

## **Few Wives 211**

Chapter 211: Found out & Emily's domain!

Everything went silent after the lightning hit.

A lightning bolt as thick as a tree trunk had suddenly struck. It seemed to have come out of the void, hitting the Monarch right on the head, along with a part of its upper body.

It was a full-power attack from an angered R3 Evolver. With a Pseudo-Legendary class. So, it was safe to say that it was definitely a deadly attack.

The shockwaves alone could have destroyed everything in sight if they weren't made from special materials.

Everyone went silent for a moment. They were all stuck in disbelief. Even as they were being slowly and painfully killed. The ten Base residents didn't even think of resisting. The Monarch was that absolute to them. Resistance wasn't even an option. Maybe their minds had long been corrupted by it...

So, for someone to actually attack the Monarch. That was inconceivable to them.

Muku just stood there blankly. One thought stuck in his mind. "We're f\*cked" were the words.

Chloe had definitely done the right thing to save her father. While she felt disgusted by him, he was still her father after all.

However, what then? Would they be able to fight the Monarch off and successfully take William away? As he was thinking about that. A scene that disrupted his thoughts occurred.

"I was wondering when you were going to make your move..." The Monarch's voice rang out in the room again.

Smoke had arisen from the impact between Chloe's attack and the Monarch's body. Which had hidden the Monarch's body.

The smoke cleared as it spoke. Which exposed its clearly uninjured body. The Monarch had tanked Chloe's attack and didn't seem to have been bothered by it.

Even from the way it spoke. One could tell that it really didn't feel anything from Chloe's attack.

Seeing the reaction. A cold chill went down Muku's spine. The budding hope that was forming in his mind was instantly dashed. There was nothing they could do to that creature.

And judging by its words. It knew they were there from the start. Was that why it had William repeat the terms of the deal? Was everything just a joke to it?

"Did you enjoy the show? Quite a bold move to actually take a seat and watch while behind enemy forces" The Monarch spoke as calmly as always while looking in the duo's direction.

Muku's fear skyrocketed through the roof. They really had been found out already!

Chloe, on the other hand,, was still riding her anger. She wasn't scared off by the statement. She just hardened her face. Ready to fight it out until the end.

Seeing her father literally getting the life sucked out of him angered her gravely. The attack before was made from instinct. It seemed her anger wasn't satisfied or shaken after the attack failed.

Her eyes started glowing blue... No different from how they got when she went berserk. However, unlike that time. There seemed to be clarity behind the madness. It was a weird sight to see.

Just above the base. Dark clouds were already forming. They didn't form as quickly as they would usually. Which was because of the green smog. However, they had formed enough to be visible to the backup.

Though, even without them. The backup could already tell that there was something wrong. While they were observing from a distance. They noticed a green light escaping from the bodies of some of the base's residents.

All the base's residents they could see, who were mostly Earth Elementalists and guards, suddenly fell to the ground. Then they started screaming in pain while ageing rapidly while greenlight escaped from their bodies. The light then went toward the hole.

The weaker ones died within a few seconds of the incident occurring. All that was left of them were their dried-up corpses. It seemed like the governing law on who died was, "The weaker you were, the quicker you died". Age was no longer equated to life force...

If the backup girls didn't think anything was wrong after that. They would have to consider giving up their brains. Especially after a while before when an unknown chill went down all their spines. They were too weak to identify the source of the chill. However, their guiding light(the dying people) came soon after.

The forming thunderclouds were just the final nail in the coffin.

"Well... It seems the initial plan failed. I guess we should attack now" Layla spoke in her usual cold voice.

Seemingly unmoved by what they just witnessed. The other two were horrified, however. It was only when Layla spoke that they collected themselves a little bit.

"Y...yeah" Emily replied while trying to recover.

"Can you try to burn away that smog?" Layla asked Emily while pointing into the sky.

"Yeah, sure. Let me try my new domain embryo" Emily replied as she closed her eyes.

"Golden Phoenix zone!" She shouted out her domain's name. She was still unfamiliar with it. So, shouting out its name helped a lot in visualising it.

BOOM!

The moment she shouted. Flames exploded out of her and spread in the surroundings. The flames didn't stop spreading until the whole base was consumed.

Unlike Layla's Shadow Domain which focused on distance. Emily's domain focused more on height. She was determined to burn away as much of the smog as she could.

Luckily for her, energy domains were versatile enough for her to literally reach the sky. The abilities of a Rank Three were no joke after all.

"Whoah!"×2

Layla and Audrey couldn't help but make amazed sounds.

Witnessing a sea of flames spread out all around you as well as reaching the skies, was pretty amazing. Especially when you witnessed it all from within the flames.

Emily's ability to only burn whatever she wanted, was shown in full display. The domain made it seem even more mystical.

"Heavenly Flame: Burning Heavens!... Ultimate!" Emily didn't just stop after creating her domain. Which would have slowly eaten away at the smog.

No! She cast a combination of two of her strongest spells. Heavenly Flames, her ultimate spell which could probably burn even Psuedo-R4s if completely unleashed. It was the result of purifying her flames with most of her mana. And Burning Heavens, one of her best-targeting spells

She would have put more spells into the mix. However, that was all she could manage with her current abilities.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Emily's undisputed strongest and most destructive spell to date went off. And... It was a lot deadlier than everyone expected.

They all thought that she'd only be able to get rid of at most half of it. Which wasn't a random guess, but a sound judgement. They had seen how Chloe's destructive lightning clouds were struggling to

The smog was literally erased from existence. Only a clear sky was left in the area. The few trees that were caught within the domain had their tops erased as well.

Despite Emily not targeting the base to get destroyed. The shockwave still took the roof and a few of the top floors off. It was just a normal building after all. The barrier only protected humans from outside attacks created by beasts. So, it did nothing against Emily's attack.

While the others were shocked by the destruction. Emily was horrified. Only one thought was stuck in her mind... "Did I just accidentally kill a bunch of people?!" Tears instantly began flowing down her cheeks.

She had only killed a person once before, after all. And that was by mistake too. When she lost her control of herself when Elsa was about to be defied. However, it was different this time. She was completely conscious of her actions.

She didn't expect it to be so destructive. However, that still wouldn't change the facts. She would still have killed people.

"Hhm... Interesting, but it seems The Smog is weak to flames... Or maybe holy flames? Hey, what's wrong? You don't think you killed people right? I scanned the area before you attacked. Everyone on the top floors was already dead," Layla spoke just when Emily was about to have a complete breakdown mentally.

She casually spoke words which brought Emily back from the brink. Whether it was intentional or not, only she knew.

"Really?" Emily asked in an uncertain voice.

"Yes, you can even ask Mother," Layla replied seriously. She even suggested that Emily ask Audrey if she was speaking the truth or not.

"Yeah, they were all dead already" Audrey agreed unhesitatingly. Whether she and Layla were telling the truth. Only they knew that for certain.

Emily's nerves relaxed a little bit more after hearing Audrey's affirmation. Her domain immediately crumbled down. Both her mental energy and mana had been exhausted.

She fell weakly to the ground immediately. Sitting on her legs while trying to recover. Layla took out a beast core and headed it over. Just when Emily was about to thank Layla, something caught their eyes.

RUMBLE! RUMBLE! RUMBLE!

Like a beast that had been freed. Chloe's lightning clouds began steering. And from the loud rumbling. They were definitely going to witness something amazing.

Chloe didn't disappoint. The clouds began changing shape. Within a little time, they no longer looked like clouds anymore. They looked like giant black hands hovering in the sky.

That wasn't the end of it however, the giant hands began combining as well. Until there was only one even larger hand left.

Everyone held their breath trying to understand what was going to happen next...

Chapter 212: Zeus' Fury!

The giant hand made an incomplete fist. As if it was holding something. Before anyone could wonder what it was trying to do. Blue lightning streaks began appearing at the centre of it.

The trio instantly understood what was going on. A chill went down their spines. Layla instantly created an ice dome on top of herself and the other two. Just in case things went out of hand...

...

A few moments before. In the secret room...

"Hhm?" Chloe made a confused sound. She was trying to do something with her lightning however, it wasn't working. She could barely get clouds to form above them.

"What? Oh... Is it the problem with your lightning? Well, let me tell you a little secret. That smog isn't something your puny lightning can stand up to" The Monarch mocked Chloe.

As for why it was so chatty. No one knew. Most just assumed it was just revelling in its dominance over them. It had been dead for a long time after all. Maybe it was just venting the sadistic tendencies it had been holding back for so long.

Crackle!

Chloe heard the Monarch's words. However, she wasn't demotivated. She gave up on that idea for the time being.

Lightning began crackling from her body instead. She was ready to close and personal. She activated a mastered version of the spell that left her naked once upon a time...

She called it Lightning Skin, the advanced version of lightning coat. Her body was basically sealed behind blue lightning. Unlike the lightning coat, there were no gaps in the lightning skin. On top of that, the lightning calmly circled around her body after the initial crackling.

It was stronger, a lot more stable and didn't take as much use as much mana as the initial form. The final benefit she cared about most at the moment was... It allowed her to get closer to the Monarch.

It was an idea she thought of when her attack hit. It was why she didn't lose hope. Not like losing hope was an option in the situation anyway.

"No matter how sophisticated..." The Monarch was in the middle of taunting Chloe again when she moved.

Boom!

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!...

She ran forward with a booming sound. She was in front of the Monarch within a second. And she didn't waste the chance. Landing as many blows as she could from different angles.

By the time the Monarch moved its hand to attack back. She had already given it tens of punches.

The Monarch effortlessly moved its hand in Chloe's direction. Yet, she felt like she wouldn't be able to dodge it. Which she really couldn't. It came on her at a speed she couldn't match.

However, instead of a punch or even a slap. It was actually a grab. The Monarch seemed to want to capture her instead of just killing her off. By the look of things, it was about to succeed.

