

## Paragon 36

Chapter 36 She is Clearly hiding something

Ohema looked at Klaus with a hint of curiosity. She hesitated before answering.

"I'm from the Baffour family, a small but respected family in the western region," she said. "We don't have the same power, but we're known for our skill in combat and espionage." In the Northern Union, there are five regions. The Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and Central. Each region contains more than a dozen Families.

However, aside from those families which most people call the Great families, there are others that although are not on the level of a great family, they are still powerful enough.

Klaus nodded, impressed. "So, you're not from one of the Great Families, but still quite skilled." he has witnessed a part of her battle, so he was convinced she was skilled. However, he just doesn't know why she was alone in the forest and such a scary place at that.

Ohema smiled. "Yes, we've trained hard to be strong, even if we don't have the same resources."

Klaus grinned. "It shows. Your skills are impressive." He continued, "I don't mean to pry, but what were you doing in that part of the forest?"

Ohema smiled slightly. "Would you believe me if I said I got lost?"

Klaus glanced back at her, a knowing smile on his face. It was clear she was hiding something, but he decided not to press further.

Klaus decided to let it go. "I guess we all get lost sometimes," he said with a shrug.

Ohema sighed with relief and then asked, "So Klaus, what are your plans for the upcoming Celestial Mountain Academy InterCity exams?"

"Celestial Mountain Academy?" Klaus raised an eyebrow. "What's that?"

Ohema paused, looking at him with surprise. "You don't know about the Celestial Mountain Academy? "

Klaus shook his head. "I haven't heard of it before."

Ohema looked intrigued. "Really? The Celestial Mountain Academy is the greatest academy in the entire world. It's the place every awakened person wants to go. The fact that you don't know about it makes me wonder where you've been hiding."

In truth, Klaus had heard of it before but didn't know much about it. Seeing an opportunity to learn more, he decided to play along. It's always better to know more about something even if you clearly have some ideas from the get-go.

"It sounds impressive. Can you tell me more about it and why it's so important?" Klaus asked.

Ohema smiled, pleased to share her knowledge. "The Celestial Mountain Academy is known for its top-notch training and elite instructors. It's where the best of the best are trained. Getting into the academy can open doors to powerful alliances and resources. It's the place for the absolute nurturing of young talents. However, to get in is incredibly difficult.

You first have to pass the InterCity exams, Regional selections, and subsequently, the Union selection"

She continued, "The InterCity exams are a way to test potential students from different cities. Only the most talented and skilled make it through. The academy offers advanced techniques, rare skills, and access to influential networks.

"Getting into such an academy will not only open doors for you but also shape your future in ways you can't imagine," Ohema said. "From what I know, the Celestial Mountain Academy was founded by the six Overlords, and it's now supported by the eight Overlords."

Klaus's interest was piqued. He listened closely as Ohema continued.

"The six Overlords were the heroes who saved the Earth during the early stages of the apocalypse. They are the backbone of the planet and the force that keeps things in check. When all hope seemed lost, they appeared with extraordinary powers and fought off the monsters and zombies."

Ohema paused, then added, "Initially, there were six Overlords, one from each of the six habitable continents. But ten years into the apocalypse, a new race of humans immune to ice emerged from beneath the icy depth of Antarctica, which is now known as the Frozen Union."

Klaus's eyes widened with interest.

"When they first appeared, there was some conflict," Ohema explained. "But eventually, the Frozen Union and the six Overlords reached an agreement. One of the Frozen Union's top experts joined the original six Overlords, making it seven."

And years later, the water or sea people also appeared covering 70% of the oceans. Their top expert also join making the union of Overlords now Eight"

Klaus nodded slowly, absorbing the information. "So, the academy was founded by these powerful individuals. It must have a strong foundation."

Ohema smiled. "Exactly. The academy is highly respected and offers incredible opportunities for those who are admitted."

Klaus's curiosity was now fully engaged. He knew he had to find a way to gain admission. The prospect of being part of such a prestigious institution was exciting and motivating.

"However, getting in won't be easy. There are many requirements, and you only qualify for one of them," Ohema said, causing Klaus to raise an eyebrow.

"What are the requirements?" Klaus asked.

"There are three," Ohema explained. "First, you need to be an Ascended and under 18 years old. Second, you must have made a significant contribution to the army. This can be done by joining a team

and entering the Forbidden Zone to help eliminate the monsters there. From what I know, you need to have at least 2,000,000 points to qualify."

