

Few Wives 351

Chapter 351: Hidden boss

"Huh?..." Muku tried to play dumb.

Though he was sweating buckets inside, his mind was chaotic and his heart was about to jump out of his chest.

"Hmm. You act like you don't understand but your heart... It's not cooperating with you. I even suspect that it would have jumped out of your chest if I weren't on top of you... Well, whatever, let me repeat it so you don't doubt what you heard. I asked when you're going to tell me about how you and Jade slept together yesterday..." Emily explained to Muku calmly.

At this point, her hands had wrapped around him. So escaping wasn't an option unless he did something a bit drastic.

Muku swore that her eyes were glowing a bit in that moment. But it wasn't the mesmerising kind of glow, it was a creepy and dangerous glow. The kind of glow one would see in a vicious viper ready to attack at any moment if you made the wrong move.

Honestly, despite being way stronger than her. To the point that Emily probably couldn't even give him a bruise with her strongest attack... Muku still felt scared for his life. It was a weird feeling and he honestly didn't know how to proceed.

Emily had reminded him again why she was the group's secret boss. She might be cool, calm and collected in normal times, but when she's pushed, she is practically a demon.

Just the invisible pressure she released at such times was enough to put everyone on notice.

Especially those with emotional attachments to her like Muku.

In fact, it was because there were emotional attachments that Muku was so affected.

Anyway, the point was, Muku's brain short-circuited. And so, instead of coming up with a lie, he chose to be one hundred percent truthful instead.

"I ah... You see, it wasn't planned. We really went to talk about a serious matter. And the matter might even concern the whole world's existence. But I can't say anything without Jade's input. So for now, just know that we got derailed at some point and my bloodline activated on its own which led to what happened. I'm sorry for not telling you, but Jade felt that it was better to speak about it after everything calmed down. Please don't tell the others, I'm willing to do anything..." Muku told her everything he could.

What Emily said after, made him regret saying anything though.

"Oh... So something really happened huh? It was just an unlikely guess, but who knew? Well, now I don't know how to proceed..." Emily spoke more to herself than to Muku while still lying on top of him.

Muku's eyes widened in surprise. He couldn't believe that the sweet Emily actually manipulated him into telling her everything... Since when was he so mentally weak?!

No, it wasn't him. It was Emily. There was definitely more to the girl than he thought.

Jade had said many times that Emily wasn't as angelic as everyone thought, and he didn't believe it. The others probably didn't either.

But now... Maybe he should have listened to Jade. Sure, Emily wasn't bad and she was usually fine. But it seemed that there was a dark side to her and she knew exactly how to control it.

That wasn't something everyone could say. Knowing that you have a dark side and having it under control are two totally different things.

"..." Muku just looked at the girl stuck in her own thoughts quietly.

He studied her face as if he were seeing her for the first time. And honestly, he might as well have been seeing her for the first time. At least that side of hers...

"What? What are you looking at me like that?... You know what, I think I know why. So don't answer that. Instead, let's talk about how we're going to proceed. While I'm definitely angry that another person beat me to it. Being angry won't fix anything. And like you said, which I believe, what happened was sudden. So I'll just blame my bad luck. I could jump you right now and get it over with. I mean, you did offer to do anything to buy my silence right? Plus, I doubt you'd hate doing something like that. But no, I won't do that. I don't want my first time to be so mundane even if I risk being overtaken by the others. I want it to be as natural as possible... Anyway, don't worry about it. I don't want anything from you which is too bad. All I want is for you to keep that promise you made back then. You will sleep with me from time to time. I would prefer it if it were every day, but I'd probably get poisoned if I did that... With that said, Jade isn't going to have it as easily. In fact, I'm going to see her right now" Emily practically spoke to herself.

Then without waiting for Muku to say anything, she got up and left the room.

Muku just looked at her do whatever she wanted with a blank mind.

The best he could do was nod at times when Emily spoke on and on.

It was only after she left that his brain began functioning properly again.

{Sigh... It really doesn't take long for things to become complicated here huh?... I kinda miss the simplicity of the Beast World now, all I had to worry about was killing and avoiding getting killed... Nuuuuuuh, I'd choose this over that life. They might be complicated but there's no point in living without them. Now I just need to figure out what to say when the others find out since they always do after the first one does... Sigh...} Muku thought to himself without moving from the bed.

{Pfft. That's what you get for being so lustful instead of choosing one girl}.

Suddenly an unwanted comment following a sneaker sounded in Muku's head.

{Raya you brat! Get out of my head!} Muku shouted in his head.

He had forgotten that if he didn't specifically try to hide his thoughts from Raya, she would hear them.

And the brat not only heard them, she even made such an angering comment.

What did she mean by that?! Was it his fault that all the girls were pretty and wanted him?...

Sure he could resist but why should he resist such blessings when they came his way... Okay, so maybe Raya had a point, but still how dare she say it!

{Anyway brat. Tell me about what you found at the battle site. Was the creature completely erased from existence or what?} Muku moved on to a serious issue before Raya began really trying to anger him since that wasn't above her means.

{Oh that. Yeah, it's completely gone. As for whether that means it's dead or it left I'm not sure. But I found no trails or residuals left behind. All that's left there is a big lake more than ten kilometres wide. The water in it is simply divine. We should go check it out sometime} Raya replied nonchalantly...

{While I don't like how you put it so ominously. At the very least, it's no longer a problem for now. And that's good enough for me. As for the lake... Sure, we'll go there. It could be a good relaxation method after training...} Muku replied.

{Great! Oh and can you tell me why you didn't use your erasing gaze? I mean, isn't it all-powerful and whatnot? Even if it couldn't completely erase the creature in a little time. It should have done significant damage if used properly right? Like attacking the part with that black orb...} Raya proceeded to ask something which was bothering her a bit.

{Umm, don't laugh after hearing this but... I haven't used it for two years because of the whole can't use it in the Beast World thing, so I kinda forgot that I even have it. I actually only remembered it right now after you mentioned it} Muku explained with some embarrassment in his mental voice.

{Ha! Hahahahahaha} Raya laughed so hard that Muku almost cut the conversation short on the spot.

{Tsk. Stop laughing. It's totally understandable to forget after such a long time. Plus if you're so smart, then why didn't you tell me about it huh? Wouldn't that have saved your power too?} Muku defended himself.

{Hahah... Oh. Actually, I remembered it while taking a swim in the new lake so...} Raya replied while also feeling a bit embarrassed.

{You brat! You aren't any better yet you dare laugh?! You know what, whatever. It has passed. Just know that if that thing is still alive somehow and shows itself in front of me again, I'll definitely kill it easily. Hmph!} Muku continued.

{Yeah, yeah, whatever. If you're done there. Can we switch back? I don't like being surrounded by people like this. It reminds me of my "siblings" who tried to eat me soon after birth those bastards!} Raya spoke in a hateful tone as she remembered her earlier days.

{Fine... Is what I'd have said if you didn't laugh. But you did, so bye!} Muku replied then before Raya could react, he left her room and the mansion. It didn't take long for him to be out of range for her position-switching teleportation.

{Bastard!} Raya cursed.

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In Muku's room...

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Emily asked Jade.

"..." Jade remained quiet.

"I just asked how your first time was, that's all. Why do you look like I asked you why you betrayed me?" Emily continued...

"!?"

Chapter 352: Best friend...

"Oh and don't try to lie to me. I already know everything" Just when Jade was about to try her best to lie, Emily spoke.

Jade studied Emily for a few seconds then a cold chill went down her spine. She realised that Emily was being truthful. After all, she could tell when Emily was lying.

"..." And so, she was again left speechless.

Internally she was cursing Muku, since there was obviously no other way Emily found out. He either told her or let something slip. That bastard! After she trusted him too!

"Don't blame Muku. I originally got suspicious due to the amount of time it took the two of you to "fix" your bloodline. But after hearing his explanation, I guess I was mostly appeased. But then I came to see you... One look at you and I knew something was different. The way you would wince every time you moved in your sleep didn't help either. Then with a little acting, I got Muku to confess. I had to review a side of myself which I hoped he never saw but oh well. At least I got what I wanted. Even if I wish I didn't. Anyway, tell me, how was it?" Emily answered the question that Jade didn't focus on.

She was walking toward Jade as she explained. By the time she finished, she was sitting beside Jade on the bed.

Jade had been so taken by what Emily was saying that she was startled a bit when she realised that Emily was now sitting next to her.

Her thoughts were more chaotic than ever. She was kicking herself for thinking that not saying anything would blind this demon named Emily.

And wasn't Muku too weak to be tricked like that?... Then again he was caught off guard, but still...

"Tsk. Fine, keep it to yourself. However, if you want to keep this to yourself, then you have to tell me about the other matter Muku won't tell me. What does he mean that it affects our very lives? He said that without your consent he won't tell me anything, so I figured, I might as well ask you... What's going on? Why won't you tell me? It's been years since this whole thing began. Aren't we supposed to be best friends?" Unexpectedly, Emily switched topics.

The switch caught Jade off guard again. She had to admit that Emily was on a roll of catching her off guard that day.

