

Evolution 200

Chapter 200: Jasmine Rahma.

Suddenly, Lord Hicham's gentle chuckle came from the door, slowly clapping his hands in approval.

When everyone turned around, they noticed that he wasn't alone... A girl was walking behind him.

The moment Levi's harmonic spine painted the girl in his world of darkness, he felt like he was in the presence of a transcendental goddess... An impossibility in reality.

She looked like someone had poured black ink across a white canvas and given it life.

Her hair poured like liquid snow... whiter than the color white itself. Some locks were inked dark, giving her hair an ethereal touch.

A single silver eye, metallic and cold with a white pupil at its center, peeked from beneath a fringe that concealed the other, lending her gaze a haunting, half-veiled allure... further highlighted by a streak of black mascara.

Her skin was so pale it seemed to glimmer, like freshly fallen snow... and her lips were a deep, almost unreal shade of black, parting slightly to show a perfect row of pearly white teeth... a glimpse, and they were hidden behind those plump, cold black lips.

She was wearing a high-necked dress of intricate black lace, resembling delicate patterns drawn in ink. The ornate lace, woven with floral and abstract patterns, seemed to splash across her pale skin, casting the illusion of shadows that traced her form.

Even the subtle movements of her walk had the elegance of brushstrokes...deliberate and flowing.

As Levi gazed at such an ethereal creation, feeling like he was staring at a human, but not a human, his heart couldn't help but skip a beat.

Levi rarely cared about the opposite gender romantically... his mind and heart were too occupied to care about such privileged emotions.

But, as Jasmine walked closer and closer... for the first time in his life, Levi had a glimpse of himself sharing his life with someone else.

However, before his heart could be snatched by this inked masterpiece, walking and breathing... he swiftly snuffed out the illuminating candle in his heart.

Levi refused to embrace such emotions... not this early in his life, not when nothing was certain, not when his path was filled with nothing but horror... but, for how long could he last?

"Jasmine, introduce yourself to your teammates." Lord Hicham said with a smile.

Jasmine stood a couple of meters away from Levi and the others... Then, she bowed her head and used a hologram to display a sentence... her lips, unmoving.

-I am Jasmine... I am deaf, I wish you would be a bit patient with me... It's nice to meet you.-

'Deaf?'

While Arthur, Jojo were left confused by this... Nurah and Shia swiftly returned the greeting, using a holographic sentence too. They already knew of Jasmine's condition, as this wasn't the first time they had met her.

Though they weren't really that close with her. Besides her disability, Jasmine's persona was too introverted... staying reserved all the time, making it harder for anyone to befriend her or know more than her name.

Jasmine looked at the holographic sentence expressionlessly, nodding her head slightly.

But, just as she was about to hide behind her father, Levi started signing with a welcoming smile.

I am Levi... It's nice to meet you. -

Seeing that Levi's sign language was a bit clumsy, but understood, a flicker of emotion showed on Jasmine's ethereal visage.

She looked at him in intrigue, and then she signed this time with her hands... everyone but her father failing to understand it.

I heard you're blind... how come you learned sign language?-

She wasn't the only one surprised... Nurah, Shia, and Jojo also failed to see a reason for Levi to learn sign language when he was blind from a young age.

What was the point of learning a language when one couldn't see the other person's signs?

Levi chuckled and signed back.

-I always believed I wouldn't stay blind forever... so, I learned it just in case... also, I was kinda bored, and wanted to learn other methods to curse off Nightcrawlers in the bridge.-

Jasmine covered her mouth, hiding an amused smile behind her slender fingers... her nails painted black with snow particle designs in their center... barely visible, but giving them a graceful touch.

Seeing her reaction, the others didn't think much of it... But Lord Hicham's pupils couldn't help but widen a little in fascination.

'Smiling at the first meeting?'

He looked at Levi and his daughter, who were continuing their small talk, and smiled a little...

'Maybe it wasn't so bad to make her join the team.' He thought.

Soon, Lord Hicham checked on everyone's contracts and noticed that everything was right.

He clapped his hands and said, "Before we can do anything, we have to decide on the squad's captain... A captain is not an honorary figure... he is the team's leader, his orders must be adhered to in the games. Otherwise, a cruel fate awaits you."

Everyone nodded in agreement, knowing that Raid-based Death Games were no joke... They would be competing against a Nightcrawler with an iron grip over his team. They could not have any confusion.

"So, how do you prefer to settle this? Voting, combat, seniority, or..."

Before Lord Hicham could finish his sentence, Arthur lifted his hand.

"I vote for my big bro."

"Likewise... Namaste." Jojo supported.

"I am not too fond of strategyizing... Levi, for me." Shia shrugged.

"I was trained to be an assassin, not a leader," Nurah said with a playful smile, resting her hand on Levi's shoulder as her gaze flicked toward Jasmine. "I choose him.."

"..."

Lord Hicham was left somewhat speechless, not expecting this heavy support for Levi's captainship... Even Jasmine's gaze reflected a flicker of curiosity as she gazed at Levi, who was surrounded by his friends... not picking up on Nurah's passive marking in the slightest.

Just as Lord Hicham was about to check with his daughter, she wrote a holographic sentence.

