

Few Wives 391

Chapter 391 Talk with Lisa

"Yes sir!" Lisa replied respectfully.

Then she led Muku to her office...

There she offered Muku her seat and opted to sit on the visitor's seat.

Muku didn't refuse but when they sat down. Lisa realised that their seats had been switched without her noticing... No, it wasn't their seats that had been switched. It was their positions!

Again she was awed by Muku's power. She didn't know if it was speed or some other power which had been used to switch their positions. But for him to be capable of doing such a thing without her noticing... That just showed how big the gap between them was.

"Sir..." She wanted to speak up but Muku stopped her by raising his hand.

"You're the boss here. So you can't so easily give up your seat. Even if I'm stronger. You shouldn't cheapen your position like that. I mean, sure, being suck-upped to isn't bad. But if someone does it too much. Then it's just annoying. So please, don't ruin my opinion of you by doing something like this again... And besides, our chairs are the same. So there's no need to go above and beyond just because of the position..." Muku lightly rebuked Lisa.

"...Yes sir" Lisa replied respectfully with admiration in her eyes.

This was one of the reasons she was so willing to submit to Muku. Sure, his strength was immense and the main reason. But on top of that, he didn't let it corrupt him as many men had.

And that was a major deciding factor. After all, if she submitted to a corrupt person. Then she might have suffered a fate worse than death along with the other women. Which was basically what happened with Mest before.

That idiot's power wasn't even that impressive. Yet he was corrupted by it the moment he got it... He was corrupt even when he was a side character in Tom's group...

"Can you say anything else besides "Yes sir"?. It's like talking to a robot" Muku commented jokingly.

He could see that Lisa was rather rigid when talking to him. Which was probably a result of that incident in the past when she was mean to Freya and he almost went wild on her. So he tried to loosen up the mood a bit. After all, they couldn't talk effectively if one part wasn't comfortable with the other.

"Yes s... I mean. Sorry for that. I'm just nervous and don't know what to say" Lisa replied.

"What?! Don't tell me you have a crush on me?!" Muku reacted exaggeratedly as he covered his mouth.

"What? N... No! I have nothing but respect for you. Please don't misunderstand!" Lisa denied it instantly.

Her face reddened in embarrassment as she did so. Muku had completely caught her off guard. She never thought he'd say anything like that to her.

"What?! So you're saying I'm ugly and not worth your affection?!" Muku replied in an outraged tone.

However, there was nothing but amusement in his eyes. Lisa was completely dumbstruck by what was going on, so she didn't notice anything.

"No, no! You're misunderstanding me again. You're definitely not ugly. In fact, you're the most handsome man I've ever seen. I just never thought to look at you romantically because of my inferior position. But if I did, I probably would have fallen long ago!" Lisa blurted out whatever came to mind.

Then regretted it soon after...

"Oh my! Thank you. You're also very beautiful" Muku replied teasingly.

"Please Sir. Can you stop? I don't think I can take any more" Lisa begged for mercy.

"And there you go. See, it's not hard to talk to me. Now that you're okay. We can finally speak normally" Muku returned to a more respectful tone when talking to Lisa.

"So that was all just an act?" Lisa asked suspiciously.

"Yes... Apart from complimenting your beauty of course. That part was completely true" Muku replied seriously.

He was the first person Lisa came across who could flirt with a straight face. And he really knew how to make people feel comfortable around him.

She should know. After all, she was unsure what to say to him a minute ago. Now she felt comfortable enough to curse him for his flirty and shameless nature.

But she held herself back. It was best not to curse him before what she desired from him was finalised and she knew him a bit more...

"Oh, okay. Thank you then. Now should we get back to business?" Lisa replied as seriously as she could. But she couldn't hide the slight blush on her face.

Like most women. She was weak to compliments. Especially from people they admired.

"Yeah. Where should we start?" Muku asked.

"Where we left off last time if possible" Lisa wanted to quickly seal the deal so she dived in immediately.

"And where was that?" Muku asked curiously.

So much stuff had happened that he barely remembered the matters related to Lisa.

He could pull them up through his mindscape. But that wasn't necessary when Lisa could just remind him...

"You promised that you'd accept us as your knights if we gained enough strength by the time you returned... Not to sound arrogant, but I don't think there are many forces right now as strong as us if we exclude those like you... And you have seen how effective we are in battle. So you know I'm not just bluffing" ISA replied.

By that point, the blush was completely gone as she got into business mode.

This discussion was so important that nothing mattered or could get in the way.

"Hmm. Your group definitely isn't bad.... Which reminds me. Weren't there around a hundred or so of you last time?" Muku didn't immediately decide anything and asked something else.

"Yes..you're right. More than a hundred people have joined us over the last two years. Most are women we rescued from local evil gangs we destroyed. The rest are children from similar origins..." Lisa replied.

"Oh, okay. That makes sense. What about men? I doubt there weren't any good men in those areas..." Muku asked curiously.

"That's exactly how it was actually. All the men who didn't agree with the evil leaders were killed or chased away. Among the gang members, there might have been some who were formerly good. But after a while, they were corrupted and became as bad as the rest of not worse. So..." Lisa explained.

"Oh... Kinda thought you refused to accept them but I guess that makes sense too" Muku replied.

"Well, actually... Some men did come to apply over the years. But as you know, most of the women here were assaulted. So they developed a phobia of men. So I couldn't risk it... Instead, I chose to help them create their own group... But that didn't end well..." Lisa replied while remembering a painful past.

"Do you mind telling me?" Muku asked.

"Not at all. After we helped them create their own group. They decided to go out into the world and look for their own barrier. Unfortunately, they came across trouble on the way. Then a few returned. They said that the rest had likely been wiped out and they were the last of them. The encounter seemed to have driven them mad as they tried to rape a woman who went to deliver them food in their guest room... Of course, the struggle was easily noticeable. And I took care of them. Which sucked after the fond memories we had with them. After that, we no longer helped any men" Lisa summarised to Muku the tale of loss and betrayal...

"I'm sorry you had to go through that. However, I doubt that everyone else died as those few men said. I bet they did something wrong on the way and were abandoned. Then they came back here to try their luck. The attack on the woman was probably unplanned... But hey, trashy people like that are usually impulsive... And it's totally understandable. Your choice not to take in any more men" Muku replied seriously after analysing the story.

"Thank you for understanding. Anyway, can we get back to the matter at hand? You haven't given me your answer yet" Lisa circled back with her reply.

"Wow, you really are persistent with that one. Which I can't understand why. You managed to survive on your own for two years right? So why are you so willing to be under someone else?" Muku asked.

Knock! Knock!

A woman knocked and then entered with some tea.

She quietly served Muku and Lisa then left.

Muku didn't refuse since it had been a while since he had tea. And it tasted...

"Amazing! You guys have sugar?" Muku asked.

"Yes... We have engineers and farmers. These people also have random classes related to that so, I'm sure you can imagine the rest" Lisa replied.

"Wow, how fortunate of you" Muku complimented as he enjoyed the tea. No one in his group had such useful skills.

More than anything, everyone in his group had classes focused on killing.

"Yeah. As for the response to your questions from before. Yes, we managed to survive on our own for two years. But that wasn't without troubles. We made it out by the skin of our teeth a few times. And I can sense that there might be bigger dangers coming soon, so we really need you" Lisa explained why she was so dead set on coming under Muku's wing.

"Oh, so that's why. That's completely understandable... Let me talk it out with my group first. Then I'll give you my answer. Thank you for the tea..." Muku replied and was about to get up.

"Sir please. Accept us. I'm willing to do anything! You can do anything with me! But please, don't abandon us!" Lisa suddenly stood up first before Muku could.

Then without warning. All the clothes on her body fell to the ground. Which revealed her everything to Muku as she looked at him resolutely...

Chapter 392 Resolute Lisa

"What?" That's the only word that escaped from the dumbstruck Muku's mouth.

And it was understandable. After all, things escalated way too quickly! One second they were discussing serious matters and the next, Lisa was showing him everything!

"I know that if you discuss it with them first. There's a high chance they might refuse. And even if they agreed. You came here alone, so there's probably something keeping them busy. Which means, we won't get an answer immediately. Who knows if we would still be alive by then? So please, can you decide on the spot? I'm sorry to put you in such a position. For that, I offer myself to you. I'm probably not much to you, but I'm pure and willing to be used however you want as long as you don't abandon us..." Lisa explained herself while standing there resolutely.

Whoosh!

Muku disappeared from Lisa's sight. When she was thinking she failed... He appeared in front of her.

He was so close she could feel his breath on her skin. And it gave her goosebumps. She was ready to accept whatever came. However, she couldn't stop herself from closing her eyes.

Which might have been a mistake, since she became extra sensitive when touched.

So she could vividly feel Muku's hand softly brush across her shoulder then onto her back.

A pink blush appeared on her face which was quite enticing. Any man could have gone wild on her at that moment.

But Muku only paused a bit then continued. Soon his hand was just above her butt. The other one had joined in and was now just below her breasts after brushing across her stomach.

Lisa's breath couldn't help but increase a bit as a tingly feeling began building up in-between her legs. Even though she knew that she was only doing it as a necessity, she couldn't stop her body from getting excited.

