

Evolution 115

Chapter 115: Hurting For What's About to Come.

Ting!

To the point, Levi heard the noise of the chain the instant it touched the metallic beam... A beat later, Levi crossed past the metallic beam as well.

Ssek-Varr on one side of the beam, Levi on the other.

The chain connected them both.

Cliiing!!!

Under the stunned eyes of everyone, the loose chains tightened the instant its exposed length slid through the beam fully.

Then, it snapped.

Argh!!

It didn't break, but it yanked Ssek-Varr and Levi back to the metallic beam, jolting Ssek-Varr awake, his eyes almost popping out of their sockets.

Levi was already used to much worse; his tightened hands refused to let go of the staff... They slid a bit, but they kept biting hard, akin to steel pincers.

The moment he survived the initial jolt, he started swinging with his body facing the rim while Ssek-Varr swung backward... their acceleration wild.

Since Ssek-Varr was thrown first, and Levi timed his fall to near perfection, the chain's length on his side was three times less than Levi's.

Thus, after Ssek-Varr had already spun three times, armor ringing with each rotation against the beam, Levi's third revolution came and went... Ssek-Varr's fate was decided.

Levi pulled... The chain linking them snapped tight once more, and Ssek-Varr's body was slammed into the iron pillar like a ragdoll!

"Aghhhh!!"

Steel bit into his ribs, driving him so close that every breath became a howl of agony.

As Levi whipped again, the beam ground against Ssek-Varr's shoulder blades, peeling leather and flesh in cruel, scraping arcs.

His joints creaked alarmingly... once-brittle bones bending under the whirl of centrifugal force... until it felt as if his very skeleton would turn to mush.

Each extra turn Levi took demanded that Ssek-Varr's battered form shoulder more of the chain's stolen energy.

The beam acted like an executioner's block, carving ridges of agony into muscle and bone to prevent slack in the link.

For Levi to gain momentum and energy, a counter force was needed, a sacrifice, one shall say... Ssek-Varr was that victim.

Levi had no time or access to a boulder, and he always knew that Rifter was going to be sacrificed for his move to work... Ssek-Varr was unfortunate to meet Levi's requirements and bold to antagonize him at the worst possible time.

Psssss!!

Blood spattered in dark streams down the metal, and still Levi spun, feeding off that pain-forged tension until Ssek-Varr's body was little more than a broken shell clinging to the beam, torn apart by the unforgiving momentum.

Being in a flow state, Levi turned deaf to Ssek-Varr's final dying screams and body's crumbling, akin to a piece of paper, until his final breaths.

His focus was on one thing only... Creating as much speed as physically possible from the spins, and this would have been impossible without Ssek-Varr's tough scales and body.

If it were anyone else, their bodies would have been split apart the instant they smashed into it.

But now, even after Ssek-Varr's soul left its mangled corpse, Levi still continued spinning faster and faster, releasing more chains from the storage with each spin!

He did this over and over until his form turned blurry and the chains were close to reaching their maximum length.

But Levi didn't wait until this happened.

The moment he knew his chains were about to run out, he timed his last spin, letting go at the best possible moment... converting his rotational motion into pure outward velocity!

Whooosh!!

His body flew, right leg pointed to the skies, left leg retracted as a support, and head last, appearing as a dark arrow.

-What in the...-

The crowd gasped, eyes widened in full, and words were swallowed.

No one expected such a move, but as their eyes landed on the hovering, moving crystallized platforms, they assumed inwardly... His legs were going to smash into one of them.

Yet, they waited, waited, and waited... No such thing happened.

Levi's dark form pierced through the network of platforms in a straight line, appearing like they were moving out of the way, creating a small, empty route, just for him.

The crowd was astounded, their eyes refusing to believe what they were being fed. In an instant, they came to a mutual realization... No such miracle was possible; everything had to be calculated to the last minuscule second.

This thought made them confused between feeling awed and stunned.

In an instant, Levi appeared on the other side, his speed dying out rapidly as the force of gravity kept applying the brakes.

Twenty meters remained between him and the network of vines, blocking the rim... No more platforms on the way, but the pit's radius was reduced to a mere ten meters, with a network of green tough vines blocking the way.

Webwalker was already inside; none could see him, but he also had no clue what was happening under him... But he didn't seem to care.

"I would have preferred if I had farmed more before winning this, but this will do," Webwalker kept talking to himself as he crawled up the network of growing vines, preferring to sneak up like this, then clear a route out.

He was fast, intuitive, flexible, and could use silk, but his strength was weaker than Ssek-Varr's and many others in the game.

But this served no issue to him as his flexible body allowed him to go through the smallest openings possible.

Unbeknownst to him, Levi was a mere twenty meters away from him, and still approaching slowly... Though everyone could tell that Levi's momentum was about to die soon, forcing him to either attach himself to a wall or fall.

