant Dyester."

"You seem to like them very much," Martha laughed, but she promptly covered her mouth for fear of alerting the class.

"A simple like can't express my feeling," Khan announced in a dramatic voice while taking Martha's hands between his palms. "This is the purest form of love. Only food stands above it."

Khan almost didn't hold back his voice during his last announcement. Most of the other students were paying attention to him due to his role in the tournament, so everyone could pick up the word "love" spoken while he held Martha's hand.

Even the professor noticed that scene, but he decided to ignore it due to the importance of Khan's role in the tournament. He limited himself to clear his throat to suppress the giggles that had begun to resound inside the hall.

"I suspect that you do this on purpose at times," Martha snorted while retracting her hand, "But then I remember that you are an idiot."

"I really do love the training halls," Khan whispered while laying his torso on the desk and waiting for the end of the lessons.

Lieutenant Unchai didn't allow Khan to go to the training hall that afternoon. The soldier wouldn't risk his best shot at getting faswite to suffer injuries or arrive at the battle tired.

Khan had to follow his class back to the mountain after the lessons, and he limited himself to meditate while the rest of the battles unfolded.

The awaited moment eventually arrived. Lieutenant Unchai kicked Khan's crossed leg and awakened him from his meditation. Khan wanted to complain, but the sight of the tall Ef'i inside the arena reminded him of his purpose there.

"[Me is Khan]!" Khan shouted in a bad accent while standing and jumping into the arena.

He had used part of his free time on Onia to improve his Ef'i's language, but he had only managed to commit a few words to memory. Still, he could now complete a few short phrases.

"[Your name has no meaning]," The Ef'i grunted while patting his chest. "[I won't waste time memorizing opponents who can't make me flinch]."

"Slow down a bit," Khan exclaimed while trying to mimic the meaning of his words with his hands. "Slow. Ehm, [egg]! That's the word for slow, right?"

Khan turned to look at Lieutenant Unchai, but the latter shook his head and shattered his hopes.

"He won't bother to learn your name until you beat him," Lieutenant Unchai translated while pointing toward the alien.

Khan scratched his head before turning toward his opponent. The Ef'i didn't move at all. He didn't even bother to enter a defensive stance.

Teco and Lieutenant Unchai exchanged a glance before raising their arms and announcing the beginning of the fight.

Khan immediately shot forward and delivered an impressive direct kick aimed for the center of the alien's chest. That wasn't one of his strongest attacks, but it still hit the Ef'i with a great amount of power.

The Ef'i didn't move at all. Khan felt as if his foot had hit an immovable wall. His battle experience even revealed something tragic to his mind. He could feel that no attack in his arsenal could achieve better effects against that opponent.

'There must be a trick,' Khan thought while rotating on himself and going airborne to deliver a descending kick toward the alien's head.

The Ef'i didn't even try to dodge the attack. He endured the kick and continued to smile while he grabbed Khan's leg and threw him on the other side of the arena.

Khan slammed on the rocky wall before falling on the terrain. The clash didn't hurt too much, but he would eventually lose if he let the situation continue like that.

'It shouldn't be a matter of muscle density,' Khan thought as he stood up and returned inside the arena. 'His physical strength isn't great. Only his defense is off the charts, and the mana might explain that feature.'

A conclusion quickly reached Khan's mind. Nothing in his arsenal would work against a defensive technique fueled by mana. He would have to execute something similar to gain a chance to win.

'How long does it even take me now to perform a complete technique?' Khan wondered as his body crouched forward. 'Can I even succeed on the first try?'

Khan shot forward while taking a handful of terrain with him. The Ef'i didn't notice that quick gesture, so he continued to smile as he waited for his opponent to reveal an opening.

Khan performed a short jump followed by a front flip that made the Ef'i think about a descending kick. The alien was ready to receive the attack, but terrain suddenly covered his vision and blinded his four eyes.

The alien began to give voice to angry guttural noises, and the same went for the audience outside the arena. The Ef'i didn't like that behavior, but Khan didn't have time to waste in that situation.

Khan took a step back as soon as his feet touched the ground. His eyes closed as his body crouched forward, and his attention went on the mana flowing through his flesh.

The Ef'i quickly cleared his eyes from the terrain and noticed what his opponent was up to. An angry noise came out of his mouth as he jumped toward Khan while stretching his claws and cracking his tail forward.

The tail was the Ef'i's fastest limb. It reached Khan in an instant and began to pierce his right shoulder. The alien's claws arrived right after, but a loud noise spread through the arena before they could stab Khan's skin.

The Ef'i figure suddenly disappeared as tremors started to spread through the walls around the arena. It seemed that an earthquake was making the entire mountain shake, but those events had a far shorter range.

Khan had changed his stance. Only Lieutenant Unchai and Teco had been able to follow his movements, but the other recruits didn't understand what had happened. They didn't see when Khan had straightened his left leg forward and performed a direct kick.

Green trails fell from Khan's shoe. The recruits on both sides widened their eyes when they saw that feature, and their gazes inevitably followed the trajectory of his kick.

A second wave of surprise filled their minds when they saw that a large hole had appeared on the rocky walls of the arena. A few green spots had even tainted those dark-red shades.

Chapter 54 - Tomorrow

Everything was silent. No one dared to speak in front of that surprising spectacle. Khan had flung the Ef'i away, and the latter had dug a hole into the wall during the impact.

The drops of green blood falling from Khan's foot and the wall's edges added a menacing feeling to the scene. Even Khan began to worry after he lowered his leg. He feared that his attack might have killed his opponent.

'He must be alive, right?' Khan wondered as pain started to spread from his right shoulder. 'He must have had mana as protection!'

Khan instinctively glanced toward Lieutenant Unchai, but the soldier wasn't looking at him. Everyone in the area was staring at the hole, waiting for the Ef'i to show some trace of life.

Some debris eventually fell out of the hole and hinted at movements in its insides. Khan kept his eyes fixed on that spot until the familiar alien figure became visible.

Khan heaved a sigh of relief, but his expression froze when the alien crawled out of the hole and straightened his position. The Ef'i had a deep foot-shaped injury at the center of his torso, which leaked blood over his body.

That gory sight made most of the recruits divert their eyes, and even some of the Ef'i couldn't help but cover their gazes. Only Khan, Lieutenant Unchai, and Teco didn't blink at that sight. They could see part of the alien's internal organs through that injury, but the scene didn't cause any reaction in their minds.

The Ef'i glanced at his injury before wearing a wide smile. He placed a hand on his chest and gave voice to a clear word that Khan recognized as his name. "Eztli!"

Khan didn't show any happiness at that event. Eztli had suffered a severe injury, but he appeared unwilling to abandon the fight. Even Teco wore a complicated expression but remained silent in front of his student's determination.

'The Ef'i are crazy,' Khan thought when he saw Eztli lowering his arm, closing his eyes, and tensing his body.

Eztli's muscles bulged from under the tight open garments that covered his shoulders and the side of his torso. Khan could see the flow of blood intensifying during that process and tainting his short tight trousers.

The muscles seemed to follow a precise rhythm that Khan could only connect to a technique. Eztli wanted to perform a move that used mana, and Khan's expression inevitably lost every trace of emotion at that sight.

Khan jumped off the arena to shoot toward Eztli. A kick flew toward the alien before he could complete gathering the energy for his technique and sent him back inside the wall.

Eztli wasn't immune to his blows anymore. Khan had kicked his face and had easily flung him inside the hole. The alien had left a trail of green blood during his flight, but everyone could still see his legs coming out of the wall.

