

KEEPER 164

Chapter 164: THE REASON

A day after the arrival of the ten schools' cadets, the cadets of all schools were almost in lockdown in different wings so as not to interact. Keeping more than two thousand youths in one place who are brimming with tension was not as easy as it seemed. In the midst of the lockdown in either the libraries, the arenas, or the dormitory wings, Sagiri was called to the central pentagon. Yavaga was the one who came to pick him, and he did not let slip the reason he came to call him, saying it was a surprise. The other cadets did not pat and eyelash this time. He was always training with Salka, and sometimes a member of his squad was common knowledge.

The walk to the central Pentagon was short, and Yavaga led him to Senraki's office. Only Senraki and Salka were present this time.

"Come in and sit down." Senraki's voice was serious, and Yavaga left soon after.

sagiri had never been asked to sit before, and he could tell something grave was about to happen.

"Since you managed to tap me with your weapon, I will hand you this sash. Salka said before he came behind Sagiri, where he sat, and united the midnight blue sash and replaced it with the red one. The sparring match with Salka had gone on quite a while that day, and sagiri had been pushed so far in his desperation to land a clean hit on salka so much so he resorted to using Nokai at his full strength. The wound on Salka's arm was a witness to what had happened that day, and everyone in the combat arena had been quite shocked. He had lost control yet again, and this time it had been even worse, and Salka had had to put him to sleep.

"I have to talk to you about what happened that day and this exam," Senraki said, and sagiri still remembered part of the fight that day.

Right after Kolu said to begin, Sagiri moved instantly. He could still use Nokai even without using the archive, even though its impact was much weaker then. All he needed was to land one hit or just make contact with Salka for him to win. Even so, he knew Salka never went easy, and he was going to go all out as if he were defending against a lethal opponent. Nokai flashed from its sheath, twin blades cutting forward in a sharp arc aimed at Salka's ribs.

Salka stepped aside effortlessly, of course. This was expected, of course. It would be too easy to beat Salka with just one move. Sagiri turned with the motion, blades reversing direction in a second strike. He missed Salka by a great width this time. It was the second strike, and yet it made him feel like the task was impossible. He caught the air again and went after Salka quickly. Salka had not even drawn out his weapon, and he just evaded all the attacks with little effort.

gain, his boots barely making a sound on the packed earth. Sagiri attacked again, breaking stride between the attacks. Even a second of hesitation with Salka was enough to set you back a thousand steps. sagiri moved faster now, getting more into the match, and unknowingly, the adrenaline was starting to pump into his veins with every evasion from Salka. It was not at its full power, but it helped him move faster.

A flurry of strikes followed, high, low, spinning, reversing direction. Nokai whistled through the air again and again as Sagiri drove forward with everything he had. Salka evaded every strike with a step to the side, or a slight lean back and shift of his shoulder. Sagiri's blades never touched him. Not once. The watching cadets leaned forward.

"Did he land one?" Ulekai asked

"No," maita answered

Sagiri gritted his teeth. The fight was fast. Both Sagiri's attacks and Salka's defences were even faster. Just how was one supposed to beat a man like Salka? Sweat ran down the side of Sagiri's face. Salka had a way of pushing everyone to their limit while he looked like he was not trying at all, yet all his movements were fluid and precise; they were so calculated that none was wasted.

sagiri rushed again. Nokai slashed toward Salka's neck this time. They had been going at it for a couple of minutes now, and sagiri had not landed a single hit. He was starting to get a bit frustrated. Salka slipped inside the attack and tapped Sagiri's wrist. Sagiri turned, slashing low. Missed again. Every attack failed. Every movement ended in empty air.

Minutes passed like this, and it was now fifteen minutes of sagiri going at it with Salka. It felt like hours for those watching, but it was impressive that sagiri had grown so much to be able to spar at that speed with Salka for all that while. Well, if it were a fight, Salka could have killed him a couple of dozen times, but since Salka was just on the defence the match was at least fair.

Sagiri attacked with relentless intensity, refusing to slow down, refusing to stop. Salka remained untouchable. Sagiri's breathing grew heavier, and his frustration burned hotter with every missed strike. He attacked again and again, harder, faster. Nokai spun through the air in a violent arc meant to force Salka back. Salka stepped aside again.

Untouched.

The pit had grown silent now. Everyone could see it. Sagiri was doing everything he could, and it still wasn't enough. Five more minutes of sparring and his frustration snapped. Something inside him twisted. It was as if The Archive began to spiral. Cold pressure flooded his chest, and his grip on Nokai tightened.

He rushed forward again, striking with brutal speed. This time, the movement was different. Sharper and more dangerous, as if he wanted to kill Salka. Salka noticed immediately, and his eyes narrowed slightly. His defense got even faster and sharper, too, and everyone watching could recognize the shift immediately. Sagiri struck again and again, but even with the slight shift, nothing landed.

Frustration exploded inside him suddenly, and something inside him snapped as if it had been caged for too long and was hungry for something, and it wanted to let it out on Salka. His eyes went black instantly, and Sagiri lost control. The spiral inside him surged violently, and he took a backseat in his own body. It had been a while since the archive lost control, or rather, he lost control of it.

Nokai reacted violently in his hand. The blade snapped upward with sudden killing intent, its edge turning toward Salka's throat. Not a sparring strike. A killing blow.

Salka moved instantly, pulling his blades to defend against the incoming blade. a blade that was moving on its own. Even with him fast to block the blade with two of his blades, they were broken in half. He sidestepped to evade it, but it still grazed his shoulders before falling. Senraki had moved again to put the boy to sleep. The only way to stop a blade gone wild is to put its master to sleep. That was something not everyone had ever seen.

"You took my blade?" Sagiri said. When he came to mind, after he was lying in the pit with N'varu waiting on him with Lotaga, and his blade was missing. No one wanted to tell him what had happened, but now he could remember because all that had happened was stored in the archive.

"You can't control it."