This brought mixed feelings to her heart. But she was still happy, since what was happening meant that he had accepted her offer, right?

She just hoped it didn't hurt as much as the others said it did...

Just when Muku's hands were about to touch her most intimate places... They stopped.

After that...

Whoosh!

Lisa felt a cloth cover her body.

This surprised her so much that her eyes snapped open.

She immediately focused on Muku who was now sitting down again. He was even calmly pouring himself some more tea.

Lisa was completely confused and didn't know what to do next. Like, was she rejected, did he want her to be proactive or maybe he wanted a room with a bed? What did he want?!!

"Please. Sit down" Muku spoke calmly as he gestured Lisa to take a seat.

Lisa did as she was told. It wasn't what she was expecting, but it was something at least.

"... You really were willing to do it, huh?" Muku asked after taking a sip of his tea.

"Yes. We can still continue if you want" Lisa replied without hesitation as she grabbed the cloth on her and prepared to take it off.

"Hold your horses. I didn't say that. What I mean is, I thought that you'd pull away at the last moment. But you didn't" Muku stopped her and explained.

"Well, I meant what I said. So..." Lisa replied.

"You really are a great leader. Willing to sacrifice it all for your group... I quite admire that about you. It's something I'd never have expected from the first time we met. It's almost like you're a completely different person. Anyway, I'm quite impressed" Muku replied with genuine admiration in his voice.

It was definitely uncommon for people like Lisa to exist in the apocalypse. After all, the current times promoted selfishness more than anything. And it was understandable to be selfish since one would likely live longer that way.

But even then, people like Lisa were always worthy of respect...

"Please don't speak so highly of me. My decision wasn't as selfless as you make it sound. Sure, I mostly did it for my comrades. But I also did it for myself. I figured that, in the current world. There can't be any men better than you. So even if I can't become a legitimate lover, just being something of a concubine would be enough since a good life for my children and me if we had any would be more than guaranteed. So, even if I had to sacrifice my purity. It was okay since feelings would form between us soon enough. At the very least, I hoped they would... So please, don't call me selfless. I really am not..." Lisa explained herself.

"Wow, you're a horrible schemer. Shouldn't you only reveal your schemes after the deal is sealed?!" Muku teased.

He completely ignored the "children" part since it was quite awkward...

"Well, I figured you'd figure it out soon enough, so I might as well come out myself and hope for forgiveness..." Lisa explained.

"There's nothing to forgive. I'm sure anyone in your position... Or at the very least thinks they are in your position, would do the same" Muku replied while waving his hand nonchalantly to show that he really didn't think much of the situation.

"Oh. Okay. If you say so. So was what happened a test then?" Lisa asked.

"Yes. I wanted to see if you were displaying false bravado" Muku replied.

"Does... That means you won't accept us?" Lisa asked in a disheartened manner.

"You really are quick to jump to conclusions, huh Ms? If anything, it wasn't necessary to do what you did. I was planning on taking you all with us even if my group disagreed. After all, I promised you. And I always keep my promises. I just wanted them to know our next step. But hey, your analysis was spot on. They are busy with something right now. So they couldn't be here and I would have had to wait for a while. For that reason, I'll make my decision and tell them later. That decision is... Welcome to the team Ms Lisa. I hope we can all get along" Muku explained.

He then got off his chair and held his hand out to Lisa.

Lisa excitedly got off hers and shook his hand. She was extremely happy at the moment. While things had gone through twists and turns. At least they worked out in the end. And that was all that mattered. All her worries disappeared. Now she could finally relax...

That's when she felt a slight chill on her skin... And it hit her.

She was still naked beneath the cloth. And she had forgotten about it so it fell off when she got up too quickly.

And so, she was exposed to Muku again...

Her cheeks instantly reddened when she noticed his eyes focused on her ample chest.

Whoosh!

Muku disappeared again. However, he didn't just appear next to her this time.

She found herself in his embrace. His hands were firmly placed on her butt.

"Ms. you are way too defenceless. And I don't have the self-control to resist you every time. So please, take better care of yourself from now on or I really will claim you as mine and you won't be able to escape from me for eternity" Muku's slightly rough voice sounded in Lisa's ear.

One of his hands even went to her breast and squeezed it slightly.

It had been a while since Muku got some. And even those times he didn't get enough because the girls were much weaker and couldn't keep up. So it really took a lot of willpower to resist jumping on Lisa when she was practically throwing herself at him was hard.

"....." Lisa didn't say anything in response but her special place was already begging for it and she internally hoped that he would do it.

But she felt that it would be too shameless to say it when it was no longer necessary. Plus she was afraid of what would happen if Muku really did it. Her gut told her that she couldn't take it with her current strength.

Not to mention what would happen when the women around Muku found out...

Muku touched and squeezed her all over as he tried to calm himself down. And fortunately, it worked. Luckily he didn't touch her most intimate area or he would have been met by a waterfall that would have definitely made him lose control.

"I'm sorry about that... Please take this fruit as my apology. And please don't do this again as I said. Next time I really won't hold myself back... And another thing. While you want safety from the dangers of this world by depending on me. I'd like you to know that I also have dangers pursuing me. And those dangers are beyond anything either of us can comprehend so... Please decide carefully if you really want to exchange smaller dangers for bigger ones..." Muku spoke after he managed to peel himself from Lisa's body.

At this point, he was standing by the door looking away from Lisa otherwise who knows what would have happened.

He took out one of those fruits that improved one's physic and threw it on the table then warned Lisa one more time before stepping out and closing the door behind him.

However, before it could completely close, he heard Lisa's shaky voice from all the groping say... "You already know my decision".

Which meant that she had decided to follow him no matter what...

Chapter 393 Unexpected situation

In Lisa's office...

It took Lisa a few minutes for Lisa to calm herself down after Muku made her horny but refused to go all the way or even make her cum with his hand.

"Sigh. Couldn't he at least finish with his hand? And what does he mean by he will make me mine next time after doing so much already? In my book, what he did was enough. Whether he wants to or not, he has to take responsibility. Hmph! Thinking he can just do that to me and leave!" Lisa complained to her as she dressed herself.

Then she cleared the air of her sweet scent with her mana before someone came in and found out what had happened...

"Fortunately it worked out... I really wish to have a talk with the people who wrote those OP returner novels. Like, shouldn't I have somehow climbed to the top of the world by now despite my less-than-ideal class level? After two years of hard work, I could barely reach slightly above average strength and almost got killed off too. At least I managed to gather a decent force which was instrumental in today's deal... But still, am I the problem or is this world not like those novel worlds where there are big opportunities everywhere? I mean, even now... I haven't come across any opportunities I could take advantage of and climb to the top. Or is it the only opportunity in this world to know him? It's kinda understandable if it is. Well, whatever, let me try this weird apple he brought me. I need energy if I'm going to blackmail him into taking responsibility. And I haven't had fruits for a rather long time..." Lisa spoke to herself as she recalled how she got to that point.

Then she took a bite of the fruit and... Perfect bliss attacked her tongue.

Yes, the fruit was so good that it might as well have been eating solidified happiness!

And like with the people who ate it before her. It ended before she could probably enjoy it...

Just when she was about to chase Muku down and ask for more... She felt a tingling feeling in her body then... Pain

"Ahhhhhh!" Without restraint, she let out a pained shriek which was heard by everyone in the fortress.

Even Muku who had just arrived at the mansion heard it and he disappeared.

In less than a second, he was budging into Lisa's office.

He arrived before even a single person from the base could make it.

And what he saw perplexed him greatly.

The fruit he left for Lisa was gone. Her reddened skin suggested that she had taken it and it was doing its job. However, that wasn't all that was happening.

Black earth mana was running wild around her and was obviously in pain as she squirmed on the ground with tears coming out of her eyes.

It looked like she wanted to continue screaming but was holding herself back by biting down on her chair's wooden leg. It was a miracle the leg wasn't broken... It was created by something with a wood element or something...

Muku was about to jump in and subdue her power when the phone in his pocket vibrated.

Of course, he was about to ignore it... But it answered itself before they could move. And his mother's voice was heard.

"Hmph! Such a terrible son. You were totally planning on ignoring your mother when she finally got a chance to talk to you live. Anyway, don't interrupt that little girl. What's happening is actually a good thing. She's quite lucky actually. In fact, give her one more fruit and leave the room. Tell her to hang in there and she won't be disappointed by the result. Do it now, I'll wait..." Mrs C complained then gave Muku orders.

He did as he was told without a second thought... She was probably the only person he'd listen to without thinking at all... Maybe Audrey could make him do the same. But not as strongly as Mrs C.

Anyway, he gave Lisa another fruit after telling her to hang in there for something amazing to happen.

Normally, a person who didn't know Muku well enough would tell him to fuck off in such a situation.

After all, they'd be in pain caused by the fruit. Then the bastard comes and offers another and says to hang in there? That was absurd to say the very least.

But Lisa was different. As a returner, thrown into a different timeline. She trusted Muku just as much as she trusted herself.

Plus she read a few novels where things like this led to great benefits. She wasn't about to pass up on such a thing. Especially not after Muku literally stated that that was the case.

So, she accepted the fruit and the pain increased. But she didn't scream like before since she was expecting it unlike last time.