"Make him surrender!" Khan shouted while turning toward Teco, but the latter didn't even bother to look at him.

Khan turned toward Lieutenant Unchai at that point, but even the soldier appeared conflicted about the matter. Different emotions filled his face, with sadness being the most intense.

"What am I supposed to do?" Khan asked. "Do I have to kill him if he doesn't give up?"

"Teco won't stop the battle since faswite is on the line," Lieutenant Unchai explained. "Try to knock him down. Nothing will happen to you if he dies in the process."

'That's great!' Khan cursed in his mind. 'Killing someone when I'm not even seventeen can only do good things to my already broken mentality!'

Khan began to feel angry and annoyed, but he didn't back down from that situation. The army wasn't a playground. He didn't want to kill Eztli, but the alien wasn't helping him in the matter.

'Just stay down,' Khan begged in his mind, but Eztli didn't listen to his silent request.

Eztli's legs twitched while he tried to crawl out of the hole. His tail and claws eventually pointed at the wall and helped him sliding out of the wall, but Khan delivered a kick as soon as he saw his head.

The alien flew back inside the hole as more blood came out of his injury. Khan maintained his aloof expression when he inspected the scene, but a tinge of sadness inevitably seeped into his gaze. Killing felt so pointless there, but he had to continue fighting for humankind.

Khan was even aware that backing down from the fight might lose him the respect of the Ef'i. His position inside the Global Army would also improve after winning the battle. Everything depended on whether he had the guts to pursue that path until the end.

The images of the nightmare inevitably appeared in Khan's vision. He felt cold and devoid of any motion as the Ef'i struggled to come out of the hole and showed his head.

Khan delivered a powerful kick to the Eztli's head as soon as it entered his vision. The alien flew deeper into the hole at that time, and his belly ended up hitting the upper parts of the small tunnel. The impact with those rocks made some of the blood flowing out of the injury splash and fly on Khan's face, but he barely felt that.

Lieutenant Unchai's sadness intensified as he kept track of Khan's actions. He could see the man ready for war hidden behind those young features. A simple tournament was forcing Khan to grow used to that side of him, and the soldier partially blamed himself.

The other recruits had different reactions. Many humans still found it hard to inspect the scene, but those who could began to look at Khan in fear. They could barely believe that one of their companions was capable of such coldness.

Instead, the aliens had all managed to focus on the scene by then. They had abandoned the anger caused by Khan's dishonorable actions and had worn solemn expressions. None of them dared to make a sound while their friend was suffering a beatdown.

Khan's eyes flickered when he saw that Eztli's injury worsened and started to release more blood. The muscles on his abdomen began to bulge and hinted at the summoning of mana for another technique.

Khan promptly grabbed Eztli's foot and dragged him out of the hole while throwing him back into the arena. The alien lost his concentration and dispersed the accumulated mana, but he landed on his knees and avoided sliding on the ground.

However, the sudden dispersion of mana made his injury lose even more blood. Eztli created a small green pool under him while he remained crouched on the ground, and his complexion paled. He seemed on the verge of fainting, but his sheer will was keeping him awake.

Khan couldn't allow Eztli to stretch that battle any further. The alien had to faint now, or he would become a murderer.

Eztli tried to stand up, but Khan arrived above him in an instant. His body was already airborne by the time Eztli planted his first foot on the ground.

Khan's leg rotated until his heel landed on Eztli's neck, and the impact slammed the alien on the ground. More blood flowed out of his injury and enlarged the green puddle, but the Ef'i's eyes finally closed after that attack.

'Finally!' Khan shouted in his mind before noticing that his situation wasn't ideal either.

Blood had continued to flow out of his shoulder during the battle. His uniform had gained a large dark patch that didn't mix well with his slightly pale complexion.

Khan wanted to turn toward Lieutenant Unchai, but he stopped when he heard a splashing noise coming from his feet. The puddle of green blood had reached his shoes, and a wet sensation was spreading under his heels.

"[The humans win],"

"We won the tournament!"

Teco and Lieutenant Unchai suddenly announced while Khan was busy staring at his shoes. They had initially been dark-blue, but the green blood had covered them with a completely different shade. That sight had also filled his eyes with helplessness.

Luke and Martha forced themselves to give voice to excited cries and clap their hands, but the other recruits weren't in the mood to show their support toward Khan after that gruesome scene.

Khan showed a weak smile toward his two friends before nodding toward his proud Lieutenant. Then, he exchanged a series of polite and respectful glances with the Ef'i. Teco even stepped into the arena and shook his hand before crouching toward Eztli to inspect his injuries.

"Take this," Teco said in a bad accent before Khan could leave the arena. "Give it to your leader."

Khan glanced at the small lump of faswite before grabbing it with great care. The silver mineral was cold and incredibly light, even if it was only a tiny piece. It radiated a strange scent, similar to the plants seen at the beginning of the tunnel, but Khan didn't spend time confirming that vague guess.

"You did good," Lieutenant Unchai announced when Khan handed the faswite to him. "Make sure to perform well in the missions, and the Global Army will prepare something for you in the second semester."

"When do the missions start?" Khan asked when he recalled about that event.

"Officially?" Lieutenant Unchai laughed. "Tomorrow!"

Chapter 55 - Women

The first semester was about to end. The last two weeks of the sixth month usually marked the beginning of the missions that would evaluate the overall growth of the recruits and their different aptitudes, and Khan's class had just approached them.

"Do we have to use the teleport again?" Khan asked as the excitement that he felt helped sweep away part of the sadness that had taken control of his mind.

"Yes, but I can't disclose your destination," Lieutenant Unchai explained. "The Global Army doesn't want to give anyone time to prepare for the different environment."

The training camp had many wealthy recruits who could purchase or ask their families for suitable equipment once they discovered the location of the missions. Khan felt glad to learn that the Global Army was trying to prevent unfair advantages.

Soft grunts suddenly resounded behind Khan. Teco was turning Eztli, and more blood fell out of the foot-shaped injury on his abdomen during the process. Yet, Teco promptly tore a piece of his peculiar robe to put a patch on it.

Azure energy flowed out of Teco's hand and sealed the piece of his robe to the injury. His mana also made it waterproof and stopped the bleeding, but his expression didn't appear relieved in the slightest.

"There are many spells that don't require much concentration," Lieutenant Unchai explained. "The Global Army barely considers them as spells. You can give special features to your mana once you learn how to control it. It's not a vital skill, but it can help in many areas, especially on the battlefield."

Khan nodded while he watched Teco lifting Eztli and carrying him into a tunnel that led deeper into the mountain.

"Will he be okay?" Khan asked while following the duo with his eyes until they disappeared into the darkness of the tunnel.

"He should," Lieutenant Unchai announced. "Mana can heal almost every injury. I once met a soldier with the flesh element who could rebuild entire human tissues. Surviving is easy. You just have to be careful about what you'll become in the process."

Khan lowered his eyes and remained silent for a while before heaving a deep sigh. Everything was in the past now. It was time to focus on the future.

"Can I go to the training hall now?" Khan asked as his voice gained a shameless tone.

"You should enjoy your last day there," Lieutenant Unchai exclaimed before approaching Khan's shoulder to pat him, but the dark patch on his uniform suddenly reminded him about his injury.

"You aren't going anywhere! Some of you drag this idiot to the medical bay. Don't let him sneak away."

Martha promptly stepped forward, and Luke grabbed Bruce by his uniform before following his friend. The trio encircled Khan and quickly escorted him outside of the mountain.

"You don't have to do this," Khan said once the sunlight hit his eyes. "We can make a deal. I'll let you use the training hall once if we all go there."