However, she quickly got the underlying meaning behind Emily's words. And it made her smile.

It turned out that Emily didn't actually care about her sleeping with Muku... Well, she did. But more than that, she cared more about Jade's well-being.

She had been worried about Jade for years but didn't pressure her into saying anything. And now, the whole fiasco wasn't about what Jade did with Muku, it was ultimately about learning what was wrong with Jade.

A beautiful smile appeared on Jade's face so suddenly that Emily was caught off guard for a change. In the next second, Emily found herself getting hugged by Jade and honestly, it felt weird.

One had to know that Jade had tomboyish qualities in some instances. Because of this, while she and Emily were best friends who shared almost everything and were as close as they could be... Jade rarely hugged Emily. In fact, Emily could count the times Jade hugged her in just one hand.

That's how much Jade disliked hugging someone.

Hell, even those times were because Emily insisted otherwise this hug would have been the first between them. Which was obviously unheard of among female friends.

"Thank you Emily for being a great friend. You've always been there for me since day one, even when I tried to push you away at the start, you were there. And now, even when I practically snubbed you for two years and did something I shouldn't have, you're still here. I could never wish for a better friend than you... No, you're not a friend. You're a sister..." Jade suddenly poured out her heart to Emily.

And again Emily was caught off guard. It seems it was her turn to be caught off guard...

"Umm yeah..." Emily replied awkwardly not knowing what to say.

All the authoritative aura she radiated before was wiped away. All that was left was the usual Emily and she was at a loss for words.... Jade had never done anything like that. This was too out of character for her friend.

"If I remember correctly, I think I said that I wanted to tell Muku first about what was happening with me. And since I have done that. I guess nothing is stopping me from telling you. So buckle up for you're in for a ride. And there's no backing out now" Jade let go of Emily and spoke while looking her in the eyes as if she was daring her to listen.

Emily gulped down some saliva nervously but didn't back down. She had waited for that day for too long. There was no way she was going to back out now. Even if she regrets knowing after it's said and done, she didn't care. She had to know what was wrong with Jade.

And so, Jade proceeded to tell Emily everything she had told Muku before. All the contents in her dreamy visions. The golden ape, the destroyed village, the tiger lady and the bleeding sky along with everything else.

"Well... That is a lot to digest. No wonder you kept it to yourself" Emily commented as she felt a headache coming on.

She didn't care about the fact that Jade and Muku were likely time travellers. Their group was already super weird, so what was a little more weirdness?

What stood out to Emily the most was the shining white figure and the bleeding sky.

The former didn't seem like something which needed to be paid too much attention to. After all, that being was obviously on their side. It was the bleeding sky she cared about... Now that sounded like a disaster waiting to happen.

She actually felt afraid from just the description Jade gave her without seeing it herself. Which wasn't something easy to do after everything she had seen and experienced.

But at the same time, she felt like that didn't affect them in any way for the meantime. Which was the only reason she was able to stay calm.

Then there was another matter she almost forgot to include. And that was the likelihood that Jade is going to have to fight the golden ape if it showed up... And again, she had a weird feeling that it would and it won't be an easy matter to take care of.

Of course, she would fight beside Jade until the very end... Just that she wasn't sure they would stand a chance against a being which massacred beings that could rip up space with physical attacks alone...

But whatever, that's what she gets for being nosy. Now all she can do is hope that the creature doesn't show up before they are ready...

"Yeah..." Jade replied simply while still studying Emily's expression.

"What?" Emily noticed it and asked.

"Nothing" Jade replied as she looked away.

"Oh... You thought I'd look at you differently because you're supposedly a person from a time so far back that it's forgotten? You really think too little of me huh?" Emily immediately understood what was happening with Jade and called her out.

"Yeah, you're right. I'm sorry. I guess I was worried that this would change our friendship in some way..." Jade replied awkwardly.

"What do you mean? Of course, it changed our friendship. Now I know that fate wanted us to be friends so bad that it dragged you here from the past to meet me..." Emily replied jokingly.

"Hehe. And they say I'm the one who's proud between us" Jade laughed as she called Emily out.

"Well, it's not my fault that you choose to show them your pride while I hide mine. Anyway, now some things which have been happening to you the past two years make sense..." Emily replied.

"Things like what?" Jade asked. The only thing she could think of was going berserk.

"Idiot, do you think it's normal for you to wake up one day knowing how to fly with your energy without even thinking about it before?" Emily replied while hitting Jade's head.

"Ow! I thought that was just part of my cool bloodline abilities?" Jade replied.

"Well in a sense yes, but I think that there are more dreams and visions which you have forgotten. And in one of those dreams, you got the information on how to fly using Beast Aura or Mana. You just forgot everything else about it..." Emily explained.

"Huh... That can't be true can it?" Jade asked.

"Why can't it be? Haven't you ever had dreams in which you remember a certain part but forget everything else? In fact, from how the dreams and visions are so broken, I can confidently say that you have probably forgotten more than you remember..." Emily continued.

And Jade was reminded how everyone from their old class was very smart. After all, it was the school's genius class. In normal cases, Muku usually beats them to realisations so like many girls when their men are around, they turn off their brains.

Emily probably only turned it on because the matter involved her best friend and Muku wasn't around to think things through in her stead.

"Well... I guess you have a point. But if that's the case. How do I recover the memories then?" Jade asked Emily since from the girl's smile it seemed like she had a way to get them back.

"One word... Mindscape" Emily replied with a bright smile...

Chapter 353: Annoyance...

"Huh?... I don't get it" Jade replied.

"Sigh, you really can be dumb sometimes huh?... Anyway, did you forget how Freya said that she can remember everything she has ever seen or experienced due to her mindscape? Like she literally can browse through her memories from the very first one as a baby to now... Which means, if you learn how to manipulate your own mindscape then you'll obviously be able to remember everything..." Emily explained.

"Oh... You're right!... But we haven't been able to make progress in that for two years..." Jade commented.

"Yeah, if we were alone. Then maybe we really wouldn't have been able to do it anytime soon. However, we aren't alone. Muku is back and he has mastered his own mindscape. That means help us with ours..." Emily replied.

"Wait, he can?!" Jade exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes. He already promised to teach us when you were unconscious. But why the big reaction?" Emily asked.

"And you say I can be dumb sometimes. Don't you get such an obvious thing?... In my visions, he's there too. Which means that at least for those visions, he should have memories of them..." Jade explained and even got back at Emily for calling her dumb.

"Oh, you're right. I wonder how I missed that" Emily replied without being offended.

After all, she had started the insults. And as best friends, it was only natural to insult each other without catching feelings.

"Let's go talk to him right n... Agh!" Jade spoke as she tried to get off the bed.

In her excitement, she forgot that her lower region hadn't recovered from hers and Muku's intense activities yet.

Honestly, if it were Emily instead of her who had a stronger body, then Emily would have been writhing in pain all over the place instead of forgetting about it.

This was because Muku had gone a bit too extreme at the end. And if it wasn't for the body upgrade she got, Jade might have gotten ruined.

"Sigh... Why don't we call him instead? I see you also received your phone..." Emily didn't know how to react to the situation so she chose to ignore it.

While she said that she was okay with it... There was no way she would be completely okay with it. She was trying her best to occupy her mind with other things. As they say, out of sight, out of mind.

"Oh... Right. Let's do that" Jade replied in embarrassment as she lay back down.

She found herself internally cursing Muku again. After all, if he had stopped after the first time and just given her that fruit. Then everything would have been fine. But nooo, the bastard just had to do it again. And mercilessly too.

While she thought those things, she took out her phone and contacted Muku. Emily didn't have her phone on her so...

"Hello?" Muku's voice sounded from the phone as soon as the call connected.

"H-hey..." Jade replied nervously.

She suddenly remembered that they hadn't spoken to each other since the deed. And the memories of what they did weren't helping at all.

"I'm good, you?" Muku replied.

"I'm okay too... Where are you right now?" Jade spoke as she tried to keep herself together.

"I'm scouting the parameter for our future activities... What's up? Do you need me for something?" Muku replied.

"Oh... No, no. It's nothing important, keep doing what you're doing. We'll talk when you're ba... Hey!" Jade was replying like a meek little wife when Emily suddenly snatched the phone from her.

More of, she grabbed Jade's hand and pulled it away. Which obviously pulled the phone away from Jade's ear.

"Shut up! Did hearing his voice make you completely forget what we're doing here? Why are you acting like a shy bride all of a sudden?" Emily rebuked Jade with a disdainful look on her face.

But Jade could tell that she was more jealous than anything, so she didn't make the situation worse by saying anything. It was better to let Emily vent since the blow she had dealt her was a very big one and she knew it clearly.

"S... sorry" Jade apologised.

"Tsk. Whatever, let me talk to him... Now listen here Muku, we have made an important discovery and need you back here as soon as possible..." Emily couldn't continue rebuking Jade after she apologised, so she switched her target to Muku.

"Oh... Okay. I'm almost done here, so I'll be back there soon" Muku replied in a slightly flustered voice.

