

RAISING A FEW WIVES IN A BEAST APOCALYPSE

Chapter 91 Your death will go unavenged

"Just as promised, your group will take half and we'll take the other half. In fact, if you want more, or all of it, we don't mind; we would have been dead without you," Jack spoke after collecting himself. His group members were immediately shocked by what he said, but knowing that he was definitely aware of a lot more than them, they didn't say anything. Not to mention that they all knew that they wouldn't have been able to easily keep their lives if Muku's group didn't intervene.

"No, that's not necessary. In fact, we'll only take two trucks worth of rice. You keep the rest; you're feeding a whole base, after all. If Master was awake, he would definitely made the same decision" It was Audrey who spoke for the group since Muku wasn't awake to do it. She actually only wanted to take one truck's worth of food but felt that it would be too nice and would lead to the other side thinking that they were nice pushovers, even if not consciously.

She removed the cloth covering her face before speaking. She felt like it would be impolite to speak with it. Seeing her face everyone on the opposite Jack's side was mesmerized. He had gotten a glimpse before when the Rank Two appeared. But he was still mesmerized like the rest, which showed just how beautiful Audrey was. They all immediately understood why she kept her face covered when interacting with strangers. Such a face in the current times would definitely cause trouble.

Some of the male members of Jack's group had a flash of lust in their eyes. But as soon as they met her smiling gaze, they felt their raging blood freeze. They couldn't shout out or even move a finger; a second later, everything returned to normal. They immediately took their eyes off her and looked anywhere else, to think they almost died just for having lustful thoughts!

When they looked around, they happened to notice that the rest of the girls in the group were super cute. The only reason they weren't up to the level of the lady with grey hair and eyes was due to their young ages, and they would catch up in a while. But after having learned their lesson the first time, they didn't think of anything improper this time. Which was to their luck as, unlike Audrey's warning, Jade might have cut off a hand or leg. The girl was just that ruthless; she just hadn't had the opportunity to show it while dealing with people. So they definitely dodged a Beast Aura-coated bullet.

"Really, thank you, but we'll take this as owing you a favour. So whenever you think of a way you want us to repay you, we're willing to do almost anything" Jack didn't refuse the rice since they needed it; he opted to chalk it down as a favour his group would owe the other side.

"Sure" Audrey didn't deny his offer. She then got onto a truck along with the rest. Then went through the mansion gate with it. Then, I came back to get the other one while thinking about how a lot easier it would have been with Muku around. But still, they weren't willing to allow anyone into their territory, while the girls couldn't drive a truck, especially one with a manual gearbox. Jack respected their decision, even telling them to keep the trucks for as long as they needed.

...

In the evening...

"Sir, there were a few rebels who invaded the mansion despite you having strictly ordered everyone to stay away from it" A skinny man who had remained behind to manage the safe zone in Jack's absence reported.

"Oh, how many were they?. How did it turn out for them?" Jack asked with a casual tone.

"At least thirty sir. And none of them returned; all we heard were some screams accompanied by beastly roars. Which made others who were overconfident in their abilities curious. They also went in and likely died. They only stopped after they reached beyond thirty; I suspect some were just looking for a way to commit suicide, though," The skinny man reported with a respectful look on his face; a flash of fear would appear in his eyes every time he remembered the blood-curdling screams accompanied by beastly roars.

"Oh, oh well, one reaps what they sow after all". Jack replied unbothered by the deaths. It would have surprised him if such a group didn't have at least such a method to protect their mansion, which definitely had some valuables.

"But sir, is it okay for us to stay right next to such a sketchy group?" The skinny man asked with an unwilling expression on his face, he couldn't take having such neighbours. He felt they had to go.

"Oh, is that so?. From what you said, whatever killed those idiots didn't come out of the gate even once, it only killed whoever entered inside, right? So I don't see what their problem here is. But hey, if you want them to leave, you can go tell them yourself, I won't stop you...

....Just know they are the reason I'm here right now and you're going to sleep with a full stomach tonight. Also, if they decide to kill you, your death will go unavenged; in fact,, there won't even be a funeral. We don't mourn idiots around here" Jack replied to the skinny man in a way that left him shaking in his boots. It was only then that he realised

how unimportant he was, he thought since Jack left him in charge, his words held some weight in the base. But Jack's words gave him a rude awakening.

"I'm sorry for being out of bounds sir. I'll take my leave now" The skinny man immediately apologized and left the room in a hurry. From that day onward he knew his place and quickly faded into the background. Never to be mentioned by author-san since he didn't like him either.

"Did you have to be so brutal with your words"? Sarah, who was sitting quietly on a sofa by the side, spoke when they were left alone.

"Was I hush? I guess I haven't completely calmed down from the crazy day I had today" Jack replied while massaging his forehead.

"Are you going to tell me what happened?" Sarah asked him for the tenth time since they returned.

"Nope," Jack gave her a simple answer that effectively displayed his stance. He has promised and he would stick to it. Also, he didn't know if those monsters had a way to find out if he broke the promise, so he chose to be safe. After all, if they can die and come back to life, what's stopping them from being able to do that too?

"Tsk, whatever, keep it to yourself then" Sarah replied with an eye roll. She knew that he would tell her if it was something he could tell her, he would have. She was super curious, but wouldn't feel angry about him not telling her either.

....

At the mansion.....

"When did you break through to Rank Two!?" Jade exclaimed in shock after finally noticing Emily's aura.

"Took you long enough" Emily replied with a roll of her eyes. It had taken them longer than she thought it would, her built-up excitement for when they finally do had long faded.

...

"So you're saying you needed to die to reach Rank Two, and the process needed a beast core of a Rank Two bird-type beast?" Jade repeated what Emily just told them with a deadpan expression on her face.

"Yup, though I technically didn't die" Emily replied with a smug look on her face.

"And you knew this from the start?" Jade asked with the same expression, but everyone could tell that if Emily said yes, she might get punched in the face.

"No, I didn't. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been dramatic" It was only when my body "died" and my spirit was separated from it that I got the information", Emily explained further.

"Oh...wait. Your spirit was separated from your body?. What does that mean?" Jade asked with confusion visible on her face, this was the first time she had heard about such a thing after all. The others were also confused, they all looked at Emily for her to explain what she was talking about.

"Hmm, I don't know how to put it other than saying, it's like my soul was ejected from my body while my body was reforged by my flames. It was like I became a ghost beside my ghost that could see everyone and everything that was happening while you all couldn't see me" Emily explained.

"Oh, so that's how you knew about Muku's situation without anyone telling you about it!" Jade exclaimed in understanding.

"Yep," Emily replied.

"But wasn't the whole situation a bit coincidental? In some way, somehow, everything worked out in a way that would benefit you. It just seems unreal. And for real, coming back to life? What kind of ability is that? Doesn't that basically make you immortal?. And all you had to do was lay down and die!. Totally unfair!" Jade complained, why wasn't she, the one who could shrug off death!?

"Hey, it's not as broken as you might think okay!" Emily exclaimed while rolling her eyes. She could see the envy in everyone's eyes.

Chapter 92 Worth only 1%!?

"Is that so? Explain to us how such a broken ability isn't broken", Jade replied, not believing Emily at all.

"Firstly, the cooldown is one year, meaning I'm not different from everyone else during the cool down. Though it will get shorter the stronger I get, who knows if I'll survive that long. Then, the need for a higher rank core from a bird-type beast. Meaning, right now, if I were to die and weren't on a cool down, I'd need a Rank Three core while we don't even know if there's any around. And even if there are some Rank Threes around, do you think we can kill it?.....

.....Then there's the issue of how I almost died for real during Muku's incident. His power destabilised the space around the place, to the point some cracks appeared all around the place and I was almost sucked into one of them. Which means attacks that can affect space can kill me. If it wasn't for his aura that froze me in place, I really would have died for real. After all that, you still think my skill is broken?" Emily explained the others covered their mouths in shock at what Emily went through. Elsa even held her hand a bit tighter.

"Yeah, that does sound super rough, but you have to admit, no matter what, a skill that can bring you back from the dead is broken no matter what" Jade acknowledged that Emily's skill wasn't as perfect as she thought. But still, it was the most broken skill they knew currently nonetheless; the others agreed as well.

"You say that, but you've got Beast Aura that can basically do anything and everything. On top of that, from what I noticed during your battle with the crow, you can control beasts if certain conditions are met. Do you think that's not broken, especially in a beast apocalypse? Then there's the devastating breath attack." Like Emily just said, Jade gained the ability to control beasts when she was berserk, which was what she needed to rank up. In normal cases, it won't work on higher stages or rank beasts like the crow.

"Then there's Hope, she can not only poison your body but your mind too. If she hadn't poisoned the beast's mind with fear, Jade wouldn't have been able to take control of it. On top of that, she's a great healer; how's that not broken?" Emily didn't wait for anyone to say anything before continuing. And she was correct again.

Hope can poison both your body and mind, and she could not only poison you into an angry state but other emotions like fear as well. Like Emily said, it was because she poisoned the crow into a fearful state along with Jade's Beast Control that allowed the girls to beat it up without it fighting back. The combined attacks of the two had basically broken its mind. If it was just one of them who used their abilities on it, it would have broken out of the state after the first attack it received.

"Layla can ignore defence with an attack she can continuously use without stopping as long as she has the mana. Since she's now a rank two, I think it's safe to assume she can now enter the shadow realm where no one can harm her and wait for a chance to attack. Is that also not broken, especially considering how most beasts have strong defences?" Again, Emily spoke without waiting for anyone to say anything. Though, at this point, the others didn't even want to speak, they were all shocked by how Emily was so aware of their abilities before they had spoken to anyone about it.