Whoosh!

That's when Chloe's body moved back at a weird angle. It was as if she got pulled back by an invisible hand.

"What took you so long?" Chloe asked after she flew back to Muku's side.

"Sorry about that. However, look at this. I think you'll understand..." Muku replied with a wry smile on his face. He then proceeded to create a sword and fire it at the Monarch.

The blade looked fine at first. However, it faded into nothingness after going a few metres toward the Monarch.

"What?!" Chloe was shocked. How was that possible? Her attacks were working fine.

"Yeah... Apparently, there's something special about your lightning. I can only use my telekinesis. This is probably because it's more mental than mana. Just like in domains... Wait, I think the area in front of us is the Monarch's domain. Yet, you...?" Muku spoke trying to explain things to Chloe.

However, he also understood things as he spoke. Which shocked him as much as it did Chloe. How tf was she able to freely use her powers in someone else's domain?

Sure, her body couldn't even get closer without being sealed in her lightning. However, that was beside the point. Her being able to use her lightning was what mattered.

"I..." Chloe was about to speak when...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

They heard an explosion from above. Which was Emily's handy work.

"We'll talk about it later. The skies have cleared up. Can you protect the Base please?" Chloe spoke to Muku. Before he could reply, she closed her eyes.

Muku was about to ask what she was talking about. However, he sensed something before he could. He immediately looked up. Unfortunately, the weird tarp still blocked the way. So, he couldn't see the sky. However, he could sense it...

His sense had been obscured by the smog. He could only sense the Monarch's energy in every direction.

Emily's attack restored his senses. He wasn't sure what he was sensing. He could only think of three words..."Pure destruction energy"

"ZEUS' FURY!" Chloe suddenly shouted from beside Muku.

The moment she did. The lightning that was being held by the giant hand in the sky got even rowdier.

Then the hand moved up. As it did, the lightning in its hand took a complete form. It formed an iconic lightning bolt known to all who knew Zeus.

The interesting thing about the bolt of lightning was that it was actually Chloe's domain. She was literally throwing her domain at the enemy! How crazy was that?! It was also kinda cool.

Her mental capabilities must be very insane to pull off such a thing. Especially when she recently just reached R3.

It seemed like everyone in Muku's group was crazy like that. Casually displaying abilities that would shock even those at higher ranks. Maybe that's what it meant to have a class that had the word "legendary" in its classification. They truly were worthy to be called as such.

While the attack seemed to have been delayed a lot due to the narration. That wasn't the case at all. Everything happened almost instantaneously the moment she shouted out.

The giant hand threw the lightning bolt towards the hole with great force. Then...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A thunderous explosion went off soon after. The explosion didn't go off when the bolt touched the tarp. No! It passed right through, like a hot knife through butter.

A hole with a radius of around a metre was left in the tarp. The lightning proceeded downward in full force. It was then that the Monarch, who had been looking on, made its move. It raised its hand up and toward the attack.

Which would have been pointless. Since such a small hand wouldn't be able to do anything. However, the hand suddenly enlarged and got big enough to fit the whole attack within its palm.

It was at that moment the two met. Chloe's weaponized domain hit the Monarch's palm dead in the middle. The heaven-shaking explosion ensued right after.

The hole that had been repaired to some extent was fully opened up again. Hell, it was made even larger by Chloe's attack. The area around it was scotched black just from the radiating energy. The tarp was completely vaporised by the explosion. Part of the base would have been destroyed as well if Muku hadn't protected it with his Telekinetic Force Field.

Dust went everywhere. Everything went silent for a moment. As if revelling in the destruction that had just taken place.

....

In the void...

"Maybe there's still a chance..." A voice sounded from one of the many observers.

....

Back at the base...

"Honestly..." The Monarch's voice suddenly sounded in the silence.

Boom!

The moment it spoke. The dust in the area was blown away. Everything became clear to everyone again. A shocking sight met their eyes.

"This is why I only wanted human life essence. You idiot", The Monarch spoke while facing William's direction.

The reason it did so was the same as what shocked everyone. Which was, its hand... Or, its missing hand to be exact...

That's right. Chloe's attack had actually vaporised its hand. The destruction almost reached its elbow.

While that seemed like significant damage. And it definitely was. Muku and Chloe's expressions turned grave. Chloe just hit the Monarch with all she had. Yet it was still standing!

Despite its missing hand. Its aura hadn't wavered even a bit. It was still as strong as ever. And now, the only one who could do anything to it was out of mana.

Muku could try fighting it with his Telekinesis however, it wasn't very destructive. So, the damage would be minimal at best. He was certain he wouldn't be able to squash it to death with his current abilities...

"No matter... Bravo little girl. You'll definitely make a great vessel with all that potential. At this point, your special attribute is just a bonus. Unfortunately, playtime is over. It's time I get serious" The Monarch spoke as calmly as before.

The moment its words fell. The air in the room instantly got heavier. Muku and Chloe literally couldn't move even a muscle.

They had finally been exposed to the full might of the Monarch. It really had been messing with them all this time.

The truth also came out. It had actually been targeting Chloe from the start! Was it some kind of body snatcher?!

...

Back in the void...

"Sigh... I spoke too soon" The voice from before sounded again. Its disappointment evident to all...

Chapter 213: Sacrifice

In the void...

"I'm sorry everyone. I'll compensate you all somehow" The voice from before spoke apologetically.

Before anyone could the others could do anything. It pointed its humongous figure forward.

A clear beam of light flew forward at an inconceivable speed.

.....

Back at the base...

Within less than a billionth of a second. It had broken out of the void and hit Muku on the back. By the time Muku or anyone in the room sensed it. Everything was already over.

They all felt that something had happened. However, no one knew what exactly happened. Nothing happened to Muku after the beam hit him. He couldn't feel anything different about his body.

"Hehe... So, some idiot in the void ignored the rules huh? He's definitely going to regret doing that. The Heavens aren't blind after all. And it didn't even work. In fact, let me kill this brat first to avoid problems" The Monarch spoke as it walked closer to Muku.

It was so arrogant it announced its every move before doing it. Though, honestly, it had the right to be arrogant. Their strength difference was too large after all.

It soon stood right in front of Muku. Pulled its remaining hand back while looking at his chest. Its intent was pretty obvious. It was going to stab through his chest or rip his heart out. Either way, Muku was screwed!

"Bye, now..." The Monarch spoke its final words to Muku and instantly drove its hand forward.

Whoosh!

Stab!

A chest was cleanly stabbed through. The heart was shown on the other side as it beat its last in the Monarch's hand. It was crushed right after.

"NOOOOOOOOOO!"

Chloe, who was standing beside Muku, screamed in horror. She couldn't believe what she just witnessed.

She just couldn't take it anymore. She fell unconscious while frozen in place. His goodbye smile was the last thing she remembered before everything went dark.

In her unconscious mind, their many memories together began replaying. A sad tear slid down her closed eyes...

....

A few moments again in the void...

The moment the beam reached Muku's body. All the beings in the voice were cut off from being able to perceive what was going on in the outside world.

Which was the punishment given out for the interference. Everyone was included in it. Which was why the being from before apologised to everyone. They won't be able to see what is going on in the outside world for two years. This will definitely give an advantage to the other side.

"We just hope that your gamble pays off..." Multiple voices spoke in reply to the apology.

They could no longer see anything. So, they could only hope that everything works out.

"I hope so too..." The one who made the move spoke in a hopeful voice.

While they could no longer see what was going on. They could still get reports from their subordinates hidden in the world. So, they should find out the outcome soon enough...

.....

Back at the base, in the present...

"Cough, cough... It seems like this is it for me. Please take care of her. And tell her that I'm sorry" William spoke while looking back at Muku from the corner of his eye.

His body then went limp. William, Chloe's father... Was dead.

That's right. It wasn't Muku's chest which was pierced though. But William's instead. He had jumped in between the Monarch and Muku in time.

Which was unexpected by the Monarch. It had been ignoring him and the others since Chloe's attack.

Muku just looked at William's body wide-eyed.

"Well... This was unexpected. However, it still got the job done. So, I won't complain" The Monarch spoke. It then pulled its hand back. William's body fell to the ground immediately.

The Monarch didn't look at Muku any further. There was no reason to care about him anymore. Chloe's mental barrier has already been weakened after seeing her father die.

It has been trying to do that from the beginning. Which was why it had been leading her and Muku along. Exposing things that didn't have to be exposed.

Chloe had held on longer than expected, however. However, she fell in the end. Now, the Monarch could take over her body with little resistance.

As for Muku, he'd be killed off the moment it stopped restraining its aura. It had to restrain itself before it got closer to the weakened Chloe. Otherwise, she'd have died along with Muku before it even arrived in front of them. Which won't be a problem after it takes over her body.

Its current vessel was too imperfect after substituting human life essence with that of beasts. There was a great difference between the two, which William didn't know about. If he hadn't suggested switching things, he might still been alive.

Whether he'd get his dead wife back or not though... That was debatable. The Monarch could only bring the husk back to life. With the memories intact. However, the soul couldn't be brought back. So, William's wife would just be a bio-robot.

Of course, William wasn't told all that. So, maybe it was better he didn't get to see such an outcome. That would have definitely broken him beyond repair.

Anyway, the Monarch slowly reached its hand out to grab Chloe's head. It was time to move along with its plans. Playtime really was over. It had vented enough...

Grab!

"I'm sorry to get in your way, but... I was tasked with the duty of protecting this girl. So, I cannot let you have her..." Just as the Monarch's hand was about to reach Chloe's head. Muku grabbed its hand first and spoke in an emotionless voice.

His aura seemed to be the same. However, his body, eyes and hair were a whole different matter. His whole body was covered by white dragon scales. Two dragon horns had grown on his forehead. His eyes had turned a burning yellow with a vertical slit like that of reptiles at the centre. His hair had turned pitch black and increased in length until it reached his waist.