"How magnanimous of you," Martha laughed. DiisCoover *u*updated novels on [n\(o\)v\(e\)lbin\(.\)com](http://n(o)v(e)lbin(.)com)

"I think I have enough Credits to live inside a training hall," Luke commented while scratching his chin.

"The most expensive training hall in Ylaco's camp even," Bruce scoffed.

"You aren't any different, Bruce," Luke complained. "The Cobsend family has a higher status because of its connection with the noble families, but the Eerly family isn't poor at all. I might even say that you have as many Credits as me."

"That might be true," Bruce laughed, "But we both know that connections are more important than Credits at some point."

"Can we go back to my topic?" Khan asked. "The entire camp knows that you are rich. They literally know me because I'm with you."

"And because you stole Martha in mere weeks," Bruce said while clearing his throat to cover his words.

"I need to bring my hammers around more often," Martha snorted, but she lowered her head to hide her faint blush.

"Khan, I'll try to make it simple," Luke announced. "You have just secured a small chunk of faswite for the Global Army. The higher-ups will definitely make you attend a few missions here once we become proper soldiers. They want you to win tournaments, so they will invest in your training without asking anything in return."

"Will they?" Khan asked as his eyes lit up.

"Think it through," Bruce continued. "The Ef'i are generally stronger than us before the evolution, but you already are better than them. The Global Army will pay any price to send you here again."

"Is faswite so important?" Khan eventually asked.

"Organic cores are rare and inconvenient," Luke explained. "The future of the Global Army is with synthetic cores. The demand of faswite is nigh-endless due to all the recruits and ongoing experiments."

The conversation went on until the group reached the medical bay of the alien camp. It was a short building with large windows that showed its white insides filled with soldiers wearing white medical coats. All of them appeared to be human.

"We can leave him to you, right?" Bruce asked while looking at Martha.

"I'm not his nanny," Martha snorted.

"I hope not," Luke winked before the two boys left the area in a hurry and left Khan and Martha alone.

Khan turned to show a pleading expression toward Martha, but she gave voice to a low curse before pushing him inside the medical bay. A few nurses quickly arrived when they noticed the patch of blood on his uniform, and they immediately dragged him into one of the corridors.

One of the nurses took out a small knife that released a faint white light from its sharp edge and began to cut the dirty uniform. Khan wanted to complain, but he found himself shirtless in less than an instant.

"I could have taken it off," Khan complained. "No need to ruin an almost perfect uniform."

"Please be silent and don't move," One of the nurses ordered. "The injury has stopped bleeding, but the cut is quite deep. Also, you have multiple untreated contusions everywhere."

The second nurse cut away his trousers, which left Khan in pants in the middle of the corridor. Only the two nurses, Martha, and Khan were there, but he still felt a bit exposed.

"Wasn't there a room available?" Khan complained while scratching the side of his head.

"We use them only in essential situations," One of the nurses explained. "This is a medical bay in an alien camp. We must always be ready for a crisis."

The atmosphere in that medical bay was far different compared to Ylaco's training camp. Everything was tenser and handled quickly. The nurses and doctors didn't take their work as a simple job. They were on a mission there.

"Stay here and don't move," One of the nurses said before both of them pushed Khan on a bed and left to grab a few meds.

"They feel more like soldiers," Khan laughed while turning toward Martha, but he suddenly noticed that she was avoiding his gaze.

"What is it?" Khan asked. "Is something wrong?"

Martha glanced at Khan from the corner of her eyes, but she quickly moved her gaze away. Khan was basically naked. His pants covered his manhood, but they did a poor job at hiding its shape.

Martha managed to get a good look at Khan's body even with those glances. She could see how defined his muscles were. Khan was barely sixteen and a half, but his physique had already reached an incredible and quite appealing state.

"Are you ok?" Khan continued to ask.

Khan wasn't dense, but too much had happened that day. His mind could barely go past the events with Eztli, and the issues with the incoming mission waited for him afterward. He didn't have enough room to consider that Martha could feel shy seeing him almost naked.

The nurses suddenly reappeared at the end of the corridor, and Khan waved his hand to claim their attention.

"Can you take a look at my friend?" Khan shouted. "She doesn't seem too good."

The nurses quickly moved toward Martha, and understanding smiles appeared on their faces when they saw her blush.

"Can you handle him on your own?" Martha asked while keeping her voice down.

"Are you sure that you want to miss this?" One of the nurses teased her, but Martha promptly turned and left the area.

"Don't tell me that it's my fault," Khan sighed when the two women turned their smiles toward him.

"Young boys shouldn't ignore their ladies," The first nurse exclaimed.

"Everything seems complicated at this age," The second nurse continued, "But it really isn't. I bet you two have yet to clarify your situation."

'Women are sharp!' Khan shouted in his mind before lying backward and placing his back on the wall. 'I guess I should talk to her, but what can I even say. The missions will start tomorrow. Neither of us has time to handle feelings now.'

Chapter 56 - Wolf

The nurses ended up applying some stitches on Khan's shoulder and a few lotions on the various contusions that afflicted his body. They even left him with clear orders. He couldn't do any physical training that night if he wanted to heal by the next morning.

The medical bay gave him a new uniform before ordering him to return to his dormitory. Khan unwillingly followed those directives, but surprise filled his expression when he saw a cheerful horde of recruits waiting for him near his rooms.

It seemed that everyone wanted to celebrate his victory in the tournament, and Khan decided to play along. He wouldn't refuse the additional food that his companions were throwing at him, but he didn't forget that most of them were unable to look at him just a few minutes ago.

Khan often searched for Martha with his gaze, but he always found her busy talking with her friends. Khan never found the opportunity to free himself from the constant attention that the other recruits were shooting toward him, so he accepted that the chance to talk with Martha would never come that night.

The other recruits threw a storm of questions toward him. They wanted to know the secret behind his power or eventual tricks to perform during their training. However, Khan couldn't give them anything. His ability came from constant exercise and a good mindset built in the Slums.

The desperation caused by his nightmares had played a crucial role in his training, but Khan wasn't willing to reveal that. He limited himself to give vague answers until he found a way to return to his flat and seal the entrance.

A heavy sigh escaped his mouth when the silence of his flat filled his ears. He had finally managed to leave the crowd. His mind could take care of reviewing the last battle and sort his emotions while he prepared to start his usual training.

His belly was full, and he barely felt his wounds. His condition was perfect for his mental training and meditations, and he still had many hours left in front of him. Khan could make full use of the additional time without sacrificing his sleep.

The eighth mental training was still a challenging opponent. Khan had made some progress in that exercise during those two weeks, but he had yet to feel confident in clearing it.

Still, he felt glad to discover that each aspect of his training seemed to benefit his overall growth. His battles against the puppets helped him gain a firmer grip on his emotions, which subsequently improved his execution of the eighth mental exercise.

The same happened backward, and everything eventually flowed into his meditations. Khan's ability would take a step forward as a whole whenever one part of his training experienced improvements. Even his recent execution of a proper technique with mana came from the convergence of his various feats.

The alarm rang, and Khan stopped draining his mind over the eighth mental exercise. He felt tired, but he still had many hours available for his meditation, so he didn't hesitate to switch to his second training.

However, Khan noticed that Martha had sent a message when he unlocked the phone to set the next alarm.

'Where did you get those muscles?!' Khan read on his phone before wearing a smile.

Khan had finally understood why Martha had been so strange for the entire afternoon, and the explanation left him laughing on his bed for a whole minute.

'Did you like what you saw?' Khan wrote and sent before continuing to laugh.