"And Chloe, she's just perfect. How is it that there's someone who can be a jack of all trades and still be so strong? She can fight close range and is even faster than Jade; her attack is also equal to, if not stronger than, Jade's, with a stunning effect on top. Her long-ranged attacks are nothing I can compare with when dealing with single targets, especially when they are a sizable distance away.....

.....Not to mention that she can summon a lightning storm that can keep on spewing out concentrated lightning as long as she has the mana to support it. And she can resist Muku's telekinesis, which not even Jade's omnipotent Beast Aura can resist" Emily continued making her point, every time leaving the others with nothing to say. Chloe has also fulfilled the last step before she she evolved, which was to turn multiple lightning bolts from the clouds into one, instead of making them individually strike one spot. Which created a more devastating attack.

"Even Ms Audrey, the moment her mana comes into contact with your blood, you're dead. And who can promise that they can finish a whole battle with her without getting at least scratched?" She didn't say much about Audrey, but what she did say, was enough for everyone to understand how broken Audrey's abilities were.

"Are you done?" Jade asked after Emily didn't say anything for a few seconds. To which Emily nodded.

"So, are you going to tell us how you're so informed on our abilities, the others like Layla, Chloe and Ms Audrey, we can understand since we all basically knew everything they could do. But as for how you knew about me gaining the ability to control beasts, and Hope's mind poisoning that goes beyond making the target angry...." Jade finally asked what they all wanted to know.

"Oh, that, I guess it does seem a bit odd that I'm so informed. Well, it's pretty simple actually. When I was a spirit, my mind was so clear, and my perception of things was way beyond anything anyone could imagine. All I needed was to look at what was happening for a few seconds to completely understand what was happening. That or Author-san's is just using me to explain how everyone evolved. Either way, it doesn't really matter as long as I know, right?"

"Hmm, sounds legit. Okay" Although felt that there was something wrong with what Emily said, she didn't pursue it. Not to mention that if one really thought about it, it was possible to figure out everything Emily said about them. Like Jade's class is a Beast Empress, so controlling beasts are to be expected. And if Hope can make you angry, she can also make you afraid, right?

"That reminds me, how many kill points did you all get for killing the Crow?" Emily remembered something and immediately asked the others.

"Oh, that...I don't know. I didn't pay attention to it at the time; I doubt anyone else did either," Jade replied, just like she said. She hadn't paid attention to it at the time, and neither did the others so they were all clueless.

"Really?. Okay, I wanted to know if it was still the same as before" Emily spoke, a bit disappointed.

[Currently at 0.25% of Kill Points needed to reach Peak Rank Two]

Before the girls could reply to her, they received the prompt. It surprised them a bit since it was unexpected. But it was a pleasant surprise.

"Oh, who knew it would work" Layla's low voice sounded in the room.

"Hmm?" Audrey beside her made an inquisitive sound.

"Oh, I just thought about wanting to know how many kill points I had acquired, and their prompt immediately rang out. I only have 0.25% of the needed amount" Layla explained herself, even mentioning the meagre amount she had

"Oh, it was your doing?. I didn't know we could do that" Chloe spoke. She didn't think about it like Layla did but still got the prompt.

"Then does this mean that when a kill is shared, if one person inquires about it, everyone gets a prompt?" Hope asked a rather rhetorical question since it was quite obvious.

"You all also got 0.25%!?" Jade inquired. To which the other three nodded.

"Which means a MR2 beast is only worth 1%!? What about a LR2 then!?" Jade asked with wide eyes. One has to understand that when they were Rank One, most LR1 beasts were worth around 2%. So this was definitely a shocking discovery.

"Maybe it just takes a lot more Kill Points to reach the peak of Rank Two" Layla shrugged. Although it would take a lot more work for them to reach the peak now, she wasn't against it. She quite liked battling beasts after all.

"That's likely it, I'm sure you've all noticed that it's now calculated in percentages instead of just counting the number of beasts killed. Which I say is a lot more comprehensive than when it counted beasts when they didn't provide fixed amounts of points" Chloe spoke,

liking the new way of tracking progress. She also didn't mind having to work harder to get to the peak.

"Tsk, why are you all so calm about this!?" Jade spoke in an annoyed tone after noticing that the others weren't as lazy as she was.

"No wonder you're a catgirl, you're so lazy" Emily teased Jade for being so openly lazy.

"Whatever, I'm still going to get to the peak before you though," Jade said while rolling her eyes. How could Emily say something so negative about her catgirl form when it was so strong and cute!?. She'll show her how great she was by reaching the peak first!

"Is that a challenge?" Emily asked with a smile. Se felt that with her current strength and her AOE attacks if she was thrown into a sea of beasts. She'll come out as a Peak Rank Two within hours if they weren't too strong, or she ran out of mana first. While Jade mostly had to attack a single target at a time.

"Yes, it is", Jade immediately responded; competitive sparks appeared between the two friends as they looked at each other with confident gazes.

The others just quietly looked on, but secretly they'd also try to be the first to reach the peak. Even Audrey wanted to be the first; she was the first to reach Rank 2, after all. So being beaten to the top would be quite embarrassing.

Chapter 93 Revealed everything!

"Now that that's all over and done with, can we talk about Big Brother?" Hope spoke after the others finished discussing the previous topic. After reaching Rank Two, she realised that she needed a lot longer to recover her mana due to the increase in her mana pool. She wanted to wait until she was completely recovered before starting his healing process, so other than wiping away his bloodied body, which had been done by Audrey in private. No other aid had been provided to him.

"Well, is there really anything to talk about? We'll just wait until you're fully recovered, then heal him" Jade didn't understand why Hope was so worried since she should be able to heal him in a while.

"That's the thing, as an evolver, his condition should have improved visibly even without healing. It wouldn't improve by much, but there would still be some progress, but his state hasn't changed at all" Hope explained what she meant.

"Really!?" Jade was finally startled, she didn't know the situation was actually so bad. Although he wasn't getting worse, not getting better at the same time was still a big problem.

"There's no need to worry, although he won't get better on his own for now. Hope, you should be able to heal him until he wakes up to manage his own body condition. Albeit it will be hard, it's doable now that you've ranked up" Audrey interjected before the girls worried themselves to death.

"Really?" Hope asked again, just to feel more secure. To which Audrey nodded with a smile, which calmed Hope and the others down. They completely believed her, not just

because she was older and a lot more knowledgeable, but because of her class, which seemed to make her a Muku expert.

"Wait, does that mean that if I was still a Rank One Evolver, I'd not be able to do anything to help him?" Hope asked after catching on to how Audrey worded her sentence.

"Yes, the situation would have been really troublesome then, but we are lucky that you evolved. His wounds are different from normal ones after all." Audrey explained, her words making the girls a bit sceptical but they still chose to believe her.

"What do you mean his wounds are different from normal ones?" Hope couldn't help but ask, she was a caring little sister who wanted to know everything about her big brother after all.

"They were caused by his bloodline. His erratic emotions when he saw Emily getting "killed" were enough to rouse it. Luckily, it was only a little bit, not even a fraction of a single percent, or he would have died on the spot," Audrey explained even further with a fearful look in her eyes; she herself didn't know when she gained this information; she just knew that she knew it before she knew it. That's when she acted and knocked him out before.

"Really!? not even close to one percent and he's so injured; what kind of bulls*it bloodline is that!?" Jade exclaimed in shock, even the other girls were shocked.

"Well, he erased part of a MR2 beast with just a second long glance as a Rank One who isn't even at the peak so I kinda believe it" Chloe spoke. As she said, such a feat wasn't something that should be possible, but to think it happened with a lot less than one

percent of his bloodline power.... was rather scary, actually. Luckily, they were on the same side. Otherwise, such an enemy would have been too much to handle.

"He's the real broken one here, not to mention that even though he's just at 70%, he can beat our 99%". Emily commented, probably just trying to shift away focus from her own broken ability.

"Yeah. And now he has become even more broken with this bloodline," Jade spoke gloomily; she had just realised that she might never get the chance to avenge herself for all the bullying she had suffered at his hand.

"That reminds me, why didn't we take the bird with us? We could have cut it up, and Layla would have put it on ice and dragged it with us. I'm sure meat from a Rank Two would be something to die for" Like usual, Jade switched gears in a split second. She was super adaptive; she just thought that since she couldn't ever beat him. Why bother thinking about it when there's food to think about instead?

"That might have been possible if someone didn't poison every inch of it" Layla replied while giving Hope a side glance. To which Hope responded by covering her face with her hands in embarrassment.

"Come on, how could I have known that after reaching Rank Two our elemental attacks don't immediately disappear after we stop providing them with mana like before?" Hope defended herself from behind her hands.

"I'm not blaming you; I just hope that you don't practice your poison abilities indoors anymore, or you might poison everyone in the mansion" Layla finally got to her point.

"I... I'd never!" Hope exclaimed, though with a little pause. She had realised that if Layla didn't mention it, she might really have done it.

"Actually, everyone will have to practice outside for now. At least until you all can properly control your abilities" Audrey interjected, to which none of the girls disagreed. They didn't have a proper grasp on what they were capable of yet so it would be best to do it outside.

"So what now? like what's our next step?" Jade asked.

"Let's wait for Muku to wake up before deciding, though knowing him, the next step will be to hunt down some beasts and get stronger", Emily replied while giggling.

"Oh, s*it!" Emily suddenly cursed with a pale expression on her face startling everyone. They couldn't understand how someone who was just giggling the second before would now look like all the blood had been drained out of her.

"What's wrong sister?" Elsa looked at her sister with her big, blue, innocent eyes as she asked the question, worry visible on her face. This was the first time she had heard her sister curse after all. It might also be the first time Emily cursed as well.