"Oh?..." The Monarch only spoke one word then...

Bang!

BOOOM!

Muku punched it in the face. It flew back and hit the wall hard. The wall, which had survived everything that happened before, broke under the force of the Monarch smashing into it.

The Monarch's face even caved in a little bit. Its green glow also dimmed.

Bang!

Before the Monarch could make sense of what was happening. Muku was already in front of it. Another punch smashed into its head. Which made it dig deeper into the hole it created.

"Enough!"

BOOOM

The Monarch screamed and released its aura entirely. It was so pissed off that it no longer cared about anything. Even if Chloe died as well. It didn't care.

Its green glow became brighter and brighter until it was blinding. The old Muku would have definitely been vaporised by the glow. However, he stood there completely fine. Chloe was fine as well. Her body seemed to have gotten isolated from the outside world somehow.

"You should have ended me when you had the chance. Now it's my turn. I won't repeat the mistake you made" Muku disappeared right in front of the Monarch's eyes. That time it saw everything clearly.

It wasn't speed which he was using. He was literally disappearing and appearing somewhere else. He was teleporting!

"IMPOSSIBLE! That ability shouldn't be something you have access t..." The Monarch screamed hysterically.

However, before it could finish. It was again punched in the face. From then on, it received one punch after the other. It tried its best to fight back. Which was really hard to do with one hand. So, it kept on getting beaten back.

Its whole body began cracking from Muku's unrelenting attacks. From how things looked. The Monarch would be killed off soon. Which confused all those who were looking on. How did the situation change so much so soon?!

It was literally about to end things. Why was it getting dominated now?! And what do we up with Muku's sudden transformation?! Where was the usual exaggerated event which came with transformations?!

It's like he just breathed and changed forms! That was completely unfair! It was against the script. The Monarch wanted to sue!

"Enough! Get back or I'll end her right now!" Suddenly a snake's... Cough, Abel's voice sounded from a distance away.

He was standing behind Chloe holding a blade to her neck. His legs were shaking up a storm. They started shaking even more the moment Muku looked back at him.

Looking into those emotionless burning yellow eyes made him almost oee his pants. Unfortunately, he had already chosen his side. He could only stick to it until the end. That's right, he was the only one who

didn't have his life essence sucked out of him by the Monarch before. Which obviously meant that he had made a secret deal no one knew about.

So, if the Monarch lost and got killed. He definitely wouldn't survive either. Helping the Monarch win was his only way out.

"Go ahead. Try it..." Muku spoke calmly.

"What? You think I don't dare do it? I'll give you a warning shot!" Abel was pissed off by Muku's response. He then slashed at Chloe's hand to show his seriousness.

Bang!

A second later, a hand fell to the ground. Abel confusedly looked at the group. He was wondering how the hand possibly got cut off. He hadn't put that much strength into it after all.

However, what he saw wasn't Chloe's hand on the ground. He saw his instead.

"Hhm? Ahhhhh!" It took him a second to realise what was going on. Then he let out a blood-curdling scream as the realisation and pain finally hit him.

"Attack!" He called out before falling to the ground.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh...

Ten different element spells were thrown in Muku's direction.

It was from Abel's plan B. He had long taken control of the ten R3 guards from the metal door. He had called them inside while Muku was still focused on the Monarch.

He felt fortunate for his cautiousness. Otherwise, he would have been killed off by then.

Muku looked away from Abel for a moment. Of course, with his current abilities, the ten weren't a problem. He dispatched them in less than ten seconds.

He then looked at the spot Abel was before. And, Abel was missing. The snake had already slithered away.

He could probably catch up with him easily if he chose to pursue it. However, the monarch was more important.

He looked back at the Monarch. It was time to finish it off. The moment he did...

Bang!

He was met with a punch to the face. The punch was as strong as his own even.

"Hehe. Time for round two" The Monarch spoke in an angry tone. Muku had embarrassed it way too much. He had to die!

Its body was fully restored. Even the missing hand grew back!....

Chapter 214 Tussle with the Monarch

Muku was confused for a moment.

Then he noticed that the nine remaining people in the room had been sucked dry and got killed. It had done it silently and quickly. So, he didn't sense it.

That wasn't all, he could no longer sense anyone alive in the base above him. The bastard had sucked all their life force as well. No wonder it had gotten so much stronger.

"You will regret that" Muku spoke. His voice radiated anger.

Humans were already dying like flies all over the world. Which he couldn't do anything about. However, for the Monarch to kill so many of them in front of him. It was like adding more wood to the raging flame of anger in his heart.

"Bring it on!" The Monarch replied in a similarly angry voice.

They both stood still for a moment. Just glaring at each other.

BOOOM! BOOOM!

At the same time, they ran forward. Muku didn't even teleport. He wanted to meet the Monarch head-on. And beat it into the ground. He wanted to rip both it and its superiority complex apart.

BOOOOM!

A loud explosion went off the moment the two sides met. They both had thrown punches at the other. Their punches met each other in the middle.

The resulting shockwave left cracks in the walls which spread in every direction. Their power levels were fast approaching levels the special tiles couldn't handle. After they gave out, everything was sure to come crumbling down.

Neither Muku nor the Monarch cared about that, however. They only cared about tearing the other party apart.

Boom! Boom!...

The two kept on punching each other left and right all over the room. As expected, the tiles soon gave out. Everything came crumbling down.

They, of course, got out in time. They continued their fight in the air. The barbaric way they fought showed just how much they despised each other.

Neither had used an attack spell since the beginning. They wanted to hurt the other party as much as possible before finishing it.

BOOOOM!

They sent out a punch at each other which pushed them in opposite directions.

"I've had enough of this! ROOOOAR!" The Monarch took the chance to send a breath attack in Muku's direction.

Which looked rather odd since its face was featureless. The breath attack formed just a few centimetres in front of the area where the mouth would be located.

"Hhm!" Muku made an unconvinced sound. Then he held out his hand.

Boom!

A huge metal door flew out from beneath the ground. It was the same door which was used in the secret room.

Muku could create his own metal to fight with. However, using something that was already around saved mana so...

Anyway, the huge door then flew in front of Muku and stood like a shield. He could have easily dodged it. However, he chose to block it instead. Who knew where the beam would hit if he avoided it? It could end up killing some innocent people or something.

BOOOOOOM!

An explosion went off when the beam and the door met. Muku was taking care of another task as he blocked the attack.

He had been fighting while protecting Chloe. Which held him back a little. He spotted the other girls a distance away. So, he teleported her to them.

The girls were startled by Chloe's sudden appearance in front of them. However, they adjusted quickly enough. They had already seen Muku's new appearance.

Which made them accept pretty much anything. He always does something like that. He'd randomly get new abilities whenever there was a need for them. Though his current form and strength were a bit exaggerated. How tf was he so strong?! Even Audrey couldn't keep up with what was going on. And what was the eerie green thing he was fighting?

Was that the Monarch? Was he already strong enough to tussle with a Monarch? Didn't they all recently reach Rank Three?! The strength he was displaying was definitely not R3 strength. It might even be above R4!

How was that fair?! Were they even using the same rank-up system? The girls felt bitter. They wanted to sue!

If the Monarch knew what they were thinking. Maybe, it would want to make them its sworn sisters. Then they'd go and sue Muku together. The cheating a\*\*hole!

"Oh my?!" Audrey exclaimed in shock after seeing William's body which appeared soon after Chloe did.

"Poor girl" Audrey continued as she looked between Chloe and the deceased William. Even in an unconscious state. She could tell that Chloe was grieving. Tears were continuously falling from her closed eyes.

To think things had turned so bad in such a short time. Only if they were strong enough. They might have been able to help. They had tried to jump into the hole to help. However, Muku repelled them back with his Telekinesis. It was just before he and Chloe were immobilised before.

He knew that the others going in at that time would have just led to more problems. As an understanding group, the trio no longer tried to enter. They even moved a distance away. Which turned out to be for the best.

"Let's go" Layla spoke after collecting herself for a bit. She had gotten really close to Chloe. So, she really felt for her.

She encased William's body in ice and put it in her Shadow Pocket. Audrey carried Chloe on her back, and the girls moved further away from the battlefield. All their moods had been dumbed by William's death.

Just a few hours ago they had been thinking about how they were going to free him from the Monarch's control. And how Chloe was going to tell him she was striving to be part of a harem. Yet, all that won't be realised since he was dead.

They had never had anyone close to them die in front of them like that since the apocalypse began. Of course, that's when Emily's death and rebirth were ignored.

So, William's death really stung. Despite them not being familiar with him. Like at all. Layla and Emily hadn't even seen him in person before. Yet, they all found themselves shading tears as they walked away.

They all swore in their hearts to get stronger so that such losses never happen again.

.....

Back to the battle...

"You disrespectful brat. How dare you use my door against me!" The Monarch complained angrily.

The door had been specifically crafted to be able to resist its power. So, it was mostly unharmed by its attack. A few more might be able to destroy it. However, it was work the Monarch shouldn't have had to do!

"Hmm... I wonder" Muku didn't reply to the Monarch's words. He seemed to be stuck in his own thoughts.

The Monarch was about to lose it again thinking it was being underestimated. That's when Muku placed his hand on the door.

Bang!

It instantly broke apart. Scrap metal flew everywhere...

"Pfft... Hahaha, that was your only sure way of blocking my attacks. I'll make you pay for you arroga..." The Monarch thought Muku had arrogantly destroyed the door to show that he didn't need it.

However, it couldn't finish its taunt as the scrap metal gathered together in the air. It then turned into a black liquid. It kinda looked like a black version of mercury.

"Oh, no you don't!" The Monarch screamed hysterically and then charged toward Muku at high speeds. It had enough experience to know not to let someone create something during an equally matched battle.

Such things are always what gets the other side killed.

The Monarch reached out to grab the blob of metal. The hand enlarged as it got closer to Muku. It was the same move it used before when it blocked Chloe's lightning.