He could tell that despite saying that she was okay with what happened, Emily was definitely very annoyed by it. She was trying her best to control herself, but she couldn't completely keep herself in check when triggered.

Neither Muku nor Jade minded though, after all, it was much better than the alternative of her making a scene.

Which could range from telling everyone, burning them or burning the whole mansion down. So yeah, Emily's current reaction was the best they could hope for.

"Whatever" Emily replied then cut the call but snatched the phone from Jade's hand which cut its power source.

Jade let her do so quietly. She was experienced in how to act when Emily was pissed off at her. She was a repeat offender after all. Maybe not to this extent, but she has definitely done some angering things before.

"Call me when he comes back. I think I need to cool down for a bit..." Emily spoke then left before Jade could say anything.

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Somewhere close by....

"Well... I'd better finish up and go back before she gets madder" Muku spoke to himself while looking at the huge lake in front of him.

It was the last thing he wanted to check... Raya had checked it before, but he wanted to make sure. After all, the dragon girl was still a child despite her intelligence.

And no matter how smart children were, they could hardly be called dependable.

For that reason, Muku came to check for any signs of Legion on his own.

Instead of just using his passive mana sense and sight, he decided to be proactive in the search. That way he wouldn't miss any signs.

And so, his active mana sense covered the whole lake and began a thorough search. Just like Raya said, there were no traces of Legion left... Which honestly was for the best.

He heard what the residual energy from the Tactoa guns did after all.

Anyway, just as he was about to call it a day, he noticed something. It was barely there and almost completely gone... That something was a thin path made in the lack.

He tried to follow it with his mana sense but couldn't reach the end. However, the process made him discover that it was created through corrosion and just happened to be as big as Legion's weird black orb...

"Fuck... It survived" Muku instantly came to a conclusion.

However, he didn't pursue the matter any further, after all, it had been quite a while since the battle. So the chance of finding Legion through the hole was minimal at best.

The path has long run cold...

All he could do from now on was keep an eye out for the creature if it decided to come back for round two.

And he wasn't afraid of it at all. He had been caught off guard the first time around which he won't let happen a second time.

Plus he had promised Emily that he would be back soon. And he couldn't keep the active volcano waiting for too long lest it exploded...

And so, Muku flew away from the clear lake after giving it one last look.

He couldn't help but appreciate its beauty because he had left. After all, it looked as majestic as Raya said it was.

He was thinking of bringing the mansion close to it actually.

It's not like high rank beasts had any real attachment to water sources. So there was no risk of them being attracted by it.

The thing which could have attracted them was the battle. And that was long over, so the situation was pretty much safe now.

As for the lower rank beasts which might show up... Well, that would just be a case of food delivering itself to their doorstep if they felt like catching it.

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Back at the mansion...

"What the hell?!" Emily suddenly exclaimed in surprise and annoyance when Audrey came to wake them up.

It wasn't the part of being woken up which sucked. It was the part of, finding out that instead of sleeping next to Muku, she was sleeping next to Raya instead.

On top of that, they weren't the only two on the bed. It seemed that the other girls had come to join in at some point.

What the hell was going on?!

"Language!" Audrey gently rebuked her.

"I'm sorry, but where's Big Brother?" Hope apologised for her language and then asked Audrey about Muku.

She wasn't the only one who wanted to know that though. The others also looked at Audrey.

"I have no idea" Audrey replied with a wry smile on her face.

She was also surprised by his absence in the room when she came...

The group all turned to Raya instantly.

"What?" Raya asked dumbly.

Chapter 354: Hope's love

A while later...

Raya powerlessly lay on the bed with tears running down her cheeks like someone who had been defiled.

And honestly, she felt like she had been defiled.

She was simply acting dumb so that she could fish for some benefits. Unfortunately, the girls didn't act according to the script.

Instead of trying to bootlick her. They instead chose to attack.

They all attacked her before she knew what was going on.

And an unwanted tickle party with her being the unlucky soul who could only laugh even though they wanted it to stop began.

Like what kind of people were they?! Even if they didn't want to bootlick her, they could at least talk it out right? Why immediately go on the attack like it was the most natural thing in the world?

Were they bullying her because she was still young? Yes, that had to be it. They were all ageist!

"Are you going to tell us now or do you want a second round?" Audrey asked while holding her hands out at Raya threateningly.

"No! Please don't. You'll kill me from laughter. I'll talk... He switched places with me a while back because he had matters to take care of. It was because he didn't want to wake anyone up. And he's already coming back. Maybe in two minutes he'll be here. You can talk to him about the rest... Bye!" Quickly sold Muku out.

She was planning on throwing him under the bus anyway, so there was no problem with that.

And now with the "incentive" she was more than willing to do it. And she didn't even tell them about what Muku did before going out. So he couldn't find any fault with her for what she did.

Fearing that they might still tickle her anyway. Raya didn't stick around after telling them what they wanted to know.

"!!!!"...

The girls were all alarmed by how she disappeared.

None of them had ever seen her do that before, after all.

However, they had seen too many crazy things to be too surprised. And it didn't take them long to figure out what was happening...

"So that's the space element..." Layla commented in a calm but intrigued voice.

"Yes it's amazing but what are you all doing here?" Hope who still hadn't forgiven their presence there asked them in an annoyed voice.

"...We know you're his sister but you must understand that the rest of us are his love interests. And it's only a matter of time before that's confirmed. So our presence here makes sense. If anything, it's your presence which is problematic. Sure, he's your brother and all. But you're now a nineteen-year-old girl. A young woman in fact. So don't you think it's a little inappropriate for you to be so physically close to him? Are you sure you see him as a brother?" Layla replied calmly after the others remained quiet.

Audrey didn't have to say anything since she wasn't part of the people being addressed. On the other hand, Chloe and Freya weren't usually the confrontational type so they were at a loss for what to say. The two girls felt that maybe they really had been too rushed in going there...

Layla on the other hand, was as straightforward and unrepentant as Jade. She just didn't speak unnecessarily. And since it was necessary to speak at that time... Of course, she spoke.

"Layla!" Audrey tried to rebuke Layla but the girl didn't wait for her to finish.

"No Mom. Someone had to say it. She needs to hear it and properly think about it. After all, what if she misunderstood what she thought and felt? Isn't that just a recipe for regret?" Layla defended herself.

"... Oh so that's how you see it. If that's the case. Let me make it clear then. Never since the first day I saw him have I thought of him as a love interest. Even before it was official, I always looked at him like the brother I never had. So your worries are unfounded. I only act the way I do because I love him so much. And I don't think age should get in the way of one's expression of their love. As long as my thoughts are pure, what does it matter how it might look to others? In any case, I appreciate what you said since I can tell you said it for my own good. But there's no misunderstanding. I know what I feel clearly... Now if you'll excuse me. I have something to take care of" Hope stayed silent for a few seconds before she explained herself as clearly as she could.

She didn't stick around after that. And none tried to stop her.

"...."

Layla quietly looked at her walking away without even blinking but didn't say anything....

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A while later in Hope's room...

The girl could be seen lying on her bed looking at the roof seemingly stuck in thought.

She didn't do anything else since she left the others.

At this time she was reliving all the memories she shared with her brother in her head.

Interestingly enough, while she was usually very forgetful, she remembered every memory related to Muku.

The realisation of this made her chuckle to herself. Then she began thinking about what Layla said to her...

"Impossible. I'd never think of my brother like that. Layla was just overthinking things" Hope spoke to herself in a low voice.

However, unlike the first time when she addressed Layla. Her confidence seemed not to be as steady.

It wasn't by much, but it was significant enough. And that worried Hope.

She had just woken up, but she began feeling sleepy again. And soon enough, she fell asleep again.

It seemed she had mentally drained herself just from thinking about Muku and what Layla said...

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In Muku's room...

Muku, Jade and Emily all sat on the bed looking at each other.

Jade still hadn't moved from that one spot for obvious reasons. She just sat up.

Muku wanted to call Hope over so that she could heal her, but he found her sleeping in her room.

So he let her sleep, it's not like Jade was in a rush to go anywhere anyway. And she didn't even feel pain as long as she didn't move her legs.

He had also addressed the others about his sudden disappearance and eased their worries, so the trio didn't have to worry about being disturbed.

As far as the others knew, Muku and Emily were just keeping Jade company as she healed from a bloodline backlash.

None of them had a bloodline so they pretty much believed anything they were told about bloodlines.

And even if they had one, bloodlines behaved differently, so no one would suspect that they were being lied to...

"So... What did you want to talk about?" Muku asked before things got awkward.

"You have complete control of your mindscape, right?" Emily asked seriously.

"Yes?" Muku replied.

"So have you gone through your earliest memories yet?" Emily continued.

"Yes?... Oh... Jade told you?" Muku immediately caught on.

"Yes... Now tell us" Emily replied in a rather rude tone.

"Okay. Unfortunately, unlike Freya, I can't access my memories from the very first one. All I can remember starts from, I think when I was five years old, standing in front of a random house. Then I was taken to an orphanage after the family found me... So yeah, I can't tell you anything related to Jade's visions. I think I have a mental block on me or something" Muku explained everything without taking notice of Emily's rude tone.