"O-oh, nothing, nothing at all. I think I'll go sleep" Emily replied while getting up and running up the stairs. Elsa, who had basically become her tail since the incident, followed after her. Since they had already eaten, no one stopped them.

Everyone was confused by her sudden change of mood though. Well, everyone except Layla, who seemed to have realised something. She looked at Emily's back with some amusement in her eyes, but she didn't say anything. She wasn't a snitch after all.

That's right, Emily remembered how she confessed to Muku when she thought she was about to die. How was she supposed to look at him when he woke up now? This was even worse than the time he saw her naked!. Now she had revealed both her body and her heart to him!. She had revealed everything!. He must take responsibility for this!

Emily lay in bed as she thought to herself with her head buried in her pillow. She screams into the pillow from time to time. At first, Elsa, who was beside her, was worried. But remembering how her sister behaved like this every time she looked at Muku's photo before and thought about him. Her worry disappeared and was replaced with some annoyance. What was wrong with her big sister? She had practically died that very day, but here she was back to thinking about her crush. Was she crazy!?

But soon after the annoyance on Elsa's face also disappeared and was replaced by a content look. Who cares if her sister was missing a few marbles in the head. As long as she was there with her, that was all that mattered. She'd just have to get stronger. Then, make sure that something like what happened that day won't happen again and they can always be together.

By the time Elsa freed herself from her thoughts, Emily had already fallen asleep beside her with a goofy smile on her face. She rolled her eyes having an idea what Emily was dreaming about. But still, she took the chance and wiggled her way into Emily's arms, who subconsciously hugged her tightly still asleep. Then with a smile somewhat like the one Emily had, but for a different reason, a different kind of love, but still as strong, she also fell asleep.

.....

Two hours later.....

"I've fully recovered my mana; I can start now," Hope said while looking at Muku.

"Are you sure it's so late? We can just begin tomorrow", Audrey replied from behind her, startling Hope. Everyone else had gone to sleep. In fact, even Hope should have gone to sleep, but Audrey knew the little girl enough, to know that she'd do something like this.

"Y-yes. The sooner I begin, the sooner he gets better," Hope replied, a bit nervous at the start but firm at the end.

"Okay, if that's what you want" Audrey didn't try to change the girl's mind. Though she was certain she wouldn't have been able to anyway.

"Hallowed Ground" Hope cast her strongest spell, not wasting any more time. The familiar glow appeared and this time a lot stronger than ever. It was about to go beyond the room before being stopped and contained by Audrey's mana barrier. She had suspected something like this happening, which was the major reason she even woke up.

The spell needed to be concentrated to work better. Which was rather easy for Audrey, not because she was strong but because it wasn't an attack-type spell; otherwise, it would

have been a lot harder to contain, if even possible. After a few days, Hope should be able to control the range of this gentle spell on her own and won't need Audrey's help.

Hope kept the spell cast until all her mana ran out. Even then, Audrey had to tap her shoulder for her to stop. They looked at Muku and noticed that his condition seemed to have improved by around 5%. Of course, Author-san is using percentages for it to be a lot more comprehensible to the readers.

Since she had been told by Audrey that it would be hard to heal him. Hope wasn't discouraged by the little progress. She was just glad that it worked in the first place. No matter how long it would take, she'd heal him completely eventually!

Then with the help of Audrey, she wobbled to her room to sleep. Audrey then went to her own. It was beside Layla's. She looked at Layla's door for a bit but eventually decided against entering. She chose to give her daughter some privacy. She then entered her own room and slept.

"Sigh," A disappointed sigh escaped from Layla's mouth. She was still up and heard Audrey's pause in front of her door. She also wanted to bond with her mother but didn't know how to go about it. So she hoped that Audrey would initiate it, but it seemed Audrey was too considerate.

And so, they were stuck at an impasse...

Chapter 94 Shouldn't I be the one pinching you!?

A week later....

Muku still hadn't woken up. Other than hunting a few beasts for food close by, the girls hadn't left the mansion much, if at all. They hadn't even bothered to interact with their "neighbours", who didn't bother them either. Although they were worried about Muku, they could only put their faith in Hope. Who was slowly but gradually healing his body.

They were also using their free time to meditate. Audrey had even improved her mana control by 4%, putting her at 5%. The moment she reaches Peak Rank Two, she'll immediately enter the Half-step R3 stage, albeit on the weaker side. She wasn't the only one though.

Emily, Chloe and Hope had also improved their mana control by a bit. Emily and Chloe being a bit better than Hope. Both were at 3%, while Hope was still at 1%. Likely because of their past experience. Chloe had always been trying to better control her mana after a certain "incident" that left her naked. While Emily got some inspiration from her spell that chooses who to burn despite covering everyone. So it was understandable that she wasn't as fast as them. Not to mention that had spent most of her week in a weakened state after using all her mana on Muku.

As for Layla, she had refused to say. Which made others think that she might not have improved by even 1%. So they didn't pry, not wanting to embarrass her. Though it wasn't true, Layla was already at 2%, just didn't want to admit that she had lost to Emily and Chloe when they ranked up on the same day. The girl really didn't like losing.

Jade, on the other hand, was going through something completely different. Unlike the others, she had to completely abandon mana and switch to Beast Aura. Her evolution path was a bit unique. Her access to mana was only temporary and had to be changed if she wanted to get to Rank Three. She had to replace the mana in her core with Beast Aura. So far, her normal transformation with the orange fur was a construct of mana, while her berserk state was a construct of Beast Aura.

When she was Rank One, the two worked in tandem. But ever since she reached Rank Two, they had started vaguely clashing. That's when the IA notified her that she should completely switch to Beast Aura which is the specialized energy for her class. Mana was only a temporary fix, allowing her to survive as a Rank One while learning how to use Beast Aura, which is a lot harder to control when so weak. Hell, she couldn't even access it initially.

So while the others improved their mana control. She has to slowly replace the mana in her core with Beast Aura, which had been circling in her body, avoiding the core until then. She was currently at 1%, which was basically the same as Hope. Since she didn't have to improve her mana control, just had to abandon it.

As for Elsa, she was still unranked, with a kill count of nine. She had managed to kill the ninth just before the Crow attacked. Since they couldn't find any unranked beasts close by, she was stuck for a while. They couldn't even return to the place they went last time since the mice had been wiped out during the chaos.

Emily was even worried that they wouldn't be able to find more unranked beasts anytime soon. This was understandable since such beasts were at the bottom of the food chain and were everyone's easy prey. Even weak humans targeted them with greedy eyes after realising that they'd likely not leave long if they remained weak.

There were no longer governments that handed out hampers to the poor....or at least during voting season. So people were learning to be independent, making unranked beasts a hot commodity. And a starved R1 beast wouldn't mind an unranked beast feast.

.....

"Ahh, my eyes!" Muku exclaimed in pain when he tried to open his eyes after regaining consciousness.

"Big Brother!" Hope, who had fallen asleep while sitting beside his bed, immediately woke up and jumped on top of him. Luckily for Muku, she wasn't too strong physically, or his back might have been broken by how hard she was squeezing him.

His body had been healed completely on the fifth day. Since Hope healed him whenever her mana regenerated. But he didn't wake up, even after two days. Audrey had told them not to worry but the others could tell that even she was starting to worry. But since there was nothing they could do, they could only wait until he woke up. So Hope's happiness from hearing his voice after a whole week could be imagined.

"You're squashing me" Muku said in a low and gentle voice. But Hope didn't move; he could only smile wryly while caressing her hair, hoping that she'd calm down soon. He could tell from her reaction that he might have been out for a while. After all, the last thing was...

When that memory resurfaced in his mind he opened his eyes wide. Then, he immediately closed them; they still hurt like hell, though not as his heart at the moment. Was she really gone? Will he never see those kinds of golden eyes and bright smiles again? Will he never hear her melodious voice again? A tear flowed down the side of his face as he thought about Emily.

"I heard screaming, what happened?" After budging in through the door, Emily asked while looking toward the bed with worry on her face. She just happened to be going past the room when she heard Hope's loud voice.

"Huh!?" Muku exclaimed in shock and confusion after hearing the voice he was just thinking that he'd never hear again. He immediately opened his eyes, which had adjusted a lot more, and looked toward the door. And there she was, even prettier than she was before. Was she a ghost? Muku kept on looking at Emily unblinkingly as all these thoughts went through his mind. Emily looked back.

"What?, Is there anything on my face?" Emily who'd already forgotten that the last time Muku saw her was when she "died", was completely confused by how he was staring at her so intensely. Her happiness from seeing him awake made it even harder for her to catch on. She would have jumped onto him if Hope wasn't already silently weeping in his arms.

"Can you come here for a second?" Muku didn't answer her question and only beckoned at her. Emily confusedly did as told.

"Give me your hand" Muku added after she came close enough. Although still confused, Emily did as told, she was already faintly blushing, wondering why he'd want to hold her hand soon after waking up.

"Ahh!, what are you doing!?" Emily screamed as she jumped back, her left hand on top of her right one, trying to ease the sudden pain. She glared at Muku with teary eyes full of grievances. Although it was acceptable that he didn't do what she thought he'd do, but why would he pinch her hand of all things!?.

"Oh, so I'm really not dreaming!?" Muku exclaimed in shock.

"What do you mean?, and even if you wanted to check that, shouldn't I be the one pinching you!? When did you become so unreasonable?" Emily complained, feeling even more wronged. Since when did the person who thought they were dreaming become the one to pinch others!?

