

Few Wives 491

Chapter 491: Layla's reward

"And the winner is... Layla!" Muku's emotional voice was heard.

He was happy regardless of who won really. However, he was extra happy because it was Layla. After all, the girl had an obsession with winning yet it had never gone her way up to that point. And the others handled losing a lot more easily.

Even Jade was better at handling it than Layla. She tried hiding her sole loser tendencies but they were quite obvious to anyone who knew her.

Anyway, now one had to be subjected to it since everything worked out...

....

"Sigh. It seems I lost. What do you want me to do?" Chloe spoke in a disheartened voice.

She really thought that she had it until the very last moment. But oh well, such was life. She could only take the loss and do better next time.

"Why do you think I want such a thing?" Layla asked.

Both of them had dispelled their avatars and were looking at each other as they stood in the arena.

"Umm, well, from how you acted before, I figured that losing would definitely lead to a bad ending for me" Chloe spoke in a certain voice.

"Well, you weren't wrong. But it has been so long that I no longer feel like doing anything. And I've seen that you have it under control. So if I still did something after that then I'd just be unreasonable don't you think?" Layla replied without shame.

She admitted her initial bad intentions as if they were nothing worth mentioning. But then again, that's how she operated.

"Oh... Okay," Chloe didn't know what else to say.

"Let's go to the others. We've been here too long" Layla spoke calmly.

After that, she turned around and Chloe followed her quietly like an obedient little sister.

The battle result had changed nothing about their relationship. Which was understandable. After all, only weak relationships would be affected by something like this...

.....

"Congratulations Layla" Muku was the first one to speak as soon as Layla and Chloe arrived.

"...." Layla didn't say anything as she just stood there looking Muku in the eyes.

Muku was uncertain but he felt like there was expectation in her eyes.

But what else did she want from him? He had already congratulated her right? If anything, she should be looking at everyone else, after all, they were the ones who hadn't said anything yet. What was their problem? Were they jealous or something?

With that thought Muku looked at the other girls disapprovingly. But he was met with suggestive gazes he didn't understand. This made him even more confused. Why were they making it seem like he was the problematic one?

"What?" Since he didn't understand what was going on. He of course decided to ask.

"Sigh. I wonder how I have so many daughters-in-law when my son clearly lacks the skills to even get or keep one" Before any of the girls could say anything it was Mrs C who lamented.

"What do you mean? How am I at fault in whatever this is?" Muku asked her confusedly. After all, it was clear that he was the only one who didn't know what was going on.

Hell, even Raya was looking at him like he was an idiot.

And for the first time ever, Muku realised that maybe surrounding yourself with women might not be a very good idea...

"She's waiting for her prize you idiot... Cough cough. Sorry, I don't know what came over me" Raya who couldn't take his denseness anymore blurted out.

She cursed him out on the spot. She immediately apologised, after all, it went against the sweet girl image she had worked hard to create in everyone's minds... Except Muku's of course.

"Huh? But there's no rewa... What would you like to get?" Muku was about to remind everyone that he made no such promises, but seeing the darkening look on Layla's face he dared not finish his statement as it was and changed it.

He had long learned to never use logic with women when they are emotional. It's the fastest way to one's demise.

"You and me. Tonight. Alone" Layla spoke like someone who barely knew how to speak.

But the others knew that it was because she was too embarrassed to say it straightforwardly. Yes, even Layla got embarrassed about such things like a normal girl. Even her calm personality couldn't protect her.

"Oh ho! It seems Young Ms here wants to have you all to herself for tonight. How unexpected and daring" Mrs C teased.

Her words made Layla's cheeks redden quite a bit even though she tried to act like she wasn't impacted at all...

"Uh, oh..." Muku finally understood.

So that's what she wanted for her prize. Well, couldn't she have just said it at the start? What was wrong with women always wanting men to guess what they were thinking about instead of saying it?

Well, at least Layla said something. Most would probably get unreasonably angry then storm off because he couldn't understand the very vague signs...

"Be clearer. Are you saying yes or no?" Mrs C asked.

"Yes, I'm saying yes. It's a simple matter really, she could've even requested it on a normal day and I'd give it..." Muku replied clearly.

And it was the truth. Girls like Hope and Emily were quite shameless in asking to sleep with him alone. So he had gotten used to it. And he also hoped that the others would be as free as they were, but he couldn't say anything as it would sound rather sus. But he was more than willing to accept anyone who asked.

"Fufu. You shouldn't have said the latter part. Now the Young Ms feels like she wasted her chance for something not as good as it could have been. But don't worry, as your mother, I'll help you fix the issue. With that said, here, this is a storage ring as big as Muku's. Sure you have your shadow pocket but it requires countless times more energy to use that than this so I'm sure you'll like it" Mrs C spoke.

She proceeded to hand Layla a ring that looked like the feminine version of Muku's. It kinda made it seem like the two were married or engaged at the very least.

This made the other girls practically turn green with envy... Yeah, there was no way Mrs C didn't know what she was doing. She was probably setting them up for something...

"Thank you... Mother" Layla thanked her wholeheartedly. Though she was a little stiff when she called Mrs C mother because it was still new to her.

"There's no need. Just give me a few grandkids and we'll call it even..." Again Mrs C asked for grandkids.

She was like a typical mother-in-law, always asking about grandkids every chance she got.

"..." Layla was at a loss for words.

She wanted to tell her that she and Muku hadn't even done it yet so grandkids were currently unobtainable. However, even her not-too-socially-aware brain knew not to say such a thing to her mother-in-law.

Mrs C was very understanding as she didn't push her any further. Instead, she turned to the rest of the girls...

"Now as for you all. Wipe those envious looks off your faces. I'll give you the very same rings... However, you'll have to earn them first" Mrs C spoke as an evil look appeared on her face.

Though instead of evil, the look looked more cute due to her harmless-looking features.

But the girls still got the chills, after all, the look was rather familiar. It was the same look Muku gave them before saying something they would soon regret saying yes to...

Again they wondered if Mrs C was just Muku's adoptive mother or his real one. After all, the similarities were just way too much.

Anyway, Mrs C didn't give them too much time to linger on such thoughts...

"Is it a yes or no? Just so you know, this is the only chance you'll get to acquire the rings. So..." She no so subtly pressured them into accepting her deal.

As for Muku? He was chilling on the sidelines enjoying the show. They had looked at him like an idiot a while back so he was definitely not going to help them get out of the situation. Let them suffer too!

Besides, whatever his mother makes them do will be for their own good. It will most likely hurt like hell but it will be good for them nonetheless. So there was no need to speak up for them.

In fact, he was already looking forward to the show...

"I agree..." Audrey was the first to say yes.

"Me too..." Emily was next.

"And me" Hope chimed in.

Everyone froze and looked at her. Why was Muku's sister gunning for a wedding ring that matched his?

"What? Can't I desire a great storage ring too?" Hope asked confusedly.

The others finally looked away after realising that she likely didn't get the ring's significance. Which was a typical Hope thing to do.

However, unbeknownst to the others, she and Muku were relieved. After all, their secret was almost caught...

What neither noticed was Mrs C's smile which became bigger while looking at the two of them.

Anyway, after that, the others agreed too. Including Elsa. She used the same reason as Hope, both for the others as well as herself.

Now all that was left was to know what they needed to do...

Chapter 492: Mom's visit (pt.1)

"What I need you to do is pretty simple actually. You just have to complete a trial I have for you. It doesn't involve difficult tasks. Just simple ones Muku also went through. And I'm sure you'll be happy to know that after going through it then the difference between him and you will be greatly reduced. It will become almost as small as it was before he left for the Beast World..." Mrs C spoke clearly with amusement in her eyes.

She had enjoyed seeing Muku struggle to push through his limits before and figured it must be fun to see her daughters-in-law going through the same. It was also beneficial for them.

What she really wanted to see was how entertaining it would be to have them go through the trials together. It will be something fresh despite the same setting.

"I'm also in" before the others could say anything, Layla who technically didn't need to participate decided to join in.

Which was understandable, there was no way she would turn down a chance to get stronger. Even if it will probably be hell, it was all worth it.

For she didn't like the difference in strength between her and Muku.

She like the others could tell that despite being in the same realm and technically having the same strength, Muku was way stronger than them. Way more than he should have been.

The incident with Nightmare also proved this point.

Sure Nightmare had added his own power to the mix, but that didn't change that Muku was involved, and it was what dominated due to Nightmare's state.

Anyway, she could accept being left behind simply because of their class difference. But back then she could resist him to some point. Unlike now when she had no hope of facing him alone due to what he went through.

So when the chance to reduce the gap appeared, she of course had to take full advantage of it...

