

Few Wives 131

Chapter 131 Beast Aura

In Jade's room...

"Hallowed Ground!" Hope didn't waste any time.

She immediately cast the spell as soon as she got beside Jade's bed. Both because she wanted to get back to Muku quickly and she genuinely didn't want to see Jade suffering like she was. Even though she was no longer confident in her healing abilities. She still gave it her all.

A gentle green light enveloped Jade's bed. Especially focused on her body. The healing power because a lot more potent since it was focused on a smaller area than usual. The green veins on Jade's body didn't even take a second before they started receding. The speed at which they receded was fast as well.

Seeing this, everyone behind Hope, who had her eyes closed, smiled. They were glad that, unlike Muku's condition, Jade's was still treatable. With that, their worries were decreased by a significant margin. Now, all that was left was to find a way to heal Muku, and everything would be okay again.

"Mmm," Jade let out a small sound from her mouth as she came to. Which was a sign that her mouth's break from being used too much daily was about to end.

"Jade!" Emily exclaimed while jumping on top of Jade. Giving her a tight hug while she sobbed softly. She had never spent so long without talking to Jade ever since they met. So she felt her absence a lot more than the others. After all, Jade was like her second sister. Her twin sister even.

They were that close, even if they fought for little to no reason most of the time. That was just their way of showing love. Which wasn't unlike most siblings.

"Are you trying to squeeze me to death?" Jade spoke in a slightly laboured and annoyed voice. She had just woken up only to find herself getting the air squeezed out of her by Emily. How could she not be annoyed? She wasn't much of a hugger either.

"Tsk, can't you be nice to me just this once" Emily clicked her tongue in annoyance as she wiped away her tears after letting go of Jade.

The way Jade had replied had completely destroyed the mood for her. The others just looked on with wry smiles. They were used to how the two interacted.

"If you'll excuse me, I have to go back to Big Brother now" A weakened Hope spoke as she prepared to leave after seeing that Jade was now fine.

"Hhm? What do you mean? Where is he anyway? Am I not important enough for him to be around when I wake up?" Jade asked about Muku with a hurt look.

It was only then that they all remembered that she was already unconscious when Muku was ambushed. The room suddenly went quiet.

"What happened? What's wrong? Where is he?" Jade asked worriedly. She could sense that the atmosphere in the room changed when she mentioned Muku.

Her negative feelings towards his absence immediately vanished. She had realised that there was no way he wouldn't be around when she woke up if everything was okay. Not that he treated her differently, but because that's what kind of person he was.

He valued them all a lot, which they could tell. So there definitely must be something going on for him to be absent. With his strength, she normally wouldn't have thought that it was something bad that was keeping him away. But the gloomy expressions of the others brought her to that conclusion.

She started feeling a sudden sinking feeling she never felt before. Her heart raced anxiously. Her already weak body started feeling weaker. All she could think of at the moment was wanting to see him.

"Calm down Jade. The situation with him might not be good. But it's not bad either. Here eat this. And we'll take you to see him," Emily spoke while grabbing Jade's shoulders softly. Which snapped the green-haired girl out of her darkening thoughts.

She then presented her with the food that Elsa was holding. They were aware that it would be necessary from Hope's case so they prepared it in advance.

Also like Hope, she wanted to reject the food and immediately go. But her body just wouldn't move due to lack of strength. So she had to eat first. But the Half-step R2 meat no longer tasted that good after they had R2 meat. Not to mention her negative emotions at the moment. So she took quite a while to finish.

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Muku's room...

"..." Jade silently looked at Muku. Her expression was unreadable.

Nothing but his pale face was reflected in her eyes. Hope, who was by his side and had come earlier than the others, was completely ignored.

"To think that even you could look so weak" Jade said one sentence softly.

Which made the others look at her with slight anger in their eyes. Hope was full-on glaring at her. How could she say such a thing in such a situation?

Jade ignored them all as she slowly walked toward Muku. She soon reached beside his bed and instinctively held out her hand. Hope wanted to slap it away but then she noticed the tears that had gathered in Jade's eyes.

That's when she realised that Jade was also hurt by his current situation. As much as any of them at least. She just didn't know how to delicately out her words.

And so, Jade put her hand on Muku's cheek. She started tracing it all over his face. Then she noticed his injuries that were barely visible under the blanket. They were bandaged up, but she could tell the severity of them. She subconsciously reached out.

"Hhm?" The moment she touched the edge of the bandage, she sensed something. Prompting her to make a confused sound.

"What is it?" Hope, who had been monitoring her like a hawk, asked.

"I think I can sense Beast Aura on his injury. But it seemed a bit different from mine. Other than the different colours. It also seems stronger and a lot purer. It's like a refined version of mine, though with some bloodlust added to it" Jade explained herself.

"Wait what? Beast Aura? How's that possible. Isn't it Ares' power?" Hope spoke confusedly.

"Unless maybe it's really an upgraded version of what Jade has. Normal people like us cannot identify, but she can due to their shared source" Layla immediately cracked the code on what might be happening. Which was accurate.

Jade's Beast Aura was something that normally, only the most superior beasts had. Not superior in strength, but bloodline.

"If so, can she do something about it?" Chloe asked the critical question that the others were likely also thinking along with her.

They had long figured out that the energy, now identified to be Ares' Beast Aura. Was the reason Muku's injuries were not healing. So if Jade could do something about it, that would be really great. It would basically fix everything.

As soon as Chloe finished asking the question. Everyone immediately looked at Jade with hopeful eyes. A positive reply from her at that moment would mean the world to them.

"I...I'm not sure. But I can try. I will have to properly rest first" Jade replied hesitantly.

She didn't want to let them down, but also didn't want to give them false hope. So she said it exactly as she felt it.

"Oh okay, you should go rest then. You can try when you get back into shape" Chloe spoke, not pressurising her.

They weren't unreasonable to think that Jade could definitely do something about the situation. Just because she had the same source as Ares' power. For them, her not outright giving them a negative answer was a good thing. At least that way, they had hope. Even if it was fragile, it was there.

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The next morning...

While Jade had completely recovered by the previous evening. They wanted to make sure that she was in perfect mental condition, too. So to Hope's dismay and unwillingness, they postponed the task to the next day.

"Are you ready child?" Audrey asked Jade softly.

While she also hoped that Jade could heal Muku. She didn't want to put too much pressure on her. Doing that might even cause her to fail when she could have succeeded.

Which was why she had specifically told the others to not say anything that could shake Jade's mental state. Warning Hope especially, the girl had been acting a bit crazy recently. So she wasn't sure what she would do.

"Yes, I'm ready. Let's get started" Jade replied confidently. Clearly, her mental state has improved a lot from the previous day. Which was good news for them all.

Jade then proceeded to place her hands directly above Muku's chest. Not touching his body. But very close to touching it.

She could clearly sense Ares' tyrannical Beast Aura. She then released hers. Her whole body was covered in it as she began channelling it toward her hands.

The moment it came into contact with Ares' Beast Aura. They both went berserk as if they met an enemy they had to defeat no matter what...

And so, the battle to decide Muku's immediate fate began...

Chapter 132 Mind encounter?

As Jade's output increased, the resistance from Ares' Beast Aura increased. Both energies were trying to consume the other.

Slowly but surely, Jade was winning. Not because she was stronger. Which was a title Ares' energy occupied in the situation. She was winning because her energy was more abundant.

She was defeating quality with quantity. Even that only worked because she was battling against a weakened, second-hand Beast Aura from Ares. If it was the purest form, from the source. She would need to be at least Rank Ten to even stand a chance against the same amount.

That's the kind of strength difference they had. Which, luckily for them, wasn't at play. So Jade was able to slowly convert Ares' Beast Aura into hers. By this point, the whole room was covered in green and red energy.

The others had long left the room. While what was happening likely wouldn't affect them. They didn't want to take the chance.

They also noticed something while observing the spectacle. The density of Jade's Beast Aura was increasing the more she converted Ares' Beast Aura. It was easy to see that she was getting quite a significant benefit from the ordeal.

Another thing they noticed was Muku's improving skin colour. I had become pale from the day he was injured. Now it was slowly returning to its rosy tone.

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Ares' dimension...

As Jade expelled Ares' Beast Aura from Muku's body. Ares quickly sensed it.

"Hhmm, who dares go against me by assisting that human?!" Ares' spoke to himself furiously.

While he could sense what was happening with his Beast Aura. He couldn't sense the situation clearly. All he could tell was that whoever was going against him was using Beast Aura.

And since the weaker beasts that could use it wouldn't do such a thing. He assumed that it was one of the other Monarchs. As for the thought that it may get to be a human... It never crossed his mind.

He hadn't paid attention to Jade both times they encountered each other. The first time, she was too far. On the second, she had already fallen unconscious when he showed up. So he had no idea that a human who could use Beast Aura had appeared.

