

Evolution 68

Chapter 68: The New Leaderboard!

"Can you afford it, though?"

Nurah sized him up and down, making Demetris' expression turn cold for a moment.

"Why haven't you asked him that?"

"He set the price, and I don't think he would've done so without having the necessary funds," Nurah smiled at Levi, who nodded in agreement.

"I can afford it." Demetris narrowed his eyes at Levi. "I can even add another wager if you're interested."

"Oh? Why are you addressing him alone?" Nurah pouted. "I want to join too."

"This isn't a wager for either of us, but just for 'people' like him," Demetris smirked. "I bet that you won't get signed by any of those nightcrawlers at the end, even if your ranking is in the top ten."

Nurah covered her mouth with a hand in intrigue. She maintained her silence and stared at Levi, awaiting his response to such a kick under the belt.

"State your price." Levi smiled.

"The discount reward," Demetris said. "If I win, you'll hand over the Training Center discount in case you rank in the top five. If not, you'll pay me one thousand Solar Aegis coins."

"I assume the same applies to you?" Levi asked.

"Yes."

"Seems fair." Levi smiled.

"We have placed these wagers under the watchful eyes of nightcrawlers and viewers." Demetris narrowed his eyes at Levi. "I would like to assume that you won't be foolish enough to renege on it later once you lose."

If it were up to him, he would have used Nocturnal Contracts to ensure that no one dared go back on their word. But since Nocturnal Contracts could only be summoned by those with seeds, he was stuck with using the viewers to pressure Levi.

Unbeknownst to him, Levi was the one fearing that Demetris might go back on his word.

"How about this...we'll swear it on our sponsored agencies' names," Levi suggested.

"I don't know how you swindled your way into the Blood Hunters agency, but fine by me. I'll take you on that."

Demetris gave a slight head nod in agreement and walked away.

He understood that swearing a bet on their agencies' names implicated them in case a problem arose with the payment.

Since they did it on national TV, it meant their agencies would do everything to protect their reputation, even if it meant paying the loser's debt.

When Shia saw this, her eyelids couldn't help but twitch in vexation.

'He hasn't even taken a step inside the agency, and he's already using our name as backup. This prick will get me kicked off the family once and for all...'

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An hour later, the Trial of Physicality was concluded, and many of the surviving candidates were either sitting on the grass or vomiting against a tree.

At least they made it out, unlike many others who had been eliminated either due to injuries or exhaustion. They were already sent outside of Willow Grove's dimensional mirror.

"It's time to update the leaderboard rankings," Instructor Seraphis announced.

Everyone lifted their heads and gazed at the massive holographic screen with their names on it. The names of the eliminated candidates began turning dark while the rest shuffled among each other. On the far corner, points were added at varying speeds.

A few seconds later, the new leaderboard was finalized, stealing everyone's breath away.

1 - Nurah Blackthorn – 400 pts

2 - Demetris Bane – 398 pts

3 - Arthur Larson – 392 pts

4 - Levi Larson – 381 pts

5 - Houda Omari (Jojo) – 290 pts

6 - Malissa Harper – 240 pts

7 - Omar Mansour – 190 pts

8 - Selene Austris – 150 pts

9 - Kiera Joan – 149 pts

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17 - Rayan Morningstar – 122 pts

Two names were noticeably out of place amongst the top ten: Arthur and Levi. One was in the middle of the rankings before and moved straight to third rank, while the other was at the very bottom of the list and now became the fourth-highest ranked!

When Demetris saw how many points Levi earned in one trial, he couldn't help but grit his teeth behind sealed lips.

Since Levi had a measly one point prior, it was easy to calculate that he had earned 380 points from the Trial of Physicality.

Although he wasn't ranked first in the overall standings, he had earned the highest possible amount of points. The surprising part...Arthur was the second!

"I came third and you came fourth." Arthur grinned as he fist-pumped his brother. "Good shit, I couldn't have done it without you."

"It was all you."

Levi smiled while sheathing his black staff in its holder. Although he had assisted his brother on the third stage by bringing more weight and even handing over his staff, Levi had no interest in taking credit.