-I choose him, too.-

'Jasmine...' Lord Hicham sent a surprised telepathic message, 'Are you sure? You said you won't accept anyone as the captain if they were weaker than you.'

-He isn't weak.- Jasmine replied, her eyes still affixed on Levi.

Behind her milky white fringe, the hidden silver eye began to pulse faintly, then unfurled into a gray spiral that deepened until her iris turned pitch-black. Her pupil remained white, but it looked as if it had been sketched in pencil and partially erased, leaving a ghostly trace that never fully settled.

Using this eye, a raging multicolored aura bursting into a world of black and white showed before Jasmine... one crimson, one golden, one black. A potent spiritual aura... yet, only she seemed to see it? Not even her father had a clue.

Somehow sensing her prying eye... Levi's spiritual eyes manifested from his aura and turned to gaze back at her slowly.

A moment of silence.

A moment after... a simultaneous smile broke on both of their faces as they thought together:

'He seems fun.'

'She seems dangerous.'

Levi knew that Ash'Kral had his real spiritual aura hidden with an active array... Instead of three spiritual auras, only a crimson aura appeared, representing his Nine Senses seed.

However, somehow... he felt like Jasmine was seeing his true spiritual aura, which shouldn't be possible, considering that Ash'Kral's array was capable of hiding Levi's real aura from even Solarbound Daywalkers!

This made him even more curious about her nightcrawler and origins.

When Levi deactivated his harmonic spine to bring back the bridge of darkness... he saw everyone's nightcrawlers chilling in the solace of their host space, no one bothering the other.

A habit most contracted nightcrawlers mastered... just because their hosts were friends, it didn't mean it automatically made them friends too.

It was like a wife forcing her husband to be friends with her bestie's husband... some relationships simply couldn't be forced.

But Levi was different.

"Yo, Levi..."

"Oh, nice of you to join us."

"Hello, little one."

Bleed'er, Khu'zan, and the rest of his friends' nightcrawlers greeted him one by one... awakening from their slumber at his attendance.

Levi returned the greeting with a polite smile and gave them a slight head nod, letting them know that he wasn't here for a conversation, but to check on Jasmine's nightcrawler.

Knowing that he couldn't be free in what he said with Jasmine's dad and his Nightcrawler around, Blee'der and the others left him to do his thing.

Before Levi could focus on Jasmine's nightcrawler, her father's nightcrawler came into the picture first... his majestic appearance stealing his attention.

He emerged like a living sculpture of ice, his horse-like form classy and well-groomed. Every line of his body was detailed, as if a master craftsman had frozen a horse mid-stride.

He was slumbering with his head buried between his arms, and yet snow seemed to drift constantly from its mane and tail even in the bridge of darkness.

'Snowpiercer... a Nightcrawler species that thrives on the coldest planets in the universe, for whom even extreme frost is no obstacle.' Ash'Kral shared lazily, deciding to educate Levi just because.

'Snowpiercer... he does look aggressive and wild even in his slumber.'

Levi murmured in admiration for a moment before his spiritual eyes got pulled to Jasmine's nightcrawler at last.

He was surprised to see a somewhat miniature version of Jasmine floating lazily above her head... The little ghostly girl had silky smooth, flowing, long white hair with a dark spiky crown on top.

Her face was pale, but around her right eye, an inked smudge was left behind.

She was wearing a gothic dress mixed with white and black ink, pouring infinitely into the aether... her feet and arms were covered entirely, leaving only her tiny pale hands exposed.

Although they shared a similar style and atmosphere, the little girl had deadpan gray eyes as if she had lost her meaning in life.

She gazed at Levi with those two eyes silently... and then, she turned to Ash'Kral, who was standing on Levi's shoulder on the bridge of darkness.

Then, she spoke... her voice devoid of emotions or life.

'Cute.'

Ash'Kral's eyelid twitched as he kept sizing her up, his mind trying its best to figure out her Nightcrawlers' species... but he came up with nothing, which was a massive shocker considering Ash'Kral's detailed research on so many nightcrawlers' species!

When Levi asked him about her, he told him the same.

'That's my cue...'

Realizing that he had nothing more to gain in the bridge, Levi swiftly ditched Ash'Kral, refocusing on the real world... It was impolite for the captain to join another conversation while in the presence of Lord Hicham... it set a bad example.

'These two girls are strange...'

Ash'Kral switched to his wisp inside Levi's spiritual Leywell, who was chilling at a table, drinking tea with the Titan... then, he looked carefully at Jasmine through Levi's harmonic spine vision, incapable of seeing her before in the bridge of darkness.

'Doesn't she remind you of something?' Ash'Kral asked.

The Titan narrowed his eyes in focus for a few moments, and then he shook his head.

'I am drawing a blank.'

'Useless.' Ash'Kral's eyelids twitched.

The Titan chuckled, unbothered by his insult. Then, he asked him what she reminded him of.

'Nothing... I must be imagining stuff.'

Ash'Kral let go of the subject, knowing that if he were to tell someone what he was thinking, they would laugh at him... in fact, he would laugh at himself for saying it out loud.

However, he planned on keeping a close eye on her, just in case...