She paused before continuing, "Lastly, you must have a recommendation from a powerful backer. This is where things get tricky for you. Since you don't come from a powerful family, the chances of you getting a recommendation are very low. The recommendation must come from someone with real influence in the world."

Klaus's mood sank as he heard the strict requirements. A frown creased his face. The first two requirements seemed achievable—he was already an Ascended, so that box was checked. As for the second, he had plans to enter the Forbidden Zones soon, so he could work on earning those points.

But the last requirement was a real obstacle. He was a nobody, with no connections or powerful allies. How was he supposed to get a recommendation?

Seeing his despair, Ohema spoke up. "No need to look so down. With your strength, I'm sure you'll catch the eye of someone powerful. You just need to show your might and let others see that you're a genius."

"Really?" Klaus asked, his spirits lifting as a smile spread across his face. He hadn't expected to hear that.

Ohema smiled at his sudden change in mood. "Of course. When you enter the Forbidden Zone, your name will appear on the Warrior Ranking. This ranking shows how many points a person has earned.

That will be your chance to prove yourself. By climbing the ranks, you'll draw the attention of someone powerful, and they might just recommend you."

Klaus felt a surge of hope as Ohema's words sank in. The idea of earning his place through sheer determination and skill lit a fire inside him. He knew it wouldn't be easy, but the challenge excited him.

"Thank you, Ohema," Klaus said, his voice filled with newfound resolve. "I'll do whatever it takes to climb that ranking and earn my spot."

Back at Ross Academy, Klaus had overheard many students talking about their dreams of getting into the Celestial Mountain Academy. From what little he knew, the benefits of being accepted into such a prestigious institution were immense. If he could gain admission, it would change his life and his mother's forever. The opportunities would be endless.

All he had to do was take that first step, and once he set foot there, the future would open up with limitless possibilities.

"Work hard on that," Ohema advised, her tone serious. "It's not going to be easy. This InterCity selection is just the first stage. From each city, only 200 people will be chosen. But even then, there's no guarantee you'll make the final cut. After the city selection, there's a regional selection, and then the Union selection."

"Say what?" Klaus asked, his eyes widening in surprise.

Ohema nodded, understanding his surprise. "Yes, it's a rigorous process. The InterCity selection is only the beginning. Each city sends its best candidates, but from there, only a fraction will move on to the regional stage. The competition gets tougher with each level. By the time you reach the Union selection, you're up against the top talents from across the entire continent."

Klaus felt a mix of excitement and anxiety. The thought of competing against so many skilled individuals was daunting, but the rewards were too great to ignore. If he could make it through all those stages, the doors to the Celestial Mountain Academy would open wide, and with it, a future he had only dared to dream of.

"So, out of thousands of people, only a handful will make it to the academy?" Klaus asked, trying to grasp the scale of the challenge.

"Exactly," Ohema confirmed. "The selection process is designed to find the best of the best. And let me tell you, from what I've heard, there are geniuses out there who can strike fear in your heart with just a single punch. That's why I want you to show your might—not just to get noticed, but to prove that you're a genius in your own right."

Klaus smiled, though a bit modestly. "Well, I don't know about being a genius, but I'll do my best."

"You should" Ohema nodded.

"You seem to know quite a lot," Klaus remarked, a hint of teasing in his voice. "Although I don't want to laugh at you, seeing a beautiful lady like yourself being a full-on erudite makes me blush in shame." He shook his head in mock dejection, but a small smile played on his lips.

Ohema pouted, clearly not pleased with the label. "Hey, who are you calling an erudite? I just know things."

"A beautiful erudite is a good thing, you know," Klaus said, his smile widening.

Ohema couldn't help but smile back, and just like that, the awkward tension between them faded away completely. They both laughed, the light-hearted exchange easing the seriousness of their earlier conversation.

As they continued their walk out of the forest, the conversation between Klaus and Ohema flowed easily. Ohema proved to be an excellent conversationalist, and Klaus, now relaxed in the comfortable atmosphere, was enjoying their talk. Without realizing when it happened, the conversation began to turn a bit more personal.

Suddenly, Ohema asked, "So, Klaus, do you have a girlfriend? Someone as handsome as you must have someone you fancy."