After all, if they hadn't traded weapons, he would've wasted more time thinking of ways to slide off the hill, which could have affected his final results.

"The next two trials will be held tomorrow morning. Feel free to relax and tend to your wounds in your rooms," Instructor Seraphis announced while clapping his hands.

Following the noise, the Gauntlet of the Titans began collapsing, stage by stage, as if buried explosives were set off beneath it.

A cloud of dirt covered the platform, forcing some candidates to shield their faces. It lasted only a few seconds before it dissipated into the void.

But instead of revealing a desolate space, a massive standardized apartment complex sprouted from the ground.

The apartment complex resembled a sand prison...yellow and dreadful. It had windows and doors, but it was not as welcoming as the buildings they were used to staying in.

"Stop giving me those looks. You should feel blessed I haven't lodged you in tents," Instructor Seraphis said coldly, noticing the displeasure on some faces.

Immediately after, everyone forced on satisfied smiles, fearing he might go through with it.

"Your room number is the same as your rank. You'll find everything you need in your rooms. Don't cause any trouble. I have you all under my radar."

With that last warning, Instructor Seraphis exited the boundless expanse, leaving the candidates with the staff members.

Of course, he kicked out the spectating nightcrawlers, returning the void to its peaceful state.

He couldn't risk letting them linger around the candidates. He knew they wouldn't hesitate to manipulate or seduce them.

As for the livestream? He disconnected it the moment he left. Unlike other instructors, he had no interest in keeping a 24/7 feed of the candidates.

In his eyes, this wasn't a reality TV show.

Although he disconnected the stream, he restored network access so candidates could pass the time.

Immediately, everyone logged into Weconnect to check the latest news and reactions about their performances.

Alas, many were disappointed when they saw that only Nurah, Demetris, Levi, and Arthur were going viral.

-Is it weird if I admire Nurah's figure even though she's still technically a minor?-

-Seek help.-

-From one point to three hundred and eighty-one... Insanity!!-

-Even though he had a three-minute delay and was more than 150 points away, he still made it to the top five! I see now why the Morningstars sponsored him!-

-If only he had scored an average in the light affinity trial, he would've been the first ranker. Such a shame.-

-Don't sleep on his giant brother! The dude carried more than 200 kilograms on a 5-kilometer hike. None of you can comprehend how difficult that is!-

-While their performances are amazing on their own, at the end of the day, Nurah and Demetris possess the highest light affinity.-

The network buzzed with tweets, hashtags, and clips of the four candidates. Yet, the highest-rated one belonged to Levi's hill slide and water glide.

Citizens were already used to Daywalkers performing wonders. Yet, Levi's clip still farmed the most likes and attention, surpassing some famous Daywalker celebrities.

The people simply loved it when one of their own did something noteworthy...it made them feel represented in a merciless era dominated by Daywalkers and nightcrawlers.

"Big bro, we're trending." Arthur grinned widely as he read the positive comments about him and his brother.

"I see." Levi gave an unbothered smile.

While it felt good to be recognized, Levi never chased fame. He understood that chasing it was like chasing an endless hunger...it could never be satisfied.

So, he welcomed it... But didn't give it much thought.

However, the same couldn't be said for the other youthful candidates dreaming of becoming famous Daywalkers, basking in public praise. Some were on this path for that reason alone.

Believe it or not, Demetris was one of them.

'Where did this bastard crawl from?' Demetris glared at Levi coldly. 'I was supposed to have the best rookie debut... Everyone was going to talk about me, and only me!'

Sensing the glare, Levi turned and gave him his usual serene, kind smile. A look that would have melted any petty grudge... but not Demetris.

It only made him angrier.

"Just wait... this will be the last time you steal the spotlight. Enjoy it while it lasts," He murmured icily, heading toward the apartment complex.

He thought no one heard him... but Levi's weaponized ears caught every word.

'I kinda feel bad for him,' Levi sighed inwardly. 'He's in for a world of disappointment.'