"Ah, right, sorry, I guess I am not thinking properly yet", Muku replied with an embarrassed expression on his face. That's when he felt the weight on him lighten, then completely disappear, along with a certain softness. It was Hope who had gotten up. She had been startled by Emily's cry of pain. Hearing what they were talking about, she realised that Muku must have been shocked to see Emily alive. And like a reasonable sister, she unwillingly got up to leave the room and give them privacy for a bit.

After Hope left Muku slowly got up from the bed. Although he felt a bit weak, he could still move, which was likely a perk of having mana that normal humans don't have. He slowly walked to Emily who hadn't dared get close to him after being pinched on her hand. As he got closer, she'd step back. He wasn't discouraged and kept on walking forward until Emily's back was pressed against the wall, and she couldn't step back any further.

He stopped advancing after there was less than thirty centimetres between them. He was taller than Emily, so he looked down, while she had to look up to meet his gaze. But she was also looking down which meant all he couldn't see was her golden hair.

"Will you not look at me? he spoke softly. Emily shivered a bit but didn't say anything; she didn't even know what to say. And still didn't dare meet his gaze; her legs felt weak, like she could fall over at any moment. She wanted to run away but didn't trust her legs to take her even one step forward, so she was stuck. She closed her eyes in the spot hoping he'd go away. She felt so nervous that she suspected that she might faint if things continued like this.

That's when she felt a hand touch her chin and then push her face up. She couldn't help but open her golden eyes a bit. She was immediately met by his grey ones that still looked at her intensely, with a lot of hidden emotions behind them. She forced her face down again, her heart racing, and he didn't prevent her.

He took her in his arms. Instead, he gave her a tight hug. Though not tight enough to hurt her. She even felt like he was treating her like a fragile flower.

"I...I'm sorry that I failed you" Muku said with a croaked voice. Although he didn't know how she was still alive. He was happy nonetheless; this way, he could make up for his failure to keep her safe.

Chapter 95 Worth the wait

Hearing his emotional voice, Emily's eyes couldn't help but tear up. Although she knew he cared already, it was only now she got a sense of how much he did. And it was a lot. It really warmed her heart.

"N...no, it wasn't your fault. It was just bad luck on our part. And we all made it, so it's fine" Emily said in a gentle voice while rubbing his back. She was secretly on cloud nine having discovered his fragile side, especially since she was the reason he was showing it.

"Tsk, I'm calling the FBI, just woke up and you're already assaulting little girls" Before Muku replied, Jade's voice sounded from the door. She had opened it without knocking, and behind her everyone was poking their heads from the sides with shock in their eyes.

"Oh my! What a scandalous scene!" Audrey exclaimed while covering her mouth. Although she and the others could guess what was really going on, it wouldn't stop them from teasing the two who were in each other's embrace.

After all, right then, Muku was shirtless while hugging Emily. As for why he didn't have one on?. That's because Audrey is a bit of a pervert. She liked seeing his toned upper body so much that she hadn't been putting one on him throughout the whole week. She just covered his body with a blanket to hide it from the others. There was no way they'd uncovered it right?

"Ahh!" Having realised their situation, Emily screamed in embarrassment. Her face burning red, she pushed Muku away, jumped on the bed and covered her whole body with the blanket. She would have preferred to run out of the room, but the door was blocked. Seeing her reaction, the others were quite amused, she was just too cute. Elsa, though, felt really embarrassed for her older sister, who just lost all her face in front of the team.

"Arg!" Before Muku could say anything to defend both his and Emily's honour and reputation. Another person was already in his arms, their face buried in his chest. Judging from the force of the hug and the green hair, it was pretty obvious who it was. To think it was the same person that was talking about calling the FBI just a few moments before. That's right, it was Jade. She had moved before anyone else could react.

"Don't scare me like that again, please" Jade spoke in an uncharacteristically soft voice. It was only then that the others realised despite her having appeared to be as loud as ever, she was probably one of the most worried people in the group. She just didn't like showing her weakness, which honestly is something they'd expect from Jade. But it seems she couldn't hold her act any longer after seeing Muku.

Without waiting for Muku to respond, she calmly left his arms. She proceeded to walk to the door with a serious face. The others created a path for her and she left. The others might think she was calm and collected if not for her red face having betrayed her from the start.

After Jade left the others just looked at Muku from a distance, not advancing or retreating. Seeing the desire for a hug in all their eyes Muku could only open his arms wide. As if a dam wall had been broken, Layla and Chloe ran forth into his arms. Audrey, being a mature lady, refused to act like the girls. Hope, having gotten first dibs, was standing by the side, waiting for everyone to get their own before jumping in for a second round.

Elsa wasn't as close to Muku as the others so although she was happy he was up, she wasn't too overly moved. If anything she cast a slightly suspicious and wary gaze at Muku. Was he one of those "passionate" guys who won't be satisfied by just one girl she saw in anime?. Wouldn't she also be in danger after a few years then, if he was?

"It's fine now, no need to cry" Muku spoke in a soft voice.

"W... who's crying!?" Layla exclaimed as she jumped out of his embrace while wiping away the tears that were coming out of her eyes.

"Something got into my eyes! Hmph!, I'm leaving" She added before walking out. Just as red-faced as Jade before her. This surprised everyone greatly, they didn't know that Layla was a Tsundere like Jade. Their levels even seemed to be about equal.

"Eep!" Having been left alone in the hug, Chloe also wanted to get out before she was how tightly, prompting a surprised sound to escape her mouth.

"What? Are you also going to leave like they did?" Muku said to the blue-haired girl who was trying her best to wiggle out of his grasp but failing.

"N...no, I'm happy that you're awake. I missed you a lot. Can you please let me go now? Please?" Chloe resigned herself to say those embarrassing words after realising that he wouldn't let her go if she didn't.

"Good girl", Muku said while patting her head, then let her go. He couldn't bully her too much after all. Especially with no shirt on and in front of people. Not to mention that all the hugs had roused a certain fellow who was close to making his presence known if he didn't let go of Chloe. Like a scared little puppy, Chloe quickly ran out of the room as soon as she was released.

"Glad to have you back" Audrey said while standing by the door with a gentle smile on her face.

"Glad to be back...don't you also want a hug?" Muku replied to her and even added a tease at the end. They had gotten familiar with each other for such things after all.

"...Maybe another time" Audrey replied while blushing faintly. She wanted to refuse to show her maturity, but since she also wanted one, she could only reserve it until there was no one else around.

"Sure, anytime you want" Muku replied while getting a t-shirt from the drawer. He thought it was just a joke, unaware that Audrey was serious. Not that he'd mind hugging such a gorgeous lady though.

"So how long have I been unconscious?" Muku asked while taking a sit on one of the two chairs in the room. Audrey took the other one. Hope sat on the bed...where Emily was still covering herself with Muku's blanket. She wanted to leave but still couldn't face the others, so chose to stay. Not to mention she wanted to know what they were talking about.

"A week" Audrey replied.

"Really!?, no wonder I feel so hungry!" Muku was shocked by how long he was unconscious. That was a super long time, considering that so many events in the novel had happened within a week!

"You're hungry? I'll go get you something to eat", Hope interjected, then ran out of the room without waiting for a response. What a caring little sister she was, everyone thought.

Audrey gave Muku a rundown of what they were doing while he was unconscious. She intentionally skipped the part about how Emily was still alive. She felt that since Emily was there in person, she might as well speak for herself.

.....

"Will you heat this for me please?" Muku asked Emily for help while holding a plate full of cold meat. Emily didn't respond for a few seconds. Then she scooped closer, still covering herself with the blanket. Her little hand then slowly came out, she tossed a little flame that enveloped the meat for a bit before going out, leaving the meat properly heated. This is what she could do with just 3% improved mana control, one can only imagine what 100% could do.

"Woah, what great control!" Muku exclaimed, truly impressed by her feat. One has to remember that when she first tried to roast meat, she turned it into charcoal. So this really was a great improvement, especially in such little time.

"Mmm," Emily accepted the compliment with a little sound while smiling under the blankets. It is to be expected that she really likes being praised by him.

"Care to tell me about your experience after I blacked out?" Muku spoke just when Emily was about to scooch back to her initial spot.

"Oh, okay" Emily replied, still hidden under the blanket. Then immediately started telling him everything that happened. From how her class required her body to die to how coincidentally everything she needed was present and everything in between. Despite having already heard everything, Audrey and Hope also listened in intently. They still found the story interesting, after all, it was a story about how someone they knew died and came back to life. The story was interesting enough that no one even minded how Emily was still under a blanket as she said it.

"Wow, to think there'd be so many coincidences; author-san really pushed it with that one", Muku commented after Emily finished speaking. The others nodded in agreement, they felt it was a bit unbelievable, but that was their new life.

"I'm sure you want to take time to think for a bit. We'll go downstairs and wait for you there" After everything had been discussed. Audrey spoke up, preparing to leave; she then went to the bed, picked up Emily along with her blanket and took her away. Hope wanted to stay but felt that maybe her brother really did want some time to himself, so she followed the others. That's when Muku stopped her, saying that he had something to talk to her about.

...

"Come sit beside me" Muku said to Hope while sitting on the edge of the bed. To which Hope happily obliged. As soon as she sat, Muku made her put her head on his lap, which she happily did again. She was always willing to be close to her brother. Muku then started talking to her about random things casually. Which went on for a bit until Hope fell asleep. He proceeded to carry her onto the bed and then lay her down.

"Thank you, little sister, rest for now", Muku said while sitting on the edge of the bed again with a gentle look in his eyes. Audrey had told him how Hope did everything in her power to heal him. How she would come to heal him every time, her mana completely regenerated, even in the middle of the night. How she didn't rest until his body was completely restored.