He would be pissed off too if the person he loves slept with his friend. Even if he knew that it would happen at some point.

And honestly, as a dude, he'd be more than pissed. He might go berserk even. Yeah, it was a double standard on his part, but girls have a lot of those so he could have one at least right?

"Oh... That sucks" Emily replied in a calmer and warmer voice.

This was likely because of what Muku said. While he said it nonchalantly, anyone with a brain would understand how tough life would be for a five-year-old child without any memories on top of that.

"Wait... The family didn't keep you?" Jade exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes? What's surprising about that? If anything, it's the normal reaction after finding a random kid on your front door. Your case was quite lucky honestly. And don't try to apply movie logic to real life. Not many people would keep a random child who just appeared out of nowhere. I'm surprised your mother didn't drop you when your hair and eyes changed colour to match hers honestly. I know I would have" Muku explained logic to the girls with a little joke at the end as not to make the situation too grey.

And he truly believed what he said about it being normal that he was sent to an orphanage. He didn't hold any grudges against the family who did it.

In fact, it was more than what others would have done. Some people might have chased him away and immediately moved on or even trafficked him.

So yeah, there was nothing to feel bad about. His earlier years might have been lonely, but they weren't miserable or bad.

"Yes... But still, who does that to a child" Emily replied with tears coming out of her eyes.

Yup, that's right, hearing Muku's story had completely melted her heart. She instantly forgot the negative feelings she had for him and Jade.

Before Muku knew it, she was already in his arms crying her eyes out like she was the one who went through the tough times.

Muku and Jade looked at each other with wry smiles on their faces. Once again they were reminded that despite everything, Emily was just as nice as she had always been.

Like Muku didn't even try but he still won her over... Only Emily was that easy to melt!

Chapter 355: Now die!

"There there. It's okay now. It's in the past. Look at me now. Everything worked out great" Muku found himself consoling Emily because of something he went through.

If he wasn't already used to the weird girl-logic, his brain would have short-circuited long ago. Now he just went along with it without thinking too deeply about it.

.....

A while later...

"Now that everyone has calmed down, can we continue?" Jade spoke while looking at Emily which made the girl look away in embarrassment.

After all, even she knew that the way she acted was a bit dramatic to say the very least.

"Y...yeah" Emily replied as she tried to pull herself together.

"From your words, I can't help but feel that you have an idea..." Muku commented while looking at Jade.

"Am I that easy for you to read? Anyway, whatever, I do have something in mind. And it's pretty simple really. We'll just go with the initial plan Emily thought of" Jade spoke.

"And that is?..." Emily who was still a bit disorientated couldn't keep up so she asked for clarification.

"Me mastering my mindscape of course" Jade replied.

"But..." Emily wanted to say something but Jade stopped her by raising her head.

"Let me finish. I know you wanted to say that if Muku's memories are locked, one should be as well so I also won't remember anything. But I don't think that's the case. Even if they were locked initially, they are definitely unlocked now. Otherwise, I wouldn't have gotten those dreamy visions. I could be wrong, but we have nothing to lose right?" Jade explained herself.

Looks of clarity appeared on Muku and Emily's faces as they caught on to what Jade was saying.

"That's right! Just because I failed to recover anything doesn't mean you'll fail too" Muku agreed.

"Yeah. That makes sense, and from what you told me. Muku's background seems to be higher than yours, which would explain quite a few things. So his having a tighter lock than yours makes sense. Plus you were just a baby, you probably only saw the bare minimum of what was going on for various reasons. With being mostly asleep during that as one of the reasons" Emily agreed too.

"Great! With that finalised, let's get it done as soon as possible. We'll start tomorrow after Hope heals you" Muku spoke in high spirits.

"Why can't we start now?" Jade asked.

"Because I'm going to teach the whole group at once. It would be unfair to give you a head start. Besides, the process takes time which I don't have right now. I haven't properly spoken to the others since my return so yeah..." Muku explained.

"Oh, that's right. I shouldn't be so selfish. You can go to them. I'll try to feel out my new power for now" Jade agreed with what Muku said after thinking about it.

"Yeah, you should go. I'll keep her company" Emily spoke with a sweet smile on her face.

It looked like she had really gotten over what had happened....

Muku smiled in relief at that then left after nodding at them goodbye.

.....

After Muku left...

"You know you're free to go do your thing right? I'm fine here on my own" Jade addressed Emily with a tone full of gratitude.

"No no. I promised him I'd take care of you. And that's what I'll do. Even if we don't include him. As your best friend, it's my duty to take care of you, right?" Emily replied with a kind smile on her face.

Something about the smile didn't seem right to Jade but she ignored it as Emily's sweet words had completely disarmed her.

"Aww Em. You're the bestest friend anyone could ever ask for...Ahh! What was that for?" Jade suddenly screamed in pain while expressing her gratitude.

But the suddenness of what happened was man-made...

"Oh sorry. I just got curious whether it still hurts" Emily replied as she took back her hand from Jade's upper leg region she had poked.

She hadn't poked a certain area but poked close enough to it to make Jade feel pain.

"Oh, if that's the case I guess I can let it g... Ahh! What the hell Emily?!" Jade was again poked where it hurt while speaking.

"Hehe. Did you really think I'd let you go just like that? What kind of best friend would I be if I didn't settle scores with you? So what if you have an ancient lineage or whatever. Did you forget that I'm immortal? And immortals are way cooler than time travellers. So you're nothing special. Now die!" Emily replied evilly and then began poking Jade left and right.

Despite how it looked, it wasn't Emily being petty trying to express hidden feelings.

She had noticed Jade's eyes dim a bit the moment Muku left. It was almost like after what happened, Muku had become the only "real" person in her eyes who could completely understand her.

She tried to fight off the feeling but she didn't completely succeed.

And Emily who has long mastered the art of reading Jade was instantly angered. How dare the brat think so little of their friendship?

Sure, the decrease in feelings wasn't much but there shouldn't have been any decrease at all!

And so, both as punishment and reminder that she was there and will always be there for Jade, Emily began poking her furiously.

The pokes were controlled so they didn't cause too much pain. And even if she went all out, Jade had experienced way worse in any random battle she got hurt so Emily was holding back due to her soft heart instead of necessity.

And so, the duo's scuffle ensued. Jade didn't dare bring abilities into it since that would lead to getting burned.

Currently, she wasn't any stronger than Emily so the chance of getting charred was quite high.

In fact, Emily was now a little stronger since Jade was mostly out of commission because of her berserk episodes. So instead of making the situation worse for herself, she decided to take the laser evil with the hope that it would end soon.

What she failed to notice was that the faint alienation she had been feeling toward Emily had disappeared.

Emily noticed though. And a bright smile appeared on her face.

But that didn't stop her from poking Jade though.

In fact, the situation became even scarier for Jade. After all, the current Emily looked like a psychopath who was purely causing her pain for the joy of it...

.....

Location: Mansion Backyard...

Audrey was sitting under a random tree among the few they had added.

She was busy meditating when suddenly...

"Ahh!" She screamed in surprise but didn't do anything else.

A smile appeared on her face instead. That's because she suddenly felt two arms hug her from behind.

She screamed purely out of surprise since she didn't feel anything until the hands touched her.

But she immediately realised who it was, hence the inaction and smile.

"How I missed this waist, this body, this hair, this scent... How I missed you, my lovely wife. Audrey" A gentle and loving voice sounded in Audrey's ears and her face instantly turned red.

Her first thought after that was to run away in embarrassment but the moment she moved, the hands around her dragged her closer to the strong body behind her.

"Honey. I know you're embarrassed but don't you think it would break my poor heart if you ran away after I expressed my feelings to you? And it's not even my fault too. You're the one who's just too hot. I just couldn't stop myself from confessing on the spot! And yet. Sigh, maybe I was too rushed" Muku spoke into her ear again. This time his tone was a sad one.

"No no. You were not wrong. I'm sorry for trying to rush away. As you said I let my shyness overpower me. I'm really sorry, I didn't mean to" Audrey found herself sincerely apologising even though she knew Muku was just teasing her and pretending to be sad.

"Well, I'll forgive you if you do me one little favour" Muku replied.

"O... okay. What do I need to do? I'll do anything for you" Audrey replied in a shy voice as crazy and scandalous ideas swirled around in her head.

"Good. But don't worry. It's nothing too much, I just need you to turn around and give me a passionate kiss. We'll see how things develop from there..." Muku spoke gently in her ear again.

Audrey's blush intensified as she thought of how wrong she was. She had thought of something way more extreme than what Muku requested. And the worst part was how she was more than willing to do it. Hell, she was even looking forward to it like a pervert.

"O.. okay" Audrey replied then turned around.

Her focus was on Muku's lips from the moment she turned around.

Without looking at anything else, she closed her eyes and kissed him deeply.

And so, the battle of two tongues which had been longing for each other for ages began.

The duo suddenly disappeared to the disappointment of the few spectators spying from the mansion...

Chapter 356: Tainted innocence

In Audrey's room...

