Evolution 75

Chapter 75: THAT'S MY BIG BROTHER!

The totem was shaped akin to a P letter mixed with a lightning bolt design, appearing as such: (Ᵽ).

After listening to Astra's description of it, Levi recognized it swiftly.

'Small Rune of Destruction.' He pondered while listening to the eerie voices, 'Is this a high-grade skill totem with destructive properties?'

Levi knew that skill-based totems were shaped as runes indicating their main effects. They were used to contain abilities mostly unrelated to sunlight, such as lightning strikes, fireballs, hurricanes, invisibility, flight, and such.

It was like sealing the nightcrawlers'/daywalkers' innate abilities into totems for one-time use by other people through incantations.

Each IIthorien rune was connected to nature's element in one way or another. In the case of this totem, its rune was called the small rune of destruction and was one of the most prominent runes in any incantation needed to activate a destruction-based totem.

While knowing about it did limit Levi's hunt for answers, it still wasn't enough.

'This rune is in tens of thousands of totems, and those are just the known ones.' Levi held his chin, 'Instructor Seraphis knows that it's near impossible for rookies like us to extract the real incantation of such a vague totem from mere clues. Especially in less than half an hour, which means...'

Levi tuned out all the noises around him, focusing purely on the whispers. They turned into clear voices speaking about different interconnected topics.

The first whisper spoke about a ruined apocalyptic world where hellfire rained everywhere. The second one was about a witch getting burned at the stake. The third one told a tale of a man betrayed by his friend and pushed into a deep pit of flames. The last one discussed a corrupt officer, who was boiled alive as punishment.

All of them were spoken in rhythm akin to incantations!

Levi had no clue if those whispers were real or just Instructor Seraphis' imaginative creations, but he recognized that all of them were connected through fire...It was the only recurring theme.

As for wondering if one of those whispers was the real incantation? Levi wasn't that foolish to consider such an easy solution as the correct one... especially not in the last section of the trial.

'It's a fire-based skill.' Levi thought, 'This reduces the number of possible totems, but there must be more to the clues.'

Levi revised the clues and analyzed them thoroughly, not skipping even a single pronunciation of each letter. When he did this, he soon found that the small rune of destruction (Ƿ) was used in every single whisper, but in different words!

Although he knew that it was a popular rune, he believed that the instructor wouldn't put it in those specific words unless there was something hidden there.

As expected, his eyebrows rose a bit after he used the words together, discovering that it gave him a few possibilities for creating incantations!

'Rupture, vile, drawn, world, spit, hellfire, came, what, before, let, core, your.' Levi thought, 'I only have one chance to create the true incantation. If I use the wrong one, the totem will be changed.'

Levi revisited the clues one last time, understanding that this was a trial of intelligence, not a trial of assumption...In simpler terms, all the answers must be buried in the clues.

'The word order is in the sequence of the whispers!'

After listening to them repeat one last time, Levi swiftly found out that the words were linked to the stories' core, and if he lined them up in the same order, he would get a perfect incantation!

Fully trusting in the logic behind the clues, Levi walked past the totem and stood in front of the door...This attracted everyone's attention, but no one thought much of it.

They had already seen how much Demetris and Nurah were struggling with the puzzle, and after witnessing how long Levi took to complete the third section, none of them expected him to outpace the others this time.

However, just as they were about to switch their focus back to Nurah and Demetris, their ears picked up on Levi's serene voice, uttering softly, "Rupture, world, and spit your vile core, let hellfire drown what came before."

Under everyone's stunned looks, the inscriptions on the totem lit up from the bottom with a red hue until they reached the top.

Then, it released a gentle pulse of energy and started floating towards the giant keyhole on the door.

Since it was shaped as (Þ), it looked just like any other key, twisting to the right and opening the door at last.

Ting!

The bell rang once, waking up everyone from their stupor, just to find Levi already facing the giant sealed Wyvern totem.

"..."

"..."

"..."

The candidates were left staring at Levi's back in disbelief after all the doors were unlocked, giving them a thorough view of the other side. When they noticed the update on the holographic screen above them, their eyes widened even more.

