

KEEPER 191

Chapter 191: OFFER OF THE DEAL

The third day of the exam came to an end with Sagiri being the last to perform. The sword had never been his forte unless it was Nokai, his double blade. The archive had grown even more restless, and the moment sagiri finished the dance, he left the arena before they were officially released. He did not go in the direction of the arena and instead made the decision to go deeper into the western rocky terrain. It was best to avoid the woods because he had not informed his teammates of his departure. He ran for around thirty minutes till he was convinced he was totally alone, and he was at the place where the rocks began to rise. He hopped from one rock to another until he found a place under a rock where it could not fit two people to sit, and crawled inside.

He shut his eyes and immediately opened them.

"Come out," he said, staring at the place where the rocks divided in front of him. He should have known someone was following him sooner, but the man was either already there, or he was at the same level as Salka and Senraki. There was no movement, but sagiri knew he was there. He stepped out from under the rock and let his red eye search. Before he could search for long, however, a man stepped out from behind a large rock. He was dressed in a black combat suit with stripes of red and a purple sash.

A grand marshal?

"A grand marshal?" sagiri said, and his brows furrowed. The logo of the sun belonging to Daziko san school sat at the heart of the man's combat suit. Either he was a grand marshal or an intruder masquerading as one.

"So it is true you can tell people apart even without the use of your eyes," the man said, taking another step further from the rock. His face was completely covered with a red customized cloth, which left only his eyes uncovered. "I am Sikuwa Senraki, the grand marshal of the Daziko Sun School," the man said, and sagiri got into a respectful stance and saluted him before he fell back to an easy stance. Even being a marshal did not explain him following him and lurking around. That was unbecoming, and sagiri remained on high alert. Another senraki clan grand marshal?

"Senraki?" sagiri asked. He could not yet tell if the man was friend or enemy, so he settled for asking questions.

"Yes, I am indeed a full blood of the Senraki clan. Your senraki is a halfblood." There was an underlying meaning in his words, and although his voice gave nothing away, the man carried hate that could make what the Tamelku twins carried around seem like a sunny day. The way he referred to senraki was not in a friendly way. He did not even hesitate to call him a half-breed. Senraki was a half-blood?

"Grand marshal Sikuwa, what are you doing out here?" sagiri asked, pushing his senses out to search for anyone lurking, but it was just him and the senraki clan grand marshal.

"You seem wary of me. Has k-senraki not built any trust between the marshal and cadet?" Sikuwa said, and Sagiri could not understand why the man kept bringing Principal Senraki into the conversation, but his hate burned even hotter every time he mentioned his name.

"You are not senraki, my grand marshal," Sagiri said, the archive inside of him stirring. Why couldn't the man just go somewhere else? The hate he carried was making the archive stir even more.

"Indeed, I am not, but I could have been if you came to Daziko Sun School." Principal Sikuwa said, and Sagiri was beginning to wonder more and more about the man's intentions. He would only be a high school student for another week. What could it benefit the man to say such meaningless words?

"Yes," sagiri answered, ready to get the conversation over with so he could get away. The two stood for a while staring at each other, one from behind his face cloth and another from behind his sash.

"If there is nothing more, Grand Marshal Sikuwa, I will take my leave," Sagiri spoke first after a long moment. He saluted the man and decided to go back to the endless pool instead, but before he could walk a step, the man had moved, and he was now two steps behind sagiri.

"You are special." his voice came right behind sagiri and sagiri wheeled sound ready to fight if the man pooled anymore creepy stances.

"Don't touch me!" Sagiri said, coming face to face with Sikuwa's raised hand, which was about to touch him.

"I just can't keep my hands off talent," Sikuwa started taking a step back. "Talented people like you are prone to get into trouble one way or another, and I am here to help."

"Is that so?" sagiri asked, finally understanding the man's goal. He was just like his benefactor, trying to get a slice of him. Only that he was straightforward about it. Just then, an idea popped into sagiri's head.

"Indeed, you only have to ask, and I will be willing to help," Sikuwa said, his voice soft like honey. What a canny fox! He was not even trying to hide it.

"What is in it for you and why?" Sagiri asked.

"That I will not tell, but I can assure you that my intentions are better than Zazami's," Sikuwa said, Senraki's first name with so much difficulty as if it was burning his mouth.

"I know Principal Senraki's intentions. " It's yours that are questionable," Sagiri said, and somehow praising Senraki even just a little bit created the reaction he had expected. The hate surrounding Sikuwa, most of it must have had something to do with Senraki. The man was not interested in Sagiri at all, or perhaps he was to some level, but his main goal was Senraki.

"You haven't tried my intentions yet," Sikuwa said, his voice losing its honey touch for a moment before he corrected it. "I only wish to help a talented boy," he added, managing to contain himself.

"You can help me with one thing," sagiri stated, and the man almost keeled over.

"Just mention it, and I will get it done.

"Above the central pentagon, the night after tomorrow," Sagiri said, finally at his limit with the archive. "Don't follow me again," he added and did not wait for the answer before he raced back to the inner pentagon.