

THE REAL PROTEGE

#Chapter 81: ONE MORE DEAR - Read THE REAL PROTEGE Chapter 81: ONE MORE DEAR

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WARNING *** MATURE CONTENT ***

The room fell silent as her words sank in, everyone understanding the gravity of the situation. They would need all their courage and strength to face the challenges ahead.

"Chatty is still recuperating..."

While Pharsa is talking, Ling Li cuts her off.

"Pharsa, since when did you get soft-hearted? Chatty now has a brand new heart. He will live. Doing drills every day is even more tedious for him. Don't you think? It's been almost five months since his heart surgery. Chatty only needs twelve weeks to heal. Do you want to defy Otakos command?" Ling Li sternly reminded Pharsa.

Pharsa could only shut her mouth.

"Let's talk more tomorrow. Go out, all of you." Ling Li dismissed them, leaving her and Four Eyes in the room.

"You, why are you looking at me like that? Are you angry?" Ling Li questioned Four Eyes.

"What do you think?"

'Why is he angry? Did Otako give him a hard time? Is he mad that he is going to Amazon?' Ling Li wondered.

"Tell me." Ling Li insisted.

"Let me punish you first." Four Eyes pinned Ling Li under him as he turned off the lights, kissed her roughly on her neck, and ripped off her clothes.

"Do you have to rip it off?"

"You have plenty." Four Eyes replied as he looked at Ling' Li's body with admiration and was surprised when Ling Li said,

"Let me do it too." Four Eyes chuckled as Ling Li ripped his clothes, and he launched at her like a hungry wolf.

The aroma of love and lust filled the entire room.

It was almost two in the morning.

"Chu Yan, let's sleep." Ling Li murmured in a faint voice.

"One more, dear.." Four Eyes whispered in her ears as he bit Ling Li's earlobe.

"You have said that twice already..." Ling Li protested.

"I can't get enough of you... please... dear... Uggghhhhhh, dear... I love you... ahh..."

Dear, come with me one last time. Let us come together, please." Four Eyes started kissing Ling Li's bosom again. Four Eyes knows this is Ling Li's weakness while thrusting hard on her G spot.

Ling Li could only curve her back, grab onto Four Eyes' hair, and moan.

Ling Li's moan is music to Four Eyes' ears and makes him more restless and hungry for her.

"Ah, Chu Yan, how can you do this to me..."

"This is punishment, remember?" Four Eyes murmured. "Dear, you are beautiful."

"Chu Yan... Ahhhhhhh..."

"I'm coming..."

"No.. not yet."

"But I'm coming... Ahhhhhhh..."

"Then I need one more after this." Four Eyes, knowing Ling Li was having an orgasm, made his thrust harder and his rhythm faster to pleasure his wife well.

"Chu Yan... Hmmmmmm..."

"Yes, let us come together... Coming... Uggghhhhhh... Yes, dear..."

You smell so good when you cum."

Just like that, Four Eyes starts to grind on her again. Ling Li doesn't know how she slept. She woke up washed and fresh. Four Eyes should have washed her, but he didn't bother putting on clothes on both of them since they woke up intertwined naked.

When Ling Li opened her eyes, Four Eyes stared at her with a plastered smile.

"Good morning." Four Eyes said and kissed her forehead.

Ling Li buried her face in his chest when she felt her whole face blush. 'How can I still blush in front of him?' Ling Li thought and hated herself.

Four Eyes found Ling Li amusing when he saw her ears all red.

"Dear, you are playing with fire." Four Eyes whispered in her ears.

"You!" Ling Li almost jumped out of bed, forcing herself out of his arms, but Four Eyes pulled her back.

"Stay with me a little longer." Four Eyes said softly.

"Is something bothering you? Are you worried about going to the Amazon?" Ling Li asked, her voice gentle but probing.

"No," Four Eyes replied, stepping closer and pulling Ling Li into his arms. "I know I have to do it sooner or later, and I also have to prove to Otako that I am worthy of you."

Ling Li leaned into him, her fingers tracing the lines of his face. "We have a lot ahead of us, but we'll face it together. You, me, and everyone else. We'll make it through."

Four Eyes nodded, his grip tightening around Ling Li. "I know. And I'll do whatever it takes to prove myself, not just to Otako, but to you as well."

Ling Li smiled, her heart swelling with pride and love. "You already have, Chu Yan. You already have."

Ling Li's eyes softened as she looked up at him. "Did Otako make things difficult for you? Tell me, and I will punish that person," she said decisively, her protective nature flaring.

Four Eyes shook his head, a small smile playing on his lips. "You are extremely significant to Otako. I was warned not to hurt you and must prove my worth."

"Really? I have to give Otako a big present then," Ling Li said cheekily, a mischievous glint in her eyes.

"I think you need to be punished again." Four Eyes declared.

"What's wrong?" Ling Li panicked.