It really touched his heart how caring she was. He never had a family before, but he felt Hope was worth the wait. Such a good little sister. He had long noticed how tired she looked despite the happiness she was showing, so he immediately devised a plan to get her to sleep and rest. Which he immediately carried out, everything else could wait.

"I hope I'm never injured like that again. I don't want you to have to suffer like that again," He said softly while caressing her hair.

"And for that, I have to get stronger, a lot stronger. Then my bloodline will be a strength instead of a hidden danger," Muku spoke to himself resolutely, then got up and left the room, leaving Hope to rest...

Chapter 96 Poorly hidden jealousy

In the lounge...

Everyone but Hope was already waiting. Most were feeling a bit awkward but they sucked it up. Since Muku was up, they'd be addressing their next step, and nobody wanted to miss it.

"Hello everyone, I'm glad you all decided to show up" Muku spoke while walking down the stairs, a smile plastered on his face. He seemed a lot better already, just that he seemed to be having trouble with his eyes.

"What's wrong with your eyes?" Jade asked, she had long calmed herself down after leaving the room. Her expression right then made everyone think this wasn't the same Jade who left the room due to embarrassment. She looked so natural. But they couldn't help but admire how she could easily get a hold of herself while they were still having trouble.

"Oh that, that's part of one of the things I'd like to address, actually", Muku replied with a little smile as he took a seat on a lone sofa.

"But first, let me congratulate you all for reaching Rank Two and leaving me in the dust. Truly, the student always surpasses the master," Muku spoke emotionally while wiping away some fake tears. Which made Jade roll her eyes and then smile smugly while the others either giggled a bit or broke into a little smile.

"I always knew one day I'd be stronger than you, now kowtow three times and maybe I'll take you under my wing as an attendant despite your weak strength" Jade is someone you should never give an inch or she'll take a mile, immediately spoke some words that made Muku's hand itch.

"Are you sure?" Muku spoke with a little smile on his face while looking in Jade's direction. His eyes glowed with a grey light.

Jade wanted to arrogantly reply, but then she noticed his eyes; she immediately felt a crisis in her life stronger than anything she had felt before. That's when she noticed that Muku wasn't looking directly at her but beside her. She subconsciously also looked where he was looking and was immediately appalled. A cup of water she had placed on a little table beside her was disappearing before her eyes!

Only a third of it was left. The water she hadn't drank yet was disappearing along with the cup. It didn't spill over the table despite a large part of the cup already having gone, like there was an invisible barrier stopping it, or laws had been twisted into making it seem like it only made sense that the water wouldn't spill.

She immediately remembered the Crow, it was also like this. She wasn't the only one looking at the cup at this point. The others were also looking on, speechless and a bit unsettled, what kind of power is this!?. Unlike last time, there wasn't even a pressure to notify them that something was going on. Within five seconds, the cup and its water were gone, completely erased from existence, and returned to nothingness.

"Well?" Muku's voice sounded again, breaking the others out of their stupor.

"N-no, of course not, it was just a joke; you'll eternally be my stronger, kind and forgiving teacher who doesn't take revenge for little things like my jokes", Jade nervously replied while sweating a bit. Internally, she was beating herself up; why did she have to blubber so much when she had already told herself not to ever do it again? Hadn't she learned her lesson that he'll always have some bug ability to use to suppress her!?

"Good! And you're right, I'd never get angry at my idiot student who's always seeking death" Muku replied with a smile while closing his eyes.

"Seems I'll need some time to get used to that" He spoke out loud while keeping his eyes closed. It seemed the ability took a lot out of him.

"Care to explain?" Layla asked, full of curiosity. She could sense that the ability didn't use Mana or Beast Aura. Well, she couldn't sense anything, just that, be it Mana or Beast, when used, they can easily be sensed by even the weakest Rank One if they are close enough. But for them, Rank Twos to not sense anything while being so close was surprising and quite eery. If it wasn't Muku who used the ability or someone from her group who did it, she'd have long escaped the scene through her shadow element.

"Yeah, that's a bloodline ability I realised I could use after waking up. Just that my eyes still haven't stabilised after being enhanced by my bloodline. And using the ability seems to take quite a toll on them. Likely because I'm still too weak," Muku immediately explained; it was one of the things he wanted to address anyway.

"Your body won't start breaking down like last time, right?" Chloe asked with some worry in her voice. She'd read a few novels where people literally died because of their overwhelming power, so she couldn't help but worry. So much so that she broke her usually quiet and shy character when it comes to Muku.

"That's the best part; unlike last time, where 1% of my bloodline wanted to awaken, this time I only got 0.01%. So if it all goes according to plan I should be fine. And my eyes should stop hurting after I reach Rank Two" Muku replied with a reassuring tone. He was mostly just telling what he was notified by the IA.

"That's good...that reminds me, here" Chloe spoke while getting up and walking over to hand him a mobile phone. Muku opened his eyes a bit as she walked over.

"There's a video on it that might be helpful to you in realising more potential. You can look at it after the meeting." She explained before he could ask.

"Oh, okay. Thank you" Muku said with a smile while raising his head. As if knowing what he wanted to do, Chloe lowered her head a bit. Then Muku patted her head. She smiled happily; finally, she'd gotten what only Hope had been getting until that point. The two quickly got lost in the moment.

"Cough cough", Jade fake coughed from the side, which startled Chloe and made her realise what she was doing. She immediately ran back to her seat and covered her face with a pillow in embarrassment.

"What an absurd bloodline of such an ability only takes up 0.01% of it, and 1% almost killed you", Completely ignoring what just happened, Emily commented. Well, it would seem like she ignored it if one of her eyes wasn't twitching and the smile on her face looked forced. She also wanted head pats!

"Cough, yeah. I guess it can be said I was both lucky and unlucky, huh?" Muku replied with an awkward smile on his face, trying to ignore Emily's poorly hidden jealousy. To think his head pats would cause such a thing. He'd even noticed that Jade's expression had gotten a bit dark while Layla seemed a bit colder. But since it was already done, he could only ignore it all.

"I think that's enough about my bloodline for now. The immediate issue we need to deal with is looking for an unranked beast for little Elsa, along with some Rank Two beasts to kill and get stronger. It should be relatively safe now with so many Rank Twos, unlike when it was just Audrey" Not wanting to linger on the topic any longer, Muku quickly moved on to the next matter to be addressed. He just wanted to quickly end the awkward atmosphere.

Unbeknownst to him, Elsa's impression of him improved a little bit when he put her on the agenda. Before this, she just thought of him as her sister's strong, perverted teacher. Now she thought of him as her sister's strong and considerate pervert teacher. Which is a major improvement really...well it's better than nothing.

"That's nice and all, but what about you? You haven't reached Rank Two yet. Not to mention I can sense that you haven't fully recovered," Jade spoke, unknowingly to her; she was indirectly rejecting the plan that seemingly leaves Muku out of the mix. Though already aware of her tsundere personality, no one was surprised.

"Aww, little Jade is worried about me being left behind, so cute! Come here so I can pinch your little cheeks" As always, Muku won't miss a chance to tease Jade. Hearing his words Jade's face reddened in anger. How dare he call her little!?

"Keep talking and I'll fight you to death" After calming herself a bit, she managed to squeeze those words out of her mouth while giving Muku a threatening look. She even displayed her canine teeth, seemingly ready to bite as well if it got to a fight.

"Fine, fine I'll stop. But seriously, you don't need to be worried. I should be fully recovered in a few more days and will reach Rank Two within that time as well" Muku stopped teasing Jade and spoke with confidence about breaking through in a few days.

"How are you so sure?" Jade asked, curious about why he seemed so certain when he had been stuck for so long, and wasn't even at the true peak of the Half-step R2 stage.

"Just a hunch" Muku replied with the same confidence from before. As he said, he really felt like he'd break through. After all, he had Author-san on his side, and they'd make it work somehow...

Chapter 97 Peak Half-Step!

The next morning...

Since Hope was in his room, Muku had slept in Hope's room. Could have used an empty room but... Hope's seemed a lot better. Not for any perverted reason or anything like that, just that the unoccupied rooms weren't cleaned by anyone. Or at least that's what Muku assumed since Audrey didn't think it was important enough to tell him when she did.

Anyway, due to the constant supply of corrupted beast guards Audrey provided, the group no longer needed to have lookouts. They could all sleep at night, comfortably too. On top of that, Muku was still recovering, which made him fall into a deep sleep that night. Which shouldn't have been a problem until he found someone sleeping next to him when he woke up.

"Umm, what are you doing here?" He asked while he and the person looked into each other's eyes. Like the monk he was, he was completely unmoved...at least on the surface.

"This is my room", the person said with her purple eyes, looking back at Muku innocently. A sly look appeared on her face for a split second before disappearing.

"I know it's your room, but you were supposed to be sleeping in my room", Muku continued, speaking seriously like the monk he was.

"Oh right, I walk about in the middle of the night for a bit. Drank some water and came here subconsciously. I immediately fell asleep after lying on the bed. I didn't even notice there was anyone here" The person continued with her story, whether true or not, only she knew.

"How did you end up hugging me then?" Monk King Muku continued with his questioning.

"It must have happened subconsciously while I was asleep; I used to sleep while hugging giant teddy bears" " the person continued, her purple eyes showing nothing but purity and innocence.

"Okay, why are you still hugging me now?" Muku pressed on.

"Oh, I didn't even notice, my mistake. I'll go fetch some water and bathe. See you in a bit Big Brother" The person quickly made her getaway after running out of answers.