"Great! The more the merrier. And don't worry girls. I won't get in your way, I know you have plans after this which include ranking up. So we'll hold the trial after you reach R6 and everything is done. Also, I'll create the portal to the Beast Realm for you in here. That way you also don't have to try out that plant's risky method that could get all of you killed" Mrs C addressed Layla first then the rest of the girls at once.

As for whom she was calling a plant, it was Iris of course. And the plan she was talking about was the one Iris had to have the group use their R6 power in the future to go to the Beast World. But she hadn't been completely truthful.

There were risks which as Mrs C said could result in death.

Hearing this from inside Freya's mind, Iris shrank back in fear.

She had always wanted to meet this mysterious lady. But now that she had met her, she wished that she hadn't.

At first, she looked down on Mrs C because of how goofy she seemed and how Muku treated her. But now she had realised that it was a side of Mrs C only reserved for those she cares about. Of anyone else rubs her the wrong way then death was the only result for them.

What the others didn't notice due to their young ages was the advanced killing intent Mrs C released for a moment.

It was something Iris with all her knowledge had only heard in stories.

All she knew was intermediate killing intent at best. And that was rare.

As for Muku and the others. Despite all their killing they didn't even have entry-level killing intent let alone the two mentioned.

So yeah, Iris was scared out of her wits. She felt like she might get pulled out of Freya's mindscape at any moment.

And she was pulled out...

"Come out" Mrs C spoke before anyone could say anything.

And to their surprise, Iris who shouldn't have been able to come out of Freya's mindscape came out.

She looked like a naughty and maybe evil version of Freya. It seems their weird relationship had actually warped how she appeared.

Then again, even Elsa's little fairy looked like a chibi version of her. So it was understandable.

Anyway, the situation suddenly went tense from the previous merry atmosphere.

Neither Muku nor the girls dared say anything as Mrs C seriously looked at Iris.

Just like proper kids when their parents were talking.

Muku finally realised that his mother actually had what it took to be a proper mother when she tried. At the very least, she had the aura.

"Listen here little plant. These are my kids. I don't care about what plans you might have. But just make sure they aren't involved. For if anything happens to them, then you're dead... I know right now you don't intend to hurt them, but we both know your personality. You'd stab them in the back for the right price. I won't judge you for that, it's your life. Just go stab someone else, understood?" Mrs C spoke while looking Iris in the eyes.

Iris wanted to look away to reduce the pressure but she couldn't move at all. She couldn't even blink or move her eyeballs as Mrs C's deep universe-like eyes looked at her like the ant she probably was when the two were compared.

"Y..yes" Iris said the only thing she could say...

"Great. Now where were we?" Mrs C spoke as her tone turned light again as she looked away from Iris.

The moment she looked away, Iris volunteerily jumped back into Freya's mindscape, she was too terrified to stay around the monster any longer.

"Umm, they had agreed to your plan" Muku replied with a little nervousness in his voice.

He was honestly a little afraid of her at the moment.

"What? Why do you sound so timid? Did I scare you?" Mrs C asked teasingly.

"Shut up old lady! I'm just trying to be respectful okay?" Muku immediately snapped.

"Of course you were. Anyway, since the tournament is done, why don't we go finish this inside? Unless you want to give the spectators a free drama as well as reveal some secrets" Mrs C addressed Muku's group.

"After you" Muku replied by directing her towards the castle.

Everyone who mattered then made their way toward it....

.....

Inside the castle...

"Wow, so this is my son and daughters-in-law's house huh? What an amazing place you have here. And I can see that it will keep on getting better. I can't wait to see what it will look like when Freya reaches R7

then R10. Just thinking about it makes me feel like peeking into the future. Or even going there..." Mrs C spoke enthusiastically while touring the castle with Muku and a few of the girls.

The others had gone to prepare a feast for her. It was a must as it was the first time their mother-in-law had visited after all.

"Please don't" Muku commented from behind her.

He really didn't want her to randomly pop up in his future...

"Tsk. Fine... I'll just go to the past then!" Mrs C replied.

"Don't do that either!... Wait, didn't tell me that your presence here is either from the past or future" Muku asked.

"Hmm, you'll never know. Regardless, I'm here because I had some rare free time. And unlike the real world, my presence here won't break the fabric of space and time..." Mrs C replied in her usual joking voice that made it hard to figure out whether she was joking or speaking the truth.

"Wait... You would have done that had you appeared?!" Muku was surprised and scared. Was their world that weak to the point that her presence would destroy it?

"Pfft... Of course not. You're so gullible. That would only happen if I didn't completely restrain my power or maybe I overlooked something and it leaked. Something that's completely below an expert such as myself" Mrs C replied.

"That means it is a possibility then!" Muku exploded again.

"Hehe. I love ruffling your feathers. Unfortunately, you have a tendency to get used to it if I stay too long, which sucks. But hey, at least it resets after a while" Mrs C replied teasingly again.

Hearing her admit what she was doing made him roll his eyes but he refused to react beyond that. Which was exactly what she meant.

Realising this made him stiffen for a second. Something everyone noticed. This caused even the girls to giggle. The mother-son pair was really funny.

And it was fun to see Muku being the one getting bullied instead.

"But wait, isn't this embryo supposedly weaker than the real world? So why can you appear here and not there without any worries? Or is this not an embryo at all like Iris said?" Muku asked.

"Oh no, it definitely is an embryo. The plant got that right even if she was guessing. And as for why I can appear here, well, this place has no set laws yet. It solely relies on you in how it works. And you only care about the surface view of things so there's a lot of operating room for those like me below. In fact, there was a chance of you randomly getting invaded at some point by a being with strength you can't fight against due to your flimsy system. But that's not a problem anymore because I fixed it. Anyway, because there are no definite laws, there are no limits on the level of who or what can come in. Of course, there's still an upper limit of energy that can be handled at once. Which is why I only used a clone to come here. My true body would destroy this place by just gazing its way... Why are we talking about this anyway? This isn't why I'm here..." Mrs C replied.

And as usual, she casually left everyone speechless...

Chapter 493: Mom's visit (PT 2)

"..."

"..."

"..."

Everyone was speechless. They knew that she was strong. But being strong to the point of destroying something by just looking at it, now that was just absurd.

You have to understand that it was different from Muku's [erasing gaze] That's a power he had to activate. However from what Mrs C said, she didn't have to do anything, just looking with no intent at all was enough to destroy something.

Sure Monarchs also had flexes like locating anyone who mentions them on the Beast World instantly. But even they couldn't kill just by looking. And Mrs C could probably do whatever they could easily do, so she was definitely way above them on the power scaling scale.

"You know what, you're right. Let's go back and enjoy the feast if you're done looking around. I'm sure they are done preparing everything by now" Muku chose to drop the matter on her power completely.

It was mind-blowing and quite frankly disheartening, he felt that he was now someone worthy of note on the power scale, but it seems he still had a long way to go.

In fact, if he were to be compared to Mrs C's, he'd be no different from an unawakened person. Then again, maybe even Monarchs were the same. So at least he wasn't alone in his suffering.

But wait, she's his mother. Why not just give up on getting stronger and have her take care of him and the girls? She clearly had the power to do it easily after all.

"Nope. I refuse. If anyone should take care of the other it's you. Have you no shame to even consider letting your mother take care of you? And who said I'm free enough to do it? If anything, I'm just buying you time until you can fix some matters that I can't. So you should speed up son. Don't you ever think about giving up again? Next time I'll pinch you if you do. And that pinch will continue to hurt for eternity" Mrs C, as always read Muku's mind and scornfully replied.

"Wait... There are problems in this universe you can't deal with?" Muku asked in shock and surprise.

He didn't even mind the mind-reading like he normally would.

"Pfft, like there's anything in this tiny place I can't take care of... In fact, I could probably take care of this one too if I went all out. However, that would mean the death of everyone and everything in the universe as no one would be protecting it..." Mrs C replied boastfully.

"Is the problem Outerversal?" Muku asked after catching certain details in what she said...

To this Mrs C just smiled without saying anything.

This wasn't the first time she had done something this and like all the times before, she took it as a yes... It might not be exactly what he thought, but it was definitely at least at that point...

Though this time her smile seemed a bit more tired than before. Like she has been fighting a solo war for way too long and couldn't wait to finally rest...

"Wow, the food smells amazing, I can't wait to dig in" Mrs C spoke as they reached the large table in the dining room.

It seemed she had long out what they spoke about behind them. And no one said anything. They all wanted to move past it anyway...

With that said, they sat down and enjoyed their meal happily. It was probably the best meal Muku had ever eaten. This made him unsure how to react.

Should he be happy that they put in extra effort for his mother or should he be mad that they didn't do the same for him... Sigh, it was simply not fair. Wasn't the husband supposed to be more important than the mother-in-law?

Or were daughters-in-law from all eras ass-kissers when their mothers-in-law show up?

Well, whatever. It wasn't like their normal meals weren't super tasty anyway...

....