Unfortunately for the Monarch Muku had seen it coming from a mile away. So, by the time the hand arrived. He and the blob had teleported to the place behind the Monarch.

The metal blob then attached itself to his body. He was completely encased in it for a moment.

Then the blob turned solid as well as took on a specific shape. It turned into a pitch-black armour that covered Muku from top to bottom.

Even his head was hidden behind a scary-looking helmet. Which looked like a smiling demon of sought. The aura it gave off was different from any of his previous armour.

The current armour almost seemed to be alive. Even the air Muku himself released was affected by it. It turned darker. Almost evil in fact...

"Well, this is unexpected... I'll call this one Nightmare Armour. For it is going to be your nightmare. It's time we end this..." Muku spoke. His voice sounded raspy and creepy behind the armour.

The Monarch froze for a moment. It suddenly felt like its death might be guaranteed now...

It was regretting keeping the mysterious metal it had found randomly all those years ago. The metal was already door in the shape of the door from before.

It was basically indestructible at that time. However, it had lost most of its strength over countless years of existence. Which was why it directed William's crew to where it was. Since it wasn't only resistant to the Monarch's power. But every other power.

Which made it perfect for locking things that shouldn't be seen behind it. It was only through the weird enchantment on it that they were able to use it.

Now, the Monarch was regretting it. Nothing had happened yet. But it could sense danger from Muku which was at least a thousand times more intense than before. The dangerous feeling kept on increasing as well.

{No! I refuse to die here! I have died once before already! I have to think of something! I can only think of one thing... Should I do it?} The Monarch thought to itself while looking at Muku intensely.

It was on guard. Ready to defend the moment he moved. It didn't even think of attacking anymore.

Chapter 215: The Monarch's Death

Whoosh!

BOOM!

The moment Muku's figure got slightly blurry. The Monarch flew away at its highest speed. It was so quick it broke through the sound barrier despite the increased threshold.

"Huh?!" The Monarch only stopped many metres away. However, it noticed something wrong with its body.

Its hand was missing again. This time it was from the shoulder. Which was a lot worse than before. It instantly looked back.

It saw Muku floating in the place it had been before. In his hand was its severed hand. It seemed it still couldn't completely escape despite pushing its speed to the max.

"It seems I missed... No matter, it won't happen a second time," Muku spoke, and then he disappeared again.

The Monarch, who felt even more threatened after losing an arm, made its move. It opted to run away again. This time, it didn't stop flying.

Until something forced it to stop. It was Muku standing in front of it. In his hand was a glowing green leg. The Monarch looked down and subconsciously. As expected, one of its legs was missing.

That's when it realised that it was no longer a fight anymore. Muku probably didn't miss the first time. He was doing it on purpose. He wanted to literally rip it apart.

The realisation angered it greatly. However, there was nothing it could do. All the people marked by its power had already been killed. It couldn't get any more power within a short period.

So, as much as it hated it. Escaping was the only option. Though that didn't seem very probable at the moment...

Whoosh!

Rip!

Rip!

As if to prove the Monarch's thoughts true. Muku made his move again. That time, even before it the Monarch could react. Its remaining hand and leg were gone. They had been ripped off its body like the others.

"Next is your head" Muku whispered into the Monarch's ear as he floated right beside it.

"NOOOOO!"

BOOOOOOM!

The Monarch was very unwilling. It let out a scream, which released most of the energy in its body. The energy went in every direction. If Muku was caught off guard by the raw energy. He might be the one to get defeated instead.

Unfortunately, that didn't happen. Muku's body didn't move from the spot. However, it turned ethereal just before the energy reached him. The energy passed right through him as if he wasn't there. It was almost like he had turned into a ghost.

Which wasn't the case. He had just jumped into a different dimension. Which was an advanced technique exclusive to the space element.

The energy wave the Monarch released didn't last long. It disappeared into nothingness after going a little distance away from the duo. Its disappearance was also the disappearance of the Monarch's final chance to turn things around.

"Go ahead and finish it" The Monarch spoke in a weak voice.

It had had given up. That move was its trump card. It only had a minuscule amount of energy left. Which couldn't do anything to Muku.

So, while it was unwilling to die just after getting resurrected. There was nothing it could do. It could at least die with dignity.

For Beings like it. If special methods weren't applied. Then death wasn't final. Maybe it will have another chance of a comeback in the future.

If it did get another chance. It will make sure to not be so arrogant. Everyone would be killed the moment it got resurrected. Whether enemy, subordinates or even passersby!

"Die no... COUGH! ARGH!" Muku held out his hand toward the Monarch's head. About to finish it off.

That's when something unexpected happened. He suddenly coughed out a mouthful of blood. Some of it splashed out through the helmet. He groaned in pain as he took his hand back. He then held it to his chest.

His powerful aura quickly began decreasing in intensity. Soon it had reached his usual aura level. However, it didn't stop there. It kept on decreasing until he was as weak as an unranked person!

The Monarch was shocked by the sudden plot twist. However, being the seasoned opportunist it was. It quickly recovered from the shock.

It gathered the little bit of energy it had left. Which wouldn't have been able to do anything to Muku before.

However, he wasn't in that state now, was he? It was preparing to kill him off with one final breath attack.

Even if the breath attack would be rather small. An embarrassment to breath attacks everywhere. It would still be enough to finish the job based on how weak Muku had gotten. He could barely keep himself from falling down.

"RO.... COUGH. COUGH"

Another plot twist occurred. Just when the Monarch was about to end Muku. A huge clawed hand made of red Beast Aura stabbed through its chest from the back.

It came out the front holding something. While it wasn't a heart, like the situation with William. It was something equally, if not more important to the Monarch. The Monarch core shard from before...

The Monarch turned back to look at who or what had literally stabbed it in the back. Its fading aura began chaotic for a moment due to the shock of what it saw.

"Impossible" The Monarch spoke one word before its body went limp. It had died, again...

...

Somewhere else in the forest...

"Huff! Huff! Argh! That bastard! I'll make him pay! He dares be arrogant because he has cheats?! I'll go heal and start an army! That cheat shouldn't last long! I'll show him!" Abel, who had run for an unknown distance in a random direction, spoke to himself angrily.

His prosperous future with the Monarch was already set. Only if that cheater Muku didn't get involved! Now he was missing a hand with an uncertain future.

His mind won't feel at ease until he gets his revenge. No one has ever done such a thing to him and survived!

Abel had a twisted expression on his face which matched his emotions. His handsome looks, which rivalled Muku's, were nowhere to be seen. One could argue that his current look was his real look.

A vile look which reflected his corrupt heart.

"Umm, you're Abel right?" A youthful female voice sounded from behind Abel.

"Yes. What do you wa..." Abel replied instinctually. However, he paused soon after.

Firstly, he was supposed to be alone. Secondly, if it was someone from the base who had found him, they wouldn't ask who he was. Lastly, other than the base residents and Muku's group. No one else was around.

So... Abel immediately began sweating bullets as he turned around. He started finding it slightly hard to breathe. Which was probably due to exhaustion and nervousness.

"How rude. Anyway, if you're really Abel. Then you're definitely talking about my Big Brother. He's the only one who can make his enemies feel such intense hatred with his cheat abilities. I kinda feel pity for you... However, sorry to say, but your revenge is not going to happen" The girl who turned out to be Hope continued speaking.

She spoke innocently with her sweet voice. However, Abel's expression got increasingly grave the more she spoke.

At first when he looked at her. She looked like a cute and innocent teen. However, when she mentioned her big brother. Abel felt chills go down his spine.

Even though her tone didn't change. Her image changed in front of him. All he could was purple mist with glowing green eyes looking at him.

He wanted to run but his body wouldn't move. He wanted to close his eyes or even look away. But his whole body had locked up on him. He could do nothing but stare at the terrifying image with terror in his eyes.

The thought to mobilise his abilities didn't even form in his mind...

On the other hand, Hope just looked at him curiously. In her point of view. Which was the real appearance of things. Abel's body had turned completely purple. His eyes were looking into blank space with unparalleled terror.

After a few seconds of that. All signs of life left his body. He was dead... Without even knowing it to.

He had been poisoned to death while being trapped in a mental illusion. That wasn't the end of it, however. His body obviously fell to the ground after losing the supporting strength.

When it hit the ground... It crumbled like a sand sculpture. Hope's poison was so strong it severed the micro connections in his body. If she has continued to apply power. He might have gotten poisoned out of existence or something.

"So... That's what my domain does... Blargh!" Hope spoke to herself while trying to keep calm. However, she couldn't stop herself from vomiting.

While she was willing to do anything for her brother. Which included killing a man, apparently... It was still not something she could easily handle.

She'll probably have nightmares for days. Though, she still wouldn't regret it. She was always happy to reduce the things her brother had to worry about. Which Abel had become... A problem Muku would have had to worry about.

"Argh! I can't delay anymore. I have to catch up to her!. Why did she have to suddenly go crazy like that?!" Hope spoke as she collected herself.

She then continued running deeper into the forest. Meeting Abel was just a lucky encounter.

She had something else to take care of...

Chapter 216: I love you

Back at the battle scene...

"All evil Monarchs must die" A familiar voice spoke just a few metres away from the weakened Muku.

His version was a bit blurry. However, he was certain that the person didn't look like that before.

As he was wondering what was wrong. The voice's owner grasped its hand tightly. Which crushed the precious shard that powered the Monarch's resurrection.

The moment the shard was crushed. The Monarch's body, which still had a hand going through it, broke apart. It shattered like glass. The shard pieces then dissolved into the surroundings before reaching the ground.

The moment that happened. A small, dim, ethereal orb was exposed. It wasn't something normal people could see. For it was the immortal soul of a Monarch. Something that was nearly indestructible. Not even time could erode it.

