

Last System 163

Chapter 163 - [Bonus]To Be Like A Beast

The day started as usual. I woke up the second the first rays of the sun touched the walls of the tent.

It wasn't a showcase of just how well trained I was.

There was some kind of formation that would detect the sunlight and then flash bright lights for as long as it would take me to wake up.

Or so was my only explanation for this strange event.

I quickly jumped out of my bed, alerted by the array of lights. The second I moved, the lights stopped.

'What the hell was that?' I asked, baffled by what just happened.

"You slept in," Lucius explained the event from the outside of the compartment I took for a room.

"We are supposed to wake up at the first light. You never slept in for so long, so I activated it."

Okay, what the hell?

"What's with this kind of annoyance," I muttered under my nose, throwing my robes on my garb.

Since Lucius was already awake, he was likely waiting for me to join in on the hunt.

This was the only way to maintain some sort of contact, now that we used to hunt separately.

Without any clocks, there was hardly any way to tell the time while in the forest. The treetops would cover most of the light, stopping one from assessing the position of the sun on the sky. And with no other way to effectively measure the flow of time, all we had was a feeling.

A feeling that enough time has passed. A feeling that it was this time of our daily routine to take a break and return to the clearing where we first fought against the nest.

It was a fancy place in a perfect location, right at our preferred depth of the forest. The vegetation was relatively thin, while the monsters were abundant and not too strong.

And unless we met in that place at more or less the same moment, the other party would know a problem arose.

'It's a crude system, prone to human error,' I thought, pulling the robes down my waist as I approached the doors in a hurry. 'But if you don't have what you want, you do with what you have,' I added in my thoughts, moving into the open area of the tent.

"Took you long enough," Lucius was quick to call me out.

And from the looks of it, he was right. Now that I had the mind to look, the small, bright dot on the tent's interior wall indicated that the sun had hung in the sky for a while now.

In other words, we were late into our hunt.

'God damn it,' I thought, quickly gathering all my equipment. As I still kept my storage ring a secret from Lucius, I had no other way but to go about it as usual. 'Maybe I really stood way too late into the night yesterday,' I chastised myself, annoyed by this novice mistake.

We didn't waste any further words. Once I was ready, Lucius simply led me outside of the tent and all the way to the woods. He then waved his hand away and ventured between the trees slightly to my right.

'He didn't bother to explain what the hell those lights were,' I thought, releasing a deep sigh.

To claim that everything was good between us would be a huge leap away from reality. Even if he tried to hide it, he was still clearly salty about what happened back at the sect grounds.

'Well, forget it,' I thought, turning my head back towards the forest and stepping ahead. Instead of right, I moved towards the left side before finally sinking underneath the surface of the woods.

If we hunted together, I would only slow Lucius down. This was the sad reality showcasing the difference in our experience.

I was getting better... But I still had a lot to learn before I could match my Overseer.

'It's no wonder,' I thought as I turned my movement habits and entire mindset to the work mode.

'What is he like, seventh rank? Maybe eight?' I thought.

I could vaguely recall him explaining what rank one needed to be to mature out of the contract... But by the love of God, I couldn't recall what rank that was!

'It's not like he is superior to me in every way,' I thought, finding it hard to judge the situation. 'I don't think the difference between us stems purely from experience thought,' I quickly added, only to slowly shake my head to the right, positioning my ears to better hear the noise I caught.

'A small fry,' I quickly dismissed the notion.

This single instance wiped all the spare thoughts from my head.

Right now wasn't the time to think; it was time to act.

I moved through the forest like a predator. Careful about every step, pricking my ears to hear the monsters and straining my eyes to see them.

This full-alert mode lasted only for a few moments.

The second I caught a whiff of a monster in my paygrade, I angled the direction of my patrol to the left.

Instead of moving towards the target I found, I moved away from it.

Rather than a predator looking to hunt, I wanted to appear like a predator just going its way and unable to be bothered by a potential fight.

This was all part of the experience of hunting, something I learned pretty quickly.

'Now that I think about it, I can remember that one phrase,' I thought, controlling the location of my prey as I moved ahead of it, only to continue angling my path in the same direction.

'To win against the enemy, you need to think like the enemy,' I mouthed, wary not to utter the slightest noise.

Anything extraordinary happening would likely scare my target away.

In what was a long time yet appeared as a moment, I was already moving in parallel with my target. Then towards it...

In the end, I made sure to keep the wind flowing right from the direction the monster would approach. I hid high in the trees and pulled out a small bow.

The one invention that I thought of way before we set off for the forest. A thing that even an amateur like me could make with just a bit of his spare time.

I calculated the speed of the monster in my head as I started to slowly draw the string of my weapon out.

'Just a little bit more,' I thought, bringing the outstretched string all the way to the corner of my eyes.

It appeared.

A medium-sized goat with massive fangs stretching down from its long snout.

I only noticed it for a flash before the undergrowth hid it again.

But it was enough.

I waited for a few more moments, using my imagination to push the outline of the monster through the undergrowth in my mind.

I didn't see it, but I could feel it already.

My hands moved down as I waited with the arrow prepared, angling down its aim.

Sting!

I released the bow, sending the arrow through the leaves and then a bush.

A short shriek... and it was over.

'It seems I still remember how to do it,' I thought with satisfaction, grabbing my spear as I jumped down.

Shooting a bow was the one form of outside recreation that I enjoyed in my past life. Even though I was of no English heritage, there was something that allured me in it to no end.

Thump.

My feet created a short, dull noise when I crushed the grass and some kind of herbs underneath my boots. I carefully approached the bush where I struck the beast before carefully pushing my spear in.

I felt resistance against its tip, but no movement or a panicked attack followed.

"Huff," I sighed, using the weight of my body to push the spear inside.

I wasn't going to risk approaching the monster if it was still alive and kicking, only waiting for me to get overconfident about my previous shot.

But it wasn't the case this time.

The monster was as dead as it could be, with an arrow stuck into its spinal cord.

'I didn't think it would have it in itself,' I thought, taking a glance at the bow I left on the tree.

I either got extremely lucky by inserting the arrow right between the bones, or there was something terribly wrong with the insane quality of that random bow!

Still, I wasted no time.

I pulled out my knife and forced it into the monster, quickly pulling the spiritual stone out of its steaming-hot flesh. Yet, as I retracted my bloodied hands, I couldn't help but notice one of its bones almost rubbing against my face.

'Isn't this exactly what I came here for?' I thought to myself, running my mana through my fingers as I dug in and snapped some of the bones out. Yet, rather than keeping them out in the open, I wiped my hand against the nearby undergrowth before touching the storage ring hidden in my pocket.

'Good,' I thought, standing up from the monster's corpse.

The entire thing took me less than thirty seconds, more than enough to ditch this place before it could get dangerous.

I took a step forward... And the forest opened up before me.

It was an extremely weird feeling as if stepping from one area directly to a different biome.

The abnormality was in the shape of a long trail, cutting straight through the forest.

I fell down to my knees and lowered my torso above the ground, taking a closer look.

'The vegetation doesn't dare to return to its usual place,' I finally figured out just what was wrong with this absurd.

It felt as if some monster went through this place... and the place refused to even buckle after that.

My mind froze as my heart started to pump adrenaline instead of blood.

I could recognize the mana lingering over the massive footsteps imprinted into the ground!

'To be like a beast, you need to think like a beast,' I thought, before doing what my bestial instincts told me to do.