With his thought that it was one of the Monarchs. He didn't dare prove further. Afraid that whoever the person was could use the chance to attack him.

After all, he was the least liked among all the Monarchs. So some of them wouldn't mind taking a stab at him if there was a chance. Which he assumed was the reason whoever was interfering with his prey was even doing so.

Unknowingly, his paranoia kept Jade's existence hidden from him a little longer. Which should have been impossible since that bloodline was supposed to have been wiped out.

"Whoever you are comrade. I will get back at you one day" Ares spoke hatefully before closing his eyes again. Returning to his previous dormant state, though this time his aura was significantly more agitated.

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In Muku's mind?...

While outside he was inanimate. In his mind, he was very much active. From the time he was attacked by Ares, he had found himself wandering in endless smoke.

He knew it wasn't the real world, but he couldn't leave. All he could do was keep walking forward or stop. And something told him that if he kept on walking forward. He will find something that would be worth it.

And so, he kept walking for an unknown time to him. It felt like years, but he still kept on walking. At some point, the grey smoke started turning darker and darker until it was pitch black.

He felt like he was walking on a moonless and starless night. Completely dark, with nothing in sight. But he still kept walking. Thinking that he had come so far, so he might as well continue. If he stopped then, he would have failed himself.

As his sanity was starting to crack from the ordeal. He saw something move in the darkness. Two large glowing orbs were beaming from the sky. Although they looked to be as big as the moon at least, he felt like they were eyes. Eyes that were looking right at him.

And honestly, he felt scared. What was such a thing doing in his mind? Was it going to kill him? Could it really kill him? Such thoughts plagued his consciousness as he froze on the spot. Unable to move from fear.

He had long realised that he was unable to use his abilities. So he was no different from a normal human standing against such a thing.

"What? Are you not going to say anything?" An unknown voice that sounded familiar to him for whatever reason sounded in his mind.

Hearing the voice, he somehow immediately knew that whatever Being the voice belonged to wouldn't hurt him. Which was definitely weird, but he just knew.

"Who are you" Muku asked after gathering all his courage.

"Good, at least you can speak. Otherwise, I would have been really disappointed" The voice didn't reply to his question.

It spoke words that would have definitely pissed him off had it been someone else who said it. After all, it was not only ignoring his question but also saying such a thing. But for some reason, he was happy that he didn't disappoint the being.

"What are you doing in my mind?" Muku asked his next question.

"I'm not in your mind" Surprisingly, the being answered his question.

"Am I also not in my mind then? Did you kidnap my consciousness?" Muku asked another question, this time a bit guarded.

If he really had been mind-kidnapped, he had no idea what he would do. Or what he could do.

"No, you're still in your mind, as you put it" The being replied patiently.

"Then are you projecting yourself into my mind?" Muku asked another question.

"No. Let me put it like this. Space, or Laws, to be more specific, don't affect me. I am nowhere and everywhere at the same time, among other things" The being tried to clarify the situation. But it just confused Muku even more.

Then he was filled with horror. What kind of being had he encountered? Wasn't such an ability a God-level power? He was certain that even Ares couldn't do such a thing. He was probably not even close to being able to do it.

To him, this information translated to, "Don't do anything to offend the being or you are definitely dead. Maybe without a chance of reincarnation even"

"Do you not have anything else to ask?" The Being asked curiously. While it could easily read his thoughts. It chose not to. Such things made conversation pointless.

"R-right. What do you want with me?" Muku asked, slightly more nervous this time. As even if the being wanted him to commit suicide. He wasn't sure if he could refuse. Which made him feel quite hopeless.

Why did he keep on encountering such beings he couldn't resist? Most people were probably still dealing with Rank One beasts as their strongest encounters.

But here he was facing a being that was beyond the authority of the Laws of Existence. And it was all caused by an encounter with another being he could not fathom.

On the bright side, this being didn't seem to be as antagonistic as Ares. So he might be able to make it out alive.

"Good question. And I don't want anything from you. I just wanted to say hello" The Being replied. The reply made Muku feel speechless. Where all Bigshots so bored these days? Like who does that? And after such an appearance too.

"Umm, really? That's it?" Muku asked after calming down.

"Yes. Should there be more?" The being said another thing that made him speechless.

Why was it asking him that? He wasn't the one that appeared in front of the other. How was he supposed to know??

"Oh right! I almost forgot. I have a warning for you" Before Muku could lose it. The Being said something that grabbed his attention. A warning from such a being must be something really important right?

"Yes please tell me. What is it?" Muku spoke respectfully.

"Don't wait too long, or you might lose them" " The Being spoke seriously after pausing for a bit.

The content made Muku almost curse out loudly. What the hell?! That was the warning?! What was that serious atmosphere for then? But after thinking about it for a bit... Maybe it was good advice after all. Wait! What was he even thinking about?

"It seems our time is up. May we meet again sometime soon?" As Muku was thinking up a storm, The Being suddenly said something unexpected.

Before he could react, he felt himself get ejected from the mindscape. He couldn't even say anything before he was gone. He still hadn't found out who or what the being was. Or its name, at least. But it seemed that he could only wait until the next time they met. If it even happened that is.

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"You couldn't say anything in the end, huh?" As soon as Muku disappeared. A disgruntled feminine voice sounded in the darkness.

"It's not yet time" The masculine voice that had been talking to Muku before replied.

"You always say that" The feminine voice spoke. But the masculine voice didn't reply. And everything returned to silence...

Chapter 133 Muku wakes up

Muku's room...

"Haaaah!" Jade screamed to hype herself up as she tried to uproot and convert the last of Ares' Beast Aura.

Which was a lot harder than when she started the procedure. This was because she had to invade Muku's body with her own Beast Aura without hurting him. And the fact that Beast Aura was generally a violent energy unsuitable for such tasks made it even harder. Not to mention that Ares' Beast Aura was fighting back.

So she had to use maximum effort as one wrong step could lead to a disastrous situation. Fortunately for everyone, she succeeded, and the last of Ares' Beast Aura was removed from Muku's body.

"That was exhausting... Oh no!"

Bang!

Jade was expressing her relief that she was down when she changed her statement in alarm. Signifying that something was wrong. But before the others could ask, she had already jumped out of the window.

The others quickly ran to look at what was happening. They saw that she was already out through the gate.

Boom!

Green aura then exploded just outside the gate. Clearly Jade's doing. Luckily, she had done so. Outside it, the mansion might have been broken down. Which was when they understood her actions.

They immediately ran downstairs and went to see what was going on with her. What they saw surprised them greatly. Jade, who couldn't enter her most mundane cat form before, was now in her berserk form. Or, more appropriately, the Beast Aura form that had zero input from mana.

They could no longer sense the previous mana signature that she released along with her Beast Aura signature. Now it was just pure Beast Aura.

Without asking they immediately realised that she had definitely finished switching over. She no longer had mana in her body. Just Beast Aura. This meant that the moment she killed enough beasts, she would immediately be upgraded to Rank Three.

Honestly, they were all envious. They were all still around 50-60% of their mana strengthening and control. While that was already an impressive feat, it wasn't good enough.

To them, if they didn't have around the same strength as their peers, no matter how strong they were. It just wasn't good enough. Even if the peer came across a great opportunity as Jade did, they still wouldn't accept it.

Layla, who was the most competitive in the team, was hit the hardest. She immediately felt like going to meditate to improve herself. But she wanted to see how Muku's situation would turn out before she left. So she was momentarily stuck. She hated it, but there was nothing that could be done.

And so, they looked on as Jade tried to get her aura under control. Even the stadium women, whom they had not seen for a while, made their appearance. Of course, they stood far away within the barrier as they looked on.

The relationship between the two groups had gotten quite awkward since the day Muku got injured. While Muku's group could go to the stadium anytime they wanted. The stadium women couldn't go to the mansion in the same fashion.

Even Freya, who was worried about Muku, refused to go when the others wanted her to. She felt wary of the girls when Muku wasn't around. As she could tell they didn't like her very much. While they didn't hate her, they definitely didn't like her either. So there was no way she would put herself in such a situation.

And none of the other women dared go either. Because of that, not knowing what the girls were planning on doing next. Or whether they would be blamed since the whole issue began with assisting them. The stadium women felt tense.

Which was honestly a one-sided issue since no one from Muku's group even thought about them once. They were all too busy to think about such insignificant people.

As for blaming them for what happened. That was also impossible. After all, the real reason they bothered to help the stadium women was because of Elsa. Without Elsa, they might not have even approached the stadium in the first place.

And there was no way they would blame Elsa. So the stadium women were just thinking too much.

Soon after, Jade managed to control her Beast Aura. She then returned to her normal state, before walking back. A little smile on her face. Getting stronger was always a good feeling.