Unfortunately, for the Monarch. Both of the individuals present could see it clearly. However, it was confident they couldn't do anything to it despite that.

One was Muku, who seemed to be close to dying. The other was the figure enshrouded in red Beast Aura who was nowhere near strong enough to even scratch it. So, its escape was basically guaranteed.

"You won this time you lucky trash. You better hope you're already dead by the time I return. Otherwise, I'll kill you in the most painful way possible" The Monarch's voice sounded in both Muku's and the other figure's ears.

"There will be no next time!" Muku, who had the motto to never let an enemy get away, spoke.

He painfully willed himself to look directly at the Monarch's immortal soul. Internally he was hoping the ability he was depending on wouldn't fail him again.

Fortunately, his wishes were realised. His yellow eyes returned to normal behind the helmet. Then a familiar grey glow appeared on them.

The Monarch instantly felt the danger. The danger it sensed could easily top all it has ever felt combined! One had to know that the Monarch was an ancient creature that originated from a time when danger and death were everywhere. Hell, it even died.

So, for the danger it felt to top all of that combined. It was easy to understand just how much danger it was in. Then again, it was about to be literally erased out of existence, so it was understandable.

"Erasing gaze!" Muku weakly called out.

"Noooooo!" The Monarch, which couldn't get away quickly enough in its slow soul state, screamed in horror as it perceived itself getting erased.

Soon, the Monarch was completely erased out of existence. Its last thought was {How is this possible?!}

Then it was gone forever...

"COUGH! COUGH! Red suits your personality a lot better" Muku joked with the figure floating in front of him despite his even weaker state.

His vision had gotten blurry after using his erasing gaze. However, he had already taken a good look at the other party before that.

Though internally he was cursing that his bloodline had forsaken him earlier when he tried it. He could have used it to scare the Monarch away or something. Then he wouldn't have had to accept the damned deal that left his body in its current broken state.

However, it didn't work at that time. Just like the time with Ares. It was like it would ditch him whenever he needed it most.

What he didn't know was that his bloodline always worked in his best interest. It had a Pseudo-consciousness, which could perceive a lot more things than he could. It had perceived the various spectators in the void. Who would have definitely found trouble with him if he had used his erasing gaze.

For that reason, like the time before, his bloodline ability was locked.

It was something he would only find out about, way in the future. And he'd be grateful at the time. For, if it wasn't for that mechanism. He'd have long become public enemy number one. Hunted down by both sides.

"Tsk. We should get you to Hope" The figure replied.

As most, if not all, have long guessed. The figure was Jade. Just that she was rocking a new and unexpected look.

Her once-green hair was now a fiery red. And as evident from her attacks. Her Beast Aura had also changed colour. It was the same colour as her hair. It also seemed a lot more aggressive and deadly.

This was proven by the fact that she could get close to the Monarch. To the point of stabbing her hand through its chest. While the Monarch had lost pretty much all its power by the time Jade came. The effect of repelling "mortals" was still as strong as ever. That was a natural ability it had which it just happened to be able to control to some extent. It didn't require any energy input from the Monarch.

It was like a physical manifestation of its aura. Something higher rank beings have over weaker ones. Even Muku's group could briefly use that effect when their emotions were high...

So, for Jade to be able to get through that. Her red Beast Aura must be really special or really strong.

Anyway, her hair was also restored to its long state. Which Jade definitely appreciated a lot. Though her eyes remained as green as ever.

"That would be for the best. Especially if you can do it within the next two minutes..." Muku replied. He wasn't against the idea at all.

"Of course. I have something to talk to you afterwards" Jade agreed. She wondered why he gave her a two-minute deadline. However, she chose to put that aside for the time being.

She proceeded to princess carry Muku which made him wish he was dead from embarrassment. After which she flew in the direction she had ditched Hope in.

"Since when could you fly?!" Although it hurt him a lot to speak. Muku couldn't contain his curiosity.

"Anyone can fly in their domain... It's just that I got a little assistance in knowing that. Look, there she is," Jade replied nonchalantly, then glanced in a certain direction.

Which was where a clearly tired and out-of-breath Hope could be seen struggling to run forward. The girl really was a mage-type through and through.

Though it was kind of cute to see her not giving up despite being obviously tired. Jade, who didn't want to prolong both Muku and Hope's suffering, descended immediately.

As for what she said about anyone being able to fly within their domains. It was one hundred percent true. It just needed one to have precise control of their energy and a strong mind. So, it was something the other girls would probably learn how to do soon enough...

"Stop running. I'm here" Jade spoke just as she reached in front of Hope while hovering slightly above ground.

"Ah! You scared me you jer... Big Brother?... Big Brother! What happened to him?! Healing Domain! Hallowed Ground!" Hope jumped back after being startled by Jade.

After realising who it was, she cursed instantly which she stopped after seeing Muku in her hands. Even with the scary-looking armour she had never seen before. She recognised him instantly.

She also instantly realised something was wrong with him after seeing him in Jade's arms. Which was confirmed by his weak aura.

She didn't waste any time. She instantly deployed her domain and cast her best healing spells in it. Even though the domain alone would have been able to do the work.

Like always when Muku was injured. It didn't take long for tears to form and start falling from her eyes. It always seemed to hurt her more than even Muku himself when he was hurt.

Jade put him gently on the ground and stepped out of the minimised domain. She stood on the side and let Hope do her thing.

"Why aren't you taking off your armour?" Hope asked as she traced her hand on the helmet.

"I can't... Anyway, listen to me. I have something very important to tell you," Muku, who was feeling a little better already after Hope's interference spoke.

He only elaborated a little bit about the armour. He then moved on to another matter.

"No, don't say anything for now. Focus on healing. You can tell me later" Hope cut him off. To her, his healing process was the most important thing at that point.

"No, please listen. I don't have much time!" Muku didn't listen to her but continued speaking.

"W...what do you mean?!" Hope asked hesitantly. She had wanted to cut him off again.

However, after hearing what he was saying. Her heart skipped a beat. She felt her body getting weaker and weaker by the second. It also felt like her heart was about to jump out of her chest from... Fear. What did he mean he didn't have much time left?!

The tears that had stopped falling from her eyes began falling again. They fell a lot more intensely than before as well.

Even Jade, who was hearing everything from a little distance away, felt unsettled by his words. However, unlike Hope, she wanted to let him finish what he wanted to say before jumping to conclusions.

"Firstly, calm down. I'm not dying... However, I will have to go away from all of you for two years..." Muku cleared Hope's confusion.

Which calmed her down for a moment. However, her emotions took another blow from what he said next.

"What do you mean? Where are you going? Take me with you! No! I'm coming with you!" Hope replied.

Her reply went from confusion to begging, then ending as an order. She didn't care where he was going. She was going to go with him. Whether he wanted to or not.

What did he mean by going away for two years? How could she live that long without him?!

Even Jade had moved closer. She agreed with Hope... Wherever Muku was planning on going. She was going there as well!

"Listen to me. No one else can come. Even if they want to. It's something I have to do alone. I..." Muku was explaining to the two girls when he suddenly stopped.

He looked in a certain direction. The two girls looked in that direction as well. They all sensed an otherworldly aura there.

The moment they did. Space split open. Like literally, it first cracked then opened up.

Before the trio could react. A giant pitch-black hand, which seemed to have a whole galaxy of stars within it, came through. It slowly made its way toward Muku. For some reason, they were all certain that it was there for Muku.

Hope and Jade immediately wanted to run away with him. However, they realised that they couldn't move their bodies.

They could only watch in their frozen states as the hand grabbed the weakened Muku. He hadn't even fully recovered yet. Then it dragged him back towards the crack in space.

"NOOOOOO! BROTHER!" Hope, who could only move her eyes and mouth, let out a pained cry.

Cracks began appearing all over her body as she tried to break free from the force which was holding her in place. Soon her whole body was painted red with her own blood.

Jade was the same beside her. She was screaming also as she tried to break free.

The girls tried with all their might. However, they just couldn't break free, no matter what. They couldn't do anything other than powerlessly look on as the hand dragged Muku into the crack.

"Please, stop resisting. For my sake, please. Don't be disheartened. I told you I would be back in two years. I promise!" Muku spoke hoarsely behind the armour. He was probably also in tears seeing how the girls were struggling for his sake.

Unfortunately for him, his words fell on deaf ears. They kept on trying to break free. Injuring themselves even more.

"Here... I promised you gifts before right? Take these necklaces. As long as they are intact. You'll know that I'm alive and well. Hold on to them until I return with better gifts?..." Muku tried something else.

He shaped special metal, which he had long created, into eight different coloured necklaces. Which was done with the little mana he had regained.

He used something he had been secretly working on. Which he called Soul Metal. The details will be saved for another time. What mattered was that the metal was linked to a person's soul. As long as the person was okay. The metal would be okay as well.

So, he used it as a form of assurance for the girls. Each necklace had the initial letter of the name of the girl it was intended for. Emily and Elsa's were different sizes.

He wasn't sure whether Elsa would even want it. However, he created one either way. As to not make her feel left out.

Hope and Jade's necklaces flew towards them and adorned themselves on their necks. The remaining six were put in front of Jade.

"Remember Hope. Big Brother loves you. Always and forever. No matter the distance in-between us. Please, continue leaving for me. Until the day we meet again... You too Jade. I love you, as well. Take care of everyone for me. Tell them that I love them as well. We'll meet again soon. I hope you're all a lot stronger when I return. Then we can continue our exploration of the apocalyptic world with ease," Muku, who was almost completely gone into the crack, spoke some final words.

Immediately after, his body was completely sucked in. And the crack closed up again.

The moment it did. Hope and Jade were freed again. They both used their top speeds to run to the spot Muku was sucked into.

However, no matter how many times they passed through it. Or even attacked it. Nothing happened. The spot had returned to normal. No different from any other spot.

"BIG BROTHER!" Hope screamed out again. One could feel the pain and longing in her cry.