Muku looked at her worriedly for a moment but then got up and left. His opinion of Lisa actually improved due to the trust she showed him.

Sure, she had shown that she trusted him with many of her actions up to that point. These included seeking him out for protection and offering herself to him.

But it was only now when the situation was out of her control and painful but she still chose to trust him that he was moved.

He even promised himself to make sure to take care of her more from then on no matter what happens.

Sure, he might get a beating from the girls for it, but oh well. Such was the life he chose...

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Outside the office...

Everyone had crowded outside but couldn't get in since Muku had put up a Force Field.

And so, they could only helplessly wait and see what would happen after they failed to break through.

If something bad had happened to Lisa, they were ready to fight it out with Muku even if it meant death.

As they thought such belligerent things. Muku came out of the office.

They glared at him waiting to see if he would explain on his own or they had to make him... At the very least, they would try...

"Don't look at me like that. I didn't do anything bad to her. I just gave her an opportunity which is a bit painful. However, the results will be worth it. I won't say anything more. Wait for her to explain later when she's done and comes out. For now, don't disturb her..." Muku calmly explained, even though he himself wasn't sure what was going on with Lisa.

"Why should we believe you?" One woman hissed back.

"You know. Before, I thought that Lisa was being too harsh with you all. But now I see that she might not have been harsh enough. Has her care made you all too comfortable? If yes, should we sort that out right now?" Muku spoke as the nightmare armour covered his body again.

And for the first time ever since he got it. He didn't subconsciously reject it... And the result?

Black smoke exploded out of it and enveloped everyone present...

The black smoke disappeared as quickly as it appeared but the eyes of the women all turned pitch black then...

"Ahhhhhh!" More than two hundred screams rang out at the same time.

Fortunately, Muku had isolated the area or the screams would have disturbed Lisa.

The women all started screaming while waving their hands in front of them as if they were looking at their deepest fears.

Muku who didn't expect the result looked at the eyes of one woman and the next second... He found himself in a black creepy-looking forest.

The woman he was looking at before was also in the forest and behind her were countless insects chasing after her.

And soon, they caught up and she was completely enveloped by them. Then they began eating her alive.

Some entering her body through her mouth, ears, nose and yes... There too.

The scene was nightmarish for even the bravest of men. Yet, Muku was unmoved as he looked on.

Soon enough the woman was killed...

Then Muku was kicked out of the weird forest and came back to reality.

He looked at the woman again and she was on the ground, unconscious. Form was coming out of her mouth. She had clearly been scared into fainting since her body was completely fine and she was still alive.

Many other women were in the same situation. But some were still screaming while standing still.

He looked into the eyes of one of those still standing and he was pulled into the forest again.

The new woman was there as well. However, she wasn't getting chased by insects. Hell, she wasn't getting chased at all. She had already been caught.

And countless naked men surrounded her as they took turns with her without giving her any breaks. Just like the last one, she soon died as well.

"... Well, that one might have been too much. But then again, from my analysis, what they are experiencing are their worst fears. So I can't be blamed. I didn't even know it was possible after all..." Muku justified himself to no one in particular.

He honestly hoped they wouldn't be traumatised after this experience otherwise he wouldn't know what to say to Lisa.

But it really wasn't his fault. They were just too entitled that it pissed him off. If it were the first time something like this had happened, he wouldn't have been bothered since they were just showing their care for their leader.

But he had basically given them their lives and recently saved them. Lisa had also warned them many times. And yet they still dared question him?

He might be easygoing with his group. But when outsiders were involved... They'd better know where to stop or suffering was guaranteed.

Even if he only wanted to crash them with his aura while scaring them with his look. This nightmare thing worked too. In fact, it might be the most effective method.

"So this is its power? Truly worthy of being called Nightmare" Muku spoke to himself as he recalled the armour.

Black smoke retreated from the women and entered the armour as he did so.

Chapter 394 Talking to Mom Again!

"Phew. Fortunately, that worked. Would have been awkward if it didn't..." Muku spoke in relief.

"You know I'm still waiting, right?" Mrs C's slightly annoyed voice was heard.

"Oh, right. Sorry mother. Let me go outside and we can talk" Muku who has forgotten about his mother rushed outside.

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Outside the fortress where most of the inhabitants were unconscious on the ground...

"Greetings mother. How have you been?" Muku spoke after going out.

"Ew. Why are you speaking like that? Anyway, I'm good. Let's get to the point, as we normally do. I got used to it, so it creeps me out when you're respectful" Mrs C spoke in a disgusted voice.

"... Fine. You were telling me about Lisa. What's wrong with her?" Muku remained quiet for a bit while cursing his mother internally.

What does the old lady want from him? When he behaves normally she says he's disrespectful. Yet when he is respectful, she says he's creeping her out.

But he needed answers so he couldn't say it out loud lest she refuse. Fortunately, she shouldn't be able to read minds through the phone.

"There's no need to rush. Let's first talk about your first wife Audrey. I didn't expect her to be so talented in the Force Technique. Even the technique's creator might not be much better than her. And I'd like to commend you for making the right decision back then. If she had missed that chance. It might have never come again. Tell her to keep practising and eventually, she should be able to take care of even the strongest R6s with just her Force. As for how long that will take. I'm not sure. It will all depend on her effort and luck" Mrs C first praised Audrey.

"Really?! She's that impressive? Well, as expected if my wife. And I'll tell her exactly that... But what about me? Will I not be able to do the same eventually? Also, why are you surprised? Don't you already know everyone's futures?" Muku asked.

"Tsk. What a narcissist. Even when you're praising someone else. You have to involve yourself in the conversation huh? Well, whatever, I'll humour you since you're my son. Firstly, while you'll also reach that stage of defeating R6s with force alone. You won't be able to reach it as quickly as she will nor will you achieve the state she can. You might have miraculously managed to improve to the point of defeating weak R5s with it. But I can promise you that getting to the next stage won't be so easy. I estimate that you won't reach it for at least five more years. Maybe three if you're lucky. As for knowing everyone's futures... I mean, technically, I could look into them if I wanted to. Hell, I could even travel to them. But right now, I don't have the time or strength for that. And who wants to live a life of always knowing everything?! That sounds so dull. I for one don't want it. And the future isn't set in stone, so even if I did look into it. It could go in the opposite direction of what I saw, so why bother? At most, I would look a few days ahead and even that is only when I need to. Anyway, can we move on if I have made things clear to you?" Mrs C replied.

"Sure... Are you going to tell me about Lisa now?" Muku asked.

"No need to rush. Aren't you going to ask about Jade's dreams, the exact date of when the next evolution will come, or maybe the truthfulness of Tracy's claims? Or maybe, the origin of the armour you can't completely take off?" Mrs C redirected the conversation again.

"Well... Now that you mentioned it. I wouldn't mind knowing all that. But how are you so well informed? Didn't you say you weren't spying on us?!" Muku asked.

"Hehe. That's correct. I'm not spying on you. But that's only because I don't need to. Reading your memories is enough after all. And don't worry, mommy respects your privacy, so I didn't look through those intimate ones" Mrs C practically boasted about looking through Muku's memories.

"You old thing! How dare you say you respect my privacy while looking through over ninety percent of my memories without permission?!" Muku exploded.

"Wha?! You disrespectful child! How dare you curse your mother like that?! You're lucky I can't come there right now or I'd give you a spanking like you do those girls! Hmph! But just for that, I won't tell you anything about the things I mentioned before. I'll only tell you about Lisa and that's it!" Mrs C exploded back.

"What the hell! You set me up! You didn't want to tell me anything in the first place! You probably looked into the future and saw that I asked about those things. So you brought them up first and twisted the conversation in a way you wouldn't have to tell me anything!" Muku replied angrily.

"Hehe. What an active imagination you have there. But you're not wrong. If I told you everything, things wouldn't be as fun. But even then, you did curse me when you could've controlled yourself. And disrespecting your mother is never acceptable unless she did something truly bad but I only changed the future a little bit. In fact, I just refused to help for your own growth so a punishment is definitely in order" Mrs C defended herself smugly.

Muku couldn't see her, but he could clearly imagine the smug expression on her face as she spoke. After all, he had no way of retorting.

Whatever reasons he can come up with, she can easily debunk them by simply saying, "You cursed me, your mother".

So yeah, he could only suck it up and take what she was offering lest hwade things worse for himself.

"You're right. I'm sorry Mother. I will try my best to make sure that it never happens again. So if you will, can you tell me what's wrong with Lisa?" Muku spoke as he did his best to control himself.

"Now that's how a proper child sounds. Anyway, there's no need to rush" Mrs C redirected the conversation again and Muku almost exploded again.

Why couldn't she just say what she wanted to say instead of leading him on then saying that annoying line?!

It wasn't annoying at first. But after hearing it a few times, it was rather hard not to be annoyed, especially after what happened.

However, he would not let himself explode again. It was clear to him that she was messing with him and he refused to be so easily ruffled. Honestly, the time away from her seems to have weakened his resistance to her playfulness.