After the meal...

Everyone sat comfortably with fully satisfied taste buds and stomachs.

"So, Mom, since you're here anyway, do you mind helping us with a few things?" Muku asked in his most filial voice.

"Tsk. You only call me Mom when you're sucking up. It's a mother every other time. Whatever, shoot, what do you want? I'll help if I feel like it" Mrs C replied.

"Hehe. Thank you mom. Firstly, can you tell us about the families of everyone here? Especially the members that haven't been found?" Muku asked something he had wanted to ask her for a long time but couldn't find the right time.

Hearing what he asked for made the girls all look at him with love and glowing eyes ...

He was really caring to ask for that before everything else. After all, it didn't benefit him at all, he had no one before the apocalypse....

"Ah, so this is why they are all enamoured with you? Well, I guess there is hope for you after all son. Mom is proud of you, keep it up and I'm sure you'll settle them all in no time("Mom!") Fine fine, I won't say anything more. And unfortunately, I can't say much about that, I'm not too involved with your world. But I will say something about Beastie's mom. She's definitely still alive. Finding her will be tough, but she seems safe for now. So maybe you should help your brothers look seriously" Mrs C answered Muku's question after straying off course for a bit.

"Oh. Okay, thank you" Muku replied.

"Yeah, thank you very much, mother. If you ever need anything I'm your girl" Jade thanked her too.

She hadn't gotten the exact location but knowing that she was alive was enough. She didn't think there was any hope before this after all...

"Anything?" Mrs C sought confirmation with glowing eyes.

"Except for grandbabies" Muku interjected before Jade replied.

"Oh come on! That's literally the only thing I want. I'm so old already, don't you feel ashamed for not making me a grandma already? What kind of terrible son are you?" Mrs C protested angrily.

"Well, I'm okay with it. We'll try harder I promise you" Jade suddenly spoke in a shy voice.

"What are you saying?! Don't encourage her!" Muku shouted in exasperation.

"Too late. My daughter-in-law and I have already sealed the deal. You have no say in this!" Mrs C said.

"I'd literally be the father! How can I not matter?" Muku shouted again.

"Tsk, whatever. Let's move on. This matter is already done" Mrs C waved him off.

It was clearly out of his hands. For that reason, Muku stopped trying to change their minds. He just "Hmphed" and went quiet.

Seeing the trio's exchange made the others unsure how to react. It was quite comical but it was hard to laugh as it involved their mother-in-law.

Plus some were still getting over not getting any news on their families. They weren't too disappointed since they had mostly come to terms with not seeing those people again, but it was hard to be completely unbothered even after years.

"Can you help Muku with his bloodline?" Audrey asked the next question since Muku was throwing a silent tantrum. He really was childish when his mother was around...

"I can, but I won't. It wouldn't be as good as him figuring things out on his own. Besides, he's already on the right path... As expected from my number one daughter-in-law, always thinking of others" Mrs C replied. And as usual, she was impressed by whatever Audrey said or did.

And she wasn't shy about naming her as her favourite. Normally in such situations this would cause the others to feel jealous, however, Muku's harem was different. Not only was there no hate among them but they all unanimously agreed that Audrey was the most ideal person in their group. She was even more dependable than Muku who had mostly taken a step back in most affairs.

It was a good move on his part as it helped the girls stay together when he wasn't around. If he had centralised power in himself alone, they might have fallen apart back then.

It also earned Audrey more respect from the others.

Anyway, they all understood Mrs C's answer. After all, there were some matters they could help each other with but didn't, to get the best possible results, so it wasn't a new concept to them.

"Can you help me recover my memories?" Jade asked with glowing eyes...

She was still trying to get those back. She was slowly recovering them, but it was rather slow, so if Mrs C could help, that would be great.

"Yes, but again, it would stunt your mindscape's growth so I won't" Mrs C replied.

Hearing this reply made most of them cancel the questions they wanted to ask. After all, most wanted help in some aspect of their training, so they'd likely get the same answers as Jade and Audrey.

"Can you tell us about Nightmare?... I'm assuming you already know about him after reading my mind" Muku asked...

"Finally, something we can actually talk about..." Mrs C replied with a smile...

Chapter 494: Mom's visit (final)

"Hmm, where should I start... Right. Well, Nightmare is as you know a former Monarch. Sometime ago, he messed with me so I turned him into armour. But unfortunately, I got too strong for him to matter in no time at all, so I ditched the armour with the fragmented soul inside. And interestingly enough, it made its way to you. The end. Isn't it just how amazing everything came around to a full circle? And hey,

we even got this embryo because of it. So I guess it wasn't completely useless" Mrs C spoke in a mostly apathetic voice like she wasn't talking about anything significant.

"... Yeah, I guess we should have expected something like this" Muku commented with a deadpan expression on his face.

The others including Lisa who was still new had the same expression. She has seen enough to already react like the others.

Before it was just suspected that she was way stronger than Monarchs, but now it was confirmed by directly turning one of the strongest into armour. After all, if Nightmare could end another Monarch then he had to be outstanding right?

"Why didn't you tell me that when I visited you before? You just took the armour off and threw me into trials!" Muku complained.

"Oh come on, it's not like anything bad happened. And I believed you could handle it. Which is exactly what happened. And you even benefited from it. So why complain? Are you just fishing for benefits? Well unfortunately for you, you aren't getting any" Mrs C retorted while pinching Muku's cheek.

He was actually sitting on the opposite side of the table. But somehow she could pinch him by extending her hand without stretching it. It was clearly a level of space manipulation not even Raya could do. At the very least not in such a delicate way that it left no traces behind.

"Welp, it was worth a try... Can you let go of my cheeks now?" Muku replied.

"Kid, you better forget ever getting something I don't plan on giving... Anyway, everyone take out your phones. There's a new software update I want to install..." Mrs C replied as she let go of Muku's cheeks..

They all did as they were told curiously.

With a snap of her fingers, all the phones turned slimmer and looked better aesthetically. Beyond that, there was a camera function, internet function, Coocle(Definitely a Google knock-off), Video call and basically everything else a modern-day phone had before the apocalypse.

"What the heck?!" Muku couldn't help but exclaim.

"Hehe. Aren't I innovative?" Mrs C spoke with a proud expression on her face.

"Bull...Oof!" Muku wanted to call her out but Audrey punched him in the gut and then spoke.

"Yes mother-in-law, thank you very much. You're the best" She spoke with the sweetest smile she could manage.

Seeing this Mrs C looked at her silently for a moment with her eyes slightly narrowed then she smiled.

"My son was really lucky to find you. I hope you're always there for him. It would make my heart feel a lot lighter" Mrs C spoke while patting Audrey's hair who was sitting next to Muku with the same space technique as before.

"Hehe. Don't worry mother. No matter what, I'll always be there for him. Not just me, the others will be there as well" Audrey replied with a smile beaming on her face.

Mrs C smiled again and then rose to her feet.

"I wish I could stay longer and we could chat more. But I've already been here longer than I should. So I should go..." She spoke with slight sadness in her voice.

"Wait... You said this is a clone right? So why can't you just stay forever?" Muku asked.

"Well, I'd love to, but I can't. This is still part of my power and I need all of it so... But I'll turn up when I can. At the very least, when you reach the peak of R6 I'll make time. Before that, I have a tip for you. Go to the sea after reaching R6. You should be able to gain KP quicker there. Now son, keep my daughters-

in-law safe. Also, hurry up and give me those grandkids you unfilial child!" Mrs C spoke then left after angering Muku again.

How could she not be angry when she herself told them that having children is hard with their strength? With how many times he has done it with Audrey, Jade, Lisa and Hope, one of them would have definitely gotten pregnant by now if it were in the old days.

Despite likely knowing that, she still has to constantly mention it as if she were questioning his manhood. It was truly annoying.

But after that, he smiled. Despite everything, he was always to have her around. She was his mother after all. Not for long, but long enough to feel peace when she's around... Then again, hasn't he always felt like that from the first time they met? Well, whatever, they'll see each other again soon enough.

As for what she was doing that couldn't be said. He chose not to think about it as always.

Instead, he would do as she said. Quickly reach R6, take care of all the matters that need to be taken care of then head off to the seas and oceans.

Even if she didn't suggest it, it was somewhere he was planning on checking out before Iris mentioned the Beast World. After all, they needed KP. And where better to get that than the water where there were Beasts left and right?

He had noticed it in the Beast World, but that place was too much for him.

However, being unable to conquer that didn't mean he couldn't conquer his own world's waters.

With that said, he addressed the others. It was decided that they would again focus on advancing and won't get out until it was done...

And so, everyone retreated to their rooms leaving Muku behind... Well, there was one more person who stayed behind. Someone who would normally be the first to go train. That's right, it was Layla.

"Umm, it's still too early to sleep. So why not go do something else for now?" Muku asked awkwardly. She was staring at him unblinkingly after all.