She, who was already physically tired even before everything soon fainted. She was about to fall to the ground when Jade caught her.

The equally bloody and emotionally hurt Jade cried silently as she held the unconscious Hope. She still couldn't believe it.

Just like that. Muku was gone...

Chapter 217: Clarity from Iris...

A while later...

"What happened here?" Emily asked while looking at the bloodied Jade and Hope.

Jade was silently crying. Hope was unconscious in Jade's hands. Muku was nowhere to be seen.

So, Emily already had a bad feeling in her heart as she asked the question. Layla and Audrey, who were behind, also had grave expressions on their faces. Their women's intuition was going off like crazy. They were certain that something very significant had occurred in that place.

Audrey even had an idea of what it was without anyone telling her. She had a special connection with Muku after. She always had a general idea of his location.

However, since a while ago. She couldn't sense anything. It was almost like Muku was no longer in the same world...

Fortunately, she was certain that he was alive. Otherwise, who knows what she would have done.

"Let's go home. We need to see Iris. Here..." Jade didn't reply to Emily's words. She basically gave the others orders. Tossed the six necklaces at Emily and then took off towards the mansion with Hope still in her arms.

She didn't even wait for a response. The three girls looked at each other after Jade left. None said anything. Emily picked up the necklaces Jade threw and they silently went after her.

Chloe was still unconscious on Audrey's back. She probably wouldn't wake up anytime soon.

Seeing the necklaces which were obviously made by Muku. But not receiving them from him made the girls feel so uneasy they almost couldn't breathe.

Jade's actions didn't help in calming them down either. With the intent of wanting to know what the hell was happening. They quickly ran after Jade.

Of course, they didn't manage to catch up. Jade flew while they ran after all. They were wondering since when she could fly or when her Beast Aura changed colours. However, there were more important things to deal with. Not to mention that Jade didn't seem to be in a talkative mood.

...

A while later. Back at the mansion...

Though Jade didn't wait for the others when she returned. She waited for them before speaking to Iris.

While the others were on the way. She cleaned up herself and Hope. Then banded all of Hope's wounds. Unlike her body, Hope's body didn't have a naturally high healing factor.

So, while Jade had long stopped bleeding. Hope was still bleeding all over. Fortunately, it wasn't intense bleeding. So, it wouldn't be problematic to Hope in a short time.

However, since Hope couldn't heal herself while unconscious. Jade had to bandage her up to prevent further blood loss before she woke up.

By the time the others arrived. She was already done. She had already spoken to Freya about asking Iris something.

Freya was curious to know what that something was. However, Jade's new look, which hadn't returned to normal, intimidated her. She chose to wait until the time came and just listen in.

While Jade had retracted her body. She still gave off an aggressive and unapproachable air which Freya couldn't overcome. Which was worse when Jade arrived in a bloodied state with Hope in her arms.

Both she and Elsa wanted to ask what was wrong. However, neither could muster the courage to ask anything.

Anyway, Jade, Freya/Iris and Elsa were already sitting in the lounge. Layla and Emily joined them immediately. Audrey had to take Chloe upstairs first. Which she didn't do quickly and returned to join the others.

Everyone was eager to hear what Jade had to say after all.

"Are you going to speak now?" Iris asked with curiosity radiating in her eyes. She was pretty much the only one who was eager to hear what Jade wanted to say purely for entertainment. She didn't care too much about Muku being missing.

Hell, his absence might work in her favour. She could try to manipulate the emotionally unstable girls into doing whatever she wanted. Of course, she'd have to proceed with caution lest the plan backfires and they unloaded their negative emotions on her.

"I will only tell you about what happened to Muku. Nothing about me. So, don't ask. I promised myself that I would tell him first about that. Anyway, it went like this..." Jade spoke in an emotionless voice.

She made it clear that they were only going to get information related to Muku from her. Which the others felt was weird. However, they didn't disagree.

They could tell that she wasn't in her usual state of mind. The current Jade almost seemed like she had detached herself emotionally from everyone present. Which hurt those closest to her like Emily. But even she quietly looked on. That could be dealt with later on...

...

A while later...

"So, he was taken into a crack in space by a weird-looking giant hand? It happened soon after his body broke down during a fight with the Monarch?" Audrey summarized what Jade said. She was making sure that she didn't hear anything wrong.

Which she felt she had to do because of the situation Muku was in. If what Jade said was true... Well, to put it simply. He was screwed. Two years? Ha! He might not be able to survive for two minutes in the place he was.

It all depended on his luck. If he was lucky. Maybe he'd survive a few days. If not, he'd die upon arrival. Especially in the state, he was described to be in.

"Yes. What do you understand from that information?" Jade confirmed. Her expression was unchanged.

However, the other girls who had just found out what happened to Muku were distraught. Emily couldn't take it anymore. She got up and ran out of the room while holding her mouth. Tears had already filled her eyes.

Audrey silently cried while sitting in place. She wanted to know everything. Which is why she stopped herself from running away like Emily did.

Layla, on the other hand, didn't shed even a single tear. However, she grasped her fists to the point that she broke through her skin with her nails. Blood was flowing freely from her hands. Yet she didn't seem to notice. It was as if she couldn't feel the pain at all.

From such actions, it was clear that she was just as affected by the news as the rest. She just had a different way of showing it.

Freya was also crying in her mindscape while looking on through Iris'/ her eyes. Hell, even Elsa was shedding a few tears.

Muku had become like an older brother to her after the time he took her out to rank up. So, hearing about his likely very perilous situation. She, of course, felt sad like the rest.

"Well, firstly. Let's talk about what got him into that situation. I think it went like this. He couldn't fight the newly resurrected Monarch. Who would have had at least LR4 strength from the beginning. So, his being dominated makes sense. Anyway, what the Monarch did was something the Higher Guardians wouldn't let slide. Their servants were probably too far to help like always. While they couldn't personally interfere... Also, like always. Anyway, the only option left was what they did. Which was to make a deal with a person who was already present and could take their power..." Iris began explaining. Like always. She stopped when the paragraph got too long...

"Am I feeding you too much information too quickly? Well, that's your problem. Anyway, your little boyfriend was probably the only one who met the bill. So, they juiced him up until he could beat the Monarch. Their usual method would be to temporarily give him access to the strength he'll have in the future. Which is done through minor time manipulation. Since he has a soul link with a dragon. He probably got to taste their union form in advance. That should be strong enough to take care of things..." Iris continued.

"However, I know nothing about the evil-looking black armour you're talking about. However, I'm sure it helped in improving his strength. Since the upgrade from guardians alone wouldn't have made him so much stronger than the Monarch after it drained all the life essence from the Base residents. Well, whatever. I'm not all-knowing, so, whatever," Iris continued speaking nonchalantly.

She was secretly feeling quite prideful. She always liked times like that when everyone would sit quietly and listen to what she had to say. It made her feel like a sage.

It seemed snooping around in places she wasn't supposed to, had finally paid off. Her nicknames from that time, "The Serial Gossiper" and "The Snooper" were well deserved.

"Anyway, let's move on to what you all want to know most. What that had was and where he was taken to. Let me begin by telling you this... Borrowing the power of Guardians always has a price to pay for both sides. The Guardians will probably be barred from peeking into the world for a while. He, well as the beast girl saw, was dragged off somewhere..." Iris continued speaking.

She stopped just before saying the place's name. She was trying to let emotions build a bit more before revealing the information. It was like an emotional drumroll.

Bang!

"Where!" Jade couldn't take Iris' nonchalant antics anymore. She smashed the table beside her and then asked aggressively.

The way she was glaring at Iris. It was clear to see that she'd probably attack if Iris kept on playing around.

"Woah! Beastie! I speak! No need to get angry" Iris spoke in a still unbothered mood. She even said something only Muku would say to Jade.

It was almost like she was asking for a beating. And from Jade's rising aura and darkening expression. She was about to get just that.

"He was sent to the Beast World" Just before Jade attacked. Iris finally spoke.

The whole room went silent after her words fell. Not even the low sound of someone breathing could be heard...

#### Chapter 218: Distant Emotions

The Beast World. A place no one had ever mentioned before. But they all knew it existed. After all, the portals that brought the beasts to their planet must have gotten them from somewhere else, right?

Despite having figured all that out. No one had ever really cared about it. They had better things to do than think about that. All they cared to think about was how they would survive the next day.

Who cared about a world they had no access to? Hell, they didn't want access to it either. That's where all the creatures that were terrorising them were coming from after all. Like they said, "out of sight, out of mind"

That's how the girls thought before Iris' words fell. With a few words, Iris made them obsessed with the world.

"How do I get there?" Jade asked the craziest but most natural question to ask.

"Pfft... Hahahaha you want to go to The Beast World?! Hahahaha. That's the funniest thing I've ever heard. Is this what you humans call true love? Hahahaha and look at the rest of you. Do you want to know, too? Hahahaha" Iris laughed out loud at Jade's question.

She'd briefly speak in between her laughter. However, what she said only made the girls angry at her.

Seeing how the others had been waiting to hear how to get there as well. Made her laugh even harder. To the point that she had to hold her aching stomach. She found the situation so funny that tears began coming out of her eyes.

While the girls were angered by her reaction. They didn't do anything to her. They still needed her to tell them some stuff after all. Not to mention how her laughter seemed to be purely out of finding the situation funny. There wasn't even a hint of ridicule in it.

Which they figured was because she knew something which caused her to be like that.

"Argh, why did you have to make me laugh so hard? Now my stomach hurts... Then again, this will not be my problem for long, so I guess it's fine. Anyway, let's get back on track. Let me tell you a little bit about The Beast World(BW). You guys are R2s and R3s, right? Well, the BW has countless of those, then R4s, R5s, R6s, R7s, R8s, and so on. Until eventually you reach The Monarchs. Like, legit Monarchs in their peak forms" Iris finally got back on track after laughing for a while.