"Tsk, that brat, does she think I'm so gullible?. Luckily, I was too lazy to take off my clothes before sleeping last time," Muku spoke to himself after Hope ran out; the little girl had snuck into his embrace in the middle of the night! Didn't she have even a single vigilant bone in her body or did she just think so lowly of him? Fortunately, she didn't notice his morning tent, or he might have had to hunt down the FBI in the apocalypse and then offer them his own head. The embarrassment would have required at least that even if the tent had nothing to do with Hope.

"Oh right, Chloe mentioned some video; I'll watch it while I calm down", Muku spoke to himself before reaching out for a mobile phone by the bedside on a little table stand.

.....

A few minutes later...

{What an insightful video, to think she thought about how I can realise my potential so much. With this, I'm even more certain that I can reach Rank Two within two days tops!} Muku thought to himself with a little smile on his face. The video content was Chloe expressing her thoughts on how Muku could possibly realise more of his potential.

"Haha, How cute" Muku laughed to himself for a bit, thinking about how Chloe didn't dare to talk to him in person, so she created a video instead. And even in the video, she looked shy; how can he not find such a thing cute?

"I should pat her head a lot more, but for now..." Muku trailed off as he got into a meditative pose after placing the mobile phone back on the stand. He was going to try to realise more of his potential in the spot. Both his Telekinesis and Metal Element needed improvement, and he'd start with his telekinesis first; he couldn't wait to try out the theories Chloe thought of. If it worked, his team's coordination would improve by a lot!

.....

30 minutes later...

"Brother, I'm don...oh", Hope spoke as she walked through the door. But she cut her sentence short after noticing that Muku was meditating. She then tiptoed into the room, got a change of clothes and tiptoed out, not wanting to disturb him.

She then changed in Muku's room before notifying everyone about how Muku was meditating. So they wouldn't disturb him. Which they all happily obliged to. Audrey promptly made her way to the room, preparing for what was likely to happen soon. She then sat by the side while looking on, appreciating his good looks which she had done a lot of when he was unconscious. Apparently, she still hadn't gotten bored of it.

....

Downstairs...

"Do you think he'll really rank up in just two days or so?" Jade asked, though not asking anyone in particular.

"Well, after all the crazy things he has done and can do, I believe that he really can do it" Emily was the first to reply.

"Yeah, well, you'd believe in him no matter what", Elsa retorted in a low voice, not wanting to be heard. But sadly for her, she was surrounded by Rank Twos and they all heard her clearly. And they all silently agreed with her.

"What did you say?" Emily spoke while glaring at her little sister a bit.

"Nothing" Elsa refused to repeat what she said.

"Hmph!" Knowing that Elsa really wouldn't say it again or admit to saying it, Emily gave up"

That's when they all their heads snapped up looking in the direction of Hope's room upstairs. For a split second they felt it, the aura of a peak Half-step R2 before it was blocked off.

"You still doubting big brother?" Hope spoke with a smug look on her face while looking at Jade.

"I never said I was doubting him" Jade defended herself while rolling her eyes. As she said, she was quite confident in his abilities, just that she felt it would take him at least a week or so to rank up. After all, the rest of them...other than Audrey, got stuck at the top for a little bit before advancing, and even that was because of Emily's incident.

....

Upstairs.....

"Well, this isn't what I expected, but it's better than nothing, I guess", Muku spoke to himself while trying to regain control of his aura that was getting suppressed by Audrey.

"Oh, and sorry about that, Audrey; I didn't know there was anyone here" He then apologised to Audrey.

He had managed to realise more of his potential and managed to increase it to 80%, which was as intense as the girls at their peak. So they had mistaken it for him having reached the peak. His meditation yielded one attack, but a very significant one since it could actually wound a Rank Two, even if it was only just a little bit. He leant the spell, "Mind Impact" which targeted the opponent's mind instead of their physical body.

Although it was a strong attack spell, Muku felt disappointed. He wanted Telepathy instead, his reasoning being that it and Telekinesis were on the opposite of the same coin so he should be able to get both. The latter dealt in the physical while the former was in the metaphysical. But sadly, it didn't seem to work that way; just getting "Mind Impact" was already good enough.

"It's okay, master; it didn't do that much damage. Of course, that's only because of our different ranks," Audrey said while the blood that was coming out of her eyes and nose returned back into her body and continued on its usual path. She had been hit by a wave of "Mind Impact" unprepared. She felt a headache and some dizziness for a second before everything returned to normal, other than the blood of course. Though she took care of that easily enough.

"Thank you for understanding", Muku said with a smile, then returned to a meditative state. He might have been done with his telekinesis but his metal still had some improvements. After which, he's likely to rank up, two days before the estimated time.

Audrey continued looking on, ready to intervene if anything went wrong. Although she got a minor injury, she still didn't mind, she even felt proud of having such an outstanding master.

As he sat there, a silver armour completely enveloped Muku. This was completely new to Audrey; he only ever created weapons and some random stuff like pots and buckets. Never before an armour, and she had to say, it looked quite cool on him. Then, right before her eyes, the armour slowly started changing colour. It was quite a magical scene; in less than a minute, the whole armour turned golden.

Audrey could tell that it was really made out of gold, not just coloured like it. As soon as it all turned golden, Muku's aura increased again. But this time the aura didn't leak out since she was prepared. The armour started to change colour again and turned to copper, then platinum, then tin, then iron.

Audrey couldn't help but have a thought as she looked on. {So this is what being a metal warlock means huh?}

The process kept on going like that, and every time, Muku's aura would increase. By the time he finished all the metals, his aura was no longer increasing. He was stuck at the peak of Half-step R2, the metals were likely not enough for him to break through. It was at this that Muku opened his eyes. His aura is no longer in chaos.

"Have you ever heard of mithril?" He asked Audrey with a little smile on his face. The armour was slowly melting away from his body as he spoke starting from his head going down.

"No, I don't think I have" Audrey, who hadn't been exposed to a lot of fantasy stuff before the apocalypse, had no idea what mithril was.

"We might have to go outside for this one" Muku said while getting up and walking out of the room. His steps were confident; he was certain that he was going to break through soon. Audrey quickly ran after him after getting out of her daze...

Chapter 98 Using a Mithril Sword to Slice into Rank Two!

Downstairs.....

"What's wrong? Where are you going? How is your aura so strong without even reaching Rank Two yet!?" Jade asked one question after the other after seeing Muku walk downstairs with Audrey behind him.

"Follow me, and you'll see" Muku said that one statement and continued walking to the front door. Not needing any more convincing, Jade got up and followed along, the rest did the same as well. They felt something significant was about to happen and wanted to be around when it did.

.....

"Is this necessary?" Jade couldn't help but ask after they walked close to a kilometre away from the mansion.

"Who knows, but I'm getting more and more interested in what requires us to walk this far away" Emily spoke beside her, seemingly unfazed by walking so far.

"This should be far enough right?" Muku asked Audrey, which surprised the others. They didn't know that Audrey was the one who advised Muku to go a distance away from the mansion if he wanted to break through as they walked downstairs. She had a hunch that his breakthrough wasn't going to be a quiet affair.

"Okay, I'll do it here then," Muku said after receiving her confirmation. He then closed his eyes while holding his hands together in front of him. The others just looked on curiously wondering what he was doing.

That's when his aura exploded, not because of breaking through, but because he had intentionally let it loose. Of everyone they'd ever met, only Jade's Beast Aura was visible. And now Muku seemed to have joined that small list, though with mana instead of aura.

His mana was slowly becoming visible in front of everyone, it looked like a grey mass of energy swirling around him. It was so dense and intense that Emily had to protect Elsa with her mana or she might have been killed on the spot by just Muku's act of releasing his mana. Although it wasn't as strong as a Rank Two it was off by just a little bit, which showed how much of a monster he was.

He then started to slowly open his hands. There seemingly was a suction force between them. As his mana was getting pulled in nonstop. It got to a point where all the mana that surrounded him before was in between his arms that had been pulled back as far as he could, creating a chaotic scene. The power radiating from the condensing mana had long

reached Low Rank Two strength and hadn't stopped yet. That's when Muku's right hand made a grabbing motion.

BOOM!

His aura immediately exploded and he successfully broke through to rank two. Audrey hurriedly tried to suppress his aura so as not to attract attention. Surprisingly, she failed to do so, her strength was not enough, far from it. Immediately Chloe, Hope and Layla joined in. Emily had to use everything she had to protect Elsa, she was even backing away from Muku while holding Elsa's hand to reduce the pressure on herself. Jade's control was in total disarray at the moment, so she couldn't help.

Luckily, Audrey and the other three were just enough to suppress Muku's aura. Though it wasn't just his aura, it was combined with the aura of whatever he had created and was holding in his hand. Muku happened to open his eyes in the moment and noticed his group in an unfavourable condition. In panic, he swang whatever he was holding before it completely formed to the side.

Whoosh! BOOM!

A concentrated energy wave flew off in that direction, creating a long ditch on the ground that stretched a distance away. Then it exploded with intensity greater than Chloe's concentrated lighting attack. Which scared away any beasts that were close by, even the few Rank Twos. At this point, Muku's hand was no longer holding anything, and the pressure on the girls had reduced by half, which was manageable. Soon after Muku gained control of his aura and calmed it down.

.....

At the University.....

"What was that?" Sarah asked, though not targeting anyone in particular. At this moment they were having a meeting on whether they should trust Muku's group and also start eating beast meat. Although Jack had long said that there was no need to be suspicious of them since they'd gain nothing from trucking them. But still, they had to vote on it.

"I don't know," Jack said with a neutral expression. He had an idea that it was likely related to a certain group of people.

"Should we send someone to go check it out?" Sarah asked.