"No, it's not that your resistance has been weakened. Oh, and yeah, I can still read your mind even if it's through a phone call. Aren't I just the best? Anyway, let's talk about you and your bloodline first. When was the last time you tried understanding it more?... Don't answer that. I already know that it was over two years ago since you couldn't exactly mess with it in the Beast World and you have been busy since you got back. Anyway, you might not have noticed it. But it's affecting you more and more as time passes by. Right now, the only symptom I've seen is that it has made you rather impulsive when sufficiently stimulated. A perfect example of this is your scandalous encounter with that Lisa girl. You, in your normal state are rather lustful already. But that has always been limited to the ones you love. But with your bloodline in the mix..." Mrs C paused as she let Muku digest what she had said so far.

"So you're saying that my reaction to Lisa's... Cough, cough was actually not completely my fault?" Muku asked.

"Yes. Exactly. But it was only like that because you weren't opposed to it so don't be so quick to free yourself of that guilt. Anyway, in a normal situation, you might have been tempted, but it wouldn't have been so hard to pull away. And from that incident, I think I can safely assume that if she were someone you already loved, then stopping was almost impossible..." Mrs C spoke.

"Oh..." Muku replied absent-mindedly as he thought of that time with Jade.

Now it made sense. No wonder he wasn't able to stop himself in such a situation...

"It seems I'm right. And if you want more proof... there's how you just cursed me. Sure, it wasn't the first time and you've done so many times before in your mind. But after all that, you had become somewhat numb to my actions. And yet, you couldn't stop yourself this time. Anyway, my advice to you as a concerned mother is that, you should really try to look into your bloodline and understand it more before it leads to doing something irreversible... Then again, what you did with that girl might already be irreversible..." Mrs C advised.

"What do you mean?" Muku asked confusedly.

Sure, he had done some significantly questionable things with Lisa but it wasn't too over the top right? How was that irreversible?!

"You silly child. You still don't understand yourself completely huh?" Mrs C commented vaguely.

"Please explain" Muku asked as he felt that he wasn't going to like the answer...

Chapter 395: Talking to Mom again! (Pt 2)

"Why should I explain your own possessiveness to you?" Mrs C asked.

"I'm not possessive" Muku denied the claim.

"What would you do if the girls you haven't made yours yet decided to leave with other men?" Mrs C asked calmly.

"I'd kill the men of course... Okay, I see what you mean" Muku was surprised by how quickly he answered that without hesitation.

"That's right" Mrs C replied without offering any opinions.

"But they are different. Even though things haven't been sealed. It was already agreed upon how they were gonna go. So my reaction is understandable" Muku defended himself.

"Okay. But after what you did with Lisa. Do you think you can simply watch as she goes off with another man?" Mrs C asked.

"Of course I ca... Can't. But I should be able to. Yet, just thinking about it makes me rather angry. What's wrong with me? Aren't I too selfish? I clearly know that she did what she did out of perceived necessity not emotions and yet..." Muku started questioning himself.

"Yeah, now you understand just how deeply your bloodline is affecting you. Not only is it feeding your impulsiveness but also your lust, greed, and obsessiveness... Let's just say, it's feeding all your negative emotions. Which makes sense considering that it was first triggered by a negative emotion. So its resonance with similar feelings is understandable. You really should look into it before it turns you into a villain. Well, you aren't a hero, but still..." Mrs C calmly advised.

"Yeah, you're right. I need to get my act together. But how do I do that? As you said, I didn't try to use it the first time around. It just happened on its own. So I don't know where to start..." Muku agreed and asked for directions.

"What do you mean you don't know where to start? It's quite obvious to me. You have your erasing gaze right? Use that as the starting point. You've only used it so far and never tried to understand it. From now on, try using it while studying it. Don't just stop at knowing that if you pull the trigger the gun will shoot. You should also know why pulling the trigger leads to shooting. You must know each and every part of the process. The parts involved, everything. And maybe, somewhere along the way, you will understand your bloodline more. Don't be rushed though. After all, that bloodline of yours is not something to be carelessly messed with. I don't think I need to tell you this, but that power of yours is beyond special and dangerous" Mrs C advised and warned Muku.

"Thank you mother. I will do just that" Muku replied solemnly.

Even though Mrs C tried her best to sound calm and detached, he could tell that she was expecting a lot from him. And for someone like her to say that his power was special and dangerous with everything she could do... Well, it meant something. Something with roots so deep they seemed endless to the current him.

He had a hunch that it was different all this time. After all, it completely ignored personal strength and erased everything equally... Then there was how Mrs C warned him to never use it in the Beast World...

It was clear to see that his power was on a completely different level from everything else. Even his trump card he could barely understand which was that mysterious Mithril sword...

"Anyway, enough of that. Let's talk about that new girlfriend of yours now. I can't wait for the day you have to explain your involvement with her to the others" Mrs C finally got to the topic that was really the most urgent.

"Let's put that aside for now. I'll cross the bridge when I get there. Can you tell me what's going on with her?" Muku replied as he felt a minor headache coming on while thinking about how he was going to explain Lisa to the others.

After all, it was already clear that he couldn't let her go because of his bloodline... Wait...

"What if I gain control of my bloodline? Will I be able to let her go then?" Muku asked hopefully.

It really would end many future problems if he could do that.

"Wouldn't it be great if things were that easy? Unfortunately for you, they aren't. Even if you gained control... Which is literally impossible for the current you or R10 you even. But for the sake of the argument, let's say you did gain total control... That wouldn't change what has already happened. The best you can hope for now is not to make any more links with new women otherwise your life might really not be guaranteed anymore. I, as your mother, think it's great to have a big family since it means more grandkids for me. But I don't think the girls would be as accepting. So try to have one of them around when you're meeting women with unknown intentions lest another Lisa pops up" Mrs C replied in gleeful voice.

She was clearly enjoying her son's plight.

"Sigh. Fine. I guess I'm really screwed huh... And did you just say even R10 me won't have total control?!" Muku asked something that caught his attention. Even if he had to put aside Lisa's matter for a bit...

"Yup. It's not even close actually. That's how great that power is. Anyway, don't fret. You don't need to gain total control of it to gain total control of yourself. You just need to understand it a little bit so that you can stop it from influencing you like it's doing right now..." Mrs C explained.

"Oh. Okay. If that's the case, I guess it's doable. I was worried for a second there..." Muku spoke to himself while calming down.

He was afraid that he'd be under his bloodline's control for who knows how many years. That would really suck...

"Okay, now let's really get into it. No more distractions" Muku addressed Mrs C.

"Sure. What's happening with Lisa is basically the luckiest encounter a person with a weak class can have. It's so rare that it happens once every one million individuals or so. And her particular case seems

to be even rarer as normal cases would have ended already. So it's safe to say, her encounter is one in a billion or in a few lifetimes if we use mortal human years" Mrs C replied.

"Hmm. Sounds amazing... So what is it?" Muku asked.

"Shut up, and I'll tell you. Tsk. Even your patience was affected. Anyway, that fruit has three effects. Two are experienced by everyone. But the third is beyond rare. The first effect is healing wounds. Which you experienced the first time you ate it. This works every time you eat it. The second is improving one's physic. This only works the first time. Which you are very familiar with. And finally, the last effect which is improving one's class..."

"..." Muku's eyes widened in surprise and he almost shouted due to the shock. But he managed to hold himself back.

However, Mrs C would have probably understood even if he did shout. After all, one's class level was basically set in stone from the start until death.

Up to that point, the only method of upgrading one's class he knew was through getting a fairy. And even that only worked when one was extremely compatible with the fairy, like Elsa. Otherwise, cases like Freya's, where you got an extra power without any effect on the class were more common...

And fairies weren't common beings found everywhere like beasts. So that path was reserved for the extremely lucky. Maybe not as lucky as the fruit path from what he was hearing, but very lucky nonetheless...

"Hmm. You managed to stop yourself from shouting. Very impressive. It seems you still have some control after all. Anyway, as I was saying, the fruit very very very rarely improves one's class. However, that only works for those with classes lower than Pseudo-Legendary. And even among those people, the higher one's class, the lower the chance. But since weak people rarely come across these fruits in the first place, their chances might as well be equally dismal. Anyway, your little girlfriend was an Epic class Evolver before right?. After the fruit does its work. She'll at least be one level higher... But from the phenomenon, I think it's safe to say that she'll improve by two classes at least. And that will put her directly below Pseudo-Legendary. Which is respectable. At the very least, she wouldn't feel too inferior to the others. But if she's lucky, she might catch up. But the chance of that happening is basically nonexistent... However..." Mrs C continued.

"However what?" Muku asked.

"Well, she's from an alternate timeline. One where everything was completely destroyed because a certain someone lost control. But hey, that timeline was more of a "what if" scenario. So it doesn't matter. Anyway, the girl went through a tough time there. So her will might be strong enough to last until she meets the requirement to upgrade to Pseudo-Legendary... In fact, let's do it. Go and tell her to hold on as much as she can and not faint until she really can't take it anymore. The longer she lasts. The higher the chance of her class improving to Pseudo-Legendary gets..." Mrs C replied.

"... Okay. I'll go do that. But when I return. We're going to talk about the alternate timeline bomb you just dropped..." Muku replied then went to speak to Lisa...

Chapter 396: One day

Inside Lisa's office...

"Mmmhn...Arg" Lisa was writhing on the ground in pain with black earth energy bombarding everywhere.

The walls and probably most of the fortress, possibly all of it would have been destroyed if Muku hadn't contained Lisa's energy in an invisible cube as big as the room.