//-Candidate: Levi Larson

Status: Finished

Trial Performance Breakdown:

First Section: 2 seconds [Grade: SSS]

Second Section: 5 seconds [Grade: SSS]

Third Section: 3 minutes [Grade: S]

Fourth Section: 2 minutes [Grade: SSS+]

TOTAL TIME: 5 minutes and 9 seconds.

Final Score: SSS

Overall Placement: Undecided-//

The deafening silence was soon broken by Arthur's cheerful, thunderous voice.

"THAT'S MY BIG BROTHER!"

The moment his voice echoed in everyone's ears, the scene exploded with reactions from candidates, viewers, and even nightcrawlers!!

-What the hell! He solved it in less than two minutes?! Without holograms?!-

-Was it this easy? How come Demetris and Nurah are struggling?-

-If the same puzzle wasn't given to everyone, I would have assumed that he lucked out on an easy one!-

The region's network buzzed with instant tweets and emojis. Everyone was caught off guard by the trial's conclusion, especially when they had no clue what Levi did to solve the puzzle!

Unlike the other candidates in his group, he had no holographic screens to show the viewers their thought process.

He simply stood with his head lowered the entire time and his chin resting on his hand, akin to a statue. When he finally made his move, he opened the door and walked out on his first attempt.

'It can't be...'

Meanwhile, Demetris didn't take the news with an open mind as he kept staring in the direction of Levi's hall in shock.

He heard the bell ring, he heard the announcement of his results, and yet, he still failed to accept it.

As for Nurah? She was also taken aback, but for just a few moments.

'It's on!'

Her expression turned solemn as she refocused on the puzzle, knowing that if she didn't solve it in the next couple of minutes, her lead would be stolen!

However, the halls' roofs were open and no one really was banned from talking, not even the nightcrawlers...This had affected her ability to listen to the whispers even more.

It was like a fading breeze passing by her ears, and she needed to catch it at the perfect moment or it would be gone, waiting until the next cycle repeated.

'How the hell did he solve it so fast? Does he have superhuman ears or something?' She frowned.

Uncaring about their struggles, Instructor Seraphis addressed Levi with a faint smile, "You still have twenty minutes more or less. Are you going to solve the bonus puzzle and win the Wyvern or skip it?"

"Why not? I have some time to kill." Levi smiled back.

When Demetris heard this, his expression couldn't help but turn ugly, even when he tried his best to keep his composure intact.

'Bastard! He is at it again! Stealing my spotlight!' He gritted his teeth hatefully, feeling a burning sensation in his chest.

Ever since he was young, he was thrown into the spotlight by his big brother and parents after they found out that his light affinity was on the better end.

When Mantis announced it to the Sunstrike Agency, they took him in and trained him with the Daywalkers at the age of ten.

He became everyone's little brother and was showered with attention, gifts, and praise. Since his talents were shown to excel in other departments too, everyone kept telling him that he had a good chance of becoming a governor; a position given to only Solarbound Daywalkers with the best achievements in the region.

After being raised in this environment, Demetris always believed himself to be the greatest talent in their region and was waiting, preparing, for this very significant day.

All for the sake of putting out the greatest debut performance in the history of the Contract Ritual Assembly.

But, as he listened to the distant chatter of the candidates, hearing Levi's name popping more often than his own, this dream, this fantasy of his, was crumbling to pieces...

'No, no, no, no, I refuse to fade into the background, I refuse to have my destiny rewritten by a blind cripple... I refuse!'

Demetris' eyes turned bloodshot as he refocused on the puzzle in hand, but his thoughts were too consumed with Levi's to concentrate properly.

But, Demetris didn't seem to care less...The moment his ears finally captured a resemblance of an incantation, his eyes shone in excitement.

He believed that if Levi could solve it this quickly, it only means that the puzzle was hearing the incantation.

Alas...

"Ash to ash, dust to air, Now my soul is everywhere!"

Silence...

What came next was utter silence.