"Sure... Let's go" she spoke then grabbed his hand and dragged him out of the castle...

It was only after getting out that she realised that they were in the embryo, so there wasn't anything in particular they could do...

"Umm... Do you have anything in mind?" She asked.

Muku noticed that her cheeks were faintly red in colour. She was probably embarrassed by how she came out without a plan like that.

"Hmm. Why don't we watch a movie? What type of movie do you like? Since we have the internet now, I guess we can download anything" Muku asked.

As for how Mrs C did everything she did, he didn't care. Magic could easily copy anything technology could do and go beyond it. So it wasn't really anything amazing if you thought about it.

Making a phone was a lot more acceptable than bringing someone back from the dead and turning Monarchs into equipment.

"I don't have anything I like... What about you?" Layla asked.

Before the apocalypse, she was a bookworm. After the apocalypse, she was a training maniac. So yeah, she never had time for such things. It was only when she was dragged out to watch anime with the others that she bothered with entertainment.

"No, no. This won't do! You have to have a favourite. Let's go watch one of everything until you figure out what you like. We'll start with a comedy..." Muku spoke spiritedly then dragged Layla back inside and up to her room.

He would have gone to his but he sensed that there was someone in it.

Anyway, they didn't take long to arrive.

After that, he downloaded the movie and then sent it to his laptop.

After that, the two sat on the bed under a blanket with popcorn to make the experience as real as possible.

As for where the popcorn came from. Well, there were a few people with the former random class in Lisa's group, so getting maize was easy.

Little things like this made Muku realise that maybe having people who are good at other things apart from destruction and surviving wasn't bad.

Anyway, after that, Muku put on one of the best comedies ever made... "Scary Movie". He just hoped that someone with a serious personality like Layla wouldn't dislike it.

And to his surprise, she was enjoying it. She enjoyed it so much that tears came to her eyes as she laughed at some scenes.

Then again, it's to be expected from a peak comedy like "Scary Movie".

After that, they still had some time before it was nighttime so Muku put on another movie. He wanted to put in another genre but Layla insisted on Scary Movie 2.

And so, he did as the lady desired...

After that, they ended up watching all five Scary movies. At that point, it was obvious that Layla definitely liked comedy.

And Muku was happier than she was. After all, seeing her laugh was rather rare. And her laugh was like music to the ears.

Anyway, after that, they finally changed genre. As someone who was kinda trying to push his own interests onto her, he put on a horror movie next.

It was a legendary one... The Conjuring...

Chapter 495: Muku and Layla(18+ ISH... ISH)

Thirty minutes later...

Surprisingly, the great Layla was a scaredy cat. She was currently curled up in Muku's arms, shivering slightly, her face covered by her hands. She would peek from time to time.

Honestly, any normal person would quit watching the movie altogether but not Layla. She had wanted to quit, but Muku suddenly dared her to finish the whole movie just before she spoke.

As we all know, the girl really hates losing.

And that's how they got to the point she was practically digging into Muku's body.

Of course, Muku didn't dislike it. He found her even cuter than usual. After all, it's hard seeing her being anything apart from calm.

So it was quite refreshing to see so many other expressions on her face.

In fact, he had decided to enjoy movies with her every now and then. This was because she didn't open up as easily as the others even if he decided to chat with her. So this was the best alternative.

And it made sure their time together wasn't awkward...

Well, it wasn't initially until he found himself paying more attention to her than the movie. He didn't know why, but she seemed rather irresistible when she was so animated in her expressions.

In no time at all, he found himself sneakily touching her all over when she jumped into his arms when scared.

Of course, she noticed this but she ignored it. Her attention was completely on finishing the movie as promised.

Muku the scoundrel took this as a go-ahead to be more unrestrained in his actions. He became bolder by touching her boobs, thighs, butt, basically anything he could get his hands on.

In no time at all, Layla was subtly moaning. But she did her best not to show it. Which was obviously impossible to hide when they were practically glued together.

She could push him away, but the movie was still not over so that wasn't an option. Leaving was even more out of the question, there was no way she'd agree to be alone after that.

And she kinda liked what he was doing. In fact, it took away some of her fear, so it wasn't really bad in the end.

So, with Muku, the resident "Handsy uncle tickles" taking away some of her focus from the movie, she was able to successfully finish it.

However, at that point, she was breathing heavily, her face flushed red, the area between her legs completely soaked. Yup, she was definitely turned on. And she was sure their usual play won't be enough time to end it.

Internally she made up her mind not to let Muku go until she's completely satisfied. Even if a random disturbance occurs like usual, she won't give in this time. He brought it upon himself after all.

And so, without a warning, she climbed up on top of Muku after pushing the laptop away then began kissing him intensely like a woman possessed.

Muku never being one to accept defeat in such matters matched her pace. He kissed her back just as intensely. In fact, he had long gotten turned on way before her. Men reacted quicker than women after all.

And so, the two got lost in each other's mouths.

Clothes flew everywhere until they were both naked. And finally, Muku could completely cut off physical contact with the nightmare armour.

It still had all its powers but now it was completely under his control. He could even control it from a distance. So finally he was able to wear something else, not just change how the same thing looked.

Sure it was convenient, but to a human, it still sucked after a while.

Anyway, after their clothes were off, Muku refused to be the one at the bottom as he switched positions with Layla. Of course, he was sitting on her legs... Just lying on top of her body while continuing their make-out session.

As always, he didn't neglect the rest of her body. He'd kiss her neck too, his hands wandering all over her body. Especially her chest and lower region. The top got squeezed and pinched while the lower half got teased.

He had only done so for a minute before he was stopped by a Layla who clearly wanted more.

She grabbed his wondering hand then looked him in the eyes. After that, she gave him a little nod he instantly understood.

A smile appeared on his face as passion began burning in his eyes.

It was finally time to go all the way with her it seemed. Honestly, if they weren't unlucky before, it would have happened a long time ago. Their timing had always been off or they'd get disturbed.

Anyway, there was no way they'd be disturbed at night in a completely safe environment.

So, it was definitely happening this time.

And so, he positioned himself properly and guided his veteran soldier onto a new map...

As expected, entering wasn't easy. But he kept at it until he broke through.

Layla bit her lip as the pain wrecked her body and blood came out. But she made no sound. It was something she had desired for a while and she knew that it would hurt the first time around. So she was prepared.

Of course, Muku was as gentle as he could be.

He slowly went in and out for a few minutes until the pain on her face disappeared as it started getting replaced by pleasure instead.

Seeing that Muku's speed began increasing slowly until he was going so hard that Layla couldn't hold her back at all.

The pleasure was just too much for someone who had never even touched herself before.

She was easily the loudest of all the girls Muku had been with. Which was obviously surprising, but it made Muku feel rather proud of himself. And so, he increased his speed again.

Layla came on the spot. But Muku didn't stop. He was always ruthless in such situations.

In order to give herself a break, Layla tried to push him away. Unfortunately, she couldn't muster up any strength at all.

Hell, even if she could use all her strength, she might not have been able to escape his clutches at all.

And so, she could only take his bullying while screaming in pleasure and cumming left and right while failing to suppress the screams.

Just when she thought she was getting used to it, Muku would change positions and hit her with a new wave of pleasure that completely destroyed all her progress.

After a while, she started begging him to stop in a voice that had turned rough from screaming so much.

But Muku with all his experience knew that she could take more. So he didn't stop.

Honestly, he wanted to do it romantically with the girls. But they were so good he couldn't control himself. Maybe in the future he'll be able to make love to them. But for now, he only knew how to have sex. Very intense sex at that...

....

A few hours later...

"Mmnh. Ahn ahn ahn aaaaaghn" Layla was still moaning.

While her moans were of intense pleasure, they also contained a hint of despair.

She felt that Muku was trying to kill her with pleasure. Something all the girls before her had thought as well.

Fortunately, he wasn't as intense as before or she might have long become broken.

At that point, she couldn't remember how many times she had come. But she was certain it was beyond a hundred times.

Which was understandable when she sometimes came multiple times in just a minute.

Muku was really good at this. A non-evolver would have long died if they were subjected to such pleasure.

And it was a miracle that Layla hadn't fainted at the very least.

Finally, Muku who came in her more than ten times already came in her one more time before stopping.

He wasn't completely satisfied, but Layla was definitely at her limit. So he had to stop.

And now that he was getting his bloodline in line, he could finally stop himself before making the girl faint.

It was a real improvement, something the other girls, especially Hope who was completely destroyed would have appreciated...

After they were done, they lay quietly for a few minutes.

Muku was just giving Layla time to catch her breath. She was heaving so much she couldn't speak.

The whole room was filled with their mixed lewd scent while the bed was completely damp from you know what. But neither cares for the time being.