Muku and Audrey who disappeared outside could be seen rolling on the bed kissing each other passionately.

Audrey's emotions had long conquered her embarrassment. She loved, missed and desired Muku too much to let embarrassment get the better of her.

....

Two hours later...

The duo was now breathing heavily in each other's arms.

"You have no idea how much I missed that" Audrey who was feeling more relaxed spoke with a satisfied look on her red face.

"Trust me, I do. I missed this just as much as you" Muku replied looking equally satisfied.

Sure he could easily go for days at that point but that would without a doubt kill Audrey. So he couldn't overindulge. He didn't want another case like Jade after all.

"Really now?" Audrey asked with a sexy smile on her face.

"Yes of course. Last time we were separated soon after. So now we have to make up for all the lost time," Muku replied straightforwardly.

"Oh my! What a lustful beast you are! And all this after doing it with Jade until she couldn't walk!" Audrey replied with words that practically exploded in Muku's ears.

"How did you know about that?" Muku asked in surprise.

He wasn't bothered that she knew since he was going to tell her anyway. But he wanted to know how she knew so that he could cover it up before the others found out too. He wasn't ready for that chaos.

"Oh right. I never got the chance to tell you. It turns out I can tell whether a person is a virgin or not from the smell of their blood. I don't know how or why but a virgin's blood smells a bit better than a non-virgin's blood. Oh and since reaching R4 I can smell blood even when a person isn't injured. So I knew from the very moment I stepped into the room Jade was in. Though actually I already suspected something was up when you came down. I was still surprised though. I didn't think you'd be so quick to act, and on Jade too. I was sure it was going to be Emily or Layla after that episode when we visited the Beast World" Audrey explained.

"Sigh. People are really developing abilities left and right now huh? Like what kind of ability is that?!" Muku commented while giving Audrey an odd look.

"Hey! Don't look at me like that. It's not like that's the only thing I can smell. In fact, it's one of the most useless things I can smell. I can actually smell weaknesses in the body's structure. Those get fixed as a person gets stronger, but for now, it's still useful. And I can also smell people's moods. I can tell when someone is about to attack among other things. You'd be surprised by how much information blood relays when you know how to decode it. Sigh, now I sound like a psycho" Audrey explained.

"Oh... Well, that is quite impressive. I'm not gonna lie. I'm kinda jealous. After all, the rest of us can't ever be completely sure no matter what. We might fall for feints and whatnot. Anyway, don't tell me more. I want to find out on my own by observing you. I mean, I'm always checking that butt out every

chance I get so I might as well do something productive at the same time right?" Muku replied in a genuinely impressed voice despite the pervy comments at the end.

"You pervert!" Audrey replied in an embarrassed voice.

Which unfortunately for her was the last straw for Muku who jumped her immediately after.

And another hour of lovemaking making they stopped. Audrey really couldn't take it anymore. If they were the same level maybe she would be able to take it, but they weren't...

After that, they cleaned up and put on some clothes before they began discussing a serious matter.

They fixed things up first because Audrey didn't want to risk another attack if they spoke naked.

Her lower region really couldn't take any more for the day.

Hell Muku wanted them to talk naked but Audrey refused.

She threatened him with leaving if he didn't agree to her terms. And that's the only way he agreed to dress first.

Their talk was mostly about general plans for the future like they did before Muku left. They spoke about when the training was going to be carried out and what order among such things.

At some point, Hope badged into the room after waking up.

She was doing way better now. Either she had figured things out or she was ignoring them. Knowing her, she probably chose the latter.

Sometime later Layla joined in too. However, she didn't come to sit with the others. She came to request Muku's help with something.

The satisfied Audrey who wanted nothing but to rest for the time being had no issues with Layla taking him away.

Hope had no problems with it either... Which surprised Muku quite a bit but he didn't ask anything.

Seeing the confusion and surprise in his eyes, Hope smiled wryly and then told him that she had something to do otherwise she would have definitely tagged along. It was only after that that clarity appeared in Muku's eyes.

Hope noticed this too and rolled her eyes. Was she really so clingy in his eyes?! Well, okay, maybe she really was that clingy but still, couldn't he pretend like she wasn't so bad?...

.....

After Muku and Layla left...

"So... Care to tell me why you didn't go with them even though you wanted to?" Audrey asked Hope who was now sitting blank-mindedly beside her...

"I... I thought about it and figured that maybe Layla was on to something. She's wrong about the feelings part, but maybe I really am too clingy and should draw some boundaries between us..." Hope replied after thinking about it for a second.

"Oh, so that's why you stayed behind. Well girl, did you talk to your brother about that?" Audrey asked.

"No... Why?" Hope replied full of confusion.

As far as she saw it, it was a personal decision. So her brother's opinion didn't matter in the situation.

"Oh, so you're probably thinking that since it's your decision then his opinion doesn't matter right? Well, I beg to differ, you weren't close with yourself but with him so why should he be excluded from the

matter? Muku never complained about how close you were so what's the problem? Isn't it all that matters the purity of the feelings?. It's already beyond the world's end, so why are you constraining yourself to its rules which ended with it? There's no opinionated and hypocritical society to judge you here. And I don't think Layla meant it that way. She just wanted you to see things clearly because she thought you misread the situation. If you know where you stand then great. There's no need to change anything" Audrey gave her point of view to Hope with some advice too.

"Oh... So that's how it is... I think you're right. I was overthinking it. Layla didn't mean anything bad by saying what she said. I'm the one who chose to see it negatively for whatever reason. But no more. I'll take your advice. I know my love is pure. And that's all that matters. I won't hold myself back like I just did again. As soon as he returns I'm jumping on him!" Hope was instantly motivated by Audrey's insightful words.

"Oh my!" Audrey was startled by what she said.

"No! No! Not that kind of jump. I meant to literally jump into his arms for a hug" Hope explained herself with a slight blush on her face.

"Okay, but how did you know what I was suggesting without any hints?" Audrey accepted the explanation but something seemed sus so she asked about it.

"I... I have something I need to take care of. See you later, bye!" Hope dodged the question and ran away.

Audrey was surprised by the reaction. As far as she knew, Hope didn't know much about sexual stuff and none of the other girls spoke to her about it. So what was going on? She seemed way too conscious for someone who shouldn't know at all.

What Audrey didn't know was that Hope had come across an H-Anime folder a year ago while randomly going through Muku's laptop.

And that wasn't all. After that, she found an adult novel folder on Chloe's laptop. And from then on the innocent girl was tainted because of the two filthy senior teammates.

It didn't take her long to realise that the content wasn't something she should talk to anyone about, so she kept it to herself as she curiously went through it all.

She was done with H-Anime but there were still a lot of novels left. Everything was not copied to her own laptop so no one suspected anything.

Fortunately or unfortunately they had external hard drives, so sharing between laptops was still doable. It was only Bluetooth, WiFi and such which required wireless transmission that no longer worked.

Anyway, Hope learned all the things no one wanted her to learn from that content. And now she knew just about as much as the others if not more than the more innocent ones like Layla and Jade surprisingly enough.

Yes, that's right, Jade was actually mostly innocent of sex related stuff since unlike Emily and Chloe, she never had time for it due to her obsession with sports before the apocalypse.

But hey, it wasn't like that affected her time with Muku so...

.....

Somewhere in the forest a distance away from the mansion.

Muku and Layla could be seen hiding in some tall bushes while looking at a triceratops-like beast feeding in front of them.

"So you want my help with taking this down?" Muku asked in his normal voice.

As for why that was, the duo was covered by his Telekinesis domain so the beast couldn't see or hear them.

Hiding behind bushes was just Muku's way of trolling Layla because he could..

Chapter 357: Tracy...

"Yes and no..." Layla replied.

"..." Muku quietly waited for her to respond.

"I'm confident that with enough time. I can take it on my own. However, I don't think I can keep it from running away until then. So I need your help in keeping it from escaping. Don't get involved in the battle apart from that" Layla explained.

"Oh. Okay. I promise not to get involved even if you're about to get killed" Muku replied with a smile.

"That's not what I meant. If it's an emergency then of course you can get involved" Layla replied with an eye roll.

"Oh okay. I guess that makes sense. Feel free to start whenever you want and I'll create the barrier... Oh and how big do you want it?" Muku spoke.

"Three kilometres should be enough... And we can start now." Layla replied.

"Okay. Not sure what I think about eliminating a dinosaur but okay" Muku replied as he got ready to create the barrier.

Layla silently rolled her eyes again. What kind of comment was that?!. So what if the creature looked like a dinosaur? They weren't in the pre-apocalypse world where such things mattered. In the current world, even a freaking unicorn was on the chopping block if found.

Layla would have gone crazy if she knew that Muku actually killed a dragon before. Yet there he was calling her out for targeting a random dinosaur-like creature.

Anyway, Muku didn't delay any longer as a sky-high silver metal wall, more than a hundred metres tall with a telekinetic sealing at the top appeared.

Muku disappeared from Layla's side and appeared on a silver platform on top of the arena he created and began observing what was going on down below.

Layla looked at him for a bit and did her best to suppress the urge to curse.