"Nope, it's completely none of our business" Jack refused immediately. Like hell, he'd step anywhere that chaotic again. From the noise, he could tell that it was even more chaotic than last time. Although he'd improved and was now at 30% potential realisation, he felt like an ant that needed to stay away from troublesome situations lest it gets stumped to death by mistake.

"Okay, let's continue with the meeting then" Sarah didn't push any further since no matter what was happening outside. They were safe as long as they stayed within the barrier. And so like that, the meeting continued, albeit no one was as focused as before.

....

At the North, the sleeping wolf opened its eyes a bit, looked in a certain direction then closed them again. Even if what it sensed seemed quite outstanding for a Rank Two, it was still an ant in front of it so there was no reason to be bothered by it.

The same happened in the South, East and West. All these places had Rank Three overlords who sensed Muku's breakthrough but were too lazy to bother with it. After all, how could Low Rank Two girls use their hollow mana barriers to block the senses of a Rank Three?

.....

Somewhere in the city in an underground cave.....

Familiar intelligent yellow eyes opened up. They looked in a certain direction and a knowing look flashed in them before going back to sleep. After all, the owner of the eyes was no longer the overlord of the city that could go wherever it wanted. For now, it had to improve itself and reclaim its throne, its curiosity had to be put on hold for now.

Although the eyes were still the same. The body was completely unrecognisable. How could it not be? It was in a black cocoon going through a metamorphosis after all.

...

Back at the scene of the crime.

"Big Brother, what was that you were holding?" Hope asked Muku curiously after everything calmed down. The others listened on.

"A mithril sword, though unfinished. Luckily, the unfinished product was good enough for me to break through," Muku replied while massaging his head; creating mithril was hard enough and needed a lot of concentration. Shaping it into a sword was even harder. So taking a mental toll when getting done for the first time was understandable. On the positive side, his eyes were now back to normal after ranking up, not to mention ranking up itself is already good news.

"Oh, what a strong sword", Hope complimented while looking at the one-metre wide and two-metre deep ditch that stretched for at least fifty metres created by the sword. She, along with the others, couldn't help but wonder what the finished product would be like. Especially now that he had more power at his disposal.

"You know it's really not fair that you keep on getting one power-up after the other. While we have the same old moves" Jade immediately complained. She completely forgets about how her Beast Aura can basically do anything under the right conditions.

"Tsk, whatever, let's go back" Muku was in too good a mood to argue with her, so they just shrugged her off. Now all the old members of the team were Rank Two!, how could he not be happy?. They were a lot safer than most people now. He was also certain that they were the strongest team in the apocalypse right then. As for why he wasn't completely sure, it's because you can never be too sure of anything in the world.

.....

Back at the mansion.....

"Now that we're all Rank Two, it's time to hunt" Muku spoke as they gathered in the dining room. It had been a while since they specifically hunted for beasts so he was rather excited.

"But don't you have to recover first?" Hope asked in a worried tone.

"Oh, that! Don't worry, it seems ranking up fixed me right up. I feel good as new, if not better than that" Muku replied to her and even flexed his muscles to show her how fine he was. To which Hope giggled thinking of how childish he was, but she wasn't worried anymore.

"Any idea on where we can go for unranked beasts?" Emily asked, still worried about Elsa's situation.

"I've got just the place actually!" Muku immediately replied.

"You all remember how the beasts got stronger the deeper into the city we got, right? If the situation hasn't changed much, then the further out we go, we should find some. We can go back in the direction of a familiar place" Before anyone could ask, he had already continued speaking.

"You don't mean..." Emily was about to name a familiar place before she was interrupted.

"Yup. The stadium?. We can even check on how the people there are doing at the same time." Muku reviewed the place he meant, not even waiting for Emily to finish.

"What about today...what the hell!?" Since it was still early in the day, Jade wanted to ask what they'd be doing with the rest of the day. Since they usually started long journeys early in the morning, they wouldn't go that day. But as she was speaking, it started raining outside. The reason why she was surprised was because it was Spring and the sky had been clear when they went out before.

"Seems we can only stay inside and meditate" Muku said while looking toward the window. He was also surprised by the sudden rain, as was everyone else.

"So the seasons are also messed up now?" Chloe spoke in a low voice but everyone heard her and thought the same.

Even more surprising was how the rain went on to rain for the rest of the day. Then continued into the night nonstop. Even when everyone went to sleep it was still raining...

Chapter 99 Water Fairy Embryo

Five days later...

"Okay, this is bull! how is it that not only is it raining in Spring, but it hasn't stopped raining for five days!?" Muku grumbled while sitting on the couch. Jade was sitting on another couch nodding in agreement. The others also agreed to a certain extent; they had all gotten used to going outside every day and beating up a few beasts. So being confined for five days straight was rather unbearable.

"Maybe it's a sign of treasure! why don't we go look around?" Chloe, a failed otaku who also developed a weird interest in the outdoors, spoke. She just made up a reason to go outside. With Muku's telekinesis, the rain shouldn't be a problem, so they might as well go look around, right?

"Not to mention we're about to run out of meat", Layla, who also wanted to go outside, spoke. She had finally managed to catch up to Emily and Chloe in her mana control after working twice as hard so she felt it was time for a break. The three were. Now all at 6%, Audrey at 10%, and Hope at 5%, she was catching up quickly. Jade was at 5% conversion from mana to Beast Aura, so somewhat the same as the rest.

Muku, for reasons unknown, was already at 30%; of course, he told the others he was still at 2%, or he suspected it might not have ended well for him. At least Jade and Layla wouldn't have taken the news too well. He suspected that his bloodline somehow played a part. It was a lot easier for him to improve his mana control than the others. He got to 30% without even being serious about meditation or he probably would have reached at least 50% already.

The trace of bloodline in Audrey might also have played a part in her being 4% higher than the others. Even though she ranked up way before the others, she hadn't meditated much during that time. So, her being so far ahead is a bit unusual, but it was still acceptable to the ground, unlike Muku's case.

"Those sound like good enough reasons to me! Let's go!" Muku exclaimed while getting up. The others followed after him. Although they no longer had a guard since Audrey hadn't been able to go out and hunt for new ones. They weren't too worried about leaving the mansion unattended since it was raining rather heavily. So what beast would go out of its way to come to break the mansion down in the rain? And so, soon after leaving the mansion, the group could be seen whooshing away on a silver board with a telekinetic forcefield keeping them safe from the rain.

Like that, the bored group went around in the rain randomly killing any beast they could find. There were only three in number; apparently, beasts didn't like going around in the rain either.

....

"Hey, I sense something in that direction" Jade spoke while pointing in a certain direction. Muku and the others who didn't have a reason to doubt her immediately got curious. And so, he steered in the said direction.

"Woah!, what's that!?" Hope exclaimed while looking in front of her.

"No wonder it was raining without any wind, thunder or lightning" Chloe spoke beside her.

They were all looking at a weird clear orb that was floating in the air in front of them. It somewhat looked like a large water drop about the size of an orange. It was raining all around it, yet there was no rain within a one-metre radius of it.

"This rain intensity though!" Emily said while looking up. The rain around them was getting more and more intense as they got closer to the water drop. Luckily, Muku was already a Rank Two and could take it. Otherwise, the Rank One version of himself might not have been able to make it through.

"Wow, what an impressive energy wave" Hope commented as they felt a strong aura radiating from in front of them.

"Yeah, luckily, it seems to have been dampened by the rain around it, or many beasts would have been drawn over by it", Muku replied, feeling the intense but gentle aura radiating from the water drop. Although he didn't know what its use was, nor did his group members, they all could tell that it was a treasure of some sort. And for that reason, they wanted it, uses can be discovered later on.

They were quite surprised that Chloe had been speaking the truth about there being a treasure in the rain, though not as surprised as Chloe herself. She had just made up an excuse to leave the house after all. If her words had some sway in the outcome, she was happy that she didn't say that there was a Rank Three Beast in the rain instead.

Soon, they reached the invisible barrier around the drop. Try as he might, Muku couldn't get through. The others tried as well and also couldn't get through. Elsa just looked on, not even bothering to try since she felt that if the others couldn't do it, she couldn't either.

"Hey little Elsa, why don't you try?" Audrey spoke while looking at Elsa with a little smile. She felt that even if Elsa couldn't get through, there was no harm in letting her try; that way, she wouldn't feel left out. Hearing Audrey's words and realising the deeper meaning behind them, the others supported her. They also started urging Elsa to give it a try; after all, the barrier didn't harm people, it just kept them out.

"Okay," the soft-spoken little girl gave in to the pressure and agreed. Though honestly, she was also interested in trying. Who knows, maybe she would be the protagonist and get through.

The others gave her space and she walked forward. She then raised her hand and slowly moved it toward the barrier hesitantly. Although she didn't have much hope of success, she still wanted to be successful. She even closed her eyes while moving her hand forward preparing to meet a barrier...which didn't come. Because of this, she ended up falling flat on her face inside the barrier, prompting chuckles from the rest of the group.

Her little face immediately reddened in embarrassment as she got up and tidied herself up. The ground inside the barrier was dry, untouched by the rain, so she didn't get too dirty.

"Well, aren't you going to try and touch it?" Emily said to her from outside the barrier that they all still couldn't enter. Although she was worried about letting Elsa do all of this alone, she could only trust her at that point.

Elsa, who had gotten a bit confused after her little incident, immediately remembered what she was doing. She turned around and faced the water drop. Immediately, she felt an uncontrolled urge to touch it; before she knew it, she was already stepping forward.

Seeing this the others immediately relaxed. From their experiences, every time someone got like that, whatever caused it wasn't harmful to them, so it was likely the case at that time. Of course, there was a chance of it being different, but they'd rather be optimistic.