However, Muku still got up and cleaned everything up with mana. It wasn't that he couldn't take it, but he was afraid it would get him back into the mood. Something the current Layla definitely couldn't handle.

After a while Layla finally turned to Muku who was lying naked next to her, holding her close after cleaning up.

She then placed her hand on his stomach and moved it up and down feeling his six pack...

"Am I officially your wife now? Can I claim you in front of everyone like the others do?" She asked shyly in a low voice.

Muku reached for her chin and then kissed her softly, before speaking.

"Girl what are you talking about? You've been my wife for years. How are you only recognising it now?"...

Chapter 496: Weak and arrogant human

"Oh..." Layla said cutely.

"Now, let me go get Hope so that she can help you relieve the pain..." Muku spoke.

He decided against teasing her. She'd gone through enough for that day already.

"No, I can handle it for now. We'll do it later. Let's stay like this for a while..." Layla who was lying comfortably in Muku's arms didn't want to be disturbed so she rejected the idea even if she felt stinging pain between her legs.

It wasn't something unbearable anyway. It was so bearable that she ended up falling asleep before she finished speaking.

Of course, Muku wasn't off the hook as she hugged him tightly as she did so.

He didn't dislike it though. He held her tightly and caressed her hair until he fell asleep.

And so, the room fell into complete but peaceful silence.

The two had definitely grown closer as a result of the experience...

.....

The next day...

Layla woke up first and began moving her hands all over Muku's body until he woke up.

After that, they ended up doing it again. Of course, it wasn't as intense as before. In fact, Muku was against it until she was healed. But she said she could take it. And she could.

And so, they made love instead of having hardcore sex. Which wasn't only Layla's first time but Muku's as well.

After that, they continued living like that for the next few days. When they weren't watching something or chatting, they were doing it or sleeping and repeating.

They didn't leave the room until Layla healed. Which took a few days.

It was affordable since none of the other girls came looking for them as they were busy with their cultivation.

As for whether it was wasting time... Of course it wasn't, only a single day had passed in the outside world in those days. So it was fine.

And Layla didn't fear being left behind. After all, when the others go out, she can stay inside and quickly catch up.

So she wasn't as rushed as before. And Muku supported her decision.

After all, they got a lot closer during this time. Before they were close but there was a trace of awkwardness that would appear sometimes. But now it was completely gone.

He could now talk to her as freely as he did the other girls... except Elsa. And she was also more open. She allowed herself to show more emotions around him, which showed that she now completely trusted him without a doubt.

It was something she had only been able to do with Audrey and Chloe so far. And maybe Jade when they clashed...

.....

A whole week later...

The duo has finally enjoyed each other's company enough to let go. They could barely separate from each other but it had to be done. They couldn't be carefree forever. The world and everyone else were moving forward, so if they kept on relaxing they might get left behind.

Anyway, Muku finally left Layla's room and left her to cultivate while he also went to his to do the same.

Unlike her, he was already one step away from reaching R6, so he wasn't slowed down at all...

....

Im Muku's room...

"Oh ho! You're finally back" Raya who was fiddling with her laptop spoke.

"What are you doing here? You have your own room. Go play there" Muku immediately tried kicking her out.

"Tsk. This is the thanks I get for warming your bed?" Raya snapped in response.

"Shut up and don't say that. It's so misleading. Just get out already, I want to cultivate" Muku replied while holding himself back.

He knew that the more the situation escalated the harder it would be to get Raya out. So he had to stay calm.

"Fine. I'm taking your bed though. It feels better than mine" Raya replied then without waiting for a response she disappeared with Muku's bed.

"Brat!" Muku cursed but didn't pursue.

Before he could do anything else, a bed appeared in his room.

It was much smaller than his, clearly for two people at best, unlike his which could hold five+ people.

He almost wanted to go fight it out with Raya, but decided against it. He couldn't win currently anyway. So it was better to advance first then go deal with her...

And so, he got onto the bed and sat in a meditative position. In no time at all, he was completely focused on improving his various attributes to reach the threshold for advancing...

.....

A few days later...

"Finally, I've done it..." Muku spoke after opening his eyes. A wide smile had appeared on his face.

He has reached the threshold, now he just has to give his body the order and it will break through.

Of course, he couldn't do it inside. So he had to go out first.

He went out of his room and noticed that everyone else was still busy with their cultivation. It seemed that despite giving them a head start, he came out first. Then again, he was already way ahead of them from the very start.

He didn't disturb them as he went out of the castle alone. He was going to break through far away and surprise them when they woke up...

Well, at the very least he'd surprise everyone but Raya. She appeared next to him the moment he stepped out of the castle.

She had been bored being all alone for days. So even if she didn't like Muku much, he was better than no one at all.

While she could leave the embryo and come back in whenever she wanted due to her soul link to Muku, she decided not to.

Hunting for herself was fun and all, but she'd rather Muku do it and leave the body for her. That's right, despite being the most talented being to ever exist, she was super lazy.

Honestly, if her life wasn't threatened in the earlier days, making strength necessary, she wouldn't have bothered herself with such things.

Now that there were people more than eager to leave corpses to her, why wouldn't she sit back and let them deal with it?

Another reason was that she might be an R6 and had the space element, but that didn't guarantee even being relatively safe as there were many stronger beasts with weird powers out there. So travelling in groups when hunting was for the best.

And that's the option she chose. Why risk it when you can use gang warfare?

Anyway, Muku reached the furthest parts of the embryo after a while. It wasn't necessary, but he wanted to check it out and figured he might as well multitask.

That's when he noticed that the edge kept on expanding. And as the "god", he quickly realised that it was connected to the life residing in the embryo.

This likely meant that the more beings that lived in the embryo, the faster it grows.

But that was a thing for the future.. currently he only cares about advancing. And so he got to it.

He stood in one position without moving for a few seconds.

Just when Raya was about to complain...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Muku's aura exploded out of his body. It quickly spread out and covered the whole embryo. But since he had anticipated this, the castle and fortress weren't affected. There were invisible isolation barriers around them.

Anyway, after his aura exploded. It quickly gathered back together then took on the form of a humongous grey Western Dragon.

As an R6 now, the dragon was around 1000 metres tall. A huge difference from the R5 size which looked like a child next to it.

As for why it was a dragon and not a huge nightmare armour. Well, he was freed from Nightmare's secret control, so he could use his original avatar again.

As for why Nightmare stopped him from using it before, it was a way to mentally affect him. However, it had only annoyed him, but he didn't do anything more. Which meant that the plan was a failure, but it was too late to change it, so the act was kept up in spite.

Anyway, Raya's eyes scrunched down a bit looking at the dragon avatar.

For whatever reason, she didn't like looking at it. Was it because it looked like her rival dragon form?

Well, whatever. Not being one to accept losing, she took on her dragon form which matched Muku's in size. Of course, she was more slender and longer, but they were considered to be the same.

Muku saw this and rolled his eyes. The brat really had nothing better to do...

Looking at her dragon form, then down at his own. An idea formed in his head.

"Hey, Raya. I have an interesting idea..." He spoke in a rough dragonic voice.

"Okay, let's hear it" She replied looking back at him.

"So you want to have a match? We're both R6s now. And you haven't advanced at all so..." Muku began speaking before he was interrupted.

"Pfft. You just advanced. You don't even know what you're capable of yet and you want to fight me? Are you secretly someone who has a losing fetish? You know what, whatever. I don't care. I refuse to participate in your craziness you weak and arrogant human. Thinking you can step up to me already... I'm out of here" Raya replied in a disdainful tone.

She then turned back to her human form and disappeared leaving behind a dumbstruck Muku...

Chapter 497: Advancement...

A few days later...

Muku didn't bother Raya after she left. He focused on himself, doing his best to adjust to his newfound power.

The best part about being the absolute being in the embryo was that as long as he had the energy to support it. He could create whatever he liked. Nothing that could be taken out, but it was still a great ability.

Anyway, with his new strength, which also increased the speed at which the embryo grew, he decided to make a clone of himself. It had complete access to all his powers, except for his bloodline, which couldn't be replicated for whatever reason.

Anyway, after creating it, he was out of power. So he took some time to recover. After which, he isolated an area where he and the clone faced each other.

That's right, he was basically going to fight himself to get used to his new power quicker as well as improve.

And so, for the next few days after that, he fought his clone over and over again. It would have been great if it could go on and on like when Mrs C did it, but he didn't have such ability. So he had to stop and power in from time to time. But it was better than nothing.

Anyway, close to three weeks later, the first person came out. It was Audrey.

And like him, she didn't break through inside. She came out only to be met by an interesting scene of Muku fighting himself in the distance.

She didn't disturb and let him finish.

"Umm, you wouldn't be planning on using clones on us right? If yes, I advise you to give up on the plan right now for we won't let you. At the very least I only want the real you" She joked with him when he walked over to her after the fight.