Her eyes had turned blood-red from the pain and change happening in her body. The change occurred from deep within her mana core. Which was one of the most fragile and delicate organs of an Evolver. So the pain she was going through was simply unimaginable to those who hadn't gone through it.

Muku looked at her worriedly from the side a little bit as he wondered whether it was really a good thing to make her prolong her suffering.

But then again, it was her life, so it was best to leave the decision to her. And so, he stepped forward...

"Umm, Lisa. I know you're in pain and honestly, I feel bad for saying something that will likely prolong the pain but still. I'm sure you'd appreciate me saying it... Anyway, what you're going through right now is actually a very rare, class upgrade process. That's right, your very class is improving from Epic to who knows what. You can possibly even go up to Pseudo-Legendary. However, there's one issue. For that to

happen, you must hold on for as long as you can. With that said, I'll get out of your way and let you decide..." Muku said what he wanted to say, and turned to leave.

Grab!

He suddenly felt a strong hand grab his leg. He didn't panic though, after all, it was obvious who did it in a room with only two people...

"How long... How long should I hold on to reach Pseudo-Legendary?" Lisa spoke in a rough and intense voice as she suppressed the pain to ask.

She needed to know. After all, anyone could tell that what she was experiencing might be painful, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime encounter. So, if it could propel her to the peak of the world... She'd definitely do everything in her power to make sure that was the case.

For that reason, she had to know how long she had to hold out for...

"I don't..." Muku wanted to say he didn't know when a mature, feminine voice interrupted.

"One day... If you can hold on for one day. You won't be as weak as you were in your past life. You won't have to run away when things really get dangerous. You won't take ages to advance. You won't be stuck at R6 like all those Epic classes you saw. Just one day to change your fate. Now tell me. Will you last?" The voice sounded.

It was calm yet passionate in how it addressed Lisa.

"Yes. I will do it. One day is nothing to change my fate. I refuse to be a side character in other people's lives!" Lisa replied as her grip on Muku's leg tightened.

Of course, it didn't hurt Muku at all. But it did hurt Lisa herself as her hand began bleeding. This showed just how resolute she was.

Before Muku came, she was close to giving up. Her consciousness was already close to fading into the blackness. But now, she was wide awake.

The pain didn't decrease, it was as excruciating as before, but she refused to let it get to her anymore.

She let go of Muku's leg and sat upright. She then got into a meditative position. No sound escaped her mouth from then on. But it was clear that she was holding it all back from how tightly she bit down on her lip to the point blood was coming out.

Muku quietly got out of the room and let her face the tribulation. Honestly, even if she fails to reach the target...which honestly felt too long considering how she was close to giving up after just thirty minutes or so... He would forever respect her.

....

On the fortress wall...

"Now where were we?" Mrs C asked.

"Alternate timeline..." Muku replied simply...

"Oh, right. Like I said before. Those aren't really important or significant in any way... At least not to the main timeline. Which is this one? So did you really want to know?" Mrs C asked.

"Yes. If you didn't say Lisa was from one of those alternates, maybe I wouldn't care but she is. And I want to understand her more" Muku replied.

"Hehe. Already interested in our new wife are we?" Mrs C teased.

"Yes. Very interested" Muku agreed with her with a calm expression.

"Tsk. It's not fun when you don't get flustered or bothered, but whatever. If you want to know, I'll tell you... Alternate timelines are exactly what the name implies. They are an infinite collection of what could have happened in the current timeline. A gathering of "what ifs", like what if you died young, what if you weren't so lustful and such..." Mrs C began explaining.

"Hey! What does it seem like you're just cursing me in those examples?!... Just tell me about Lisa's "what if" that's the only one that matters and I get the gist of the rest, so there's no need to go deep. Oh and, I'd like to know how she came here since you said that the timelines couldn't affect this one..." Muku replied in the way she was hoping he would.

Which honestly, he did purposefully so that she's pleased and doesn't skimp on details. Of course, he directed her towards what he wanted to know while he was at it...

"Well, that girl's timeline is one of the most brutal ones... As I said, it's mostly your fault. You didn't directly do anything to her. But for certain reasons I won't say, you lost control and destroyed over ninety percent of the creatures there, humans included. After that, your bloodline consumed you completely and you exploded. The explosion made most of the planet uninhabitable. But on the bright side, it did stop the invasion. Because the point of it all was mostly gone... Anyway, that doesn't matter for now. What matters is that, on the little land that was left. Competition was tough and our Lisa here died as a result of a clash between two powerhouses while covering the retreat of a comrade... So, instead of saying she's a different Lisa, compared to the one from this timeline. It's more appropriate to say, she's a version changed by tough times..." Mrs C explained.

"Hmm. So that's what happened. And I won't bother asking what you withheld since I know better by now... But you didn't tell me how she made it here..." Muku replied.

He wanted to know why he'd go berserk and die so horribly. But she didn't say, so asking was pointless.

And it seemed she had almost revealed something important about the apocalypse before casually steering away as usual. Dealing with her was certainly tiring with how secretive she could be.

And honestly, it felt like she was doing it on purpose. Which she probably was. But even then, she was way more knowledgeable than Iris. So she was indispensable.

Also unlike Iris who was bound by mystical forces in what she could review. Mrs C wasn't bound by anything apart from her own mood. As she said many times before, she only withheld information to keep things interesting.

But when it was necessary to speak, she would. Plus, she was trustworthy when compared to the mostly unwilling Iris. So the pros outweighed the cons.

"Oh, that... I happened to be browsing through timelines for fun during the time. And well, I felt rather emotional. So I have given her a chance... I created a reincarnation gacha for her. It had over a thousand possibilities... To keep the game fun. I left it all up to her luck. So I didn't check where she ended up. It's only fate that we met here and you are involved with her too..." Mrs C replied.

"Sigh. So that's why you were so spirited when speaking with her before. It's because you gave her this chance. And don't think I'll believe you for a second that this is all fate. I'm certain that you twisted the so-called "fate" to make sure that she and I met... But then again... We didn't know each other back then so... How?" Muku refused to believe that Mrs C was as clean as she was saying she was.

But then, as he said, they hadn't established their, mother-son relationship yet when Lisa came over from the other timeline so...

"That's simple actually. While you didn't know we would meet. I did. Cough I mean. It's fate like I said before. And no one can control fate. It's that mystical!" Mrs C practically shot herself in the leg.

"Tsk. Says the lady who plays with fate all day, every day. Do you think what you did..." browsing through timelines" which is absurd on its own and giving a poor soul so many options. And I doubt randos can add people to the so-called main timeline. I mean, I always knew you were absurd and I'm not surprised but please don't try to insult my intelligence by hiding behind fate" Muku refused to take it lying down.

If she was going to do something like what she did, at the very least, she should acknowledge it!

"Tsk, fine. I might have done a few things. But in my defence. It was all for you, one way or the other. And don't overthink it. I'm only involved with Lisa a little bit. The rest of the girls have nothing to do with me" Mrs C relented.

"Good that you acknowledged it" Muku replied in a pleased manner.

It was rare for his mother to give in after all...

Chapter 397: Rare break!

"Whatever. I've spoken to you longer than expected. So I have to leave before the situation starts deteriorating" Mrs C announced her departure.

"Okay, Mom. Goodbye. It was nice talking to you again... Even if I wish you didn't read my mind every chance you get" Muku replied.

"Hehe. It was good speaking to you too son. As for reading your mind? Just give up on that one. I'm never stopping! Hahahaha. Oh and a tip for the coming World Evolution. It's better to stay on the ground, or underground if possible. Which should be doable with Lisa's upgrade. The sky will be quite chaotic for a while. However, it will also be an opportunity to gain KP for the entire team. Additionally, the earthquake will last only an hour. After that, the beasts will come. Real danger will only appear after one week. Do what you will with that information... Bye!" Mrs C gave Muku some seemingly important tips before going.

It was probably because Muku was more filial in how he spoke to her at the end. Which was a major improvement from before when she had to practically threaten him...

"So the evolution really is close at hand huh? Well, thank you Mom. I won't let you down" Muku spoke to himself as he put away his phone.

Then he made his way back inside the fortress after contemplating all the things Mrs C told him.

At this point, all the women had woken up. They were back to doing their tasks.

Whenever Muku passed them by, they would stop whatever they were doing and look down with their bodies shaking in fear.

This result wasn't the one Muku wanted since he gained nothing from being feared by them. But it was better than the ever-defiant look in their eyes from before.

Muku didn't feel like speaking to them so he ignored them as he walked to Lisa's office.

He peeked into the room to check Lisa's condition before turning to leave.

By that time close to two hours had passed. Lisa was still battling on as she sat there unmoving.

However, the continuous twitching of her body showed that even with a will as strong as hers, she couldn't completely ignore or suppress the pain.

At least it looked like she could hold on for a lot longer. Which was a good thing considering that she still has a long way to go...

...

Back on the floating mansion...

Muku could be seen resting on a couch with his eyes closed. He had just returned from Lisa's fortress and realised that he for the first time in forever didn't have any matters that required immediate action. And since the girls were all occupied, he might as well take this time out to relax a bit before what was coming.

"Well look at you. Relaxing there with zero worries. Must be nice to be you" Raya spoke after quietly appearing on another couch.