The bastard was clearly taking her fight as a form of entertainment. Just when she thought he couldn't do anything worse.

Raya appeared beside him and the two took out some materials from who knows where and seemingly began betting.

She immediately stopped looking at the duo lest she explode from anger and frustration. And even if she didn't explode, her battle effectiveness would be impacted significantly.

She couldn't afford to look at the duo anymore anyway. This was because the fifty-metre-tall triceratops had noticed what was going on around it. And now it had noticed her too since Muku had taken back his shielding barrier.

The creature was also stronger than her being a legit PR5 when she was still a bit off from that.

"Human... Is this your doing?"

"?!" Layla was surprised by how it spoke.

Sure she knew that some R4s and even R3s could speak. But those were so rare that she had only come across maybe five in all these years.

Actually, there was a chance that more than that were among the ones she met. After all, beasts tended not to bother themselves with speaking to humans. This was because they viewed humans as inferior beings just like humans viewed animals as inferior.

With that said, Layla didn't say anything back. Just because she was surprised didn't mean she would speak to the beast.

All she wanted was to fight the beast, kill it and move on. She barely liked speaking to people so speaking to beasts wasn't on her to-do list.

"No... This is beyond even my strength... By a lot too. So it's definitely not you. There must be another force at play here..." The Triceratops which couldn't see Muku and Raya because Muku made it so spoke as it looked around.

Muku and Raya commended its intelligence. And even Layla couldn't help but be impressed.

After all, it wasn't every day one met beasts who thought first before attacking.

And this one didn't just think, it thought meticulously. Even though it couldn't sense or see anything. It was sure of its words. The barrier was all the proof it needed.

"Are you going to fight or not?" Layla couldn't take it anymore so she asked.

Since she was the one who sought the beast out and it was sentient enough, she couldn't bring herself to sneak-attack it.

"Why should I fight you? You haven't done anything to me, and I haven't done anything to you. So why should we have to fight?" The Triceratops replied.

"But didn't you invade our world so that you could fight and kill us?" Layla was unwilling to speak but couldn't help but reply.

She wanted to know where the triceratops was going with its argument.

"Correction. The higher-ups and those willing to participate invaded your world. I was forced to come here. And since I came, I haven't done anything to anyone. I strictly live off plants. Just like I did back

home. I'm sure you can sense that there's no killing intent coming off me. Not even the faintest hint of it" The triceratops continued.

"Well, this is war. Your personal views don't matter. You're a soldier, and a soldier must fight whether they want to or not. If you were so hellbent on not fighting you should have refused to come with all your might..." Layla rebutted.

"You're right. But can an ant refuse the will of a human here? Especially if the ant's sick partner was held hostage?" The triceratops continued calmly in its feminine voice.

"... Shouldn't you be more than willing to fight then? I mean, isn't your partner enough reason for you to fight? Besides, why would a Monarch need a hostage to get you here? You're just a weak PR4 beast..." Layla didn't back down.

She felt that since she was already involved, she might as well go all the way.

Muku and Raya weren't expecting the plot twist, but they were enjoying the show. They were now munching on some leftover meat Emily prepared as they watched...

"Well, you're right. I am weak. But the power inside me isn't. Believe it or not, the world in which I get killed will lose half of the living beings living on it no matter the rank or strength. They will die at random so no one is safe until it's over..." The Triceratops casually dropped a bomb which made a chill go down not only Layla's but Muku's and Raya's spines.

They were strong enough to know that she wasn't lying. Whether she was being truthful or not it didn't matter. What mattered was that she completely believed what she was saying...

"Impossible! Nothing like that exists!" Layla exclaimed in denial.

"Well, they thought so too until they killed my mother and half of them along with half of the Beast World's population died with her. And that was around a century ago if we use your human way of calculating time. But hey, you can take a chance and try it if you want..." The Triceratops spoke with utmost confidence.

"Okay, let's say I believe you for a second. Why aren't you in battle killing for your lover then? Aren't you afraid they'll kill him?" Layla asked.

"I really might have been doing just that if I didn't find out that he plotted with them to get me out of the world since they were all scared that I might get killed somewhere in the dangerous Beast World. Which threatened their lives..." The Triceratops spoke calmly as if it wasn't the one who got betrayed.

"Why not imprison you to keep you alive instead of all this?" Layla asked.

"The ability follows causal laws they can't tamper with. For that reason, they can't do anything since if I kill myself as a result of their actions then it's considered killing me..." The Triceratops generously replied.

"What if you die on your own?" Layla asked something that Muku and Raya also wanted to know.

If that also killed others, then they would have to make a plan to send her back to the Beast World. They couldn't keep such an unreasonable time bomb around after all.

"That's fine actually. Just like my grandmother and her mother before her, if we die alone then it's okay" The triceratops replied.

"I don't know if I believe you. This just sounds like an elaborate scheme for you to escape a situation you can't escape otherwise..." Layla replied as a chilly air began gathering around her.

The triceratops wasn't moved...

"I Tracy, swear to the heavens above that my life and mana that nothing I said here today was a lie. If it was, may the heavens strike me down where I stand" The triceratops named Tracy made an official swear to the heavens which would kill her if she was lying.

Something Muku and the others already knew about.

However, other than acknowledging the swear with a few rumbles. Nothing else happened. Which meant...

"You're speaking the truth..." Layla spoke in a low but extremely shocked voice.

What kind of development was this?! She just wanted to have a simple hunt yet now she almost became the reason half of the life on the Blue Planet got wiped out!...

Chapter 358: Tracy (Pt 2)

"Yes. Now it's up to you whether you want to risk everything to put an end to me. You would be putting me out of my misery too actually. I would have done it myself if I didn't promise my mother that I'd never kill myself..." Tracy replied.

"..." Layla looked on speechlessly.

The two were so focused on each other that they didn't notice the barrier around them disappearing.

Soon Muku appeared beside Layla with the friendliest smile he could master while looking at Tracy.

"I'm sorry for my friend's rudeness Ms Tracy. If I had known that she was targeting you esteemed self, I would have stopped her. As an apology, please allow us to host you for a few days?" Muku spoke in a professional tone.

Layla was surprised by his sudden appearance and words. And how could he casually throw her under the bus like that?!

But she didn't say anything and let him do whatever he was doing. She knew him well enough to know that he always had a plan, so there was no need to get ahead of him.

".... So you heard what I said huh? And let me guess, it scared you so much you don't feel safe with having me outside where I can get killed at any moment. So you want to keep me close so that you can keep an eye on me..." Tracy replied after a moment of silence as she looked at Muku who didn't release even the faintest trace of energy.

"I..." Muku didn't know what to say since the dino had hit the nail on the head. Who knew that it would be so smart and cunning?

After all, one has to have a certain level of cunning to understand when someone was trying to be cunning with them...

"There's no need to say anything. We both know it's true. And luckily for you, I don't mind hanging around you for now. It's not like I have anywhere I have to be or anyone I have to see. I was also afraid that I could randomly get killed one day. So this is also to my advantage. While I can't sense even an ounce of strength from you, I can confidently say that right now... On the planet, you're probably one of the beings standing at the peak..." Tracy spoke after interrupting Muku.

Muku's eyes glowed in keen interest. He was quite impressed by the Dino. It was like he was speaking to an elder who knew quite a few things about life.

Nothing like Iris who lived for who knows how long but still acted like a rebellious teen most of the time.

Hell, even Mrs C didn't give off such a mature air... Then again, that lady was mysterious, so he couldn't judge her based on the little information she chose to expose him to.

"I don't know if I would say I am at the peak. But I can confidently say that if I go all out, few would dare stand in my way... And thank you for understanding. We'll make sure to treat you as best as we can in our time together" Muku replied while taking a little bow.

As for whether that meant anything to a beast, he didn't know. But it felt like the right thing to do at the time.

"Thank you. I will also try my best to be the best guest I can be... However, I do have one request..." Tracy spoke.

"Please, go ahead..." Muku replied.

He had no issue with going along with whatever she wanted as long as it was reasonable.

It was for his group's safety after all...

"It's nothing much. I just want that one to be the host... You know, the one who will tell me about your group and how you do things. I'll also tell her about anything related to me that you might want to know. I feel that we have an affinity with each other so I'd feel more comfortable talking to her..." Tracy explained.

"Oh, is that so? That can be arranged... However, that's only if she's willing" Muku replied positively as he saw no issues with it. But of course, it was Layla's decision at the end, so he let her decide.

"Sure. I don't mind" Layla who still wanted to know more about the weird beast named Tracy agreed.

The Dino's situation intrigued her quite a bit. And just like Tracy said, she also felt like there was some invisible link between them. Like they were the same in some way...

"Great!... Then I'll leave you ladies be. Layla knows the way back home" Muku spoke then after a nod from Tracy he left.

What Tracy didn't notice was that he was hovering a few metres above her, with Raya as they sat on some comfy-looking chairs and ate some meat.

Layla who could see everything rolled her eyes and ignored them.

She wondered what Tracy would think if she found out that the seemingly gentlemanly and respectful human was actually just a poser who treated her like a free live TV show.