Martha's answer was almost immediate and left Khan's speechless. He almost couldn't believe his eyes when he read the simple "yes" written on his screen.

'What do I even answer now?' Khan wondered as a faint blush appeared on his face.

He didn't expect such a direct answer. His knowledge in matters related to love and relationships was non-existent, and having to handle that situation through the phone was even slightly annoying.

Khan stared at the screen in silence, unclear about what to answer. The desire to see Martha made its way inside his mind. Still, she sent another message before his thoughts could explore the topic any further.

'Don't overthink it and finish your daily routine quickly. We have the semestral missions tomorrow.' Khan read on the phone before heaving a deep sigh.

'I think I can confirm that she likes me, right?' Khan thought while lying on the bed and closing his eyes.

He couldn't ignore the happiness that had appeared in his mind, but that feeling struggled to find enough room to exist among his other thoughts. The matters with the Global Army, his nightmares,

and his training were already too heavy. Khan didn't know if he could add a potential relationship to his life, but he would definitely try to do it.

'Don't tell me that dad was right,' Khan laughed in his mind. 'Do I really need to find condoms?!'

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A siren sounded through the entire dormitory early in the morning. Lieutenant Unchai's orders quickly followed that noise and forced all the recruits to pack up and gather in front of the building.

The Lieutenant was already waiting for them, and he quickly led the group toward the camp's exit.

Khan didn't miss the chance to approach Martha, who was yawning in the corner of the group. The girl wore a complicated expression at that sight, but she eventually showed a slight smile.

"What's with those eyebags?" Martha asked as she suppressed a faint laugh. "You went to sleep late."

"The meds are to blame," Khan snorted. "I didn't think my body would naturally absorb the stitches. I actually had to search it up in the network before being able to sleep."

"Look at you," Martha laughed. "You can use the network on your own now. I'm so proud."

"You don't look too rested either," Khan tried to go on the offensive. "Did you think about something in particular?"

Khan uncovered his abdomen to use his uniform as a fan. He pretended to be hot, but he was clearly teasing the girl next to him.

"Cover yourself before the Lieutenant sees you," Martha laughed while covering his mouth. "I'm not like that, okay? You just took me by surprise."

"What if I were like that?" Khan asked.

"Do you lust after muscular bodies?" Martha asked. "No wonder you spend so much time with Lieutenant Dyester."

"You know what I meant," Khan smiled while adjusting his uniform and making sure that Martha watched the scene. "And you also know that one of us had to say it."

"Shut up," Martha whispered. "We would need to live on a planet where the days last fifty hours just to consider that."

"I'm considering it anyway," Khan announced.

"You are an idiot who needs a phone to rule the length of his training sessions," Martha rebuked.

"We can use the phone for that too!" Khan exclaimed.

"We won't use a phone for that," Martha quickly refuted Khan's idea.

"Something is there then," Khan smiled.

"The whole training camp can't be completely wrong, can it?" Martha said before a faint blush appeared on her cheek. "Focus now. The semestral missions are here."

"Can we talk about this properly once we are back?" Khan asked.

"No," Martha immediately replied before lowering her head. "Maybe."

"Maybe is enough," Khan announced before continuing to walk next to her in silence.

Luke and Bruce had noticed that interaction by then, but they didn't dare to approach the duo. The two boys had been with Khan and Martha far longer than the other recruits of the special class, so they could sense that something was off.

Martha and Khan had always spent a lot of time together, and they had clearly shared a few secrets. However, they had never obtained the romantic aura that new couples usually had.

Still, that feeling was surrounding the duo now. Luke and Bruce could almost sense that their relationship had taken a step forward. Something had changed during the two weeks on Onia, but the two boys couldn't understand the reason behind that event.

A long truck and a jeep were waiting for the recruits at the exit of the training camp. Lieutenant Unchai quickly ordered everyone to jump in, but the class of Ef'i suddenly appeared in the distance and delayed their departure.

Khan felt happy to see that Eztli was among them. He needed the help of one of his companions to stand up, and his waist had many green patches, but he was alive.

Teco forced his students to form a line in front of the human class and perform a military salute. Then, Lieutenant Unchai's voice roared behind Khan and the others and ordered them to reply with a similar gesture.

The two groups exchanged their polite salutations, and Khan didn't miss how Eztli's gaze never left him. Khan couldn't help but smile at that sight, but the Lieutenant soon made them break the ranks and go toward the truck.

"It's hard to believe that we have been on another planet," Khan sighed as he kept his eyes on the openings of the trucks to memorize Onia's desolate environment.

"Your body will remind you of the difference once we go back on Earth," Martha laughed, and her gaze often fell on Khan's curious expression.

The truck didn't take much to get back to the camp that held the teleport. Lieutenant Unchai made all the recruits jump off the vehicle before leading them toward a familiar structure.

Scanners and green floors unfolded in Khan's vision as he returned to the first alien building seen during that travel. It was time to leave, but the recruits had yet to learn about their destination, and Lieutenant Unchai had no intention to reveal it to them.

"I won't follow you there," Lieutenant Unchai announced once everyone gained access to the circular area with the teleport. "A different Lieutenant will take care of handling the semestral missions. Be sure to use the valuable battle experience you have gathered here to make your training camp shine. Bring honor to Ylaco."

"Do you mean that we'll have to fight against other training camps?" Khan asked, and everyone fell silent before turning toward Lieutenant Unchai.

The soldier didn't say anything else. He showed a wide smile before giving the order to the scientists. The teleport activated, and all the recruits jumped on the oval platform.

Khan could feel the area of synthetic mana gathering around him again, but another sensation suddenly spread through his arm. His eyes went on that spot and noticed that Martha was holding his hand.

"The first time wasn't too nice," Martha briefly explained.

Khan limited himself to tighten his grasp on Martha's hand and nod. No one could see their gesture since everyone was busy worrying about the side effects of the teleport. Yet, the machine activated before any of them could even think about preparing their minds.

Everything went dark before a few sensations appeared among that darkness. Khan felt cold spreading from his knees, but his left hand was warm. His vision then returned and allowed him to see that he was kneeling on a white platform surrounded by glowing blue plants.

Martha was crouching at his side, and the other recruits were in a similar situation. Some of them still puked, but the white surface of the teleport took care of that waste.

Khan wanted to help Martha, but a huge figure suddenly filled his vision. A more than two meters tall humanoid creature walked toward the group of recruits and showed a displeased expression when it noticed their state.

'Isn't that a Kred?' Khan wondered when he inspected the creature.

The alien was massive. Its furry skin didn't manage to hide the tight array of bulging muscles. The creature had the face of a wolf that had inherited a few human features, and its fingers ended with sharp claws.

"You are another disappointing bunch," A female human voice came out of the Kred. "Welcome to Istrone. I will be your Lieutenant for the semestral missions."

Chapter 57 - Plain

"I'm Lieutenant Sehlolo of the Global Army," The humanoid wolf-like alien announced. "I will handle the special class of Ylaco's training camp. Other Lieutenants will manage the other groups from your city and the other training camps. We can move once you stop puking on the teleport."

Khan never blinked as he kept his gaze on the Kred. He had only seen a few images of that alien species on the network due to their connection to Lieutenant Dyester, but the real deal gave off a completely different vibe.

The Kred were creatures that humans often saw as evolved animals due to their stark resemblance with the fauna on Earth. Lieutenant Sehlolo was the perfect example of a wolf who learned how to stand on two feet and talk.

Their language didn't have fixed grammatical rules. The Kred used cries that reflected their apparent connection with the animal species on Earth, but they could understand each other even if their sounds were different.