"Oh shut up. You've been relaxing almost every day, going swimming and whatnot. I haven't been able to do that in years" Muku replied without opening his eyes.

If they hadn't gone so far from the lake he, Raya and Legion created. He might have gone for a dip. But wait...

Muku suddenly opened his eyes and looked at Raya.

"What?" Raya asked immediately. She didn't like being looked a like that.

"Nothing much... Take me to the lake" Muku replied.

"Do you know how much mana I'd be wasting by doing that?" Raya asked with a deadpan expression on her face.

"Oh shut up. I know that the stronger you get. The less mana your teleportation needs. After all, your understanding of the element and mana density has improved..." Muku replied while rolling his eyes.

"Tsk. I hate you. Can't you just take the hint that I don't want to do it?" Raya replied grumpily. She wouldn't have come if she knew he was going to ask her for something. Now it was too late for her. He looked bored enough to chase her down if she tried to run. The only way to get away was to teleport a long distance away. Which would defeat the whole purpose of not wanting to do it. Like Muku said, teleporting that far wouldn't take too much mana. But it took enough for a mana miser like her to notice. Which was why she didn't want to do it..."

"I'll catch you an R5 snack if we come across any" Muku coaxed her.

"You know you can get there within an hour if you really try right? So why are you bothering me?" Raya asked.

"Why waste an hour when I can get there instantly. Plus I'd need another hour to get back. That doesn't work for me. Like what if something happens? And there's a high chance of running into some trouble on the way. Which would increase the time. Plus I might be strong, but it's only when we're together that I'm confident in facing the world" Muku replied.

Raya's cute little face reddened slightly as Muku's last words reminded her of the romance anime she watched on Chloe's laptop.

She couldn't completely grasp the meaning of the words or the feelings, but she still found them embarrassing.

"Fine, I'll take you there. But only this once" Raya relented.

"Thank you. I doubt I'll have another chance to do this again for a long time to come so I don't mind"
Muku replied truthfully.

Raya didn't say anything and just grabbed Muku's shoulder then the two disappeared...

Surprisingly enough, nothing changed after Muku disappeared. The mansion kept floating and was still invisible. Lisa's office was still protected...

This was definitely not something Muku could do before... At the very least, R4 and weaker him couldn't do it. But R5 was different...

Doing such a thing was easy. He was so strong that he could cast spells that could continue existing for hours without his input. Which was a major improvement from just being able to create physical objects that did that...

And so, Muku could confidently go swimming. He could have waited for the girls to wake up but who knew how long that would take...

.....

At the lake...

Unranked and lower-ranked beasts from different species could be seen drinking some water. Some were swimming in the lake, they had clearly made it their new home...

The scene was quite tranquil, like the ones shown on those animal documentary channels before the apocalypse.

KUBVUM!

Suddenly the peace and tranquillity were ruined by a loud sound of something dropping into the water....

"Raya, what the hell?!" Muku who was the one dropped into the water by Raya cursed as he tried to swim but couldn't... That's right. The legendary Muku Chisen, The Nightmare, The Saviour and a whole bunch of other grand nicknames couldn't swim!

"Hahaha. I suspected you couldn't swim back in The Beast World. But who knew that I was correct? Hahaha. An R5 who can't swim! Hahaha. I can't believe you're one of the strongest beings on the planet. Hahaha," Raya began laughing at Muku while floating above water.

KUBVUM!

Another loud sound of a body hitting water was heard.

This time it was the unsuspecting Raya who was dragged into the water by Muku's Telekinesis.

"Yeah well, unlike you, I can swim" Raya chose emotional damage over throwing a tantrum then began smugly swimming away from Muku.

And it worked as Muku really was emotionally damaged.

However, he didn't let it bother him too much as he began paying attention to the way she swam and began copying it.

As an R5 it didn't take long for him to learn how to do it. Then slowly but surely, he began swimming in the lake. His technique improved by the minute.

Raya's expression became more and more sour the more he progressed. Sure, his fast progress was to be expected but still, she wanted to see him struggling a bit more. But alas, it wasn't her day...

And so, thirty minutes of peaceful swimming went by...

Of course, there were a few rowdy animals that approached since Muku and Raya were suppressing their auras.

But just leaking their aura a little bit was enough to scare all of them away. Neither was interested in killing off such weak creatures after all.

Though Muku couldn't help but feel nostalgic while looking at those weak beasts. After all, there was a time he was as weak as them if not weaker...

....

Around an hour later...

A group of around a hundred and fifty people on a semi-transparent disk which was moving slightly above the trees approached the lake from a distance.

The people on the disk all looked weary and travel-worn. There was a gloomy air around them as well.

Which was understandable after what they had gone through...

As some might have guessed. It was Klaus's group...

After escaping the "Dark Shadow" they were ambushed by another group from Tactoa.

And this time the result of the clash was worse. They lost a significant number of people.

But they won somehow. But things took another turn for the worse... The black energy from before appeared again and the Tactoa members began gathering into one being again...

Just when they were about to lose hope since they were tired... The familiar shadow appeared. And just like before, the monster which was getting created was taken care of before they could blink.

The shadow and its piercing red eyes disappeared again...

At that point, it was clear to them. They were being used as bait by it and there was nothing they could do...

Chapter 398: Random encounter...

Even their leader Klaus couldn't do anything about it...

Fortunately, it seems that was the last group of Tactoa people who knew where they were.

They were probably sent after the first group. So they knew the general location from the start. Which meant their meeting was more of an unlucky encounter than a predetermined thing.

At the very least, everyone thought that was the case. If it were, maybe that creature would leave them alone...

But then again, what if the creature targeted them when it got hungry and didn't receive its Tactoa meal?

No, they couldn't possibly be that unlucky right? Besides, it had already been a while since the last time they clashed with Tactoa. So if it wanted to attack, it would have attacked.

Hell, maybe it was already gone. After all, they couldn't sense it at all, not even a vague feeling of being watched could be felt.

This meant one of three things, the obvious meaning was that it left, the second was that it was so much stronger than them that they couldn't sense its gaze and lastly, it was lurking around them, but wasn't paying attention to them specifically, so they didn't feel like they were being watched as they technically weren't...

Klaus bet that it was either the first or the last. The middle one seemed unlikely and quite terrifying, so he wished that it wasn't it along with the reasoning that it wasn't...

After all, if it was that strong, couldn't it just go attack their base directly or something?

Anyway, such thoughts didn't change their situation. What the group needed right now was a way to get their mind off things...

Just as he was thinking that, a lake appeared in their line of sight... His eyes brightened instantly. This was just what they needed. They could go for a swim as well as wash their clothes. Both things should make everyone feel a lot better...

"Everyone, do you all see that beautiful lake? I don't know about you, but I'm going for a swim when we get there..." Klaus spoke while looking at the lake.

The others saw it too and they liked the idea. It was just what they needed to loosen up.

Everyone was experienced enough to know that their current mental state wasn't optimal for surviving in the current world. Hell, it wasn't optimal for any version of the world...

"I'll definitely join you, Leader!"

"Me too!"

"I'll show you all my legendary swimming skills!"

"Shut up! Your class is literally called Aqua Soldier! What natural swimming skills could you possibly have?!"

"Ey! Just because my class is water-related doesn't mean that I myself aren't good at dealing with water. Besides, isn't my class a part of me? What could be more natural than me taking advantage of a part of me?"

"Oh? So you admit that your legendary skills are all from your class huh?"

"Hahaha. I knew it! There's no way someone like John could have legendary skills. That is if we don't count his legendary skill of getting rejected by every girl he has ever approached!"

"Hey! Why are you all getting so personal with me?! Leader! I'm being bullied! I need justice!"

"Hahaha"...

Everyone began laughing after John's complaint.

Klaus smiled without saying anything. The lake really was wondrous. Everyone was already doing better even before getting in. Just mentioning it was enough...

Soon enough the ground reached the lake...

And it was even more beautiful up close...

Everyone was ready to jump in when they noticed something...

There were already two people swimming in the lake...

A little girl and her young father... The man looked too young to be the father of such a big girl. But it was the apocalyptic world. So the dude might be in his thirties and just looked young...

But that wasn't the most interesting thing about the duo. The most interesting thing was how the young girl was literally swimming circles around the man who seemed to be struggling a little bit like a newbie in swimming.

But how was it that the daughter was an expert swimmer but the father sucked?...

"Hey over there! Can we join you for a swim?" Klaus called out to gain Muku's attention after noticing that the other party wasn't paying attention to them even though they were easy to see and their auras weren't completely suppressed.

It was his way of showing that they didn't mean any harm.

"Sure. But first, destroy the grime on your bodies with your mana. Got to keep the water clean. Oh and, we don't need to talk. You do you, and we do we" Muku replied while swimming further away from them to show that he really wanted nothing to do with them.

He had actually noticed them long before they noticed him. But he no longer got excited from meeting new people like in his earlier days.

Back then, people were possibly useful allies. Now, well, he had a team of monsters getting even monstrous at that very moment. And he also had Lisa's mini-army.

So he really did need to care about people. Like he said, as long as they don't bother with him, he won't bother with them...

"How rude! Let me go teach him a lesson" One of the stronger members of Klaus's group was extremely offended by how Muku disregarded their leader.