....

On the invisible platform...

"So, what's the plan here? Are we going to look for a way to kill her without triggering the causality law, or?" Raya asked while looking at Tracy emotionlessly.

You'd think that as a fellow beast, she would be sympathetic to Tracy, but no, the dragon girl was just as uncaring as she would have been if Tracy were a human.

But then again, that's the same with how humans generally don't give a damn about unrelated people. If Tracy had some sort of self-harming curse, then maybe Raya would care. But Tracy's curse or whatever it was posed danger to her. And for that reason, she wanted Tracy gone!

"Wow. What a ruthless child! Anyway, no, we're not going to do that. Instead, we're going to look for a way to send her back to the beast world! We cannot keep a ticking time bomb here. She's way too dangerous. And looking for a way of killing her without triggering the ability seems risky and unlikely. After all, even Monarchs couldn't do anything to this beast..." Muku replied calmly and calculatively.

"Hmm. You're right. Your plan is way safer and doable... To think the "Sudden Death Plague" from a hundred years ago I heard about in the Beast World was actually caused by the death of this one's mother. Truly a crazy world..." Raya replied then brought up some valuable information from her past.

"Did any Monarchs die?" Muku asked curiously.

"I'm not sure. I heard that a couple of Monarchs died but it wasn't confirmed since any beast which tried to dig into the matter would disappear... Now that I think about it. That was probably the indirect confirmation of something happening. Otherwise, why would they all disappear?" Raya replied.

"Yeah... To think that even the Beast World has such problems. But then again, I guess that's the messed-up way of doing things brought by having intelligence. Though I think it's understandable. It was probably the way for the Monarchs to protect themselves from anyone who might try to target Tracy as a way of taking some of them out..." Muku spoke after thinking about it for a bit.

"You're probably right... Now can we stop talking about it? I'm bored. See you later. I think it's time I devour that shark corpse. I should have built up enough appetite" Raya replied then disappeared before Muku could say anything.

"... Sigh. I guess sometimes I forget that despite being smart, she's just a child..." Muku spoke to himself as he continued following Layla and Tracy.

...

Below Muku...

"So... Aren't you going to say anything?" Layla asked after a few minutes of walking in silence.

She didn't expect Tracy who suggested wanting to talk to her would just remain quiet and focus on walking.

Normally, she wouldn't mind and would happily welcome the silence. But this time. She was genuinely curious to hear what Tracy wanted to say.

Maybe something Tracy says will reveal to her why she feels a kinship with Dino.

"Why rush it when we have all the time in this world? And aren't you the quiet type anyway? Shouldn't you appreciate my silence?" Tracy spoke in her calm and wisened voice.

Her words seemed simple and straightforward but Layla couldn't sense a hint of teasing. And she didn't like that.

For that reason, she didn't reply and chose to walk in silence... Well, Tracy was walking and she was flying but still, the point stands...

Tracy wasn't offended by her silence. In fact, her Dino mouth curled up a bit to form a feint smile before returning to normal.

Layla missed it but Muku didn't. He didn't say anything though. He wanted to see where the Dino was taking things.

And there was something he also noticed. And that was Tracey's big eyes. Before they looked super lonely and pained... Now, although they still looked mostly the same, the look seemed to have dimmed down a bit.

This didn't happen after he invited her to come stay with them, but when Layla agreed to be her host.

And as much as he didn't want to admit it. The lonely look had played a part in his invite...

After all, keeping an eye on her secretly was also an option even if it would be a bit troublesome...

...

A while later....

Everyone was up minding their own business at the mansion when suddenly... They sensed a strong and unfamiliar presence approaching.

Without a second thought, they all ran outside...

Even Jade who had finally received Hope's healing.

She was actually having a hard time explaining to Hope why the healing glow was focused on her lower region when the strong presence emerged.

So she was the first to bolt out with a look of relief and gratitude on her face.

She was even thinking of sparing whatever was approaching after beating it up a bit as a thank you for getting her out of the troublesome situation.

Then she saw what it was...

"What the hell?!"

Chapter 359: Tracy (Final)

An hour later....

"So that big thing out there can possibly get us killed and you decided to bring it home to protect it?" Audrey asked Muku who was sitting across her.

Everyone else apart from Layla was present and quietly listened in. Their eyes were filled with shock and disbelief. How can such a thing exist?... But then again, they had encountered quite a few things that were too crazy to be true but were true nonetheless.

Like Emily coming back from the dead, Muku erasing things out of existence, Mrs C and other things.

But even then, this causality law thing seemed even crazier than all those things.

"Yes. Pretty much" Muku replied.

"But why is it so weak if it has lived for over a century?" Chloe couldn't help but ask.

"I reckon it's because it lives off vegetation instead of meat. And vegetation doesn't have nearly as much KP as meat. It has some, but it's not a lot. Maybe plant-type beasts could have a lot of KP. But those are super rare so..." Muku replied.

"Oh, okay. But do you really believe it? It sounds a bit too crazy if you ask me..." Chloe commented.

"Well, it did swear to the heavens and wasn't cut down so..." Muku replied with a shrug.

He didn't want to believe it either but no one can lie to the heavens, so he could only believe it.

"Iris said that it's true. She said that even back in her time, there were tales of a cursed bloodline with unknown origins which did just that... She thought it was just a story until now though. And that's all she knows since it wasn't discussed much" Freya suddenly spoke in support of Muku after Iris told her some valuable information.

"Oh... Well, there you have it then. More evidence on top of the irrefutable evidence from the heavens" Muku was surprised that there was a whole story on the matter dating back countless years but he didn't dwell too much on it.

"Yeah, I guess you're right. We can only protect it for the time being..." Chloe was finally convinced.

"Yeah. Now do y'all want to go and meet her? We'll be seeing her every day from now on so we all should get along right? I mean, we did come back inside without any introductions after all" Muku spoke.

The girls agreed and they all went to introduce themselves to Tracy.

....

After the introductions...

"Thank you all for accommodating me. I hope we can always get along" Tracy spoke.

"Yeah. We hope so too" Audrey spoke on behalf of the group.

Even though they were different species, Muku felt that it was better for a lady to be the one to speak to another.

"And in the spirit of that. Let me take on a much more suitable form..." Tracy spoke then her silverish grey skin was covered by a silver light in front of everyone.

Her body surprisingly began to shrink under the light. She shrank until she was the size of an average-sized house dog.

Everyone was awed. Some more than others but awed nonetheless. It was a pleasant surprise actually.

Now she would be less conspicuous and easier to protect...

After the light faded a cute little Triceratops was exposed. She looked like a baby Triceratops. And as everyone knows, most babies look super cute. Tracy's new form was no different.

And so, the girls all had their hearts stolen.

They immediately swarmed her with sparkling eyes and began fighting over who would get to hug her.

It was like the cuteness had made them forget that Tracy was still way older than them despite the new look. So they were basically disrespecting an old lady.

Fortunately, it didn't seem like Tracy was too bothered by it even if she looked a bit overwhelmed.

"Tsk. What's so cute about that old lady? I have a much smaller and cuter form! Hmph! These people have no taste" Raya who secretly liked it when she was the centre of attention due to her cuteness spoke in a voice laced with thick jealousy.

Muku who was the only one standing beside her didn't say anything. He just rolled his eyes and let her be.

And for that, he earned a kick to the leg before Raya disappeared.

More than his leg hurt at that moment. His head hurt too. After all, Raya's behaviour made him feel like a single father suffering under the tantrums of his rebellious daughter.

He literally did nothing but just stand there and yet he got kicked.

Anyway, the girls soon calmed down and everyone went back inside.

After all, Tracy was now small enough, so there was no need to talk outside.

...

"Umm, I know you're taking care of me for your own sake. But I feel that if I just accepted that without giving anything back then I'd be taking advantage of you. You might be okay with it, but I'm not. For that reason there's some information I want to share with you I think you might find very useful..." Tracy spoke while resting on a couch.

"Okay, if that's how you feel. We won't deny you" Muku accepted to hear her out.

Hell, he was more than willing to hear her out. Any information that a being like Tracy thinks is significant will probably be more than that to them.

After all, Tracy was mostly detached from the world's affairs due to her lifestyle...

"Great. The information is that the next World Evolution will likely happen within the next thirty days" Tracy casually dropped a bomb which exploded in the minds of everyone present.

"... Are you sure?" Muku asked for confirmation after a moment of silence.

He knew that there was no way she was joking since she wasn't that type of beast and they weren't close enough to joke like that yet.

"Yes. I came across a portal a few weeks back. The previous colour was almost completely gone and in its place, a thick red appeared. It's changing slowly but at most only thirty days are left. And just so you know, the portals combined together again to create something bigger and stabler. This means that

more beasts will be able to come out at once as well as stronger ones... That's right, R6s are coming in less than a month" Tracy explained seriously.

"Oh", Muku only said that one word then went quiet.

His face turned paler than a ghost. After all, he had encountered R6s in the Beast World more than once.

And it was no exaggeration to say that he a R5 was less than an ant to a R6. It was the same old tale of a lower rank being trash to the higher rank. And as always, the gap in between is even bigger than the one before it.