A wolf-like Kred could understand a lion-like Kred and so on. The reason behind that feature was an innate mental connection among the members of their species. They were a spiritual bunch, and humans could communicate with them only if they managed to tap on that mental environment.

Khan had tried to understand more during his lessons of xenolinguistics, but Professor Thogett had never focused on a single alien language during the first semester. Rumors said that accessing that mental connection was possible only after accepting the innate feral side, but Khan didn't know how to take that information.

'She definitely looks wild,' Khan commented in his mind while trying to find any feature that could hint at her sex.

Dark-blue fur covered the entirety of Lieutenant Sehlolo's body. A few white strands of hair appeared under her long chin and seemed to stretch through her chest, but Khan couldn't confirm that due to her uniform.

Her right shoulder featured two stars, while the left only one. She was a second-level warrior and a first-level mage, but Khan wondered whether those symbols had the same value on a Kred.

'I didn't know that the Global Army had aliens in its ranks,' Khan thought while planting a foot on the teleport. 'They should have a better body, but they can't handle mana as well as us.'

Khan reviewed the little information about the Kred learnt during the past months while he prepared to stand up. He recalled their devotion to mana and their rebellion, but his knowledge ended there.

Martha was still holding his hand, and she had yet to find the strength to stand up, but her complexion was far better than the other recruits. She seemed ready to leave the teleport, but she clearly needed some help.

Khan crouched toward her ear before whispering a few words. "I'm going to help you stand now."

Martha frowned before performing a weak nod. Her grasp on Khan's hand tightened before relaxing and releasing it completely.

Khan took that as the signal that she was ready to stand. He took her hand and placed it on his shoulder before wrapping his arm behind her back and slowly pull her up.

Khan would be lying if he said that he wasn't enjoying that moment. He didn't like seeing Martha in that state, but the warm sensation spreading from the hand clutched at her waist was quite intoxicating.

He had heard his peers talking about hormones, but he had never felt them so clearly. Part of him wanted to hold Martha right away, but he suppressed that instinct to focus on helping her.

Martha clutched her hand on Khan's shoulder, but her grasp slipped away. She had to reach for his neck to gain a good handhold, and her short nails inevitably tried to pierce his skin.

The duo eventually ended up on their feet, and Khan remained in that position until Martha found her balance. The process took a few seconds, and Martha's hand soon left his neck to slide through his back and return to her side.

Khan did the same once Martha nodded, and the duo exchanged an understanding gaze afterward. They both had performed a few useless moves just to touch their friend's back a bit longer, but they let that knowledge remain silent. RêAd lateSt chapters at nô(v)e(l)bin/.c/o/m Only

The other recruits were doing worse than them, but Bruce and Luke showed signs of recovery. The two kids from the Rotston family were in a similar situation. It would only take a few minutes before all of them could stand on their feet and leave the teleport.

Martha and Khan jumped off the platform and started to study the area. The teleport was almost identical to the others seen on Earth and Onia, but the rest of the building was completely different.

The floor didn't have metal tiles. Instead, ground and glowing blue plants surrounded the oval platform. Walls made of a black material that seemed able to store electricity separated that hall from the outside world.

Many consoles and soldiers wearing white medical coats handled the various consoles attached to the black material, and a dark corridor connected the hall to the rest of the building.

There wasn't much metal in the hall. Most of the materials used for the walls and tubes that brought electricity and mana seemed to come from natural substances. Only the consoles and the teleport had a completely different technology, which required various alloys.

The recruits slowly stood up and gathered around Lieutenant Sehlolo. The Kred grunted before turning toward the corridor, and the kids instinctively followed her.

The same black walls unfolded in their vision. Pale azure glows shone from behind that strange material and made the recruits fear that everything could crumble at the slight tremor. After all, that black substance seemed to have the same fabric as Onia's terrain.

"Humans always rely on their metal," Lieutenant Sehlolo snorted when she saw the reaction of the recruits. "You are completely unaware of the potential of natural resources, but your power allows you to thrive in your ignorance."

"I'm sorry, ma'am?" One of the recruits asked after mustering enough courage. "Why did you decide to join the Global Army then?"

"We can do better together, humans and Kred," Lieutenant Sehlolo explained. "Istrone has been the home of the most recent rebellion, but the Kred believe in peace and cooperation. It's only logical for some of us to join the Global Army and try to change things from the inside."

"Change what, ma'am?" Another recruit asked.

Lieutenant Sehlolo didn't seem too scary after her first answer. She had a threatening appearance, and a wild aura surrounded her, but her voice hid a peculiar kindness. Her behavior was rude compared to human standards, but Khan began to accept that the Kred simply were extremely honest.

"Humans exploit the mana without caring about the consequences on the environment," Lieutenant Sehlolo explained. "Mana can empower everyone and have enough power left for the world, but the humans don't know how to contain themselves. They need a Kred to learn harmony."

The group went through the usual scanners and signed the familiar forms before going out of the building. Khan discovered that even Martha, Bruce, and Luke didn't require to use pills to breathe anymore, and he couldn't help but feel happy for them.

A proper jungle unfolded in their vision once they left the building. Tall trees that had greenish trunks and blue leaves stood all around the structure. Their large and thick crowns covered the sky, but a yellowish halo seeped through them anyway.

Azure glows ran through the terrain and ended in various plants that trembled when that energy spread through their structures. Violet flowers blossomed right in front of the group's eyes, and new vegetation appeared from those spots.

Khan and the trio who didn't need the pills took a few minutes to accept the change of atmosphere. The air there was dense and wet but also powerful. Khan could feel mana everywhere. It seemed that every inch of Istrone had grown with that energy.

"The days last twenty-six hours here, with an almost perfect division between day and night," Lieutenant Sehlolo explained once Khan and the others became able to breathe. "Don't underestimate the vegetation, humans. Most of the plants here have a will of their own and have gained special abilities through mana. You can consider them Tainted creatures."

Everyone immediately became wary of their surroundings. The recruits had yet to see a spot of Istrone that lacked plants, so their worries inevitably intensified.

"There aren't many paths on Istrone," Lieutenant Sehlolo continued. "Only the natives here can avoid losing themselves in this everchanging environment. Follow me closely. The area for the first mission is right ahead."

The group followed Lieutenant Sehlolo across uneven paths that had many hindrances on their way. They had to move roots, branches, bushes, and even entire plants at times to proceed forward, but a large plain eventually unfolded in their eyes.

Khan could finally see the single sun of Istrone once his group left the tight array of trees. The star radiated a pale-yellow light that kept the temperatures relatively low. He wasn't freezing, but he felt like in autumn on Earth.

Crowds of younglings filled the immense plain and surrounded the various metal platforms in the area. Those structures were thirty meters wide and two meters tall, but they had stairs on their side, which hinted at some special purpose.

Khan recognized some of the students from Ylaco, but he also saw many unfamiliar faces. However, the uniforms were all identical. The location of their training camp didn't matter. They all belonged to the Global Army.

Chapter 58 - Flare

Shouts and peculiar roars resounded through the plain as the various Lieutenants handled their groups. Khan saw other Kred wearing the dark-blue uniforms of the Global Army among them. He managed to identify a horse-like and a lion-like alien before Lieutenant Sehlolo forced his teammates to focus and walk toward one of the platforms.

A group of recruits was already there, but Khan didn't recognize any of those faces. They seem to belong to a different training camp, and a tinge of curiosity inevitably appeared in his mind.

Khan had never been past Ylaco on Earth, and he didn't even remember much of the city's insides. His planet was a mystery, and his curiosity eventually tried to make him speak with the other recruits.