Hell, most of the members felt the same and supported what the guy was about to do.

However, Klaus stopped him by grabbing his shoulder.

"I won't stop you. But if you die there, I will also not intervene. That man doesn't know us, we don't know him. So why do you feel offended by him? Since when were you so hot-headed? I thought everyone here thought things out before acting. But seems I was wrong. We haven't even done anything noteworthy other than running away but you're so arrogant already... Besides that, I can't sense any mana from him or his daughter. Can you?" Klaus thoroughly rebuked the man. But at the same time, he was teaching him and the others.

Everyone paid closer attention to Muku and Raya after Klaus spoke.

And as he said, they couldn't sense anything. And yet, wherever the duo went, the beasts there would scatter.

This scene made the arrogant man feel a cold chill go down his spine. Sure, the beasts were weak. But they clearly knew something he didn't. So like Klaus said, if he really did find trouble with the man. Death was a possibility...

"You're right Leader. I'm sorry. I don't know what was wrong with me. Please punish me". The man bowed in front of Klaus while apologising.

"There's no need. Just don't let it happen next time lest you cause trouble for the whole group. And I promise you this. If such a time comes, I will disown you with hesitation for I refuse to die because of one person's stupidity. And that goes for the rest of you all. Arrogance will get you nothing but death in this world" Klaus replied seriously.

"We will remember and live by your words leader!" The group all exclaimed at the same time.

"Good. Now enough of that. Clean your bodies and jump in!" Klaus spoke in a more gentle tone. Then destroyed all the dirt on his body before jumping into the lake.

The others joyfully did the same. And soon the group were merrily enjoying themselves in the water. All the mental fatigue they felt was getting slowly washed away by the water...

Muku looked on for a bit from a distance...

"Hmm. What a decent leader... And I really should bring the girls here next time. Being here alone sucks" Muku spoke softly.

"Alone? What am I then? A ghost?" Raya snapped from a distance away.

"Oh, please. You know what I mean" Muku replied dismissively. He felt that the child really cared too much about little details.

"No, I don't know what you mean. Tsk. Whatever... Did you also sense what I sensed?" Raya asked seriously.

"Do you mean the trace of Legion's energy on them? Why yes. Why do you ask?" Muku replied nonchalantly.

"Aren't you worried about that thing making an appearance again?" Raya asked while rolling her eyes.

She really hated the relaxed and nonchalant version of Muku. He never took things seriously.

"No, not really. And don't you want it to appear so that you can finish it off if it really managed to survive? Besides, I doubt it's Legion. They probably encountered members from Tactoa. It would be naive to think that we're the only ones they are finding trouble with after all. And if it was really Legion. Do you think they'd be here now?" Muku replied while trying all kinds of swimming techniques.

"Hmm. I guess you're right. But I did also sense a vague glare from the distance before it disappeared..." Raya spoke.

"Maybe they were being trailed by something which got scared away by us. There's no need to worry about such things that don't involve us... Anyway, I think we've stayed here long enough, let's go back..." Muku replied.

"Fine" Raya finally relented. She then came closer to Muku. Touched his shoulder and they both disappeared from the lake without causing any commotion...

"So they really were experts huh..." Klaus whispered to himself while looking at the place Muku and Raya had disappeared from.

The power they used was completely unfamiliar to him.

It looked like they were so fast they disappeared. But he felt that speed had nothing to do with it, and they just disappeared.

Which was both interesting and scary...

Chapter 399: The Dark Shadow's plans

"And for some reason, I feel like a strange weight has been lifted off my shoulders since we came here..." Klaus continued speaking to himself.

"Oddly enough, I feel the same" Chris who had been entertaining his life partner, Scarlett, replied as he swam over.

"Hmm? Shouldn't you be with sister-in-law?" Klaus asked.

"She's playing with her friends now. It feels weird hanging around so many females... Plus she kind of shooed me away when they came" Chris replied tiredly.

He missed the days when he was the only thing she saw. Sure, romantically, it was still the same, and he didn't see that changing anytime soon. Scarlett just got herself a few female friends from the group and he was happy for her. But conflictedly enough, he wanted her all to himself at the same time. The situation was quite confusing for him...

"Haha. Never thought I'd see the day my brother would be jealous of his wife's friends... Never thought I'd see my brother with a wife actually..." Klaus replied.

"Oh, shut up. You're just jealous" Chris snapped back.

"Of course I am. I never thought I'd be the one struggling to find a wife when I'm clearly the better-looking one between us!" Klaus continued.

"Yeah right. On a serious note, do you think that feeling we felt was because the creature finally left?" Chris changed topics since he wasn't the gloating type.

At the very least he didn't do it openly...

"Tsk... You might be right about that. Even though I couldn't sense anything. I always felt an invisible pressure pressed on me..." Klaus replied while considering what this entailed.

"Looks like you're thinking what I'm thinking..." Chris spoke while looking at the spot Muku and Raya had been before.

"Yup. At least one of those two people. Likely the father was stronger than the shadow or at least just as strong. It could sense that and decided to back off since there was no reason to fight" Klaus said thoughtfully.

"If that's the case, then we have to thank them if we ever meet again..." Chris added...

"You're right... And something tells me that we definitely will meet them again. Hopefully we meet on good terms..." Klaus spoke as he finally stopped looking at the spot...

...

A few kilometres away....

"Revenge!"

"Kill!"

"Run!"

"Not yet!"

"Grow stronger!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

"Revenge!"

"Get stronger!"

"Get stronger!"

"Get stronger!"...

Numerous voices could be heard shouting one after another in a deep and dark cave...

It was easy to assume that there were many people in the cave but there was actually only one being in the cave. And that was Legion.

And all the different voices, male, female, old, young and so on came from one mouth.

It really had been trailing Klaus's group all this time. And it really did stop only because it saw Muku and Raya before they saw it. After all, it was looking when they weren't. So, it made a hasty retreat before it was spotted.

There wasn't much resistance then since many voices already wanted to leave.

Now that it had time to properly consider the options. The voices began "voting".

Some wanted revenge or to kill, which were basically the same thing. But most chose to wait and get stronger.

The reason for this was that the number of "souls" in Legion has increased a lot. Now it was mostly made up of souls that had nothing to do with Muku. So the drive for revenge wasn't as strong compared to the whole.

It wasn't that revenge against him was getting completely ruled out... No. It would eventually circle back to it. But at that point, Tactoa had become the being's greatest enemy. As well as a food source...

So Muku and Raya managed to avoid a clash with it for the time being. Though the two probably wouldn't mind whether it had happened there and then or later on...

And so, the hundreds of creepy voices in one body began discussing their next step...

Klaus's group was now useless when it came to attracting Tactoa members, so Legion might have to target the organisation by itself.

It had avoided doing that because there was a chance it could be abused by the organisation's best if it did that.

While the connection it had with the Dark Monarch was mostly severed by that point, if it got close enough. The other party could still sense it. There was also the possibility of getting taken over by it. So it had many reasons to avoid the Monarch and pick off those sent outside.

However, now it had no other choice. But of course, it wouldn't target the main base. There were many branches to target first.

And by the end of it, it should be strong enough to go against the Monarch. After that, taking care of Muku and Raya was just a matter of course...

Whoosh!

With a plan in motion...

The "dark shadow" set out again. Since it had a few higher-ups in its make-up, it knew where all the bases were. So it wasn't acting on instinct alone.

It was going to target the three weakest first, then switch it up to avoid being ambushed...

If it didn't get smarter with every Tactoa member it consumed, it wouldn't have come up with such a detailed plan and just gone on a rampage.

Whatever the case... Tactoa was in for a chaotic time...

.....

Back at the mansion...

"I'm so bored! What should I do now?" Muku spoke to himself after realising that no one was still done yet. From the girls to Lisa...

"Why not try sleeping?" Raya suggested while munching on some meat.

"Hmm. I have a better idea..." Muku spoke as he looked at Raya with some bad intentions in his eyes.

"Nope"... Raya spoke then disappeared before Muku could continue.

"Come on! I just wanted you to overlook me while I mess around with my bloodline!" Muku shouted!

"Yeah well, only an idiot would stick around while you do something so dangerous!" Raya exclaimed in Muku's head from who knows where.

"Tsk. Whatever. I guess I'll just do it myself... Though, it would have been great to have a person to wake me if I get too immersed... Sigh. Why did everyone have to be busy at the same time leaving me with that unreliable brat?" Muku lamented.

"I can watch over you if you want" Tracy who mostly remained quiet when Layla wasn't around offered her services.

It wasn't that she wanted to be quiet all the time. But she had no reason to speak. And the show Muku and Raya provided was quite entertaining too...

"Really? I'd be honoured to have you. But I'm obligated to tell you that if things go out of control, there's a chance you'll get erased out of existence..." Muku replied...

"Well... Now I'm definitely less willing. But I trust you enough to put my life in your hands. So let's do it. Just try your best to stay in control please". Tracy replied with a slightly wry expression.

She regretted offering her services after hearing the possibility. No wonder Raya ran away before even hearing anything. But she had already offered to help and she wasn't one to back out...

"Don't worry. I'll do my best... Let's do it outside just in case..." Muku replied confidently... But the following suggestion didn't inspire confidence...