But Ling Li was never answered and was pinned down by Four Eyes.

It was already lunchtime when Ling Li woke up, the sun high in the sky. She stretched, noticing Four Eyes was long gone. Making her way downstairs, she found only Butler Peng waiting for her.

"Where are they?" she asked, looking around the empty room.

"Shi Min and all the men went to the camp; the girls took the twins shopping. Lunch is ready, Madam. Master Chu Yan has personally brewed a soup for you," Butler Peng replied with a respectful bow.

Ling Li's cheeks flushed a delicate shade of pink. "I see, thank you." She smiled softly, feeling a warm rush of affection at the thought of Four Eyes taking such care to ensure she rested well. She knew her staff probably understood the nourishing properties of the soup and the reason behind her waking up late.

After finishing her lunch, she prepared herself and drove to the camp, her mind already shifting to the tasks at hand. The camp buzzed with activity. Shi Min, Mushu, and Pharsa were in the middle of teaching the group how to wield various weapons—spears, knives, and the like. They had already mastered swords and archery in previous sessions.

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Shi Min, Mushu, and the Camp Commander stood together, meticulously selecting Class C and Class A men from the battalion to join their elite group. The air was thick with focus and determination.

Ling Li observed silently for a moment, proud of the dedication and effort everyone put into their training. She approached Shi Min, who was demonstrating a precise move with a spear.

"Shi Min," Ling Li called, her voice cutting through the din of practice.

Shi Min turned, his face lighting up with a smile. "Mother, you're here."

"Yes, I wanted to see the progress and discuss Otako's mission further," Ling Li replied, her expression serious yet composed.

Shi Min nodded, signaling to Mushu and Pharsa to continue the training while he walked over to Ling Li. They moved to a quieter spot, away from the clashing of weapons.

"The preparations are going well. The men are showing remarkable improvement," Shi Min reported.

"Good. This group of men needs to be ready for anything. This mission is unlike any we've faced before," Ling Li said, her eyes scanning the training grounds.

Shi Min's expression mirrored her determination. "We'll make sure they are ready. Mushu and Pharsa are pushing them hard, and we'll continue to intensify their training."

Ling Li's gaze softened slightly. "Thank you, Shi Min. Your leadership and dedication are invaluable."

Shi Min bowed his head. "It's our duty, Mother. We will succeed."

Ling Li observed the training from afar before joining them.

Ling Li's words hung in the air, her voice firm yet reassuring. "There's no need for perfection. As long as they grasp the proper usage, it's good enough. Let's press on to the next lesson. Time is scarce, yet the knowledge awaiting us is extensive." Her eyes sparkled with determination as she approached Shi Min, Mushu, and Pharsa.

"They will perfect it in the actual battle," Ling Li continued, addressing the questioning looks she received. "The battleground." Ling Li uttered. They understood what she meant; it sent a shiver down their spines.

"Proceed to the next phase," Ling Li commanded.

Mushu decided it was essential to teach them how to help each other when bitten by wild animals. He demonstrated the delicate procedure of suturing a wound with precision, ensuring everyone understood the life-saving technique.

Ling Li watched with satisfaction. Just before the training ended, she stepped forward to give further instructions. "Arm them and send them to the battleground. No rifles. Leave three bullets per pistol. One spear, one bow, six arrows, a knife and a dagger, a medical kit, and water. There is no need for a sword."

"Mom, Paps, and Shun are in the group," Shi Min said uneasily, his voice tinged with concern.

"That is precisely the reason why I'm doing this," Ling Li replied with unwavering resolve. Shi Min could only remain silent, knowing he couldn't change his mother's decision.

Shi Min's heart raced as he meditated on his stepfather, Shun, and their comrades. The battleground was an impressive 100-hectare enclosed artificial forest meticulously crafted by Ling Li. It was a training ground like no other, designed to push them to their

limits. Before dispatching their teams to the Amazon, they would immerse themselves in this unique environment. Unlike previous groups who had undergone three years of training, this team faced a condensed and intense preparation.

Shi Min's heart raced as he thought of his stepfather, Shun, and their comrades confronting a pack of wolves in the artificial forest. The dangers inside the battleground didn't stop at wolves; the forest was home to an array of the most venomous snakes imaginable, adding to the daunting threat.

The clear lakes were deceptively dangerous, teeming with poisonous and virulent fish. Every element of the forest was designed to challenge them, from insects to predators, creating an environment where only the strongest would survive.

The battalion commander and his subordinates personally prepared the team's arming. Shi Min, Mushu, Pharsa, and Ling Li conducted the final inspection, their faces reflecting a blend of pride and determination.

Ling Li approached Four Eyes, her expression both stern and affectionate. "Chu Yan, I will wait for you. Don't act brave and reckless. I will punish you," she said, her tone a mix of concern and resolve.