However, Martha promptly pulled his sleeve and gestured to bend toward her.

"They might be our opponents in the missions," Martha whispered. "Don't try to make new friends now."

"We have become very touchy since our conversation," Khan teased her, completely ignoring her previous statement. "I must say that I like it." Visitt [novelbin\(.\)co/m](https://www.facebook.com/visittnovelbin) for the latest updates

"Shut up and focus on the missions," Martha snorted, but a smile appeared on her face even if she wanted to show an annoyed expression.

"Someone also likes it," Khan commented while straightening his back and glancing at Lieutenant Sehlolo.

"You said it, not me," Martha promptly replied before following his gaze.

Lieutenant Sehlolo had climbed on the platform to meet the two soldiers in charge of the other groups. The three exchanged words that Khan and Martha didn't manage to hear, but they didn't fail to notice that the trio often glanced toward the sky.

"Do they really expect us to do the missions in this condition," Luke asked while looking in the same direction. "Most of us can barely stand, and we are the special class. I bet the other recruits are far worse off."

"They must have a reason for this gathering," Bruce joined the conversation. "These platforms seem landing spots. They might want to transfer us somewhere before starting the missions."

"Are we going to fly?" Khan asked as his eyes lit up.

"Didn't you fly before?" Martha asked. "We flew together when Lieutenant Unchai brought us to the training camp."

"A mere platform and an old truck don't count," Khan complained. "I want to see a proper spaceship in action."

"I don't think they'll deploy actual spaceships for the missions," Luke explained. "Those things run on synthetic mana. You can't expect them to waste it like this."

"My Credits are on helicopters," Bruce added. "Nothing is cheaper than them."

"Nothing is older than them," Martha scoffed. "I believe they'll send small troop carriers. They should be perfect for this environment."

The four friends eventually fell silent since they could only wait to see the answer to their doubts. Clouds covered the sun as the minutes passed, and a thin rain even started to fall at some point.

The Lieutenants did nothing to shield the recruits from the rain. The semestral missions had already started, and enduring the harsh conditions of the environment was one of the requirements. Moreover, it was hard for bodies empowered by mana to catch a cold or a similar illness.

The minutes slowly transformed into an hour, but nothing happened. Other groups of recruits had entered the plain during that time, but their Lieutenants had only divided them across the various platforms.

"I think it's time to give a few instructions," Lieutenant Sehlolo suddenly announced once another group entered the plain. "We will divide all of you and create mixed groups. You'll end up with recruits from other training camps. Working together is the key to get through the first mission."

A wave of surprise filled Khan's group. They didn't expect the mission to force them to work with unfamiliar recruits, especially when they came from other training camps. They had initially thought that the tasks would be a competition between cities due to Lieutenant Unchai's words, but they seemed to be deceiving.

"The performance of the group won't affect your individual score," Lieutenant Sehlolo continued. "You might gain access to the second mission even if your team fails to complete the first. The Global Army has already activated a scanner in your phone to keep track of your actions, so don't worry about unfair treatments."

Khan immediately picked his phone and noticed that most of its functions had gone dark. It only marked the hour and depicted a vague map now.

The other Lieutenants on all the platforms were explaining the same things to their respective recruits. Khan guessed that the first mission was about to start, and the appearance of large vehicles in the sky confirmed his hypothesis.

Khan opened his mouth in surprise when he saw dark-gray planes descending toward the platforms. Those vehicles had two wings and a large cockpit. Their tail was short and thick, and engines that released an azure light stood right at the center of the whole structure.

The engines had the shape of circular gears that contained levitating azure spheres. They only needed to turn to change the direction of the released energy.

The carriers slowly descended toward the platform and turned their engines off. Their tall doors opened and showed their ample insides. They could contain up to eight grown-up soldiers in their central section.

"I'll form groups of four now," Lieutenant Sehlolo announced. "Make sure to memorize the name I'm calling. They will be your teammates and your first opponents. We plan to eliminate half of you as soon as you land."

Another wave of surprised gasps spread through the recruits, and a notification appeared on everyone's phone. The details of the first mission became a menu on the devices.

The first mission was relatively straightforward. Each troop carrier would bring two teams to an isolated location and force them to fight. The winning group would then have to return to the plain with nothing more than their vague map.

"The Global Army has already freed a few Tainted animals in this area," Lieutenant Sehlolo continued. "They can't infect anyone, and they will have reduced offensive abilities, but they can still kill you. This isn't training anymore. You are on the battlefield now."

Lieutenant Sehlolo then started listing names. Groups of four formed and walked toward their assigned carried before the soldier moved to the next team.

Khan eventually heard his name and walked toward the stairs while whispering a faint "good luck" to Martha. The girl did the same, and the two exchanged a quick smile before focusing on the mission again.

Three unfamiliar recruits gathered around Khan before Lieutenant Sehlole sent them to the carrier. The four spots next to them remained empty since the Lieutenant had yet to call their opponents.

"I bet we didn't hear our names due to this annoying rain," One of the girls in Khan's group announced while wearing a smile. "Memorizing them now is also pointless since we might never see each other after these missions. Why don't we name ourselves after our cities?"

"Good idea," The boy next to Khan announced. "I'm Flurris."

"Ylaco," Khan promptly added.

"Etherdale," The second girl exclaimed.

"Perfect," The first girl said as her smile broadened. "I'll be Reebfell then. Nice to meet you all."

The rain intensified during the wait, but a second group of recruits eventually arrived in Khan's carrier and occupied the seats next to his team.

The tension inside the carrier immediately intensified as the two groups inspected each other. They would fight as soon they landed, and the losers would fail to join the second mission if they didn't show anything worthy of consideration.

The other group didn't speak. Khan felt lucky that his team had the chance to say something before that inevitable awkward silence. Still, now he couldn't wait for the mission to start.

Martha eventually climbed on the platform and moved toward one of the carriers. Khan didn't manage to make their gazes meet under that heavy rain, but he still followed her with his eyes. His other companions soon did the same and took place on different carriers, and some of them had to walk toward other platforms even.

Each platform could only contain three carriers, which took care of twenty-four recruits. Many kids had to move toward other platforms or wait for vehicles to rise in the air and leave their spots open.

The carriers on Khan's platform ended up going into the sky to leave their spot to other vehicles. They didn't fly toward the beginning of the mission yet since it would be unfair toward the other recruits. They simply hovered in the sky and waited for all the kids to take their place.

Khan kept track of Martha's vehicle. He wondered if he could meet her team in Istrone's harsh environment, but he knew that those were delusions.

His mind had to be on the mission, but he couldn't stop thinking about his return to Earth. He could actually gain a girlfriend if everything went well.

The other troop carriers soon flew in the air and floated in a circle above the edges of the plain. Everything was ready for the beginning of the mission. The pilots were only waiting for a signal from the Lieutenants.

Then, one of the Lieutenants shot a flare at the center of that airborne circle, and the various vehicles departed in different directions.

Khan and the others peeked from the windows to memorize the layout of the thick vegetation under them. They wanted to obtain an advantage in the second part of the mission, but everything seemed the same from the sky. Also, the rain covered most details so, they didn't manage to understand much.

However, many red lights suddenly lit up among the thick trees. Scarlet trails and smoke also came out of those spots. It seemed that someone had launched other flares, but their trajectory seemed off.

"Brace yourselves!" One of the pilots shouted through the communicator inside the carrier before a firework of red light filled Khan's vision.

He saw multiple explosions happening in the distance, and one of them seemed to come from the direction of Martha's carrier. Still, Khan didn't manage to think about much since an explosion eventually resounded under his vehicle and made the pilot lose control.