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"Congratulations," Emily said as soon as Jade joined them. She was truly happy for her friend.

"Thanks, let's go see what his condition is like now" Jade accepted the thanks without gloating or anything. She knew that it wasn't the time for such things.

And so the girls returned to Muku's room. There they saw Hope busy healing Muku while Audrey stood by. That's when they noticed that the two hadn't gone out with them.

Which was understandable for Hope really. Audrey's case only surprised them a bit before they remembered that she was technically Muku's loyal servant.

It wasn't that they didn't care about him enough to go after Jade when they did. It was just a logical choice. Muku wasn't going anywhere while Jade seemed to be having some issues. So their decision to leave didn't mean that they cared too little.

"Finally..." Chloe whispered as she noticed Muku's injuries start to heal under Hope's healing glow. It was clearly visible as Hope or Audrey had removed the bandages.

Soon all the wounds were gone. And they could see Muku's fingers as well as his eyelids move slightly. Which was a sign that he was about to wake. Which made them all overjoyed. They could finally start putting the whole ordeal behind them.

Under their eager gazes, Muku slowly opened his eyes. The grey eyes they hadn't seen for a few days were again in their full view.

Bang!

"Ouch!" "Ahh!" "Why?!"

Three cries of pain sounded as Emily, Jade, and Chloe hit face-first on solid blood barriers. Which had suddenly appeared in front of them when they tried to jump on Muku all at once.

Layla was only spared from the experience because she had happened to notice when Audrey cast the spell. Otherwise, she would have also been crying about her nose. Hope got a free pass since she was already on the bed with Muku. Elsa was just standing by.

Fortunately for Muku, Audrey had seen it coming. Otherwise, he would have found himself beneath a mountain of girls. As for whether he would have liked it or not, that was none of Audrey's concern. As long as she protects his life, her duty is done.

"Big brother, you're finally awake", Hope spoke softly, tears streaming down her pale cheeks as she hugged Muku.

"I'm sorry; I didn't mean to worry you again", Muku replied emotionally. The situation gave him a sense of déjà vu so he promptly agreed.

He already knew that whenever something like this happened to him. The one who suffers the most is Hope. Which made him unwilling to get badly injured again. Sadly, fortune wasn't on his side. As it happened again.

So he could only apologise. As he hugged her closely. He looked around the room. Seeing the girls, I gave them all a little smile. Which they were all happy to see again.

After the initial heightened emotion from seeing him wake up. The girls definitely couldn't jump on him again. So they could just happily stand at the sides. Envious of Hope's position, of how she could just hug him whenever she wanted, without a care in the world.

Unfortunately, they couldn't do the same unless they chose to be his sister. Which obviously none of them wanted. They wanted something else, which, sadly, they could tell that Muku wasn't willing to have with them yet.

So they could only look on for the time being.

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Later on in the lounge...

Muku had already had some food and the whole group had a chance to talk to him personally. It was time to get back to business. At least the planning part of it.

"So, did anything noteworthy happen while I was unconscious?" Muku began the discussion.

"We, there's this" Jad was the first to speak, and she transformed as she did so.

"Is this worthy of note?" She asked smugly. Now that Muku was up, she was quickly getting back to her usual personality.

"Well... congratulations. When did this happen?" Muku was truly impressed.

From his estimate from before Jade was supposed to be one of the last to reach Rank Three. Due to her troublesome Beast Aura conversion. But somehow, it seemed like she was going to be the first.

"Thanks, and it happened just a little while before you woke up. I think I have to thank you for it too" Jade responded clearly and was even humble for a change. It was likely caused by Muku's non-provocative answer, which was also a rarity when talking to her.

"Is that so? We'll have to circle back to this and you'll tell me more" Muku continued speaking properly, confusing her and the others a bit.

It almost seemed like he no longer saw her as just a troublesome brat. But as a girl, he still thought she was troublesome, but there was a significant improvement. Jade was so confused she didn't know what to say so she remained quiet.

"Okay, anything else?" Seeing that Jade seemed to be done. He asked if there was another thing that happened.

"No, it has been a rather peaceful few days" Audrey replied.

"Okay. So what's the situation with the stadium? Any relevant improvements on their side?" Muku asked a question that made everyone go quiet. After all, they had basically ignored the stadium since they returned.

"Umm, about that..." Audrey tried to reply but didn't know how to continue. So she just stalled mid-sentence.

{Sigh, I knew it} Muku thought to himself thinking of how he should continue...

Chapter 134 New recruit!

"I suspected this. It doesn't matter. Let's get it over with and move on with our lives. Would someone go call a few of them over? We can address them for the last time here as well as give them some meat since I'm certain you all didn't give them any" Muku spoke. Not minding how the girls had basically abandoned the stadium women.

"I'll go" Chloe stepped up. Not because she wanted to but because she had noticed that Audrey was about to volunteer. And there was no way she would let her go while she was around.

Layla likely would have taken Audrey's place in the end. But everyone knew that Layla's communication with strangers was nonexistent. Which was why Chloe stepped up.

She then promptly left for the stadium. And soon returned with Freya and a few other women from the base. While she wanted to leave Freya behind for obvious reasons, she refused to let her pettiness get in the way of business.

"Hello, sir. It's nice to see you in good health" Freya was unable to control herself when she saw that Muku was okay. She immediately blurted out what she thought. She had been extremely worried every day since the day she saw him last. It even affected her sleep.

So now, finally seeing him. Looking okay on top of that. She just couldn't control herself. She immediately regretted her words as she felt the air around her get heavier. She again found herself the target of multiple unfriendly gazes.

It felt so unbearable that she stumbled backwards. She then stumbled on her own foot and fell to the ground. Like any normal person when they fall. She reached out with her hands to touch the group and soften the impact.

[Functional House Detected!]

[Do you wish to bind?]

[Caution: Once bound. Can only be unbound by the destruction of the house]

As soon as her hands made contact with the mansion floor. She got several unfamiliar prompts. But she immediately knew that they were linked to her class. Which left her dazed as she didn't know what to do next.

"Hmm?... Well, that's certainly an interesting development," Muku spoke with a little smile. He and the other Rank Twos had just sensed something weird.

The moment Freya's hands touched the mansion floor. They sensed her mana travel through every last part of it before returning to her body. Which was something even they couldn't do.

While they could sense almost anything in the mansion. It was because of their heightened senses. While Freya basically merged her mana with the mansion. Which was something that shouldn't have been possible for someone as weak as her since even they couldn't do it. But it all made sense as soon as they remembered her unique class.

Interestingly, he could vaguely sense that the mansion had gotten a bit stronger after her mana passed through its walls. A crazy idea immediately formed in his mind.

"So this is what I missed last time, huh? Our mansion is still a house after all. Hey Ms Freya, before we move on to other things. Mind having a little chat with me?" Muku spoke aloud his thoughts and then addressed Freya at the end while helping her up.

The girls were giving him a look that said "Don't you dare!" But of course, being himself. He ignored them. He would do anything that would improve their safety, even if they were initially against it.

In this case, if Freya really developed like he thought she would with their help. Then there was no way they would keep on disliking her. Especially when there was really no reason to dislike her... At least not yet there wasn't.

"Sure" Freya, who was still a bit dazed, agreed to sit down and talk to Muku.

"Great. Audrey, why don't you go show the other ladies what they need to take?" Muku delegated the task of dealing with the stadium women so that he could speak to Freya without exposing everything about her to them.

After all, who knew whether they could be trusted or not. As for his girls, he trusted them. And if they wanted to do something to her. Whether they knew something private or not, it didn't matter. The strength difference was just that great.

Another reason was he wanted the two sides to quickly get used to each other. His crazy plan wouldn't work if they clashed constantly. So, he was going to try and use the situation as the foundation for the future.

"Sure" Audrey agreed to carry out the task. And so, she directed the women to the kitchen where the meat they were supposed to take was.

"No, we can speak without worry. If you don't mind Ms Freya, can you tell me what just happened with your Class just now? In as much detail as possible?" Muku immediately got to the point.

"Y-yeah, sure", Freya responded, a bit surprised by how he already knew that something had happened that was linked to her Class.

After all, there were no obvious outward occurrences that had suggested such a thing. But remembering his strength that seemed godlike to her, she accepted it. To her, it made sense that he could tell such things. In her mind, he was an almost unequalled presence.

"So it happened like this..." After Muku nodded for her to proceed.

She immediately recounted what had happened. Not leaving anything out. She even cutely tried to imitate the way the IA spoke in her head. Which made Muku and the girls realise that they might have come across one of those airheads they had heard so much about.

And honestly, they all found her cute at that moment. Some girls even got the urge to go and pat her head. Which would have been weird since she was older than them. She looked to be around 18 or 19 years old.

"Oh, is that so. How fascinating. Anyway, I have a proposition for you if you don't mind hearing it" Muku who had somewhat guessed it, wasn't too surprised.