Neither.

Levi had predicted his momentum dying and prepared for it.

'Judgement's Chainstaff.'

He murmured inwardly, the left-behind staff breaking apart into shady flower petals, just to reappear in his hand, still shuddering a little from the stored vibrational energy of his Thunder Chant!

This was the meaning of a perfectly mastered ability... Usually, such abilities had their stored energies dispel into the void the moment they were desummoned.

But not his Judgement's Chainstaff.

The moment Levi used Thunder Chant to store the vibrational energy, it would remain stored in Ash'Kral's body!

If he wanted to dispel it, he could; if he wanted to leave it until Levi tried to use it again, he could also!

Ash'Kral's decision was clear.

Levi pointed the vibrational staff beneath him, his body still upside down.

'Thunder Chant...X10.' He murmured inwardly, followed by his sonorous cosmic voice, "Release."

Rumble!!!

A powerful thunder roar was emitted from the tip of Levi's staff, invisible, but its oppressive kinetic energy was wild enough that it reached some of the Rifters below!

"What the hell!"

"Dirt wall!"

"Reinforced Muscles!"

IronQueen, Starfall, Nixy'Rii, Mawgrub, and a few others, who made it to the Upper-Pit tiers at last, found themselves forced into a defensive position.

Unbeknownst to them, it was nothing but the aftermath of Thunder Chant X10, as most of its energy was used to propel Levi into the rim like he was using a rocket jet!

If it landed on them directly, not even their shields would be enough to save them.

'Huh? What was that? Why was it so close?'

Meanwhile, Webwalker's heart skipped a beat in dread after the thunderous explosion resounded in his ear like he was within a storm.

As he looked under him, his eight eyes moved all over the place to peek through the gaps in the vine network.

At first, he saw nothing, but just as he was about to turn around and focus on the last ten meters separating him from the rim, something dark appeared from a tiny gap.

It was small at first, but in a heartbeat, it covered the tiny gap.

Before the confusion could settle in Webwalker's eyes, the network of vines started splitting apart, Levi barreling through the barrier in a spray of green shards and sticky sap.

His leather, dark boots grazed the vines so forcefully that his feet fractured against the uneven ends! Yet, not a single yelp was released.

Levi was still in a flow state, the adrenaline pumping so much, he barely felt anything. His focus was on crossing the rim regardless of what happened.

He was so zoned out on this, Levi didn't bother to change his trajectory once... Even when Webwalker appeared in his auditory vision, blocking his path to glory.

"Ah!! AAAAA!! STOP!! STOOO..."

Webwalker skipped all emotions and went straight to pure horror at the soles of Levi's boots being a mere few meters from his face.

Alas... His words did nothing but paint a much clearer path to Levi.

The lingering momentum of Levi's charge turned Webwalker's face into a rupture of bone and blood...

A fractured jaw dropped open; sinew and marrow spilled as skull fragments tumbled free.

Crack!

A final, sickening crack echoed in everyone's ears as the remnant skull, blood, and brain juices flew outside of the rim, just beneath Levi.

He emerged in the same position, one leg upfront as a spear, and the other retracted next to it for support.

Blood welled between his toes, painting his legs a dark, glistening red under the faint rays of light...

In one motion, Levi spun to the side and hurled his chained crown to the closest boulder in sight. The instant the crown tightened around it, he pulled himself away from the rim, rolling on the ground with a broken leg until he came to a stop, a couple of meters away from the rim.

Then, he collapsed to one knee, boots caked in blood and vine pulp. He retracted his staff into its rigid form and held it for support, his entire body shaking... The adrenaline was gone, leaving him to feel like his body was collapsing internally.

The pain was abysmal, his hands burned, his internal organs twisted from the insane G force he applied to it, his right leg shattered... Everything hurt, and at the same time.

Yet still, Levi neither screamed nor showed any reaction.

He kept his head affixed to the skies at the infinite sea of awestruck eyes, allowing them to marvel at his three celestial stars orbiting in the shape of 'V'.

He wasn't toughing through the pain to keep his mysterious image intact... It didn't even cross his mind.

Levi was hurting, not for what happened, but for what was about to happen.

Rumble!

There it was... a noise that sent a shiver down Levi's spine, and made him feel sick to the bottom of his stomach.

The Rim was closing, and no one was near it.

Levi's ears could pick up on the frightened voices of the Rifters still trapped, trying their best to climb as fast as possible.

Trying their best to outlast the abyss.

Trying their best to see their loved ones' smiles.

Trying their best to rewrite their fate.

Alas...Fate wasn't kind to them, putting them in Levi's game.

Although Levi could turn a deaf ear to their misery, he refused... He wanted to hear it all; he wanted to experience what his decision had caused.

Yet...

'Ash'Kral... you were right... theory's one thing, but the feeling is another... It hurts... So much, it's unbearable.'