And even if R6s are ignored. Just the fact that R5s will be everywhere from then on was scary enough.

He could take care of one R5, or maybe even two or three at once. But five, ten, or twenty would kill him with little effort.

Sure, R5s rarely travelled in groups. But knowing his terrible luck, there's a high chance of meeting the few who do travel in packs...

"We need to train girls. And hard too. I wanted to go slowly at a steady pace but now.... I hope you understand" Muku addressed the girls who were also thinking about the horror which was about to come.

They weren't even at the peak of the current world like they were during previous evolutions, so they felt more pressure than Muku.

"What do you take us for? Do you think we're still greenhouse flowers after all the things we have been through? What's a little tough training compared to that?" Jade was the first to speak up with her battle intent surging in her eyes.

She was more than ready for any challenge now that she didn't have to worry about her bloodline. It had kept her from going all out for way too long. So she was fired up and ready to go.

"Yeah, exactly as Jade said, we are ready for anything" Emily supported Jade.

"Yeah!"

"Yeah!"...

The others also voiced their preparedness to face any challenge.

"Great!. I'm glad you're motivated. The first thing we're going to do is look for R4s so that y'all reach the peak as soon as possible. Then we can start on your advancement journey from R4 to R5. We'll also be doing other training in between. From now on, we'll only sleep two hours every two days. Your bodies and minds are strong enough to take that right?" Muku addressed the girls.

Some gulped a bit after hearing the plan but none stepped back. They all understood that they didn't have time to take it easy. Even Hope didn't complain this time. Hell, she was even more fired up than the others because she wanted to be the one to impress Muku the most during the training.

"Ms Tracy. Thank you very much for that timely information. If you hadn't been here. We would have been caught off guard which could have been disastrous considering the enemy we're expecting" Muku stood up and thanked Tracy while bowing respectfully.

The girls stood up and did the same.

"No please don't, I'm just helping those who are helping me" Tracy replied in a delighted tone.

She quite liked being surrounded by other beings for a change after such a long time alone...

Chapter 360: Training (pt 1)

The next morning...

"Alright. So after talking it out with Audrey and Jade. We decided that getting used to your new physical bodies is the most important thing right now. After all, with the little time we have, everything else

might be hard to accomplish. But of course we'll do it too" Muku addressed the girls while they all stood on a long silver platform attached to the floating mansion.

That's right, the dude basically made a training ground in the air. So the group could train while looking for beasts to kill.

The creation impressed the girls quite a bit. After all, they remember back then when he could barely lift the mansion up. Now he could even add accessories and move around nonchalantly without feeling any mental toll. It was things like that which made them realise just how far they had come.

Anyway, after that Muku didn't delay any longer. The first thing he did was make the girls lift weights... No it wasn't so that they could become muscular hunks, it was so that they could gauge how much they could lift.

The end result was the girls being able to barely lift weights equivalent to how heavy Tracy was in her normal fifty-metre-tall form.

That was for the mage-types. Audrey could comfortably lift such weights while Jade could easily lift them.

And even among the mage-type girls, Chloe could lift the most, followed by Layla, then Emily... The rest were so similar that it was hard to tell.

Obviously, Hope failed to live up to her own expectations this time as she tied for last place with Elsa and Freya.

But she wasn't discouraged. There were still other tests to be had.

And so, they moved on to the next. Which was measuring their top speed... As expected Jade won again, followed by Audrey then Chloe. But Elsa was surprisingly fourth in speed, followed by Hope.

Emily and Freya, the two with the largest boobs in the group were left in the dust as they struggled with their heavy chests.

Audrey also had quite a large chest but her physical body was stronger than the others so obviously she was faster.

And as for why Chloe wasn't first... That was because no mana or Beast Aura was used. If they had used those energies, then not even Jade could touch her. The girl's speed was already so fast at R4 when she went all out that it looked like teleportation. Who knew what it would be like when she reaches R5, R6 or R10? At that point... Honestly, who knows?

Anyway, the running test didn't stop there. There were other subtests like control, reaction and things like that.

On control, the girls had to make a sharp turn at the edge of the platform or risk falling off... Which some did.

Fortunately for them, Muku was there so they didn't plunge to the ground. Sure, it wouldn't have killed them but it would have been embarrassing.

After all, their Mana or Beast Aura was sealed by Muku so saving themselves was off the table.

Then came the reaction test at full speed. In that one, they had to dodge incoming projectiles from all angles.

Only Audrey, Jade and Emily who were used to doing that were able to pass the test. The rest would have been filled with holes if it weren't for dummy arrows that were used.

And yes, the arrows weren't too fast, they weren't even as fast as the girls but they still got hit. But that was understandable since they weren't used to the fast-paced thinking and reacting needed for dodging.

But of course, they will get used to it eventually.

After half a day of nonstop training, they finally took a break.

However, whether it was a real break or not, it was debatable. After, they only stopped because Raya located a couple of R4s engaged in battle a distance away.

The two beasts weren't alarmed because the mansion and training platform were invisible and completely undetectable due to Muku's Telekinetic barrier.

Only R5s had a chance of detecting the mansion. So the R4s were completely caught off guard.

They didn't sense anything even when the mansion came directly above them.

The light above them did get slightly warped, but they were too occupied to notice.

Even better was how more than ten other R4s with many lower-ranked beasts were looking on from a distance.

The beasts all looked like huge black wolves.

And from their years of experience. Muku's group quickly realised that the two who were fighting were probably doing so to decide on who would be the pack's leader.

That's right, even beasts did such a thing. Hell, humans also did it before the apocalypse. Just that humans fought with intelligence, cunning and connections to decide who would be the leader.

So yeah, being intelligent didn't prevent beings from using fighting to be on top, whether physically fighting, or mentally fighting...

Anyway, as a way to speed up the process, the girls decided to let one person kill the beasts.

And Hope happened to be the perfect person for the job.

With a little wave of her hands. Death began whispering in the ears of all twelve R4s on the ground.

There were seven LR4s, three MR4s and two PR4s which were fighting.

The seven LR4s fell first without making a sound. Hope was slightly above MR4 in strength, so taking out LR4s was easy.

Then followed the MR4s. The R3s, 2s and 1s began making sense in fear after seeing their superiors fall and die.

At first, the two PR4s ignored what was happening but after a while, they couldn't ignore it anymore.

But they were too late... Before they could enquire on what was happening, they both began feeling dizzy and soon they too fell.

And just like that twelve R4s were wiped out. It all ended in just two minutes...

"Oh my! What a horrifying little girl!" Tracy commented in both awe and horror.

Before she thought that only the grey-haired man and the child who gave off a weird scent were scary in the group. After all, they were R5s.

However, now it seemed she had misjudged the situation. She shouldn't have come to a conclusion when she knew nothing about the abilities of the others.

Hope's nonchalant way of killing off the beasts proved that point.

"Don't give me too much credit please. It was only so easy because none of them had their domain armour up. They weren't even using their domains or any mana at all" Hope replied shyly.

"Yeah, you're right. I know these beasts. They decide on who their leader is through brute strength alone. However, even then, being able to do that without being detected and doing it so quickly... I reckon even if they used their mana they'd get killed the moment they showed even the slightest weakness. And sorry if that sounded rude. I meant it as a compliment actually. I've never seen anyone using such a method before. Fortunately for me, it wasn't you who came after me or I would be long dead by now with many others accompanying me" Tracy explained herself.

"Are you calling me weak?" Layla surprisingly interjected herself into the talk.

"No, what I mean is that she wouldn't have appeared before me before attacking. Then I would have likely died without being able to even open my mouth..." Tracy explained to Layla.

"Oh... Okay," Layla accepted the reasonable explanation.

Anyway, after that Muku pulled out the beast cores from the twelve beasts after Jade confirmed that they all had them.

Speaking of which, beast cores were quite odd. They were completely undetectable when inside a beast's body or corpse, even if one scanned the whole thing with their mana sense.

And Jade who could easily pinpoint their location from day one was even weirder. Was that part of the mysterious power of her bloodline? Well, whatever it was, it was great for business.

Even if more often than not, high-ranking beasts had beast cores.

The group that had enough meat for the time being didn't take any of the wolf meat. Plus the meat Hope poisoned never tasted good even if she dispelled the poison so, they immediately went back to training.

This time they were learning hand-to-hand combat.

Muku showed them another interesting and unexpected ability.

He created eight metal clones of himself. The things weren't nearly as strong as he and would be pretty much useless in fights against R5s. But against R4s, like the girls, they were more than enough since their strength was Peak-Pseudo-R5.

And he could actually control them easily while doing everything else. It wasn't easy to do, but he had long mastered it while in the beast world.

There has come a time when it wasn't safe for him to move around, so he had to use clones.

Anyway, that was a story for another day. For now, what mattered was that all the girls had a training partner.

Instead of being happy, all of them felt like crying.

They were looking forward to the training since there was only one Muku. So obviously, some would rest while he trained one.

But obviously, that wasn't going to be the case now...

And so, the training began...