Soon, Elsa's hand was on the water drop. The moment they made contact, the raindrops stopped moving midair. Before anyone could make sense of the mystic scene, the raindrops started moving in Elsa's direction. They gathered into a substantial amount of water as they got closer.

The water would first circle around Elsa, who was now floating a metre in the air, then enter into the drop. No matter how much water entered it, it didn't change the size; it stayed the same, other than giving off a gentle blue light. The light kept on getting brighter and brighter as more water entered into the drop. Soon the morning sky was clear again with no sign of rain as all the water had gotten drawn into the drop. At that point, Elsa wasn't even visible, she had been completely consumed by the bright blue light.

Luckily, although the drop now radiated more energy, it didn't get projected too far. After a while the blue light started dimming until it was completely fine. That's when the others realised that the drop was gone; all that was left was Elsa, who was slowly descending onto the ground, with her eyes closed.

"Elsa!" Emily called out as she ran toward her sister. The others followed behind her. They were all a bit worried since it was their first time seeing such a thing. Even if they felt it wasn't anything bad, they still couldn't help but worry for the little girl.

Soon Emily reached Elsa and hugged her, yet Elsa didn't react or even open her eyes. This worried Emily even more, but she scanned Elsa with her mana but didn't feel anything wrong with her.

Hope, who was more sensitive to the state of people's bodies due to her class, also gave it a go. She also felt that there was nothing wrong with Elsa's body, but sensed that there was some intense mind activity going on. However, even that didn't seem to be affecting her negatively. So they just stood there waiting for Elsa to snap out of it, as she didn't seem to be unconscious.

...

In Elsa's mind...

[Water Fairy embryo acquired. Class changing in progress....]

[Error!]

[No class detected!]

[Individual has been identified to not have reached Rank One yet]

[Embryo will remain dormant until individual meets the minimum requirements to awaken it]

...

As soon as the multiple prompts that Elsa barely understood were all stated. She immediately opened her eyes, which glowed blue for a second before going back to normal. Then, a blue water drop-like marking appeared on her forehead. It looked rather mystical how it etched itself there in front of everyone's eyes.

Emily immediately wanted Elsa to explain on the spot. But the others persuaded her to wait until they returned home. And so Muku sped home with the others, they all couldn't wait to hear what had happened.

As they speedily flew back, they didn't notice what was happening to the city ground. Once it had been covered by tar and buildings, now, vegetation was quickly reclaiming it. It was growing at a rather alarming rate too.

Chapter 100 Rounds of Punishment!

Back at the mansion....

Elsa felt quite tense. How could she not?. There were seven intense gazes focused on her after all. It was an understatement to say they wanted to know everything that had happened. And so, she quickly spilled the beans and told them everything. She didn't like being the centre of attention like that.

....

"So you're saying you got some kind of Fairy Embryo thing that will only awaken once you reach rank one?" Emily summarised what her sister said while seeking confirmation. To which Elsa nodded in agreement.

"I guess now we have one more reason to get you to Rank One. I can't wait to see what happens" Muku chimed in. Like many people, he quite liked seeing new and interesting things.

"Should we set off immediately then?" Emily suggested she couldn't wait anymore, wanting her sister to rank up.

"No need to rush, we've already spent most of the day, so we might as well set off tomorrow morning. For now, we have to go say goodbye to our neighbours" Muku refused her suggestion.

"Do we have to?. We're not even that close to them, though," Jade chimed in before Emily could reply. She didn't mind waiting for another day, but she found it quite troublesome to deal with the university people.

"Yes, we have to; it's the polite thing to do", Audrey replied before Muku could. She didn't want the girls to lose their human manners just because it was the apocalypse.

"Fine" Jade unwillingly agreed. If it was Muku, she would have argued a bit, but she respected Audrey too much to do that.

"Great!, now that has been decided, everyone go prepare. We'll go see them in an hour and get it over with," Muku spoke; he also didn't particularly like doing it but felt he had to. That's how the world of adults worked after all. Who knows if they'll need Jack's group's help in the future?. So bridges had to be kept intact, even if they were super thin and flimsy.

.....

An hour later, at the university....

"So your group will be leaving tomorrow morning, huh?" Jack spoke, the light in his eyes dimming a bit.

Although they don't interact much, having good strong neighbours is never a bad thing. Like if a Rank Two beast suddenly sets its eyes on the university for whatever reason, his group wouldn't need to worry about being trapped inside because it would get killed off soon enough by their neighbours for food. Although that's unlikely to happen, stranger things have happened. And it can even be a rank two human enemy who shows up, with Muku's group around, they wouldn't need to worry. But now, the sense of security they subconsciously got from having Muku's group around was about to fly away with them and their mansion.

"Yeah, but don't worry, sure we'll meet someday again", Muku replied with a smile. He could somewhat understand what was going through Jack's mind, but that wouldn't change his mind.

"I sure hope so, anyway, thank you again for the help before. I wish we could give you some kind of farewell gift, but I doubt there's anything we can give you that you don't already have," Jack spoke with a self-deprecating smile on his face. Even Sarah, sitting beside him, also felt a bit embarrassed. They still hadn't found anything they could do to repay the favour from before. Now they couldn't even come up with a small gift.

"It's fine, it's the apocalypse, so everyone is struggling to fend for themselves, let alone find gifts to offer others", Muku replied with an understanding smile on his face, not at all offended. After all, there really was nothing Jack's group could provide them with that they couldn't get themselves.

"Anyway, we won't be staying for long; we have to go back and prepare for tomorrow", Muku spoke while getting up. The stink eye Jade had been giving him had finally gotten too much for him to stand.

"It's fine, we won't keep you. I wish you luck in your travels" Jack also got up then shook Muku's hand with a smile. He felt honoured to shake the hand of one of the most powerful people, if not the most powerful person in the world at that time. And so, Muku's group left while getting waved off by the crowd from the university.

....

After Muku's group left...

"Why were you smiling like an idiot while shaking his hand?" Sarah asked Jack with a deadpan expression on her face. She felt that he not only lost his face in the situation but also hers and the whole safe zone's face as their leader.

"What if I told you all of them are now rank two except for the little girl?" Jack spoke up, not at all offended by Sarah's words.

"Weren't they all already rank two last time?" Sarah asked confused by Jack's words.

"No, he wasn't yet. I don't think you properly grasp what their strength means. You see, I'm the strongest one in our base, and I'm only at 30% Half-step R2. Yet they have 7 full-blown R2s. It's only been a bit less than two months since the apocalypse began. What do you think they'd be like after a year or two?" Jack continued.

"Oh my!" Sarah finally grasped Jack's meaning and immediately exclaimed. She had been so blind! She should have tried her best to at least get close to one of the girls instead of just passively standing there. That group was definitely going to be one of the biggest powers in the apocalypse and they should do everything in their power to latch onto them. After all, they say when someone ascends, even their chickens and dogs ascend with them.

"Why didn't you tell me this sooner!? We wasted such a good chance! Who knows when we'll see them again!?" Sarah screamed angrily at Jack while shaking him.

"This is why I didn't tell you, I knew you'd have tried to suck up to them. And I can tell you for a fact, that would have backfired. They don't seem like those shallow people who like having suck-ups around them" Jack replied calmly, not even minding how Sarah was shaking him.

He had expected it before it happened after all, he was well aware of every quirk his girlfriend had. While other men would feel disrespected by her actions, he rather found it endearing that she exposed every side of herself to him. And he loved her even more because of it.

"O..oh, I guess you're right. Sorry about that" Sarah immediately calmed down after hearing his explanation. She then quickly apologised while tidying up his shirt with her hands, an embarrassed smile on her face. After all, it wasn't the first time she had done such a thing. And she has a sneaking suspicion that it won't be the last either.

"Ahh!" She suddenly screamed in surprise as Jack suddenly pulled her onto his lap.

"You think you can just do that and apologise and it will be over??. Get ready to face your punishment!" Jack said with an evil grin on his face. Sarah gulped down some saliva with a look of fear in her eyes.

Soon, lewd sounds could be heard from the room as Jack gave Sarah several rounds of punishment until she begged for mercy. Even then he didn't stop until they were both powerless and breathing heavily on the floor.

"You meanie! You didn't stop even when I begged you to", Sarah spoke after catching her breath with a little smile on her rosy face.

"Sorry, you're just so irresistible I couldn't stop" Jack replied while kissing her forehead.

"Hmph!" Sarah responded still pouting cutely.

"This is your fault" Jack suddenly spoke in a rough voice.

"Huh, what do you m...Ahh!" Sarah was confused until she noticed that Jack had gotten into the mood again. Before she could react Jack was already back on top of her.

And the sounds resounded in the room again...

.....

"Has anyone else noticed the grass on the ground?" Layla suddenly spoke as they walked back to the mansion. Muku felt that they'd get too lazy if they used the "Silver Surfer's" board to go everywhere, especially when it was closed. So he had the group walk to the university and back.

"Hhm, what do you mean?" Audrey, who was walking beside her, asked.

"It seems to be growing too quickly", Layla replied; she had looked at the grass for a bit as they came to the university. Yet now, as they returned to the mansion, the same grass from less than an hour before seemed to have already grown in size.

"Really? I think you're thinking too much; maybe you just didn't look at it properly before", Jade chimed in; the grass looked the same to her. Everyone else other than Layla hadn't paid attention to it before, so they also thought that Layla might have seen it wrongly before.

"Maybe" Layla replied with one word, also doubting herself. Maybe she had really not taken a proper look before making it seem different.

With that, the issue of the grass was dropped. It was only on the next day that they realised that Layla had not seen things incorrectly.