

THE LAST PARAGON IN THE APOCALYPSE

Chapter 7: First Battle

The wolf lunged at Klaus, its spiked fur bristling as it closed the distance in an instant. Klaus sidestepped quickly, feeling the rush of air as the beast's claws swiped past him. He swung his sword in a wide arc, aiming for the wolf's side, but the creature was fast, dodging out of the way just in time.

"Damn, this bastard wants me dead" Klaus cursed under his breath, knowing he had to stay focused. The wolf was circling him now, its eyes never leaving his. Klaus mirrored its movements, keeping his sword ready. He couldn't afford to make a mistake.

The wolf lunged again, this time feinting to the left before darting to the right. Klaus reacted instinctively, bringing his sword up to block the attack. The wolf's claws scraped against the blade, sending sparks flying. Klaus pushed back, forcing the creature away from him.

With a quick step forward, Klaus slashed downward, aiming for the wolf's neck. The beast twisted its body, and the blade grazed its shoulder instead. The wolf yelped in pain but didn't retreat. Instead, it snapped its jaws at Klaus, trying to catch him off guard.

Klaus jumped back, barely avoiding the sharp teeth. His heart pounded in his chest, but he forced himself to stay calm. He couldn't rely on his elemental powers or fancy skills. This fight was going to be won with pure swordsmanship—or not at all.

Well, not like he can use those skills yet. His objective for coming to the forest was to train his sword skills and hunt. But aside from that, he was there to train. He has all eight elements in him, but he doesn't know how to use them just yet.

It requires practice to master them, but in active battle and his first-ever battle as an awakened, using an unmastered skill is just courting death. As for his moon slash, Klaus needed his elemental mastery to use it, so for now, he wanted to test his knowledge when it came to the sword.

As a Weapons Overlord, he is destined to find it easy when using any weapon. Strangely so, using the sword was practically easy for him, flawless even.

The wolf charged again, more aggressive this time. Klaus parried the attack, using the flat of his blade to deflect the creature's claws. He felt the impact vibrate through his arm, but he held his ground. The wolf was strong, but Klaus wasn't weak.

"I knew it, my stats as an awakened are several times higher than the normal awakens," Klaus said feeling how stronger he had become. In truth, when someone awakens, their stats are just slightly higher than an athlete. However for Klaus, his own was on the level of a genetically engineered supersoldier. This gave him an edge over others.

Taking advantage of the brief moment when the wolf recoiled, Klaus stepped in close, slashing horizontally across its side. The sword cut through the thick fur and into the flesh beneath, drawing blood. The wolf howled in pain, stumbling slightly.

Klaus didn't let up. He followed the momentum, spinning around to deliver another strike. This time, the blade dug deep into the wolf's hind leg, crippling it. The creature staggered, its movements becoming slower and more erratic.

Seeing his chance, Klaus pressed the attack, thrusting his sword forward. The blade pierced the wolf's chest, sliding between its ribs and into its heart. The wolf let out a final, pitiful whine before collapsing to the ground, lifeless.

Klaus stood there, staring at the huge body of the wolf with blank eyes. "I killed it, just like that," he muttered to himself. He remembered sneaking into lectures at the Academy where he worked, hearing the instructors talk about how dangerous it was for an Awakening to kill a mutated monster.

They made it sound like a terrifying ordeal, something that deserved praise. But now, standing over the body of a monster that many Awakened would have run from, he felt nothing.

He wasn't tired, stressed, or even relieved. It felt like nothing more than a warm-up. The fight lasted just five minutes, and he had killed a Tier 1 monster without using any active skills.

Usually, when someone awakens, they gain one skill, some geniuses might get two. Families would then buy skill books to help them learn more. But Klaus awakened with four skills, something unheard of. Yet, despite having so many skills, he hadn't used any of his active ones. In fact, Klaus still didn't know how to use his active skill.

His passive skills worked automatically, but he hadn't quite figured out how to use [Moon Slash]. His senses, though, were incredibly sharp, allowing him to anticipate the monster's movements. This gave him an edge during the fight.

Klaus turned his attention to the screen that popped up after he killed the monster.

[You have killed a Tier 1 Jagged Spiked Wolf. You have received 100 Exp.]