All that surprised him was that she had to destroy her previous bonded house to choose another one. But other than that, it was all within his expectations. So he quickly moved on to the next step of his plan.

Hearing him actually say it. The girls narrowed their eyes but they didn't say anything. While they could oppose him. They chose not to. They felt that whoever opposed him at that time would be lowering their chance of ending up with him while increasing that of the others. After all, they heard read in a magazine that they came across a while back that men like women who are understanding.

Whether it was true or not. They didn't care. It seemed reasonable enough. And no one was willing to test out its truthfulness.

"Yes, sure, go ahead, please" Freya replied with some confusion.

Having no idea what he might want to propose to a little character like herself. Hell if he wanted to, he could force her to do whatever he wanted. And she wouldn't even be able to resist. Would she want to resist though?

Okay, she was going off track. So she quickly got out of her mind and completely paid attention to Muku. Waiting to hear what he had to say.

"Umm, what do you think about joining my crew?" Muku again didn't beat around the bush.

Hearing his statement, Freya's heart skipped a beat. She almost had a heart attack. And she had trouble believing what she had just heard. Did he really just say what she heard him say. Was she dreaming? It must be a dream, right?

"It's okay if you don't want to. But just give me a clear answer so that I cannot for certain that I was rejected," Muku spoke up with a slightly downcast expression. He had assumed her dazed silence for rejection.

Hearing his words the girls all facepalmed. The guy really didn't know how to read a girl, did he? Everything about Freya's actions was suggesting that she wanted to join. But the dense fool was seeing the opposite.

They all soon calmed down. They realised that he was also dense with them, even after all the signs they tossed around daily. So it was to be expected that he wouldn't understand Freya's signs either.

At least that's what they thought...

"What? No... NO! I didn't refuse. I was just surprised that's all. I didn't think you'd want a weak person like me in your team. I even thought that I misheard. I want to, I really do! If you are willing to take me. I'm willing to join" Freya immediately explained herself in panic. Thinking that a once-in-a-lifetime chance was about to pass her by.

"Oh. Is that so? Great then! Welcome to the team" Muku put on a look of understanding as he replied. Internally though, he was smiling triumphantly.

He was never as dense as the girls thought of course. Just that he acted that way. While the world's social system had collapsed. He wanted to at least preserve his own sense of morality. So until the girls were 18, he'd continue acting.

As for Freya. He acted dumb to get her to take the initiative sometimes. If she was going to be their teammate. Then she couldn't be so passive all the time.

In their current world, only those who took the initiative could make it far...

Chapter 135: Time to face it

"Ladies, would welcome your new teammate?" Muku asked the girls who hadn't said anything yet.

"Welcome to the team Ms Freya. Let me reintroduce myself. I'm Hope. Big Brother's beloved little sister. I hope we get along" Hope, who had the least dislike for Freya, introduced herself first. Which was because she didn't see her as a threat to her position. She was even smiling as she did so.

In fact, she never disliked Freya from the start. She was just supporting her friends and pretended to dislike her. But now that Freya was part of the team. There was no reason to pretend. And she didn't want to isolate her, which would be cruel.

The others, seeing her, couldn't help but roll their eyes. It always surprised them how her personality changed so much depending on Muku's state. Now that Muku was okay, she was back to being the kind girl they all knew. They were certain that if Muku was still injured or unconscious, she wouldn't even bother to acknowledge Freya's existence.

"Welcome to the team, Ms Freya; I'm Chloe" Chloe, who could adapt easily, was the next to welcome Freya.

"Jade, sup" Jade didn't say much. Which was to be expected. But it was enough.

Layla was even worse. She just nodded at Freya without saying anything.

Emily just looked on silently before turning to leave. Her heart wouldn't let her welcome more competition. The others she could handle since they somewhat had the same origin and stood on the same ground. Even Audrey, she could accept.

But Freya made her feel extremely threatened. Nothing was stopping Freya and Muku from doing certain things if they wanted to. While in Muku's eyes, she and the other girls were still too young. And Audrey was Layla's mother so it was complicated. All this made her unwilling to accept Freya who seemingly had a clear path to Muku's heart.

After Emily left. Elsa nodded in Freya's direction before quickly running after her sister. While she thought that Emily was being rude. She would still always stand by her sister no matter what. And she could somewhat understand why Emily was unwilling.

Muku just looked on with a wry expression on his face. He had expected something like that to happen. He was even surprised that it was only Emily who did it. But then again it was also understandable. Emily might be nice in other things, but when it came to him. He had noticed some certain tendencies of wanting to monopolise him.

Which again was understandable since no one would be willing to share the one they love in normal circumstances. The only thing holding her back was the fact that she and Muku weren't in a romantic relationship. Otherwise, she might not have just walked away from the situation.

"Umm, Ms Freya, aren't you going to reply to what they said?" Muku ignored Emily's situation for the moment as he spoke to Freya. Trying his best to disburse the awkward atmosphere Emily has created. However, it was already kinda awkward since he invited Freya to join the team.

"R... right, I'm Freya like you all know. Thank you for welcoming me. You can just call me Freya, there's no need to say Ms" Freya awkwardly did as Muku asked.

She could sense the tense atmosphere but chose to ignore it. It was her moment of happiness and she didn't want to ruin it by thinking of negative things. So what if she wasn't well-liked? She'd definitely do her best to make sure they like her in the shortest amount of time.

Her chance of a better future had come and she was willing to fight for it. Fighting spirit burned in her eyes as she thought such things.

Without knowing it. Her easy-to-read face improved the opinion the girls had of her. They respected any girl who was willing to fight for what she wanted. Especially someone who was originally timid like Freya.

"Good" Jade couldn't help but give a little praise before walking away with a little smile on her face.

The rest followed after her. Leaving only Muku, Hope and Freya in the room. There was no way Hope was going to be okay with leaving his side so soon after he woke up.

"Oh right, there's one more member of the team. You know her already but I'll tell you about her anyway. I'm talking about the lady with grey hair from before. Her name is Audrey. And she's like the team's second in command. So if she tells you to do something. Just do it. But don't worry, she's a nice lady. So she won't make you do something unreasonable" Muku introduced Audrey since she was absent.

"Okay, I'll do my best to live up to your expectations" Freya replied. Showing her complete willingness to incorporate herself into the team.

"Good, Hope here will show you around the mansion. I have to go rest for now. We will talk later about your class. And if there's anything at the stadium you want to take with you. I advise you to get it today since we will be leaving tomorrow morning" Muku suddenly surrendered his job to Hope, who was surprised by how sudden it was.

She wanted to refuse, but unfortunately for her, she couldn't deny her brother's words. So she dejectedly started showing Freya around the mansion.

Muku had gone back to his room to rest. He still had not completely recovered from the ordeal so he still needed to rest. What Hope didn't know was that he had set her up on purpose.

He knew that the girl wouldn't leave him alone for the next few days. And he couldn't tell her to leave him alone since he couldn't bear to see her sad. But he didn't want her to be there as he tried to rest, looking at him unblinkingly. So he came up with the plan to get her to lead Freya around.

And he had also briefly gone to the kitchen. Where he told Audrey to delay the girl after she was done with showing Freya around. With all that, even if she came to his room after, he should have long fallen asleep. Thereby avoiding the situation where he can't sleep because she's intensely looking at him. Almost like he'd disappear if she looked away.

While it was sweet that she cared about him so much. It was a rather big distraction when one was trying to sleep.

And so, Muku went to sleep peacefully. Surprisingly, an hour later, when he woke up, she was still not there. He couldn't help but wonder how Audrey had delayed her. But that had to be put on hold for the time being.

He first had to deal with Emily. Which made him feel quite nervous. After all, he knew exactly what she was worried about. But if he admitted to knowing it and said that he didn't plan on doing it. Even if it got rid of her worries. It would create new problems for him.

She would immediately realise that he had been playing dumb all this time. Then she will likely tell the others as well. Which would increase the problems even more. So he was at a loss for what to do.

Just then he vaguely remembered someone telling him that if he kept on delaying. He would lose them all eventually. He couldn't remember who, but the words still shook his heart.

And so, he finally made his final decision. It was time he faced it. While he couldn't completely go against his beliefs. He would at least not ignore it like he had been doing. That was not fair to the girls, and himself since he couldn't completely let down his guard around them lest he slipped up.

...

Emily and Elsa's room...

"I'm such an idiot. Why did I let my emotions take control of me like that? How am I supposed to face him now?! How can I get myself out of this?" Emily spoke to herself like a crazy person while tightly hugging her pillow and sitting on her bed.

She immediately regretted her actions after walking out. But since she had already done so, she couldn't turn back. And now she was beating herself up because of it.