Though she was joking, her eyes were very much serious.

"Do you think I'd do that with my unreasonably high levels of jealousy? Let alone do it, I won't let it shake your hand" Muku replied in a similarly joking manner that also had seriousness hidden behind it.

"Hehe. At least you know that your jealousy is unreasonable at times. Anyway, congratulations on advancing. I thought I was going to be first since you were busy with Layla. But I guess I was wrong" Audrey spoke.

"Actually if she hadn't stopped me, you really might have beaten me" Muku replied.

"Oh ho! So you finally did it huh?... As your wife and her mother at the same time, I really don't know how to feel..." Audrey spoke with an awkward expression on her face.

"Don't think about it too much. I know I didn't" Muku replied with a shrug.

"Of course you wouldn't. You got to claim both mother and daughter you rogue. Does it feel good that you claimed both our innocence?" Audrey spoke with an eye roll.

"Please don't speak like that unless you're ready to be pushed down on the spot. It has been a few days so I'm quite pent-up you know" Muku replied while scanning Audrey's body with predatory eyes, ready to pounce and take a bite.

"Please don't. Our current strength difference is so great that you might kill me by mistake. How've, we can celebrate after I break through? Which happens to be the very thing I'm here to do..." Audrey spoke in a seductive voice that made Muku even hotter and more bothered.

"Well, what are you waiting for then? Do it already!" Muku enthusiastically urged her to advance.

To which she laughed then did just that.

Like when Muku broke through, her aura covered the whole embryo. It wasn't as strong but it wasn't too far behind.

Internally, her body was upgraded by her higher-level mana at a cellular level. In seconds, it became so strong that peak R5 attacks wouldn't be able to do anything to her.

Her other attributes were also strengthened.

Such was the power of evolution.

All this happened while Audrey had her eyes closed to completely feel the moment.

As soon as she opened her eyes she was instantly carried off by Muku. His intentions were obvious and she was more than happy to oblige.

The two only appeared more than ten hours later with satisfied looks on both their faces. And honestly, they could easily go for days, but that would be excessive for one session. Ten hours was enough...

Anyway, after that Muku created a copy for Audrey as well. Being petty, he drained her of her mana and used it to create the clone instead of using his own.

After that, he powered his own. Which left them to recover together. The reason why he didn't use his own mana was, in his words, "why should I use my mana when you have your own? Why should I suffer alone when we can do it together?"

To this Audrey understood but she was a bit upset. After all, he from the past would have taken all the burden on himself and treated her like a delicate flower.

Noticing her expression Muku immediately understood then he said, "Hey, why are you thinking about the past? We were still in the dating stage back then. Now we're an old couple. So of course we have to help each other out when possible right?"

Audrey nodded unwillingly. She understood but she still liked being treated like a princess. It was something girls never grew out of.

"Okay your Highness, what if I promise to take you out on a date whenever we have time in return?" Muku haggled. He had to keep his lady happy even if the situation was a bit unfair.

"Hehe. Sure. I love you" Audrey's expression instantly turned around.

Sure going on a date in the apocalypse was way different from before it. But she didn't care about the activities, just being alone with Muku and doing whatever was enough.

She even kissed him on the cheek happily.

Of course, Muku accepted it. He was already planning on finding different things to do with all the girls alone like movies with Layla. It was great being together as a group. But doing one-on-ones was also good for their bonding. In fact, getting closer was easier during such times....

After that episode the two who had recovered their mana started training with their clones.

In the next few days, the other girls appeared one by one until all of them had reached R6.

And like with Audrey, Muku made a clone for all of them after they broke through.

And he obviously took Emily, Jade, Hope and Layla for "private sessions" after they broke through.

It was a bit tricky with Hope as they had to be sneaky, but they somehow made it work. The others were mostly busy with their clones after all.

Anyway, after everyone had advanced and got a clone. The whole group focused solely on training, familiarising themselves with new strength as well as improving their fighting techniques in general.

It was almost like they were in complete retreat from the world... Honestly, they were.

Muku was the only one who came out of the embryo for two weeks in the real world, which was over two months inside the embryo.

They wanted to make sure that they were as ready as they could be before heading off on their next expedition.

Sure, they wouldn't head off to see before seeing Jack's group, but that meeting shouldn't take long. So they planned to go immediately after that.

Plus they finally got access to their Belief energy after reaching R6, so they had to look into that too.

It seemed Spikes was just talentless for Belief energy worked on more than just ranking up to R7. It could actually be added to their attacks to make them stronger.

And before reaching a certain amount, it couldn't be used to advance. All of them felt they were far from that threshold at the time being.

So they put that aside. As for using it in battle. That was left as a last resort as the energy didn't regenerate on its own like mana or had cores one could suck it off of.

This meant that when lost, they'd have to find a way to get it from their believers by doing something amazing that earned it.

Unfortunately, the current group they had didn't give much anymore after getting used to their greatness.

So setting out for new people was even more necessary than before.

On the other hand, Raya the lucky brat was different, she got a big payout from the blood essence she used.

She actually almost had enough to rank up. But she decided to hold out as long as she could even if she made enough and gather as much as possible.

Which was something they confirmed would give a better result.

Of course, there was an upper limit. But it was rather hard to reach.

But everyone was more than ready to wait for as long as they needed to.

Besides, they also had to reach the peak of R6 by killing beasts.

After all, KP was still useful on the stage. Even if it wouldn't stop one from ranking up, it still made one stronger.

Yeah, they had a long journey ahead of them.

With that said, they finally prepared to set out...

Chapter 498: Looking for Jack

So it turned out that not having to stage around a castle everywhere was pretty good for travelling speed.

Which might or might not be linked to the fact that they didn't have to worry about being visually large targets.

After all, it was a pretty big structure. And moving through the clear sky was practically begging for trouble.

Anyway, without it, and everyone being R6. They moved pretty smoothly. If Raya had been to Jack's base, maybe they could have teleported there.

Actually, even without that, using Muku's memories was enough. Unfortunately, the works had changed a lot since the last time and things had shifted all over the place. So the position technically no longer existed in the same place.

And teleporting to locations one wasn't sure about was a big no-no. Who knew what was currently there now?

Anyway, they took the general direction of the place and stuck to it. Because if the change, it took them a whole week of looking before they found it... Or it's ruins rather.

It was now thousands of kilometres away from where it was before. Which was that be expected.

It would have taken longer to locate it had they been weaker and slower.

Anyway, even the ruined state wasn't completely unexpected. Barriers like this stopped being useful a long time ago.

Anyone who still depended on them was simply seeking to die...

Maybe that's why the base was completely abandoned.

After all, if someone wanted to stay, with an average Evolver's power, it would be pretty easy to clear the place up and create something new and better. Like Lisa's fortress.

"I don't think it's abandoned... At least not completely..." Jade suddenly spoke up just when everyone was about to continue their search for Jack's group.

After all, they were looking for people not the base.

Of course, this was after Freya plundered the barrier crystal. She was still on a mission to improve their own barrier even if it wasn't as important as before. After all, it was still a valuable tool in battle...

Jade made a move before anyone could say anything. She summoned red flames then....

BOOOOOOOM!

She blew the whole place up, burning away rubble and sand leaving a pit behind.

At the bottom of the pit lay an exposed sand worm with its body completely roasted.

It would have been turned to ash had its body not been extremely tough and Jade held back. But neither of those protected its life.

"Damn it! Not these things. How did they even make it through the portal?" Muku immediately complained.

Raya clicked her tongue from beside Audrey. She also disliked the sandworms.

After all, both of them were humbled by the mindless creatures back in the Beast World.

"Umm. Do you have anything you want to share with the rest of us?" Jade asked while eyeing the worm. Probably wondering whether it could be eaten or not.

"Oh, it's nothing. As you can easily guess. That's a sandworm. Unlike normal beasts, it usually doesn't develop intelligence. However, as a trade-off, it's extremely tough and sensitive, things that make it more dangerous than most smart beasts...

...On top of that, they live in colonies with more than five hundred members... Then again, that was in a desert area. And since you haven't sensed anything else, I'm guessing this one was alone. Also as a testament to their good senses, it probably hid itself deep underground after sensing us. Which is practically impossible for normal R5s like this was" Muku replied.

"Ah... Okay. But you realise that this means that Jack and his group are most likely dead right?" Jade immediately said the most insensitive thing she could say at the moment.

And she did it with such a straight face it was chilling. Layla grimaced as even she had more self-awareness than Jade. Like what the hell! Is that something one says so casually?

Even if she herself along with the other girls didn't think much of Jack and his group, she should be considerate of Muku. He considered Jack a good friend even if their meetings were short....

"Yeah... I guess that means our search stops here. The next target was the ocean right? Let's go do that..." Muku spoke in an almost mechanical voice then moved ahead.