Chapter 59 - Corpses

Everything became a mess. The troop carrier started to spin and turn as the pilots failed to regain control of the vehicle. Khan and the other recruits weren't wearing seat belts, so they began to smash on the various surfaces of the plane during the fall.

The other recruits panicked and tried to grab anything that resembled a handhold, but Khan was calmer than his companions. That wasn't his first crisis, so he knew that letting his emotions take control of his mind wouldn't help.

Khan flew and slammed on the other kids and insides of the carrier until he managed to grab one of the seats. His veins bulged as he forced himself to wrap the seat belts around him in a desperate attempt to reduce the damage from the imminent crash.

Then, the troop carrier hit the ground, and everything went dark. Khan had sparse moments of awareness filled with pain and a buzzing noise that didn't make him understand where he was, but his vision slowly gained some clarity.

A familiar scene unfolded in his eyes. Khan saw fuming debris and metal slabs mixed among the thick vegetation. Some of them were on fire, but the plants on Istrone seemed too resilient to burn.

Some of the other recruits were absent. The carrier was on its side, and its doors had disappeared. The same went for three kids, and one of them was from his team.

The recruits inside the carrier weren't in good condition either. They didn't manage to fasten their seat belts, so they had suffered many injuries during the crash before amassing on the broken side that touched the ground.

Khan didn't manage to understand the nature of their injuries from his position, but his survival instincts didn't allow him to prioritize their well-being. He had clearly ended in an unforeseen situation, and the only ones who could know more about the whole situation were in the front of the troop carrier.

'I must talk with the pilots!' Khan immediately concluded in his mind and lowered his head to remove the seat belt.

Khan's expression froze when he saw that a sharp slab had pierced his left shoulder. The cut was deep, and a lot of blood flowed out of it. The injury appeared relatively serious, but he managed to see the positive side in that situation.

'My legs are fine at least,' Khan sighed before wearing a determined expression and tinkering with the seat belt to remove it.

The seat belt unlocked, and Khan gave voice to a grunt when he grabbed the edge of the broken door to avoid falling on the other side of the carrier.

Only his right hand worked properly, so Khan had to wrestle with the various unstable footholds inside the vehicle to get out of it. His new position didn't improve his point of view. The vegetation was too thick to see past ten meters in every direction.

'Deal with the injury first,' Khan ordered to himself as dizziness tried to take control of his mind.

He was bleeding too much, but the global army had managed to give a few lessons that could help him during anatomy. Khan knew that he had to cauterize the injury, and his eyes grew cold when he set his gaze on a fuming metal slab right under the vehicle.

Khan grunted again when he jumped off the carrier, and a tinge of hesitation appeared in his mind when he sensed the heat radiated by the piece of metal.

'I have gone through the Second Impact,' Khan reminded himself. 'How bad can this be?'

The upper part of his uniform only had a few holes, but Khan ripped it apart to create a thick cover for his right hand. Then, he took another piece of fabric and folded it a few times before putting it in his mouth.

His teeth bit hard on the piece of uniform before he took the sharp metal out of his shoulder. Pain filled his mind, and dense patches of black blood came out of the injury, but he quickly moved to the next phase to preserve his momentum.

Khan threw the bloody shard away and crouched to grab the scorching metal slab. The protection didn't manage to block all the heat, but it was enough to make his hand endure it until the procedure ended.

Khan took a few deep breaths and applied everything he had learnt during his mental training to separate his mind from his emotions. The scorching slab released sizzling noises when it touched his shoulder, and a massive wave of pain tried to tear down his determination, but Khan only pushed the metal with more intensity.

Khan counted the seconds in his mind and threw away the metal slab once he reached three. His knees immediately hit the ground at that point, and his eyes closed to help him enter the meditative state.

The adrenaline released during the fall seemed to give Khan more control over his mana. A similar crisis had given birth to his desperation and determination in the end. It was as if his body had returned home and could finally show its true power.

Mana flowed out of his nape and converged toward his left shoulder. The injury had been losing too much blood, so Khan wasn't sure that a simple cauterization could solve everything. He had to rely on the miraculous energy that flowed inside his body to fix what he could.

Waves of mana attacked the injured spots and filled them with power. The intensity of the pain slowly decreased, and Khan even began to feel better. The dizziness vanished, and his left hand started to shake whenever he tried to move it.

Khan remained inside his meditative state until he became able to close his hand into a fist. It would take a while to obtain a full recovery, especially without meds, but that was enough for now.

'The pilots now,' Khan ordered to himself before standing and moving toward the front of the carrier.

The scene that unfolded in his eyes would make most recruits puke. The tip of the carrier had completely caved in. Its metal had created a series of spikes that had pierced the two pilots. Blood covered their corpses, and confused expressions filled their faces.

Khan sighed before wearing a cold expression. He kicked the shards of glass that were still in one piece and slipped inside the pilot cabin to remove the seat belts from the two corpses. Then, he dragged the dead bodies out of the vehicle and made sure not to leave anything important behind.

Of course, his definition of important was relative. Khan was still incompetent when it came to tech. The vehicle probably had a communicator or something similar that could reach the Global Army, but he didn't even know what it looked like.

Khan recalled about his phone after glancing at the destroyed console of the pilot cabin. His device was still in his pocket, and it seemed to have survived the impact. Yet, most of the menus were dark. It seemed to be completely offline.

'This can't be part of the missions, right?' Khan wondered. 'These corpses are real, just like my injuries. Testing our ability to survive a plane crash is way too much.'

Dark thoughts filled Khan's mind as he approached the two dead soldiers. He could only think the obvious since he was on Istrone, but that wasn't the time to make a point of his situation yet.

The soldiers didn't have much on them. Their phones had broken during the crash, and the same went for anything that could resemble a radio. Khan even inspected their shoulders to get an idea of their power, but neither of them had stars there.

'We are fucked,' Khan cursed in his mind before mustering his strength and moving back inside the vehicle.

Climbing was annoying due to the condition of his left arm, so he entered the pilot cabin again and kicked open the door that separated it from the central part of the vehicle.

The four injured recruits were still unconscious, and Khan didn't hesitate to grab them to drag them outside of the vehicle. Most of them had amassed on the side of the carrier, so he uncovered the central part by pulling them away. *ViiSiit novelbi/n(.)c/(o)m for latest novels*

A large puddle of blood unfolded in Khan's vision when he grabbed the last recruit lying on the ground where the carrier's door was supposed to be. Other slimy materials filled that red pool and led to under the vehicle.

Khan dragged the recruit outside of the carrier and returned inside it to inspect that spot, but his eyes immediately closed when he crouched to see what it hid. He had found one of the lost kids.

'Where are the other two?' Khan wondered while inspecting the area, but his search didn't produce any result.

The carrier had slid on the terrain for a few hundreds of meters. Yet, the vegetation on Istrone had already started to fill the long hole created during the crash.

Khan could barely see that path anymore. The trees around the destroyed area had stretched to fill the hole, and the mana flowing through the terrain was giving birth to other plants every second. It was a mystical scene that he didn't manage to appreciate due to the severity of his situation.

Khan didn't dare to go too far during his exploration. He wouldn't risk getting lost to find the two missing recruits. He only committed the direction of the broken path to memory before returning to the other kids.

Thoughts inevitably surged at that point. Khan had retained a small brim of hope before. He wanted to believe that everything was part of the test, but the corpse of the recruit under the carrier had shattered that belief.

That situation was outside of the Global Army's control. It was an unforeseen crisis, something that Lieutenant Dyester and his platoon had faced forty years ago.