Elsa just looked on. It was a familiar sight to her. From even before the apocalypse in fact. And she had long learned to just sit there quietly when it happens as Emily wouldn't listen to anything anymore said in such a state. So the best she could do was to be present.

Knock! Knock!

Suddenly a knock came from the door. Normally the person inside would then ask who was outside. But they were Evolvers. Evolvers could sense each other's energy signatures if they weren't hidden. Muku wasn't hiding his signature. So even the weak Elsa knew who it was, let alone Emily.

And so, the room went quiet. Elsa was leaving the decision on what would happen next to Emily. While Emily's mind had completely shut down.

"Hey Emily, it's me. Can I come in? I'd like to talk about something. It won't take too much of your time, I promise," Muku called out after almost a minute of silence. But even after that, Emily remained quiet and stayed frozen on the bed.

"Sigh" Elsa sighed from inside the room. She then got up. Went to open the door for Muku.

"I hope what you want to talk about is something positive". She then spoke before Muku said anything.

After that, she passed him by, heading downstairs. Not even waiting for a response. She was giving the two some privacy. As well as mildly warning Muku to not hurt her sister.

The little girl was quite mature when she wanted to be.

Chapter 136: The Talk

"So can we talk now?" Muku spoke while standing at the door looking at Emily who was still frozen on the bed.

She still didn't budge. She was just looking at him with her golden eyes, unblinking. Her brain had short-circuited. To think Elsa would ditch her just like that.

She was considering how she could escape. But his standing at the door made it hard to do. It was almost like he knew that she wanted to run. And she couldn't break through the window since replacing it wasn't an option anymore.

"Sigh, I'm not going to ask you why you left like that... Because I already know why" Muku continued speaking after not getting a response from Emily. He didn't want to drag it on for long so he was going to get it sorted out that day no matter what.

"Oh, okay... You what?!" Emily replied subconsciously after hearing that he wasn't going to ask her why she left. But after the second part of his statement was finally decoded in her mind she screamed out in shock and panic.

What did he mean he knew? Did he really know? Or did he just think that he knew? What would she do if he really knew? But there was no way he'd really know right? Not with his dense brain... Right?

Emily's brain went into overdrive. Muku could swear that he saw a little smoke coming out of her ears. That's how much she was thinking.

"Anyway, I came to tell you that I won't play dump anymore. I know about how you and the other girls see me in a special way. And honestly, even the densest person in the world would be able to tell," Muku continued again before stopping without saying everything. He was giving Emily a chance to say something if she wanted to.

"So you knew all this time"? Emily, who had finally calmed herself down, spoke. She wouldn't let her nerves cheat her out of having the conversation she had always wanted to have with Muku.

If she did that, not only would she have let herself down. She would have also let the other girls down. As from his words. He knew about them all. So she brought herself to ask the first question clearly.

"Ye..." Muku was replying before Emily interrupted him by asking something else.

"What do you think about us then? Do you see us the same way? Or even one of us?" Emily didn't care about how rude it was to interrupt him at the moment.

She just couldn't hold herself back from asking anymore. What she asked was something that had been plaguing all their minds for the longest time. So when she got the chance to ask, she didn't care about anything else. She was that desperate to know.

However, his unknown answer also made her extremely nervous. In her mind, it could go four ways. The first way would be that he liked them all romantically. Which was somewhat good news for her. The second way would be that he only liked her. Which would be great news for her.

Then came the opposite side. Which was either he didn't like any of them romantically. Or he liked one of them and it wasn't her. The first one was acceptable since it was what they had been assuming all this time. And it was something that could be changed with some effort.

However, if he likes someone else from the team who wasn't her. She would be devastated. Likely to never love again. After all, she wouldn't be able to do anything in such a scenario. She couldn't betray her friend so that she could end up with Muku herself. And even if she tried to sabotage the relationship. There was no guarantee that she would be the one to benefit.

So, with such thoughts going on inside her pretty little head. It was understandable that she would be nervous about his reply. Especially when she was aware of Murphy's Law and found truth in it.

"The answer to that is complicated..." Muku replied before trailing off. Not sure how to continue.

"Do you, or do you not?" Emily wasn't going to let up. Even if she was nervous. She was determined to hear the answer no matter what.

"Fair enough. The truth is I'm not sure. I think I do. But because of your ages and our past relationships, I can't let myself completely surrender to my emotions. So that makes me uncertain" Muku replied as honestly as he could at the time.

He really wasn't sure how he felt about them because of the various mental barriers that he faced. While he was certain that he didn't want to see any other man with any of them. He wasn't sure if he wanted to see himself with them when they were still so young.

The situation reminded him of a traumatic event from his past. When he was still a child, there was a nice, slightly older girl who took care of him at the orphanage. Then some old dude came and took her away at sixteen as a bride after bribing the orphanage administration. Which was a common tale really.

Obviously, some stuff happened afterwards that harmed her young mind. When he met her five years later she was an apologetic drug addict who didn't care about anything. From the smart and caring young girl he knew. Which he felt was because she stepped into the adult world earlier than she should have.

While he knew he wouldn't do anything bad to the girls. He still felt that even starting a relationship with them wasn't something that he should do. Not to mention that there was more than one girl. Which was another problem.

Because of that, among other things. He didn't want to start anything with them. But his weird encounter and Freya's incident made it clear that he also couldn't ignore the situation anymore.

So his mind was caught up in a mess. Not knowing what he should do. In that moment he couldn't help but miss the simplicity of the days before the apocalypse. In those days, he wouldn't have to deal with the situation.

"So, at the very least, you don't dislike us, right?" Emily took his reply rather positively. For her, as long as it wasn't a definite no. It was okay. Now, even if she had to wait two years. She would bear it. It was clear to see that he was going through some mental struggle because of the situation. So she wouldn't push him too much.

There was no need to rush. After all, his words had merit. They really were still quite young. For the time being, knowing that there was a chance was good enough.

"There's no way I could dislike any of you even if I wanted to" Muku gave her a clearer answer this time to her pleasure.

"Okay, what about Freya then?" Of course, she didn't forget about Freya.

"What about her? I really only brought her into the team because of her abilities, which I think will prove helpful in the future," Muku replied straightforwardly again with a clear conscience. While he had thought a few dirty things involving Freya during the hug. That was it. It had been strictly business after that.

"So you don't think she's pretty?" Emily pressed on.

"Obviously... I do. Why wouldn't I think a beautiful girl is beautiful when I can see that she's beautiful?" Muku replied while rolling his eyes, thinking that Emily's question was rather stupid.

"Good point. But, do you want to... You know, with her?. You know what? I'm certain you do. But before that, I want you to promise that you won't do anything with her before me" Emily then went on to say something that left Muku speechless.

The girl really didn't know when to stop. What kind of questions was she asking?? Even her face was red with embarrassment from what she was saying but she still dared to ask such things. Though he wasn't surprised that she even knew about such things. After all, if a child has a phone from ten years, by the time they reach fourteen, they'd definitely know some things.

"Fine, whatever. I promise," Muku agreed so that he could get it over with and get out of the awkward situation. His face had long darkened from the moment she spoke.

"Can you promise not to do anything with the others before me as well?... Fine, I'll shut up. Forget I said that" Emily, who had been given an inch, wanted to take a mile. But after seeing Muku's ugly expression she retracted her words. She didn't know where all the confidence that powered her was coming from.

"Good. I'll take my leave now" Muku spoke as he got up from the chair he had sat on preparing to leave.

"Wait!" Emily called out hurriedly then got off her bed. Ran to Muku. Tiptoed beside him then gave him a little kiss on the cheek. Then ran back to hide under her blankets. Finally, she had something she had wanted to do for the longest time.

Muku froze for a moment, thinking about what had just happened. He then shook his head a bit before walking out. He felt quite tired from just talking to Emily. Which made him sigh thinking about how he also had to talk to the others.

It was going to be a hard day for him. He just knew it...

Chapter 137: The Talk (pt.2)

Due to the prior nap, by the time Muku was finished speaking with Emily. It was already late in the afternoon and the stadium women were already gone. The girls were all doing their own things somewhere within the mansion.

With its large size. It would have been rather hard to find where they were quickly by just walking around and searching. So Muku was using his heightened senses to look for them.

At the same time, he was deciding on who to talk to first. At the very least it wasn't going to be Jade. He wasn't sure whether she would say weird things like Emily did or not. However, he was certain that she had the capability to do it. So he would play it safe and talk to the others first, lest she say something that would make him unable to continue with the plan.

"Oh, Layla is in her room? I'll talk to her first... This is gonna be a rather awkward conversation to have. Even more than its default was going to be. I just hope she says something at least... Man! I feel so scummy for this" Muku spoke to himself as he hyped himself to talk to Layla.

He wasn't even sure where to start. Layla has always been the hardest to talk to among his students... For obvious reasons. Then he had to talk to her about something like that? It was going to be quite a hard day indeed. He didn't even know what to expect.