[Next Level up: 100/600]

"This is unfair," Klaus muttered, his earlier excitement now fading. He had read about needing 12 times the amount of experience to level up, but in the joy of his awakening, he hadn't given it much thought. Now, seeing the numbers in front of him, he frowned.

A normal Awakened needed just 100 Exp to reach level 2. After that, the requirement would double, needing 400 Exp to reach level 3. But for Klaus, he

needed six times that amount just to level up once. "Does this mean I'll need 6 times the Exp to reach level 3, too?" Klaus shuddered at the thought.

He quickly pushed those thoughts aside. Dwelling on the unknown was dangerous, especially out here. There were too many other things to worry about, and right now, he needed to focus on mastering his skills, not on how long it would take to level up.

"This place is too open. I'll take care of this in a more private spot," Klaus muttered, storing the monster's body and leaving the area. He didn't have a map, but his senses were sharp. He could feel everything around him, so he wasn't worried about a monster sneaking up on him.

"I should master the Moon Slash skill before going any deeper. But first, I need to find a secluded spot to collect my rewards," he thought to himself. After walking for about twenty minutes, Klaus came across a cave. He carefully checked the surroundings before stepping inside.

The cave seemed empty, likely abandoned by a monster long ago. Klaus quickly retrieved the monster's body and began working on it. He started by cutting away the spiked fur, then moved on to removing its saber teeth. Each piece was valuable and could be used later, either sold or crafted into something useful.

Once he finished, Klaus took a moment to relax. The cave was quiet, and the cool air was a welcome relief after the fight. He sat down, leaning against the cave wall, and closed his eyes for a few minutes, letting himself unwind.

But he couldn't rest for too long. He still had work to do. Klaus stood up, feeling a bit more refreshed, and decided it was time to practice his Moon Slash skill. He knew it wouldn't be easy, but he had to try.

He drew his sword and focused, trying to connect with the elemental essence inside him. He imagined the energy flowing into his weapon, but when he swung, nothing happened. The sword cut through the air, but there was no crescent arc, no sign of the Moon Slash.

Klaus frowned and tried again. This time, he focused even harder, picturing the energy forming into the shape of a crescent moon. But when he swung, it still didn't work. The sword just cut through the air, leaving him frustrated.

He tried several more times, but each attempt ended the same way. Klaus could feel the energy inside him, but he couldn't get it to cooperate. The Moon Slash remained just out of reach, refusing to manifest.

"I can feel the energies inside me, so why can't I control them?" Klaus asked himself, frustration clear in his voice. He dropped his sword and sat down, unsure of what to do next.

"Damn it, education really is important," he sighed. Klaus had never had the chance to study under an expert; everything he knew came from sneaking around Ross Academy and picking up bits and pieces of information.

He remembered something an instructor had said about using spiritual qi to harness elemental energy. It was supposed to make the energy manifest, but it was risky. Running out of spiritual qi was dangerous. Klaus felt a moment of understanding but quickly dismissed it.

"But now that I think about it, my spiritual qi is pretty huge. Maybe I can give it a try," he muttered. With that thought, he began to channel his spiritual qi. Almost immediately, he could feel the presence of his elemental energies more clearly.

"Let's start with Ice," Klaus said, extending his hand. He focused, directing his spiritual energy into his palm.

As he concentrated, a cold sensation began to form in his hand. Slowly, ice started to appear, faint at first but growing more solid as he kept at it. Klaus's eyes widened in surprise and excitement. It was working.

He continued, focusing on maintaining the flow of spiritual qi while shaping the ice. It took a lot of effort, and the process was slow, but the ice was there, responding to his will. The more he practiced, the more control he gained.

After a while, Klaus felt ready to try the next step. He picked up his sword again, determination in his eyes. If he could channel the ice into his sword, the attack could be powerful. He steadied himself, gripping the hilt firmly.

This time, he focused on merging the ice energy with his weapon. He channeled his spiritual qi into the sword, just as he had done with his palm. The blade began to shimmer with a frosty glow, and Klaus could feel the power building up.

He took a deep breath, then swung the sword with all his might. A burst of icy energy in the form of a crescent moon arc shot forward, far more powerful

than anything he had expected. The force of the attack was devastating, slicing through the air and leaving a trail of frost in its wake.

"Well damn" Klaus smiles evilly looking at the devastation he has caused.
"Time to hunt and perfect this"