Martha's face appeared in Khan's mind. He was worried about her, but he forced those emotions to vanish. Feelings wouldn't help him survive. The time to grieve or shout in joy would come after he got out of that situation.

Chapter 60 - Panic

The heavy rain quickly took care of the small fires around the destroyed troop carrier. Khan spent his time tending the recruits' injuries, but their situation didn't look good.

Flurris and Reebfell's injuries were lighter since they had been on the side that didn't slide across the ground. Their bodies were full of bruises and cuts, but their wounds had already stopped bleeding after hours spent unconscious.

The other two recruits were worse off. The boy had patches of scarred skin across the entire left side of his body. His uniform was also in pieces, and many metal scraps had ended up piercing his left arm, leg, and side.

The girl was in a similar situation, if not worse. Her body didn't suffer the same extensive injuries as her companion, but her right hand had turned into a bloody mess. Her fingers had bent toward unnatural angles, and her wrist had taken the same density of a jelly.

Khan couldn't do much while they remained unconscious. He proceeded to tear pieces of their robes to create bandages and cover their injuries. He even removed some of the metal shards stuck inside their bodies, but he left those that still released blood in their place.

Khan had placed the four recruits under a spot covered by the rain, but he regretted his decision when he saw that they continued to sleep. His patience eventually ran out, and he began to deliver light slaps to those who seemed better off.

"What is-," Flurris began to ask in a weak voice, but Khan placed a hand over his mouth and made him remain silent.

Khan then pointed at his various injuries and made it realize what had happened. The boy immediately started to panic while trying to break free of Khan's hand, and his struggles threatened to worsen the other recruits' injuries.

Khan rolled his eyes and dragged Flurris under the rain. The boy could finally see the entirety of the crash site, and his panic intensified. Retches even climbed down his throat when he saw the corpses of the pilots on the vehicle's side.

'He will need a while,' Khan sighed in his mind before approaching Reebfell and starting slapping her face.

The girl slowly woke up, and her reaction was almost identical to Flurris, so Khan dragged her under the rain too. The coldness of the water falling on her face and injuries seemed to bring some clarity in her case, but everything fell apart when she saw the two dead pilots.

Khan shook his head when Reebfell puked a mixture of saliva and blood. She would also need a bit to recover from the trauma, which brought his attention to the other two recruits.

'I can't wake them up before gaining their help,' Khan concluded when he reviewed the state of the boy and girl still under the vehicle's cover.

Their injuries were too deep. They would only worsen their condition if they fell prey to their panic like the other two recruits. Khan couldn't risk that, especially when he lacked the means to restrain them.

"Someone attacked us," Khan announced after turning toward the two recruits under the rain. "We crashed. We are the only survivors."

Khan partially lied, but he didn't care. He didn't know the location of the other two recruits, but he needed his group to believe that returning to the plain was a priority.

After all, Khan had every reason to believe that Tainted animals and rebels of the Kred species were roaming that jungle. There was even a high chance that they were hunting survivors.

The two awake recruits froze when they heard those words, and Khan couldn't help but recognize their expressions. Their whole world had turned upside-down. They were experiencing the same emotions that had afflicted him after the Second Impact.

"You need to calm down and meditate," Khan explained. "Stabilize your condition and help me with the other two. We aren't safe here."

The confidence and calm carried by Khan's voice helped the two recruits accept their situation. The Global Army had trained them to be soldiers for six months in the end. Part of them already knew what to do in those situations. Gett your *f*avorite *n*ovels at [no/v/e/lbin\(.\)com](http://no/v/e/lbin(.)com)

Flurris and Reebfell sat under the rain and closed their eyes to enter a meditative state. The falling water didn't disturb their concentration at all. The duo actually felt glad that their bodies could still sense something after everything that had happened to them.

Khan glanced at the two recruits sheltered by the broken vehicle and heaved a deep sigh. He was doing the best he could to keep the situation under control, but his power had clear limits. His knowledge was the same, especially when it came to the medical and technological fields. He wasn't the right person to be in command of the group.

A growl suddenly resounded among the trees and alerted his senses. Khan instinctively turned toward a seemingly random spot of the jungle and felt a chaotic mass of mana nearing his position. Something big was coming, and his two awake companions were in the way.

"Wake up and hide behind the carrier!" Khan shouted while stomping his foot near the two meditating recruits.

The two recruits instantly woke up, but they didn't understand the reason behind his words. Yet, they saw a large figure moving through the trees when they looked in the direction of Khan's gaze, and they quickly crouched to crawl behind the vehicle.

Khan remained in his position, and his mana started to flow through his legs. His mind had never been clearer. His emotions were in a separate part of his brain that didn't have any access to the side handling the technique.

A massive bear slowly came out of the jungle and stepped into the crash site. The creature was three meters tall and stood on its rear legs. Azure fur covered its entire body, and its drooling mouth hung open as its glowing eyes moved among Khan and the other recruits.

'Did the rebels remove the suppression from the Tainted animals?' Khan wondered when he saw that the bear didn't have any device meant to reduce its offensive ability.

Its long claws were in the open, and its paws hung on the side of its body. Its teeth were sharp, and its movements didn't show any trace of restraints.

'I'm not a kid scared of Tainted animals anymore,' Khan thought as his body crouched forward.

His left shoulder hurt when he tried to move his arms to balance his body, but nothing reached his mind. Khan was only thinking about his technique and his opponent. Everything else had disappeared.

The Tainted bear descended to stand on four legs before charging ahead. It closed the distance from Khan in two long jumps, and one of its paws swung toward his head once he entered its range.

The paw never managed to hit Khan. The bear's head shook as an invisible strike landed on its side and flung the entire creature away.

Khan had delivered a kick so fast that it didn't even create afterimages. His left leg had only trembled for an instant before stopping moving. The attack had taken place during that short second.

The bear crashed on the ground and slid for a few meters. The side of its head had turned into a bloody mess, but its resilience was off the charts. The creature straightened its position and released an angry roar, but its vision soon went dark.

Khan had flowed into another technique instead of stopping to inspect the creature's condition. He had deployed mana while the bear was sliding on the ground. The preparation for his move had taken even less at that time.

A scorching sensation spread through his skin as the sole of his foot landed on the bear's eyes and dug through its skull. His shoes broke during the attack, but he barely felt anything. Khan didn't even sense the blood and brain matter falling on his naked skin.

Khan didn't lower his leg, and the Tainted bear fell on the ground. Tremors ran through its body before life completely abandoned its eyes. The animal died, and Khan dispersed the accumulated mana while lowering his leg.

'I can fight with mana,' Khan concluded in his mind. 'The techniques aren't completely reliable yet, but I'm getting there. I might be able to have an even fight with the seventh level of the training program now.'

Khan's success with the previous executions of the proper Lightning-demon style came from his completely calm mindset. He felt like a robot that gave orders to his body and managed his mana. Mistakes seemed impossible when his emotions didn't play a part in the battle.

Flurris and Reebfell had inspected the battle from a hidden area behind the troop carrier, and complete shock filled their minds after witnessing such a clean fight. Khan had taken care of a huge Tainted animal in two mere blows, but the surprises weren't over.

Khan had been shirtless since they awakened, but the two recruits had been too confused to notice the azure scar on his chest. However, they couldn't miss it now that he turned to walk toward them.

Khan's defined body, coupled with the azure scar and the hideous burn on his shoulder, removed every trace of youth from his figure. The lack of shoes and his broken trousers also gave him a wild aura. Reebfell even blushed when his azure eyes met her glance.