Knock! Knock!

For the second time in an hour, our Muku found himself nervously knocking on a door.

"Come in"

Fortunately, unlike Emily at first. Layla was receptive as her calm voice was heard soon after he knocked. He also didn't delay as he entered immediately after being allowed to.

"Is there a special task for me?" Layla asked immediately while looking confusedly at Muku who had just taken a sit beside her bed.

It was understandable that she was confused since that was the first time he had ever entered her room. Whenever he had to talk to her before she was in her room. He would either call out to her from outside or send someone else to get her.

"No, there's no task, but there's a matter I want to seek out with you. You're free to not respond if it's not something you want to talk about by the way" Muku immediately got into it. Not wanting to delay things.

"Okay, I'm listening" Layla replied as calmly and a bit stiffly as always. She was completely in the dark about what was happening. She could sense the awkward atmosphere Muku had created at all. The girl was sometimes slow to pick up on things despite her high intelligence.

"Hmm, where to start... This is so much harder than I thought it would be" Muku couldn't think of what to say. Being stared at by Layla so intently made him forget everything he was planning to say.

Layla didn't say anything. She just continued looking at him. Her confusion increasing. It wasn't that she didn't want to say anything. But as a person of few words, she didn't know what she was supposed to say in such a situation. So she just chose silence. Which wasn't too different from how she usually operated.

While she was a quiet person who didn't mind being quiet. That wasn't always the reason she stayed silent. Sometimes she just won't know what to say which made her seem even quieter than she was.

"Okay. I'm just going to say it. I know you have a romantic interest in me. After the incident with Emily, I realised that you girls seem to lack security since I don't acknowledge your feelings. So I came to make it clear that I will not do anything with any of you until you're at least eighteen. However, you can rid yourself of any worries of losing out since I will also not get into a relationship with anyone for at least the next two years

Since she couldn't think of a way to soften his words and make them less direct. He decided to be as blunt as possible. Which he was sure was also the best way of speaking to Layla with her low communication skills.

"Oh..." Layla only said one word with a slightly higher-pitched voice.

If it wasn't because of her reddened face. Muku might have thought that she wasn't moved at all. It seemed she just didn't know how to respond or act in the situation.

"Who told you?" After a while, Layla managed to barely squeeze out a question after seeing that Muku wasn't leaving.

She had considered encasing herself in ice to escape. Which wasn't something new to her. But even she could tell that it wouldn't cut it that time. It was something she had no choice but to face.

"No one. I knew from the start" Muku replied immediately and confidently.

Hearing him, while thinking that her behaviour along with the other girls was quite obvious. She still couldn't help but want to dig a hole on the spot and hide forever. She was only so obvious because she thought he wouldn't understand what she was doing. Which was likely the case for the others.

Now knowing that he knew all that time... The embarrassment was unbearable. How was she supposed to look at him now? Why can't a R3 beast attack them right then so she can escape the situation? And where is everyone when you need them? Wasn't Hope supposed to be sticking to Muku like glue?

"So how are we supposed to continue now?" She asked another question. With such an elephant in the room, would they be able to continue acting like they did?

"I wouldn't mind continuing how we were, but I know that that's impossible. So I can only hope that we figure it out as we move forward from now." Muku replied with a wry smile. He really had no idea how the team would operate from now.

While he would have given them some form of security. Was it worth it? He wasn't sure. But he was going to see it through no matter what. Since he had started it. He had to finish it. Whatever comes, comes!

"Have you talked to the others?" Layla asked another question. She was getting more and more comfortable as they spoke. Which made her wonder whether she was the first or not.

"I've talked to Emily before you for obvious reasons. She's the reason this all started, after all," Muku replied truthfully. While she would have likely been happier if he said she was the first. He chose the truth since lies always end up getting exposed at some point.

"Oh, makes sense. So which one of us has the highest chance?" Like Emily before her, Layla started getting more and more daring. At least hers weren't too over the top though.

"That... I don't know" Muku didn't know what to say. If he said that he saw them all as equals then it would seem fake. As for liking one more than the others, he wasn't certain so he couldn't say that either.

"It's fine. It doesn't matter. I'll make sure to be the one you like the most by the time it matters" Layla then dropped a bomb on him.

He didn't know that her competitiveness would extend to even this. The girl literally radiated battle aura as she spoke. In that moment he knew for certain that things were definitely not going to go back to how they were before.

"Umm, okay?. I'll be taking my leave now if you don't mind" Muku didn't know what to say anymore. Who knew what she would say next. So he tried to make his getaway.

"What about Freya?" Layla ignored his hidden plea to leave and asked one more question.

"What? About Freya?" Muku asked her to clarify what she meant. He probably knew what she meant. He wanted to see if she would retract her question and end the awkward situation.

"Is she also on your list?" Layla asked him with narrow eyes. She seemed like a different person at that point. It was like Heaven and Earth from when they began talking.

"What do you mean list?? She's just a teammate who will likely become very useful later on like I said. I can just feel that her power is something special. Nothing less, nothing more" Since it couldn't be avoided. Muku defended himself the best he could.

He was also getting a premonition that he might get asked that question a few more times that day.

"Hmm... Okay, if you say so. I have no more questions for now" Layla accepted his answer but sceptically.

"Okay, good. See you later then" Muku took what he got and ran. Layla barely saw how he moved from the chair to the door. Then he was gone...

Chapter 138: The Talk (pt 3)

The kitchen...

Audrey, Elsa and Chloe were there cutting up some beast meat. Hope, who had been somehow talked into joining by Audrey, was also there.

The reason Muku went there was because his next target was there. Which was Chloe. While the conversations with Emily and Layla left him feeling rather drained. He had some confidence in Chloe. Out of all the girls in the group she seemed to be the most stable.

While the others had one problem or the other. He hadn't noticed anything like that from her. That was, of course, excluding Audrey, the mature lady.

"Hey, everyone", Muku greeted the group as he entered the kitchen. They all replied with smiles on their faces. Which showed how happy they were that he was up again.

"Chloe, can I talk to you for a bit outside, please?" As someone who wanted to get it over with as soon as possible. Muku didn't make any small talk as he immediately asked to speak with Chloe.

"Yes, sure" Chloe gave a positive reply as she stopped what she was doing. She then washed her hands and followed him out of the room.

The others were curious about what it was about, but they didn't follow behind to eavesdrop. Which was definitely because of Audrey's presence; otherwise, Hope would have definitely tried something. As for Elsa, she was more interested in whether he managed to fix things with Emily.

While Audrey couldn't say she wasn't curious. She was okay with not knowing. To her, if he felt that she needed to know something he would tell her.

...

Muku's room...

"Umm, why did we come all the way here?" Chloe couldn't help but ask feeling a bit nervous. Her mind thinking up some weird scenes.

"So that we aren't interrupted by someone "passing by" or something like that", Muku replied honestly. He knew Hope's personality. She was definitely capable of using such a reason. So he chose to take the talk to his room to avoid such a situation if Audrey couldn't stop her.

"Oh, okay" Chloe replied. Her weird thoughts were immediately shattered. She wasn't sure why she even had such thoughts in the first place. The dense guy would never do something like that, hell he would never even speak about anything that was related to romance...

"What am I in your eyes?" Muku asked a question that stunned Chloe out of nowhere. Just when the girl was thinking about how he would never have those kinds of thoughts too.

"Umm, what? Can you repeat that? I don't think I heard you correctly" Chloe finally managed to speak.

While she was certain of what she heard, she was hoping that Muku would change his statement. Then she wouldn't have to reply to the sudden question. Or maybe she really did hear wrongly and Muku would clear things up. Just the one question had overwhelmed her.

"No, you heard correctly. Don't worry though, you don't have to give an answer" Muku replied in a way that made her feel both panicked and relieved.

Panicked before it meant that he was on to something. Relieved because she didn't have to reply. His next words, however, made her heart skip a beat and her whole body freeze.

"You don't have to reply because I already know the answer" Muku spoke confidently.

Chloe suddenly felt cold for some reason. Her mind was plagued with one thought...

{OMG! He knows!}

She didn't know what to do next. Just like the two before her, she was considering running away. Unfortunately for her, Muku, who expected her to want to do that, was again standing closer to the door than her.

"Calm down, it's not like you did something wrong. It's just a natural occurrence. You just have to listen to what I want to tell you. If you have anything to say after that, you can say it. Understood?" Muku explained himself quickly.

He was afraid the girl would faint from holding her breath if he delayed. She had been holding her breath since the moment she gasped when he said he knew. Which, honestly, he found to be a rather cute response.

His words did the job as Chloe calmed down a bit and started breathing again. Though now her face was reddening more and more by the second.

