

KEEPER 178

Chapter 178: SENRAKI III

Smack!

Senraki was sure he was dead, but he shut his eyes, and suddenly the hands holding him tight loosened, and he fell to the ground. His heart was still beating, and he wondered whether they were its last beats before it stopped completely and he was gone.

"A clan ganging up on its own. Despicable," a voice reached Senraki's ears, and he opened his eyes slightly. Salka was standing in front of him to the side, and all seven boys were sprawled in different places in the arena. Senraki's head swam, but he held on. He was not going to let himself faint.

Sikuwa spat a mouthful of blood and stood to his feet." So the smack was a punch landing on Sikuwa's jaw. The jaw looked broken, and Sikuwa held onto it as he talked to Salka.

"Were you planning to use a secret art of your clan on your own blood?" Salka asked again, and Sikuwa hissed before snapping his jaw back to place.

"You, asakana, don't know how to manage your business. Stay out of matters of our clan," Sikuwa growled, moving closer to Salka but still keeping his distance.

"Seven boys ganging on one. Is that what you, Afolani, do?" Salka asked not to bulge. He had his hands folded to his chest, and although Senraki had trained with the boy for a few months now, he had never seen him look more menacing and deadly. He had come to learn a few things about Salka. What you see is what you get. He trains hard, eats enough to feed a squad, hangs out with boys from his clan mostly, and spars together. Well, it was only natural since only the asakana could hold a candle to him and a few of the chimera. He did not really care about petty things or conflict. He was big, high, the best of the best, and did what he was supposed to do to perfection. They had all the assets to brag and be a pain in the neck, yet he was lighthearted. The train had almost made Senraki change his mind about using him, but he had gone against it. He could not afford to hesitate. Besides, even if Salka was expelled, he could still make it somewhere else or be taken in by another high school as an aged student. He would survive. Or the academy would turn a blind eye since he was the best of the best.

He was disposable, Salka wasn't.

"He is not a pureblood. His mother is a whore southerner who gave birth to a child to a man who had not even paid his dowry," Sikuwa snapped. Senraki had long gotten used to hearing such insults, but somehow he did not appreciate it that they told it to Salka.

"I could have thought you were the halfblood with how failed that secret art technique was clumsy," Salka said in a bored tone now, and Sikuwa hissed. Perhaps he did not like the hand he was dealt.

"Do you think just because you are strong, you can just push people around?" Sikuwa hissed again, taking a step closer,

"I should be asking you that, since you are the one who was ganging up on a boy you think is weak. I heard every word you said. You wanted to kill him and paint it on me, sikuwa. Threatening to taint my honour by painting the death of a comrade on me is unforgivable. I am willing to let it go if you all get on your knees and apologize for lacking honour and trying to kill an opponent. Or. you. Fight. Me," Salka said, and the arena went silent. Even Senraki had never heard him talk that much unless he was correcting his stances and giving instructions during sparring. So the boy had a deadly side to him. He was cold as he said the last statement.

"Do you think I can bow to that halfblood and apologize? You are delusional, asakana. I would rather die..." Sikuwa did not have time to finish his statement before Salka disappeared from in front of him, and the next thing he heard was a booming sound as Salka held Sikuwa by the neck and smashed him to the floor of the arena, enough that the whole place trembled.

"So fight me it is then," Salka said in a matter of factly tone, still holding Sikuwa by the collar and slamming him to the ground a second time. He did not stop but lifted him this time above his head and launched him at the two other boys from Ntega who had reacted and came to the rescue. The body of Sikuwa hit them square and sent all three tumbling to the floor. The other four still standing looked hesitant.

"Are you going to run? I gave you an option to apologize, and you chose to fight. Are you just cowards who only gang up on one boy?" Salka tilted his head to the side, and the four, even scared, were now trapped between agreeing that they were cowards and fighting with Salka. None of these options was pleasant after the first display, but the four boys did not seem to want to admit defeat, and they stood in a dilemma for a moment.

Salka moved again, and Senraki was beginning to realise Salka had been barely trying at all during their sparring match. Was that what an asakana was capable of? He held the first two by the neck before they

could react and planted a scorpion kick to the chest of the third. Both the attacks happened simultaneously, and while the third was still flying back, Salka had already twisted his body to crouch. The other boy had been stupid enough to think there was an opening and went to attack. Salka swept him off his feet. The boy jumped up to evade the sweep, but Salka must have anticipated that too because he planted both his hands on the background and drove a kick with both legs to the boy's midbody. The boy was sent flying into a mud dummy, breaking it in half from the force.

Senraki had never seen such a display of power and agility, and he did not know whether he was scared, jealous, or in awe. One thing was sure, however. He had never felt such satisfaction seeing boys who had tormented him get bitten like a bunch of children by one boy.

"Are you Afolani full-blood so weak as to be stopped by one attack? I'd say the half-blood is the strongest, since he can spar with me and never stop after one punch." Salka taunted, and Senraki had never heard of such a perspective. He could have hated being called a halfblood by Salka, but somehow, he was proud that he was not a fullblood of such a clan and tribe.

The boys with their owner on the line did not know when to stop, and they crawled up and surrounded him again. They were dropped just as fast as they stood, and Senraki could not stop the smile that rose to his face, and finally, a laugh tore through his lips. It was such a beautiful scene, and he was grateful he had seen it before he used Salka. Perhaps this was better than anything. Salka turned to him finally when the boys could not stand back up.

"If I miss supper, I'm going to kill you, Senraki. All that training I gave you, and you let these losers oneup you. Do you not care for my honour?" is what Salka said as he came to help him stand.

"I will do better," is all Senraki could manage.

Now looking back at that time, it must have been when the two started training together more to save Salka's honour. Then he had later become strong and even rose to be in the top twenty in the third year in combat and weaponry. Then later, they became rivals. Senraki had not stopped his revenge there anyway. He had found a way to make sikuwa pay, and this time he would not use Salka. He was going to deliver the punishment with his own hands.