"Okay", Tracy replied and followed after Muku.

She really hoped that she wasn't walking to her death...

....

Back at the lake...

KUBVUM!

Raya appeared in the air and fell with force.

This startled everyone present. From the beasts that thought she was finally gone to Klaus's group which was still enjoying themselves...

While they were startled, none dared find trouble with her because of it.

And so, Raya began enjoying herself in the water again... Though she kind of liked it better with Muku around because she got to crash him with her swimming skills...

As she thought this, her eyes looked in a certain direction. Then she disappeared...

Klaus's heart skipped a beat because he noticed her looking their way before disappearing. Before he could make sense of it. She appeared in front of him...

"Hey, you. So you want to have a swimming race with me? Don't worry, I'll reduce my strength to match yours. And you won't refuse me after enjoying yourselves in my lake right?" Raya spoke immediately after appearing.

"...Well. If the lake's creator who graciously let us swim in it wants a race. Then a race she shall get. However, instead of a single boring race... Why not have a mini tournament? Everyone else will face first. Then the winner will race you. How does that sound?" Klaus replied after a moment of silence

He kept a neutral expression on his face but internally he was beyond shocked. After all, the lake was more than twenty kilometres wide and more than fifty kilometres deep.

And he was certain that this was only because it was something kind of concentrated attack. Yet it covered so much ground and dug so deep.

Their two sides only met by chance otherwise the chance of meeting was quite low in such a large lake...

One had to know that the soil was naturally resistant to all attacks due to prior evolutions. So damaging it even a little bit was already super impressive. And yet, this child did so much damage!

Another thing which was worthy of note and scared him quite a bit was... What creature required such a strong attack to take care of?!...

Chapter 400: Brother! You've got class!

"A tournament huh? You're just like him. Taking advantage of every little chance you get to hold a tournament. How annoying. But fine. I'll indulge you this once. I don't want to race weaklings after all... Well, you are all weaklings but still" Raya replied in her usual, unfiltered manner.

"That's great! Then let me organise the tournament. It should only take a few minutes before the first race. So please be patient" Klaus replied with a smile.

If it were someone else, they might have been offended by Raya's words. Some to the point of wanting to fight it out.

But he was different. He was Jade's older brother. He had long gotten used to speaking to a young girl with no filters.

Chris was the same as he quietly stood behind Klaus. He was also reminded of Jade by this rude brat. But he didn't dare pinch her cheek like he would have done if it were Jade. After all, that would be no different from seeking death if the child really was like Jade.

Jade would let her family pinch her. But anyone else would be asking for a fight if they tried it. No matter the age, she would lose it... She had caused quite a few problems for their mother in the past when she tried to fight neighbours and old people who pinched her cheeks while admiring her childish cuteness...

Fortunately, word got around quickly and after a while, no one dared try it. But that wasn't before she thoroughly embarrassed their mother...

"Okay. In the meantime, let me go get someone. He'd probably bug me forever if he finds out that I participated in a tournament without him there..." Raya replied.

"Sure. See you soon" Klaus replied as his smile widened.

Sure, he wanted to speak to Raya more and maybe get her to reveal some things indirectly. Just like how she had revealed that she created the lake without being asked and such...

But that method seemed quite traitorous even if they didn't know each other. There was a chance Raya knew what he was doing. So if he insisted, the relationship between the two sides would deteriorate.

So, it was better to speak to the mature man. That way, their clear intent would be more obvious.

Yeah, in the past Klaus wouldn't have cared about making allies. However recent history has taught him that allies weren't a bad thing to have. Especially ones as strong as this girl who could potentially scare away that creature which had been using them as bait...

Hopefully, the man is willing to be an ally with him. He could tell that it was going to be hard though.

Just from how the man seemed so free. He could tell that he was someone who was relatively in control of things and had manageable troubles.

He used to be like that before he met someone stronger. But something told him that finding anyone stronger than the other side wasn't an easy task...

.....

Back at the mansion...

Muku was back on the couch staring into the nothingness...

"Why couldn't I sense anything? I used the erasing gaze as she said but I didn't see any clear path..." Muku complained to himself...

"Well, maybe you gave up too soon... From what I've gathered about your bloodline. It's very special. So maybe it requires more effort than everything else you've looked into before..." Tracy tried to console him.

"Hmm. You might be right. But I can't completely immerse myself in it right now. There are way too many things happening. At best, we're experiencing the calm before the storm. So it's best to wait until things stabilise. At the very least, a few things should be cancelled off the long list first" Muku replied seriously after thinking about it.

"Yeah. Maybe that's why it's so hard. You aren't fully committed to it right now. Your mind is too cluttered" Tracy supported him.

"Yeah. Thanks for helping me see the way... But then, that means I still don't have anything to do right now. Do I really have to always like Raya suggested?" Muku spoke.

"There's no time to sleep. I have prepared a tournament for you. Now praise me and come see" Raya suddenly appeared as Muku was considering sleeping.

"Ooh! A tournament! I'm in! You're the best Raya! Let's go!" Muku didn't need details.

As long as it was a tournament, he definitely had to see it!

"Senior Tracy. I leave everything in your care!" Muku called out to Tracy just before he disappeared with Raya.

"... And who said I didn't want to see the tournament too?!. Sigh. Fine. I guess someone had to stay here. Even if it's the group's weakest member... I always suspected this before. But I think this group's leader is quite unreliable!" Tracy complained to herself...

....

Back at the lake...

KUBVUM!

"Tsk"

A familiar sound was heard. This time no one was startled. But Raya was annoyed though....

After all, this time Muku expected what was going to happen. So he didn't fall into the water when they arrived. Raya fell on her own...

And this is what annoyed her. He practically made her look like an idiot for falling alone... Well, technically she did it herself, but it was always more fun to blame someone else...

"Oh? They are still here?... Anyway, tell me about this tournament of yours. How many participants are there and where did they come from?" Muku asked after briefly glancing at Klaus's group who seemed to be organising something.

He had a hunch from what they were doing, but he chose to ask Raya first before coming to any conclusions.

"Hmph! I'm not telling you" Raya refused to say.

"If I am..." Klaus called out from a distance.

"Yes?" Muku replied.

Raya looked at Klaus for a second before looking away. She wanted Muku to beg her first before she told him, but this stinky bastard had to get involved.

She would have beaten him up if it wasn't because of the tournament she was very interested in participating in...

"The young lady here organised a swimming tournament with us in which the winner races her. Everything has already been prepared. So if you don't mind, we'd be honoured to host your esteemed selves" Klaus spoke while gesturing and the semi-transparent terrace Chris prepared.

"Oh. So it's a swimming tournament. I've never seen one before. And please, you can speak normally. We're all humans here... Well, mostly. Anyway, sure. Let's watch together!" Muku excitedly replied and dragged Raya over with his Telekinesis.

The scene looked quite comical. Muku was flying over enthusiastically. Raya on the other hand was oddly flying backwards in the water like she was getting pulled along. She even looked disgruntled.

This garnered a few chuckles from Klaus's group...

However, Klaus didn't find it funny. His eyes narrowed as he looked between Muku and Raya.

While he couldn't prove it, he had a hunch that Raya really was being pulled along instead of trying to be funny.

A while later...

The first batch of people was already in the water... There were ten of them and they were separated by semi-transparent blue dividers. Those were probably the stand-ins for ropes used in normal swimming competitions.

Everyone else was sitting on the terrace that Chris had prepared. Muku felt that he could create a better scene and arena, but he was a guest and spectator, so he could only make do with what the other party provided since he didn't want to be rude.

The surroundings were noisy as other spectators made bets on who would win and so on...

Muku couldn't help but smile. After all, this is what a real arena should be like.

Watching with his private group was okay, but this was more appropriate for the situation...

"So, they are racing to the edge of the lake which is more than twenty kilometres away and back?" Muku asked.

"Yes. And that's not all. They are also allowed to use minor harmless spells to obstruct the path of others. We can't have a normal race with Evolvers after all. That would be a waste!" Klaus replied. There was some excitement in his eyes as he looked on.

His comrades couldn't help but roll their eyes. Their leader's illness was flaring up again...

The thing was, it wasn't the first tournament Klaus had practically forced upon them since he never asked for their opinion. He had done so a few times in the past. It all started after watching a group of beasts surrounding two beasts of the same race fighting.

He was instantly captivated and became something like a mini-Muku when it came to organising tournaments.

Though his weren't strictly fighting like Muku's...

"Oh?... Hahahahaha. Brother! You've got class! That sounds great! I can't wait to see who wins" Muku excitedly replied after a small pause while confirming that he had found a kindred soul.

And out of nowhere he was giving Klaus a bro hug while laughing and waiting for the race to begin.

Soon the two began laughing together while discussing the tournaments they had held in the past.

Everyone else had deadpan expressions while looking on. They felt like they were in the way of a reunion between two long-lost best friends.

"Klaus..." Chris called out calmly.

"Yes?" Klaus paused his laughing and looked at Chris as he replied.

"The race..." Chris reminded...

"The race? Oh, the race! Hahaha. Had forgotten about that. Three... Two... One... Go!" Klaus finally started the race he had forgotten after being reminded.

The racers rolled their eyes before setting off...