"I just wanted to tell you that. I will not be pursuing any romantic experiences with anyone for at least the next two years. So you can at least be assured in that time that I won't be stolen away by someone or something like that. You can also use that time to evaluate your emotions for me. That way, you'll be completely sure whether what you think you're feeling is really what you're feeling..." Muku continued speaking but then Chloe interrupted him suddenly.

"I'm sure" She only said two words when she cut Muku off, but the conviction and certainty behind the two words was immense.

Even her blush had disappeared as she looked at Muku with her blue eyes seriously. She wasn't going to stand there as her feelings got questioned like that, even if it wasn't intentional or directly.

She felt that she was always aware of what she felt. So she knew that she liked Muku for real and two years wouldn't change anything.

"Umm, okay then, sorry..." Muku replied a bit stiffly. Her sudden strong stance caught him off guard. It seemed the girl didn't allow anyone to question her convictions even if it was in good faith. So, in a way,, he had found her reverse scale.

"No, it's fine" Chloe replied as she calmed down. That's when she realised that she had basically confessed to him. Her blush that had suddenly disappeared before immediately came back with a vengeance.

She closed her eyes and hid her face behind her hands as she stood there in embarrassment. When did she become so bold? Will he think she's weird for admitting that she liked her teacher so openly?

"Like I said before. No need to be embarrassed or anything. It's a normal occurrence. Anyway, I've already talked to Emily and Layla. If you don't have any questions, I'll go and talk to Jade next" Muku, who was getting good at what he was doing, spoke in a way that calmed her down.

Knowing that she wasn't the first or the only one he talked to made her feel a lot better. Though she felt slightly bitter that she wasn't the first. Internally, she promised herself that she would be the ultimate first thought. As she thought that, the blush on her face increased.

At that point, Muku was starting to worry that she might faint. She was blushing so much, she felt the room temperature increase a little.

"I don't have anything to say for now. You can go. I'll just look for you when I can think properly" Unlike the two before, Chloe didn't start saying weird things at the end.

Which Muku appreciated a lot. Just like he thought, Chloe was a lot more stable than the others. Her reaction was the reaction the others, as inexperienced young maidens, should have had. Unfortunately, the two before her were weirdos.

"Okay. You can look for me at any time," Muku replied, then left the room. Chloe remained there and even sat on the bed as she tried to gather herself after the experience.

....

The mansion's backyard...

Jade was there meditating under the only tree inside the mansion walls. For some reason, she found it a lot easier to meditate when she was outside. Which was likely related to her class.

Her meditation wasn't to improve her mana efficiency. She didn't even have mana anymore after all. She meditated to improve her Beast Aura control. While it wouldn't stop her from advancing after killing enough beasts. She just liked improving it as it made using it smoother in battle.

As a violent energy, it needed one to have an exceptional control level. Otherwise, they might lose control. It wasn't a problem for the current her, but she had a feeling that as she got stronger, its violent nature would also increase. So she wanted to be a step ahead.

"Hey... I can come back later if you're busy," Muku, who had arrived when Jade was about to get into another round of meditation, spoke. Unlike the others, she couldn't meditate for too long before her mind started wandering. So she took breaks. Which was already known in the group. Fortunately, she was getting better.

"No, it's fine. We can talk now. It's finally my turn to get the talk. I don't want to delay that. I can't wait anymore" Jade spoke with a little smile on her face.

Her words rang like thunder in Muku's mind. That's how shocked he was. He wasn't expecting that at all.

"What?!" He subconsciously asked.

"Yup, I heard everything" Jade replied, her smile turning smug. She was enjoying his shocked expression a lot...

Chapter 139 The Talk (final)

"What do you mean" Muku asked, trying to understand how she knew. While her senses were good. They weren't that good.

"I mean this..." Jade replied then trailed off at the end. A look of enjoyment was still on her face. As she did so, two green cat ears appeared on her head. Which was surprising because the rest of her body remained unchanged.

"Since when were you able to do that?" Muku asked, truly surprised.

"Since earlier on. About the time you knocked on Emily's door. I was just playing around with my improved Beast Aura trying to see if I gained any new abilities. Then this happened. What an interesting coincidence right?" Jade explained, her expression really smug. She was having the time of her life having caught Muku completely off guard like that.

"Oh, congratulations... But still, the distance between here and the house, plus the low voices we spoke with. How were you able to hear all that. Your senses shouldn't be that good" Muku spoke, still dazed.

"You're right, my senses aren't that good yet. However, when I don't fully transform it's just my ears. My hearing ability is improved by an unreasonably high margin. So, I could hear everything clearly" Jade promptly explained. She had been dying to tell it to someone since she got the ability.

"You're forbidden to use that ability around the house" While he was happy for her. He immediately shut down its use around the mansion.

While it wasn't like anyone was doing anything scandalous. No one would feel comfortable knowing that there was someone always listening to them.

"Well duh, I'm not a weirdo who likes eavesdropping... It just happened coincidentally before. And I couldn't stop myself. Anyway, it's not like I can use the skill all day. It's like a bottomless pit for my Beast Aura. I didn't use it for even an hour and yet half of my Beast Aura is gone. The worst part is that Beast Aura takes longer to regenerate compared to Mana. So trust me, I won't be using it randomly even if you paid me" Jade explained more about the skill.

Just as she wanted to tell someone about how cool it was. She also wanted to complain to someone about how much of a bottomless pit it was. Muku happened to be at the right place at the right time... In her perceptive at least.

"Oh, okay. It would have been unreasonable if such an ability had drawbacks" Muku spoke, feeling a bit more relieved. At least now he knew that if he wanted to make sure she didn't hear something. He just had to wait until she had expended her beast aura in a battle or something.

"Yeah... Sooo, don't you have something to say to me?" Jade asked as she looked at Muku expectantly.

While she basically already knew everything he had to say. She still wanted to hear it as the intended recipient. That way, it would feel more official. She didn't want to be the only one who didn't have the talk.

"Nuh, I'm no longer in the mood. We can do it another time," Muku replied as he turned around, about to leave.

"If you dare move one step further away from me. I swear I will fight you to death, right here, right now" Jade spoke coldly as her battle intent and Beast Aura went wild.

It seemed like she really was prepared to fight him to the death. All because he wouldn't tell her something she already knew. Like always, you can never expect a girl or woman to be reasonable. Especially when she feels like her wants or needs are not being met.

"Woah Beastie, I'm just joking. Put the Beast Aura and battle intent away" Muku stopped in his tracks and turned back to face Jade as he spoke. He didn't expect her to react so intensely.

"What did you call me?"

Boom!

Jade's aura exploded. Apparently, she really didn't like being called that.

"Careful", Muku spoke as he also released his aura, and it quickly suppressed Jade's. The idiot had forgotten where they were. If she was allowed to continue. She might have destroyed the mansion with her aura alone.

"Oh, right!. Sorry," Jade, who quickly realised her mistake apologised.

"Just be mindful of your actions from now on... At least don't do that around here" Muku really wanted to stop after telling her to mind her actions. Unfortunately, he knew her well and so knew that it was impossible. So he had to say more.

"Fine... But wait, aren't you supposed to be still in a weakened state?" Jade asked confusedly after realising it. Her sudden anger from before was completely gone, just like how it had appeared.

"Yeah, I am still weakened. That was just a bluff" Muku replied tiredly. Just using his mana aura to suppress her took a lot out of him. Which made the two realise that he was still a distance away from full recovery. Even if his physical injuries were healed.

"Sorry" Jade apologized again for making him exert himself like that. She was even internally beating herself up for being so impulsive.

"It's okay, I kinda brought this upon myself. And you wouldn't be Jade if you didn't cause trouble" Muku let the issue go.

"While I feel insulted. I'll let it slide this once," Jade replied, feeling slightly annoyed by his words. Couldn't he speak as nicely to her as he did the others before? What's up with the obvious discrimination??

"Anyway, do you still want me to talk to you officially? Honestly speaking, it feels quite awkward for me to continue at this point so please have some mercy" Muku then brought back the issue that began the whole matter.

"It's fine, we don't need to do it. But you have to make it up to me somehow" Jade replied while waving her hand. She no longer cared about having the official talk.

Muku couldn't help but be amazed by her fickleness. After all the drama. She let it go just like that?. Then again, it was to be expected from her and her erratic mind.

"In what way do you want me to make it up to you?" He asked defensively with a suspicious look in his eyes as he looked at her.

It was important to make things clear. Lest she did something crazy in the future and he won't be able to do anything about it. As she could say it was how she wanted him to make it up to her.

"What's with that look? Do you really think so little of me? I'm not even going to ask you to do something. I'll leave that to you. You come up with a way to make it up to me. It just has to be something that pleases me. That's nothing bad right?" Jade spoke while rolling her eyes at Muku's reaction to what she said before. In his eyes, she really couldn't be trusted at all, huh?