"And before you say anything, let me tell you something. Even if you all had Half-step R4 strength. You still wouldn't be able to scratch a LR4 beast. Let alone a higher rank. I won't even mention the issue you'll have with R7s and so on. I will, however, tell you something about Monarchs. You all might think they aren't that strong because you've survived a few encounters. However, you couldn't be more wrong. In that world, just saying a Monarch's name without being sufficiently strong enough to say it will make you explode and die. And that's just one of the many absurd things about those creatures" Iris continued to shed a little more light on why she laughed so hard.

There was genuine fear in her words. Her revelations showed just how perilous the situation Muku was in truly was. It was worse than anything anyone could have ever imagined.

"Also, before you disgust me with your hot-bloodedness by saying you're aware of the danger. And you still want to go. Let me make this clear. I don't know how to get there. Such information is only known by Higher Guardians. I am... Or I was, rather, just an Apprentice Guardian" Iris shut down the next question Jade was to ask even before she could think about it.

"Honestly, your best option right now is to pray and hope that he was sent to the outskirts of the world. His chances of survival would at least exist then..." Iris heartlessly laid the facts on them.

After all, the so-called outskirts were filled to the brim with R4s and R5s.

"Now, if you'll excuse me. I have some laughing I should get back to," Iris said her goodbyes as she switched places with Freya.

Freya immediately muted her as Iris really did continue laughing after returning to the mindscape. She really found the situation very funny.

"Fine," Jade said one word to acknowledge her understanding of the situation. She then got up and began walking out of the mansion.

"Where are you going?" Emily, who was just returning, asked Jade.

"Out" Jade only said one word again and flew away.

Emily's heart took another hit. Jade had never behaved like that with her no matter how bad her mood had gotten. So, for her to start acting like that, especially with how things were going. It really hurt a lot more than it usually had.

"Iris said to let her be for now. She's like that because of her new power. It got awakened prematurely. It's also not completely awakened. Which makes her emotions unstable" Freya told the others what she had been told by Iris.

"Oh, okay" Emily replied to Freya's words. She felt a bit better knowing that Jade wasn't completely in control.

"If you'll excuse me. I have to go do something" Layla suddenly spoke while getting up.

Without waiting for any replies, she walked out the door just like Jade before her. Her whole body was emitting a chilly aura. It was clear that she was probably going to vent.

She hadn't cried like the others. So, everything was still bottled up inside her. She had to release it somehow. Knowing that, the others quietly let her go.

They all knew that Layla wasn't the type to cry something out. Especially in the apocalypse. Her way of venting almost always involved fighting.

They even felt slightly sorry for whatever beast she was going to encounter...

As for the rest. They looked at each other quietly for a while before going their different ways. Some also went outside. Others returned to their rooms.

They were not in a very chatty mood for obvious reasons. They each felt like having some time to themselves. They didn't feel better together like they normally could.

It was like Muku was the glue that held the whole group together. Without him, they all felt a bit distant from each other.

Maybe it was just a momentary feeling driven by the situation. However, that's what they felt. So, they chose to give each other the space they wanted.

The usually bright mansion, no matter how difficult the situation got, suddenly went dark. It suddenly felt cold and empty...

...

In the "Assistance Room"...

Audrey lay on the bed silently crying. It was the place she felt closest to Muku. She would have gone to his room. However, that's where Jade had placed Hope.

Which was a good move. Since it was only after being placed on Muku's bed did tears stop coming out of her closed eyes. It was almost like she could sense his presence in the room or something.

Anyway, while the "Assistance Room" had been wiped clean of all evidence that anyone was in there. It was still a very special room to Audrey.

It was the place where she shared an unforgettable experience with Muku. So, being in it, made her feel closer to him.

That's why she chose to cry there rather than in her own room. She hadn't completely let herself go in front of the others. She had been trying to stay strong in front of the younger generation.

As the unofficial vice leader of the group. As well as the oldest member. She couldn't break down in front of the others. She had to be their pillar of support in these troublesome times.

In Muku's absence, it became her job to look after the group. Which she honestly didn't want to be. But, it had to be done.

"No! I won't cry anymore. I have to stay strong. Crying only means that I have no faith in him. I should focus on getting stronger and keeping the group together instead. That's what he would want. That way when he gets back. I can proudly look into his eyes with an improved group behind me" Audrey suddenly stopped crying and began hyping herself up instead.

She didn't want to be a useless woman who couldn't function without Muku. Instead of being his weakness, she'd rather be his strength.

She also wanted to get a lot stronger. That way Muku won't have to do something like that again. If they were all strong enough. They would still be together with Muku at that moment. Maybe even Chloe's father wouldn't have died.

So, with the necklace Muku made her around her neck. She got up from the bed. Wiped her tears away. And walked out of the room.

She had a determined expression on her face. Determined to win. Determined to get stronger. Determined to make Muku proud when he returns.

Just like her, Emily, Layla, Jade, Freya and even little Elsa were also determined to improve. Their methods would somewhat vary, however, the goal was the same

Muku should be blown away by their improvement when he returns. As for him possibly dying there? That was impossible!

He was Muku, an anomaly with cheats left a right! The only Legendary Class owner they knew of. The Divine Warlock...

He will definitely survive and make it back to them. And they were certain he would blow their minds away with his improvement.

For that reason, they will strive to blow his mind away at the same time...

Chapter 219: Beast World

In the Beast World...

"Ahhhh!" A sudden panicked yell was heard then...

Thud!

With a not-too-loud thud. The yelling stopped. A slightly audible pained groan is what replaced it.

"Argh. Couldn't it drop me closer to the ground? I mean, come on! That hurt!" Muku complained as he lay on the ground.

He didn't know how long it had been since he was dragged into the crack in space. It felt like forever ago. And just when he was starting to get used to the new environment. He was tossed out. Falling from a few metres above ground.

Which would have been nothing worth mentioning in normal cases. However, his body was still heavily injured. He was taken away before Hope could finish healing him.

{Hey! Stop yelling! Do you want to get us killed?!} A slightly panicked voice sounded in Muku's head.

"Don't tell me what to do! It's your fault that we're even here in the first place!" Muku snapped at the voice. However, he did it in a low voice.

Signifying that he had taken heed of the warning despite his outward protest. He painfully willed himself up as he spoke. He was already missing Hope. Being in pain for an extended period was not something he was used to.

{What?! Are you seriously blaming me for saving your life?! Do you think I wanted to come here after barely making it out??} The voice sounded again. It sounded very annoyed by his words.

Muku could tell that the owner wanted to throw down with him. Maybe he should first learn more about where they were before making random comments.

As for who he was talking to. It was the dragon he made a soul link with of course.

Unlike what Iris assumed. It wasn't Muku who made the deal with the Higher Guardian. Nor was he the one the Guardian sought out.

The Guardian sought out the dragon from the start. It had sensed it resting in Muku's mindscape. And from its lineage, as well as the soul link with Muku. It knew that the dragon wasn't on the side of the beasts. If it was, it wouldn't have formed a soul link with a human. Even if its troublesome lineage was ignored.

For that reason. The Guardian offered it a deal. Which made more sense than offering it to Muku.

First of all. Muku knew nothing of Higher Guardians. He also knew nothing of such deals. So, it would be reasonable to assume that if a random voice appeared in a person from The Blue Planet's head. Offering power. They'd immediately think... "F\*ck! I'm being tempted by the devil!"

Even if they don't think it's the devil. They'd still not trust a random voice offering power when they need it most. Especially cautious people like Muku.

So, the wise Guardian chose to approach the dragon instead. And, fortunately, everything went according to plan.

After being awakened and made aware of what was happening. The dragon decisively agreed to the deal. Of course, it consulted Muku first.

Who thought about it for a bit. He was hesitant, but after remembering how he was linked to the dragon. He agreed. After all, if things ended up badly for him, they'd end badly for the dragon as well.

So, with that. Muku agreed to the deal that gave him the power he needed. And since it wasn't a traditional power-up. There wasn't the usual burst of "Rising Qi" or whatever. It was done in a way, the power seemed to have been there from the start.

Which was why the Monarch was caught off guard and beaten up. Anyway, it wasn't just Muku who felt the backlash in his body.

The dragon was equally affected. Both of them had their power boosted to the limits of their current bodies. Then, they were merged through a soul link skill.

Which gave them the combined power of PR4. That allowed Muku to comfortably battle the Monarch. His power was actually already failing when he brought the door into the mix. He was trying to conserve it at that time.

After seeing how the door could block the Monarch's attacks. He thought it would make good armour. Which would save him the mana he'd have to use for defence. So, in the heat of the moment, he turned it into armour.

However, things went beyond what he was expecting when he did. The weird thing actually boosted his power to MR5!

And that wasn't all. He felt it trying to alter, or more appropriately, to corrupt his personality. Fortunately, his willpower was strong enough to resist.

And since it was helpful in his fight, he kept it on and continued with the fight. The armour really proved useful. Even though he felt like he wasn't using its power properly...

Everything seemed to be going well after that. To the point that he forgot that he had little time left. So, like a kid who had gotten a new toy. He began playing around with it, unaware of the time. And, just when he was finally about to finish it. His time was up and he would be the one to get killed if Jade hadn't shown up.

It would have been the most embarrassing death ever... Well, second most embarrassing death ever. Kazuma will forever be number one<sup>1</sup>.

Speaking of which. More often than not. Even in their early days. It has mostly always been Jade who bailed him out of troublesome situations. Maybe he should consider treating her better... Nuh! The brat totally deserved everything she got!

What was also worth mentioning was the teleportation ability. Which even the Monarch was surprised by. It was as uncommon as the Monarch made it out to be. At least for beings below R10. Almost none could use it. And all those who could. They would always shake the world in their later years.

That information was unknown to Muku though. If he did, he'd be smiling from ear to ear for lucking out when he made the soul link with the dragon. He thought its abilities were just a little bit more special than the rest.