"What's wrong with him?" Jade asked the others in confusion.

While she was insensitive to matters from outside the group, she was rather sensitive to matters from within. So she instantly picked up on Muku's minute changes... Though she didn't understand the reason because to her, Jack was insignificant.

Sure him and his group would have helped them with KP, but that didn't matter too much as they could always find other people...

"You know girl, you and I really have to sit down at some point and talk about thinking before we speak" Audrey replied in an almost disappointed tone.

Initially Jade was completely insensitive even in matters in the group, but she had gotten a lot better over the years. This gave Audrey the illusion that she had improved overall. But it seemed it was wrong to assume that.

The girl had just improved her circle from involving only her to involving them too. Everyone else was still worth less than grass in her eyes. Honestly, they also kinda thought like that after a while, but they would never say it. Especially when one of them was involved in some way...

"Huh?" Jade was still confused.

"Muku cared about Jack you idiot. He was probably someone he considered a friend. Likely his only male friend before Klaus even" Emily couldn't take her friend's obliviousness anymore and spoke annoyedly.

Everyone else gave Jade slightly disappointed looks then moved on. After all, she had only made the mistake of speaking when she shouldn't have. Otherwise, they were the same in how they viewed Jack's group.

"Oh..." Jade finally realised. She immediately began feeling bad as well as cursing herself internally.

She knew that she had the problem of disregarding many things others cared about. But she thought she had gotten better over the years. Now it seems she wasn't completely better, there were still problems.

Anyway, she decided to apologise to Muku when she finds the time...

After that bit so happy incident, the group continued quietly.

While Muku said that they were done with the search, it was obvious from how he moved that he was still searching as they went along.

Seeing this, Jade saw a chance to redeem herself. She started helping him without voicing it. Putting in even more effort than Muku himself.

After a few hours, she found traces of a large group moving through the forest.

The traces were almost gone as it had likely been a long time. They were so faint that only she noticed them due to her better senses even Muku couldn't rival.

She of course told the others about it. Muku's eyes lit up a bit hearing what she said.

From then on, Jade took the lead while following the traces.

They went like that for many days until they reached a big mountain with many caves all over it.

With their strength, they thoroughly scanned it, and immediately sensed more than seven hundred lifeforms inside.

Their auras were quite familiar too. They were humans...

No one celebrated yet, after all, the people might not be the ones they were looking for.

They of course investigated with their mana sense. That's when Muku noticed someone very familiar.

Unfortunately, it wasn't Jack. Fortunately, it was Jack's wife. And she was holding a young child in her hands...

That could be talked about later. For now, he has seen enough to go inside.

And so, the group went inside. They were immediately greeted by hostile guards close to the entrance.

Unfortunately, despite having threatening looks on their faces the guards weren't very threatening themselves. They were just a small group of young teenage boys with R3 strength.

Muku and the others didn't try to force their way through. He just told them his name...

The boys immediately fell to the ground. It seemed they were told about him.

They started apologising nonstop until Muku threatened to kill them if they didn't.

After that, he was led to their leader. Who was unsurprisingly Jack's wife. Everyone had forgotten her name so they didn't mention it for the time being.

Muku planned on looking through his memories later before embarrassing himself by saying it wrong...

Anyway, the woman immediately began crying when he asked about Jack's whereabouts.

This could only mean one thing. And that's exactly what she told him.

"Jack is dead. He died three months ago. We were still living at the base despite the troubles because it was better than nothing.

However, out of nowhere, a worm appeared. He and the other men tried to defend us with all their might as PR4s but they were simply too weak. So they had us runaway. We thought they were only delaying it then coming after. But it seems we were wrong. They never came..." Jack's wife said with tears streaming down her cheeks.

Chapter 499: Good manipulation?

"You don't have to say anymore, Sarah. I get it. I'm sorry for your loss. If only we had been here sooner... But I have avenged him at the very least" Muku stopped her from reliving the terrible memory.

It was clear that Jack and the other men died for their loved ones to the sandworm.

"You've killed it?" That's the only thing that stood out to Sarah so she asked while clutching the child in her hands closer.

"Yes" replied. While it was technically Jade who took out the worm, she was his girl so he did it by association. Sarah didn't need to know the details.

Fortunately, Jade seemed to have wised up, as she didn't expose him.

"You hear that little one? Your father has been avenged. Even if we couldn't do it personally, it has been done. I just hope that his soul can rest in peace now... Thank you Mr Chisen. I am in your debt" Sarah spoke to the child while weeping then thanked Muku.

"It's no problem. He was a good friend of mine so it was the least I could do. And you don't owe me anything. If you want to repay me, just take care of his child to the best of your abilities... What's the little one's name anyway?" Muku replied in a gentle voice and asked about the baby in an attempt to lighten the mood.

As for why he knew the child was Jack's, it had all his features. So much so he almost thought Jack shrank. Of course, the features were much cuter than Jack's.

"I will do my best. As for her name... He doesn't have one yet. Jack planned on letting you name him as a thank you for everything you did for us. Of course, if you had taken too long to return, we would have thought of something. But since you're here, will you please fulfil what can be considered to be his last wish?" Sarah replied in a way that surprised Muku.

He and Jack might have gotten along well and he had done a few things for the guy, but he had never thought that it was enough for Jack to give him such an honour.

Also, he was extremely jealous. How come Jake managed to have a child but he couldn't?

Sure his current life wasn't exactly good for a child, but still, did this mean Jack was more of a man than he was?

No, that can't be it. The child looked to be more than a year old. This meant that it was considered when Jack and Sarah were relatively still weak. Currently, Sarah is only LR4. Which meant that she was likely weaker when she got pregnant.

And as Mrs C said, the stronger one is, the harder it is to have kids. Which meant the weaker you were, the easier right?

He and the girls were already pretty strong when they started doing it. Not to mention their talents that boosted their strength even more. So not being able to have kids was understandable.

With that realisation, he felt better about himself. Even better than when he finally remembered Sarah's name without looking at his memories before things got awkward.

"Well, I feel that's something you as the parent should do. But if it's what Jack wanted, then I'll be honoured to. I just hope you can give me some time to think of a proper name" Muku accepted the honour.

It looked like Sarah wouldn't take no for an answer anyway.

"Thank you. And please take all the time you need. I'm more than happy to oblige, it shows that you care" Sarah replied with a smile... Or at least something that looked like it might be a smile.

It seemed she had basically forgotten how to smile since the separation from Jack. She was likely only still holding on for her child otherwise she would have long fallen into depression and might have even followed Jack back then...

"Great. Thank you for understanding... So what are your plans now? Do you plan on staying here or are you trying to reach somewhere?" Muku asked.

While he would very much like to take the group for his group's benefit, he would never force them. That would be counterproductive after all.

And he didn't even need to take them along to get their Belief energy.

"I ah... Honestly, we have no idea what our next step should be... If possible, I'd like to seek your guidance on the matter. What do you propose we do if you don't mind" Sarah asked for Muku's advice expectantly.

Actually, from her body language and what she was subtly hinting at. It was clear she wanted Muku to take responsibility for their group, but she was too embarrassed to ask.

After all, they had nothing to offer in return. Hell, even their most beautiful girls couldn't amount to one of the girls in his group combined. And strength? That was even more pitiful. The difference between them was so large that they couldn't even sense Muku and his group's presence despite looking at them.

Some even wondered if they were talking to ghosts, but none dared test it.

And it was common knowledge that if a stronger Evolver didn't want a weaker one to sense their power then that's how it would be. It was only that it had never been so thorough before.

The above were just Sarah's thoughts, she didn't know that they were actually quite helpful to Muku. More than they knew...

"Well, I alone can't think of such a big matter properly, so let me discuss it with my group" Muku spoke calmly.

He and the girls then went to the side and returned within a few seconds.

He looked at the expectant Sarah then spoke...

"I was planning on maybe helping you all get stronger and build a proper shelter before leaving. But they convinced me otherwise. They suggested that we take you along with us. In fact, they threatened to kick me out of the group if I didn't take you all along. After that, I remembered that a child should grow up in the most stable environment possible. So I agreed. Now it's up to you. Are you willing to leave your fate in my group's hands? I'll give you as much time as you need to decide" Muku spoke in the most manipulative way he has ever done in his life.

So much so, he and the girls almost couldn't stop themselves from cringing. That's how much they despised the trickery.

But it was necessary to get as much belief energy out of Sarah's group as possible within a short period of time.

That's why he worded it in a way in which all of them had credit so that not only one person gets the belief energy.

And it wasn't like they were just going to exploit them without any benefits like politicians. They were going to do their best to take care of them in return... Which will coincidentally earn them more Belief energy. So it was a win-win really.

"We agree! Our lives are in your hands" Sarah replied immediately.

"Are you sure? You can sit down with the others first and properly think about it..." Muku pretended to give her a choice.