"Oh, I guess that doesn't sound bad at all. I think I can do that. I'll see what I can do then" Muku replied with a relieved look on his face. Internally he was wondering since when had Jade become reasonable.

"Yeah... Just have whatever you're preparing ready by tomorrow. If not, then you'll have to do whatever one thing I ask you to with no questions asked" As he was celebrating, Jade showed her true colours.

It seemed her real plan was to entrap him and then get him to do whatever sinister thing she was planning. A gleeful expression even appeared on her face as she spoke. She was clearly already imagining what she was going to make him do and how it was going to play out. Such an evil little girl!

"Give me two weeks or no deal" Muku wasn't taking it as he replied with a deadpan expression on his face. He should have known that Jade becoming a good person was impossible.

"What?! No! That's too long! The best I can give you is two days!" Jade gave her counteroffer. She knew he wasn't going to agree to the initial pitch.

She was willing to be a bit more flexible. After all, she was certain there was nothing he could do in two days that would impress her to a high enough extent for it to count.

"Ten days, take it or leave it" Muku refused her offer and proposed his own. He knew that he needed as much time as he could get to come up with something. Otherwise, he'd definitely fail and fall into Jade's hands.

"One week is all I'm willing to offer!" Jade counteroffered again, seeing how he was unwilling to give up much ground.

"Okay, deal!" Muku didn't try to negotiate anymore. He felt seven days was more than enough time to come up with something good.

"Wait! No! I meant 3 days!" Jade was flustered by his willingness to take the deal. She felt that she must have given him too much time. So she tried to backtrack.

"Too late. The deal has already been made. Now, good day" Muku wasn't taking it as he replied then promptly left.

Jade was left there fuming in annoyance. And so, the talk that no longer seemed like it the moment Jade stepped in came to an end...

Chapter 140 Binding

The rest of the day went by fine for Muku. He was done with what needed to be done. He even felt like a heavy weight had been lifted from his shoulders.

As for Audrey and Hope. He wasn't sure how to speak to Audrey. It also didn't seem necessary since she wasn't as insecure as the younger girls. While Hope had become like a real sister to him. She might have been a bit clingy but her love wasn't romantic. He could tell. She was also the one who felt most secure about her permanent position in his heart among all the girls.

With all that done. He was excited about what was next. Freya was back from the stadium and they could finally begin the binding process.

Out of everyone in the mansion, he was probably the most excited. Even more than Freya who was the one doing it. He just hoped that her class lived up to his expectations.

"Okay Freya, you can begin whenever you're ready." Muku addressed Freya while the other girls looked on from the side.

The time was around six in the evening. While they could wait until the next day before doing it. Muku didn't want to wait and Freya didn't mind. So it was getting done right there and then.

"Yes, sir" Freya spoke as she got ready to bind herself to the mansion.

"Good, and you don't have to call me sir anymore. We're teammates now. I hope you can feel more at ease around us" Muku mentioned something he felt was important for their future coexistence.

"Yes, si... I mean sure. I'll try my best" Freya replied affirmatively. To which Muku smiled with a nod and let her do her thing. With no more distractions, Freya focused on what she needed to do.

[Functional House Detected!]

[Do you wish to bind?]

[Caution: Once bound. Can only be unbound by the destruction of the house]

As soon as Freya crouched down and touched the floor. The prompts similar to the ones from before rang in her mind. Unlike last time, she wasn't surprised. She immediately thought "yes" in her mind.

As soon as she did, she felt all the mana in her body get drained out. It was sucked into the mansion floors and walls. The normal floors and walls of the mansion started to radiate a little mana.

The signature was so similar to Freya's that if the group were weaker and weren't looking at her. They definitely wouldn't be able to locate her just from her mana signature if she was in the mansion.

[Binding complete!]

Fortunately for Freya, before the girls started complaining about sensing her presence everywhere. It started to fade. All that was left was stronger walls that could dampen mana sense from travelling through them.

Which they all rather appreciated. While it was convenient to easily tell where everyone was through mana sense. It kinda felt like a breach of privacy. So while no one had mentioned it before. No one was too happy about it.

Now that Freya provided the option for privacy in the mansion. They all couldn't help but wish she got stronger quicker and completely sealed off mana sense from getting through.

After all, it was pretty obvious to them that as they got stronger. They will likely be able to "see" what they sense with their mana. Which was only good when you were the one "seeing", not being "seen". It would also keep their enemies from spying on them in the future if they get enemies strong enough to do it.

Muku touched the walls and put a little strength into his hand as he pushed them. He immediately realised that the walls were at least as strong as the body of a defence-type PR1 beast. Which was great news. He was already starting to get worried whether the mansion would be able to house them for long.

After all, their strength was constantly growing. So it was safe to say, there would come a point when one of them might randomly sneeze (if it was still possible) and blow the mansion away. Or maybe just casually move their hand and destroy the wall or something. The bottom line was that Freya showed up at the right time.

"So, the house's defence is directly proportional to hers? How interesting..." Layla commented, then trailed off at the end.

"Yeah, but without defence, doesn't that just make her a tortoise waiting for someone to break through and be feasted on?" Jade commented as well. While her words didn't sound nice, she had brought up a valid point.

"Umm, It seems at rank one, I only have a defence. It's only at rank two that I get offensive abilities... At least that's what the information that suddenly appeared in my head says" Freya spoke up, defending her class. She also felt that her class was nothing impressive at that moment. She still wouldn't let anyone look down on it!

"Oh, is that so? I can't wait to see that day then. I hope it's sooner rather than later. So realise your potential already" Jade replied, truly curious about what would come next. To the point of telling Freya to do something practically impossible.

After all, the potential realisation wasn't something that one could do instantly. On top of that, Freya's potential realisation was related to a freaking mansion. Where was she even going to start?

Even Elsa hasn't been able to realise much despite the guidance of everyone. After trying her best, she had only realised 5%. While it might have been linked to the situation that was happening at home. It was still a testament to how hard it was to realise potential.

"Let's not be unreasonable now. I'm sure Freya will get there soon enough" Audrey interjected after seeing that Freya didn't know what to say to Jade's somewhat unreasonable words.

"Y-yeah, I'll do my best!" Freya replied a little nervously. While Audrey was the nicest person she had ever met, and she had also met her at some point during the day. She still couldn't help but get nervous around her. Audrey was just too beautiful. She was as so beautiful it seemed like she came out of a fantasy novel...

While she could handle being around her when she was still part of the stadium. It was hard for her to face her alone like that. It was addressed specifically by Audrey. Being looked at by those mesmerising grey eyes. She was even suspecting that she might have a thing for girls or something.

What she didn't know was that she was just not used to Audrey's charm in such close proximity. Even Elsa had gone through the process. Just that the little girl usually remained quiet and kept a straight face. So she didn't seem to have been as affected as Freya.

"Well, whatever the case. I think it's already evident that Freya will be an important part of the team in the future right?" Muku spoke in support of Freya. He was already seeing promise in her class. Just her ability to strengthen the mansion was great to him. The current mansion could likely survive the previous World Evolution without having to get lifted off the ground.

If Jade released her aura like before. As long as she wasn't hell-bent on destroying the mansion with it. It likely wouldn't be damaged much as well. After she got a bit stronger, they probably wouldn't have to leave the mansion every time they needed to do something that seemed it could lead to some kind of exaggerated occurrence.

The girls all nodded to Muku's words. They were starting to see how she could be really useful to the team. And it wasn't like they needed any more immediate firepower when they were all basically offensive monsters.

The main reason they weren't willing to accept her before had been addressed anyway. Thinking about it, the four couldn't help but blush a bit whenever they looked at Muku. They would then take a glance at each other. Battle intent to see who would be "the first" sparkling between them every time they locked eyes.

Audrey could tell that something was going on. Which had begun soon after Muku went around talking to the four. She could guess a few things, especially from how the girls seemed a lot more relaxed. However, whatever she thought would remain as guesses unless someone told her. She was too embarrassed to ask.

"Hey!, I just remembered something!. Let's sit down and talk" Muku suddenly exclaimed. Gathering everyone's attention.

The group then all returned to their seats since they were already in the lounge. They were curious about what he had to say.

"What is it, Big Brother?" Hope impatiently asked as soon as she sat down.

"No need to get so excited. It's nothing new. It's something you know even. I just want to know the KP you all got from the ant kills. Especially you after all those kills. I'm also interested in knowing how many points a PR2 ant gives from Layla and Jade" Muku told them what he wanted to know.

Hearing his words the group realised that they really had forgotten about it. While it was something they did after every battle. It was understandable that they forgot since there was a major crisis happening.

"Oh, that?. Let me go first" Hope spoke in realisation. Remembering the KP she got, she immediately perked up as she was about to speak. Everyone could tell that she had made some great gains...