Which was understandable when his team had someone who could come back from the dead. Someone who could ignore defence. Someone who could poison your mind. Someone who could pretty much use every element available if they had the core for it. Someone who could upgrade a house like it was a game. Two people who could summon fairies. Someone who could corrupt you by scratching your skin. Someone who could freely use their element under a Monarch's domain without any specific buffs.

Then their leader! Muku himself, someone who could gaze you out of existence. So, yeah... Maybe teleportation wasn't too special after all.

"Okay, I'm sorry for saying that. Thank you for accepting the deal. Anyway, you're more familiar with this place. What should we do next?" Muku apologised to the dragon. He then asked what their next step should be.

While he had taken the leader position from the beginning of this whole apocalypse thing. He wasn't against stepping back when there was someone else more qualified to present.

And in the unfamiliar Beast World, the dragon was the more qualified individual. So, he immediately gave the reins to it.

{Umm, firstly we should determine how far deep into the forest we are. Then, based on that information. We'll determine how hard we need to try to hide. Everything else we'll figure out after that. Insuring our weak lives takes priority} The dragon laid out the plan.

Muku, who preferred being cautious while in an unfamiliar environment, was on board with the plan.

He was thinking that his and the dragon's meeting was truly fate. They were both cautious to a fault when the situation was uncertain. Though for the majestic and all-powerful dragon from lore to be so cautious. It was kinda disappointing...

Then again, it was just a Rank Three for the time being. So, it's not so majestic behaviour could be ignored.

"Hhm, I like that plan... How are we going to do that though?" Muku expressed his agreement and then asked the next question.

"Well... Unlike your world. The gravity here isn't uniform. There's also the mana density. However, that's not as absolute as the gravity. Anyway, the stronger the gravity. The deeper in were are into the forest. Just use your world's current gravity level as a gauge. Its gravity, after reaching level 2, should barely be equal to the outermost areas of the forest. So, if you feel anything beyond that. We're deeper than we'd hope to be..." The dragon clearly explained things to Muku again.

He was starting to like it more and more. Having a partner who gave off such a reliable aura was always a good thing.

"Oh okay. Good plan. Just one problem though. I don't think I feel any gravity pull at all. Like, I feel very light. Even lighter than I would feel on the Blue Planet. Is that weird? Well, it's obviously weird, but how weird?" Muku asked.

It was actually something he had noticed a while back. At that time, he just thought that it was how the Beast World works. However, it seemed to not be the case from the dragon's words.

{Hhm? That's weird it shouldn't be like that. Let me come out and see}... Ah!"

Bang!

The dragon replied. Then in front of Muku's shocked eyes. A white light came out of his body and turned into a mini dragon.

Before he could make sense of what was happening. The mini dragon screamed and fell on his chest hard...

Chapter 220: Ghost Forest?

The dragon immediately turned into a white light and returned into his body.

"Umm... What was that?" Muku asked in a bewildered voice.

{What do you mean by that?! I should be asking you! You said you couldn't feel any pull from gravity! Then what was that?! I almost got smashed to death! Are you secretly plotting against me?? You want me dead, don't you?!} The dragon spat out words rapidly.

While it didn't curse. Muku was clear that the intent was there. It probably was just too proud to actually voice it.

In one small incident, the dragon's reliable air instantly disappeared. Maybe it had been pretending to be calm before. It was probably just as uneasy about their current situation as he was. No wonder it immediately chose to hide as the priority.

"Calm down... Firstly, your dying would halve my power for who knows how long. And look at my current state. Wouldn't I straight up die if I lost any more power? Secondly, I really don't feel any gravitational pull. There's no reason to lie about that. Unfortunately, we don't have Iris-pedia here. She'd probably know what's going on" Muku spoke calmly. He was trying to calm the dragon down. It was his only source of information after all.

{Oh... I guess that makes sense. Sorry for overreacting. There should be some reasonable explanation for what's going on} The dragon apologised after realising that it had been too rushed.

"Nuh, it's cool. I'm sure you're just spooked by the situation. Anyway, what's your name? I can't keep calling you "you" or dragon right?" Muku asked for something that would help the dragon calm down a bit more.

It was also something he wanted to know. They hadn't had a chance to talk outside of a troublesome situation. So, he never got the chance to ask.

Well, their current situation was definitely troublesome as well. However, they had the time to speak idly, so it was okay to ask.

{My name?... I don't have one} The dragon replied while trying to think of what could be the problem with the gravity. It also couldn't figure out how deep in the forest they were with its weakened body.

"Really? Do beasts not have names? I guess that makes sense," Muku replied while thinking about how the savage creatures bite first, then ask questions later. So, it was reasonable that they wouldn't need names.

{What? No. We do have names. Just that only those from top lineages have names from the start. The rest of us must wait until we're at least R5 before naming ourselves. It's only after reaching R5 that you're slightly acknowledged in the forest. Before that, you're just food} The dragon spoke nonchalantly. As if it didn't just expose how bleak the lives of weaker beasts are.

"Oh... But wait, aren't you also from a top lineage?. Isn't that what being a Monarch's descendant means?" Muku asked curiously.

He has pretty much put aside any thoughts on their current situation. He'd let the dragon figure things out. Having someone else to lead you was always a treat... When the leader isn't a politician, that is.

{I am a Monarch's descendant. However, I'm a fallen Monarch's descendant. So, my lineage doesn't matter anymore. If anything, it has always made me a target. Oh, that reminds me. Never say a Monarch's name while in this world. It will immediately know where the person who said it is. If the Monarch isn't in a good mood, or you're too weak like we are. We'll most likely get killed off} The dragon replied nonchalantly again. It seemed like it had long gotten used to its bleak existence.

It took the chance to warn Muku about one of the top taboos in the Beast World. Which he appreciated a lot. Who knows if he was going to randomly mention Ares' name at some point.

Which would have definitely been a death sentence for him. Or maybe a date worse than death with how much Ares' hated him.

As for the dragon being from a broken lineage. He didn't ask for the time being. That sounded like something that required Monarch-level strength before sticking your nose into it.

"Noted... However, that couldn't possibly stop you from giving yourself a name right? Why don't we put it this way? What's the name you want to use when the time comes? I'm a human, so it would be weird for me to talk to someone without a name. But, if you really don't want to say, I won't force you." Muku asked.

{You're right. If I wanted to give myself a name. I could still do it anytime I wanted. However, I never had a reason to give myself one. So, I haven't really thought about it. Plus the local names here suck. They are usually just random sounds turned into names like Roh, Splat, Ban and such. And I'd rather not have a name if it's going to be something like that} The dragon replied.

"Hhm... Makes sense. Do you want me to help you with it? I'm sure you'll like my world's names a lot more" Muku offered to help the dragon choose a name.

{Do whatever you want. Just do it after we find a safe to hide. While I can't figure out where we are through the gravity. I think it's safe to say we're in quite deep. And if we judge based on the mana density. We should be in the midlands} The dragon dismissed Muku's idle talk for the moment. What it cared about was "not dying".

"Oh... That doesn't sound too bad" Muku optimistically spoke. He was still a newbie to terms like outermost/outskirts, Midlands and such. From the knowledge, he heard from his world. The Midlands should be slightly difficult but manageable, right?

{Hehe. How naive of you. If we make it out of here I'll take time to educate you} the dragon replied scornfully. It didn't bother to explain to him how wrong he was.

"Okay, so what's our next move?" Muku asked. He had rested for long enough. He felt okay enough to fly by that point. Though, it won't be anywhere as good as his usual flying.

His mental energy was still low. He even had a vague headache which signified the fact. However, he was willing to push through.

{Well, for now, pick a direction where the mana is spreading to. Then slowly and quietly make your way toward that way. Remember, where it's spreading to... Not spreading from. In normal cases, mana moves from the deeper parts to the outskirts} The dragon gave him directions on what to do.

Muku stood up painfully from where he was. Then he followed the mana current like he was instructed to.

That's when he began looking around. He noticed how the world was a lot different from his own. No matter where he looked... He could only see stupidly big tree trunks. All the trees went up into the clouds.

The only "trees" he could see all of were shoots. And even they were as big as the biggest trees in his world. And he was certain that he wasn't walking on actual ground. It was too smooth and polished. It was probably a huge leaf he had been walking on top of for close to ten minutes.

Walking in the forest made him feel like an ant. Will his world look like that one day?! Will humans still have a place in the world at that point?! Should he consider looking for a way to increase his size???

He chose walking because flying would possibly expose him to danger. He was also saving the little mental energy he had for emergencies. On the bright side, he could feel his mana recovering faster than it would have back home.

Unfortunately, his body's condition didn't seem to be improving at all. He still felt like he had been run through by a train.

Even if all his mana recovered. He'd probably not even stand a chance against creatures like the boar he easily defeated before...

"Hey, is your whole world like this? Are all the trees here unreasonably huge? And why is it so silent?" Muku asked the dragon while continuing the journey.

The surroundings were so silent it was unnerving. So, he felt like he had to try and make conversation. Not to mention that he pretty much always had someone to talk to before. Hope would never miss a chance to talk to him. Which he had gotten used to. He was already missing her and the others.

{No, not really. Areas like this are usually where you'd find the rulers of the area. There are areas with smaller trees for the rest of us. As for the silence, I'm also having trouble figuring out why that is. The forest is never silent. Not to mention that you've been walking for quite a while but you still haven't been attacked. To be honest, this place creeps me out. I'm not even sure if we're even in the forest despite it looking like it} The dragon replied.

The more Muku walked. The more confused it got. It almost felt like they were the only two beings in the place. Which made no sense. After all, the forest, like it said is always noisy from beasts killing each other. Whether day or night. There'd always be chaos everywhere.

Maybe they weren't in the Beast Forest after all. This raised the question... Where tf were they then?!...