That's right, even if she said they'd stay behind, he'd find a way to get them to come. He wasn't a saint after all.

"No no. We don't need time to think. We are ready to go right now if you want" Sarah replied instantly again.

There was no way she was going to give him a chance to back down. And she didn't need to be a leader. She had had enough of that since Jack left.

And relying on a true powerhouse like Muku will guarantee her child's safety even more than Jack would have had he been around. It sucked to admit, but that was the truth.

And it wasn't a betrayal as Jack had always said to latch onto Muku's lap whenever they got the chance. So it was technically his idea she was following.

"Okay. If you say so. Then welcome to the team. For now, I'll give you and the others two hours to prepare for departure. Make sure that all matters are taken care of" Muku replied.

Since she was completely on board he wouldn't try to push her away again.

"Understood. I'll go inform them. We'll only need an hour at most... Can you hold him for me for a bit while I go take care of the task?" Sarah replied. Then she held out her child to Muku.

Before Muku could do anything, Audrey jumped in and snatched the child enthusiastically.

That's right, as always, she had fallen for the cute toddler.

"I'll hold him for you. Don't worry, he's in safe hands. You can go do what you have to do in peace..." Audrey spoke in a gentle voice to Sarah but her eyes never left the child who was looking back at her.

It seemed they were both mesmerised by each other's appearance.

"Thank you. I'll be back soon" Sarah replied then turned to leave after looking at her child one more time.

She could see the love in Audrey's eyes. And that made her feel that the child was probably even safer with Audrey than with herself.

It was interesting how both she and Jack were beaten by Muku and Audrey in guaranteeing their child's safety...

Chapter 500: Gratitude

A while later...

Sarah kept her words as she and the others really managed to prepare in less than an hour. Then again they were Evolvers and didn't have much stuff anyway so.

Muku and the girls had hoped they'd take longer actually. After all, they were having fun playing with the child. Yeah, after a while all of them had caught Audrey's baby fever.

Even Muku. This made him want to give proper thought to a name for the little boy. He was planning to hold a meeting specifically for that later on. And with how the girls were enjoying playing with the toddler, they'll definitely love to participate.

Anyway, after the group of more than seven hundred people finished preparing, Muku told them to all gather together closely.

This confused them greatly as it would make moving hard but they did as they were told.

Then Muku waved his hand.

Whoosh!

Like magic(which it was) they all disappeared from the mountain caves. No matter how far away from Muku they were, they were taken away...

Honestly, even if they were kilometres away from him he would have easily taken them. But that would require more energy. So he had them huddle together just to make it easier on his mana pool...

In an instant, they all appeared inside the embryo on empty land.

They were all shocked and confused because of what was happening.

There was a little fear mixed in too since they couldn't sense any mana in the air. Which had become as common to them as oxygen by that point.

"Don't panic every. You're safe. Currently, you're in our world. A world untouched by the apocalypse. A world where you're free from fear of not seeing the next day because of beasts. Now, if you look to your left, you'll see a castle. That's where I'll reside. On the opposite side of that castle is another settlement. You're free to interact with them as you wish. However, it would be best if it's only women who try at first since men aren't viewed too well there. Now onto you, I assume you have capable earth elementalists. They are the ones who'll create your residence. If not, I can find you some from the other settlement. Are there any questions?" Muku explained everything he thought was important to the group.

"Ah yes... Are we free to stay here forever?" It was actually Sarah who asked the question.

But then again, with what she had experienced, and her child's safety, it was understandable why she would ask that.

"You're more than welcome to stay. However, your good situation is all on you. We'll get you grains. And maybe some unranked beasts to rear, but after that, you'll be on your own" Muku replied.

As soon as his words fell many began crying on the spot.

Not that they weren't sad. It was the opposite actually. They were so happy that they had finally found a safe place after so much struggling for years...

But of course, they were a bit sad as well. This was because their loved ones who passed away didn't live to see this day.

As they cried, Muku and the girls were hit by a sudden wave of Belief energy. It was at least thirty times more than that from Lisa's group that had more people.

It was quite surprising since that group had more than a thousand people while this one had all slightly over seven hundred.

It seemed the number didn't determine the amount of belief someone gave.

Which was understandable if you thought about it. After all, some people felt strongly while others didn't.

Not to mention that the reasons for the belief were different. The first kind from Lisa's group was induced by a show of power while this was induced by genuine gratitude.

As for why it wasn't Muku who just got the KP, well he had been involving the girls from the start so Sarah's group really thought it was a group effort.

The girls were really grateful for this. Some were already planning on giving Muku a happy ending that night to show their gratitude. They began eyeing each other scouting the competition. They were now in a race to see who would get to him first.

While they did that, Muku realised something. They hadn't told Lisa's group about the chance to stay in there forever. Maybe that would get his group more Belief energy.

With that thought in mind, he decided to speak with Lisa later on. She knew them best. So she should know how to speak in a way that gives the most belief energy.

Would she like the act of treachery? No. But she was part of his group now so she had to get with the program. Not to mention that she was also benefiting and knew just how important belief energy was for them in a world that was constantly getting more and more dangerous...

For that reason alone, she'll definitely do it. She was quite objective when she had to be. And it wasn't like they'd be harming them.

"Before I leave you to it. I'll have you know. You're also free to go out when you want. Just look for anyone from my group. They'll open the way for you. Oh, we live by the basic human code in here. So if you do anything unethical, or straight up evil like rape or murder, we'll send you out forever... Well, that's if you steal or something. But if you do the other two or something just as bad then death is what awaits you. We don't hold trials here. But if you commit a crime, trust us, we'll know. I mean, after what you went through, living honestly shouldn't be hard right?... Enough of that, now do you need any help building or what?" Muku added before leaving.

"Understood Your Highness. And yes please, we'd appreciate it if we could have some help building" Sarah spoke in such a formal way that Muku almost cringed himself to death.

It seemed knowing that he owned a haven made her impression of him climb even higher. Hell, she was steadily providing him more KP than Lisa did at her peak, and before Sarah, no one had come even closer.

Speaking of which, the belief energy he got from Lisa was decreasing by the day. Was the ungrateful girl getting too comfortable with him?

Now that he thought about it, he wasn't getting anything at all from the other girls in his group. Did they only love him without any belief or something?

Was he a lovable clown to them? He was definitely going to have a talk with them about it later. They had to explain themselves!...

"Please don't call me that. Just address me as leader or boss or anything else that's not that. Even calling me Mr Chisen is better than that" Muku immediately put Sarah down before her way of addressing him caught on to the others.

He wasn't a king and had no desire to be one. Leading his own household was chaotic enough, so why would he want to lead everyone else's?

Sure, he knew that the way he was being addressed didn't change the fact that he really was the supreme leader here.

But he felt that being a supreme being and being a king were different. After all, a supreme being only has to be supreme and get involved whenever they feel like it. But a king's job is literally being involved all day everyday. Something he wanted no part in.

In fact, after this, Sarah's group will likely deal with the girls just like how Lisa's group did.

In fact, Lisa's group was in a better situation because of her high position. Unlike Sarah's group which didn't have anyone worthy of note.

"Okay... Leader" Sarah changed the way she addressed him. She felt that it underplayed his power but it's what he wanted so...

"Good. Now, as for the help. Talk to this lady right here. Her name is Lisa. She'll help you get some people. And if you ever need anything that has to do with building structures and such, she's the one for you. For anything else, you'll see this one, she'll direct you in the right direction. Her name is Audrey" Muku immediately started shirking responsibility.

The girls rolled their eyes but didn't say anything. In fact, they were more than willing to prevent him from interacting with other women unnecessarily.

While his bloodline being under control meant that he wasn't as fickle as before. Like his incident with Lisa. It was never bad to be extra careful.

They didn't think he'd go for his dead friend's widow, but you never know what fetish someone has so...

"Okay. Thank you" Sarah expressed her gratitude.

"Cool. Now if you'll excuse..." Muku was about to turn and leave when he was interrupted.

"Wait... Sarah and the baby should come stay with us. The group's matters can be left to her second in command. We promised to give this child the best life after all. If she wants to deal with the matters here first then it's fine, but she'll live with us. I can take the baby now and she'll follow after she's done... How does that sound to you, Sarah?" Audrey interrupted. She was still holding the child in her hands unwilling to return him.

"... If you're offering then I'm more than willing to accept. Thank you. And please, take care of him for me while I handle things here. If he becomes problematic, please feel free to call for me..." Sarah accepted the deal.

She felt quite awkward thinking about it, but if it provided her child with the best environment for growth then she was okay with it.

It was only a little awkwardness after all.

"Great! See you later then. We'll leave you to it" Audrey spoke happily.

She merrily took the baby away with the others. Only Sarah, her group and Lisa were left to sort their matters out...