Four Eyes chuckled and pulled Ling Li into an embrace. "You are more nervous than me. Of course, I will come back, and I will be the one to punish you," Four Eyes whispered into Ling Li's ear, his breath warm against her skin.

"You still have time to joke!" Ling Li replied, shaking her head as she inspected Four Eyes' gear. Ling Li took one of his daggers and replaced it with an elite combat axe she pulled from her waist. "This is mine. I always carry it during my missions. And this." Ling Li handed Four Eyes a stunning knife, the 'Gem of the Orient,' which she pulled from her boot.

"Now, I'm giving these to you to remember me," Ling Li said, her voice softening. She knelt and placed the knife back into Four Eyes' boot, ensuring it was secure. Ling Li had fallen in love with the knife ever since she bought it from an auction for a hefty two million dollars.

Four Eyes looked at the knife, encrusted with emeralds and diamonds, and knew it was not an ordinary blade but a precious one. Four Eyes felt a warmth spread through him at Ling Li's gesture.

Four Eyes embraced Ling Li again, his heart swelling with emotion. "Don't worry, I will be okay, dear. I will be back. I love you, Ling."

"I love you too," Ling Li replied, burying her head in Four Eyes' chest. Four Eyes was more than a head taller than Ling Li, and she felt safe in his arms.

"Really?" Four Eyes asked, his voice laced with surprise.

"Why?" Ling Li looked up at him, puzzled.

"This is the first time you have said these words to me. I have been waiting for you to say them," Four Eyes said, looking straight into Ling Li's eyes.

Ling Li realized she had never verbally expressed her love for him before and felt a pang of guilt. "Chu Yan, I love you. You should know it even if I didn't say it, right?"

"Um." Four Eyes hugged Ling Li tighter, a content smile on his face.

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The thirty-four men were led to an imposing door, its edges worn with the passage of countless others who had faced the same unknown. Though they were cautioned to be vigilant and ready, the reality of what awaited them remained shrouded in mystery.

Four Eyes was given a cryptic hint that they needed to hunt and beware of the lake's deceptions. Shun, on the other hand, was advised to distinguish between what was poisonous and what was not. Beyond these fragments of advice, they ventured forth into the unknown.

Shi Min stood before the group, his expression serious. "Once you enter this door, there is no backing out. Some of you may come out injured, and someone may be unlucky and not make it out. But the majority of you will surely come out. Well, hopefully, all of you will make it out. You will come out after thirty-six hours upon entering. Two hours before your exit, you will hear an alarm. It will be your cue to gather at the door." Shi Min's voice was steady as he laid out the instructions.

"After two hours, there will be a final alarm, and it will be the door opening. It will sound like this." Shi Min pressed a button, and a loud alarm echoed through the room, followed by the slow creaking open of the door, which was only a meter wide.

Beyond the threshold, total darkness awaited. The faintest outlines of trees and foliage were barely discernible, creating an air of foreboding.

When Chatty saw the door, his nerves got the best of him, and he swallowed hard, feeling a wave of nausea. His surroundings are turning green.

"Quan Ye, why are we here again?" he whispered, grabbing Fatty's arm.

"Aren't you marrying Pharsa? She did this; why can't you?" Fatty replied, his tone tinged with humor.

"Can I just accept that she is stronger than me?" Chatty muttered, his voice trembling.

"No, remember Otako's order?" Fatty retorted firmly.

Chatty shivered, recalling his unsettling encounter with Otako. "Right," he murmured, steeling himself as Shi Min's voice rang out again.

"Gentlemen, go in, and good luck!" Shi Min's genuine wish for their success was palpable. As he watched them enter, memories of his own journey through that door flooded back. At sixteen, Shi Min had been thrust into this battleground, having trained since childhood, but still, he had to fight and struggle for his life in this battleground.

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Ling Li stood tall, her commanding presence a source of strength for those about to face the trials ahead. She knew the dangers they faced but also their preparation. This thirty-six-hour trial was a crucible, a necessary step in their arduous journey.

As the team filed in, Ling Li stood tall, her presence commanding respect. She knew the dangers they faced, but Ling Li also knew that training them in this battleground before sending them to the Amazon was essential. The next thirty-six hours would test their limits, but it was a necessary step in their journey.

Shi Min watched as the last of the team disappeared into the door to the battleground, his heart heavy with worry. He turned to Ling Li, his eyes reflecting his unease. "I hope they come out stronger," Shi Min said quietly.

"They will," Ling Li replied, her voice unwavering. "They have to."

The two stood in silence, the weight of their responsibilities pressing down on them. They knew the path ahead was fraught with danger, but they also knew that they had no choice but to press on. Together, they would face whatever challenges came their way, fortified by their determination and the bonds that held them strong.

Ling Li watched as Four Eyes vanished into the darkness, her heart skipping a beat.

"Mom, go home; I'll stay here," Shi Min suggested, sensing her turmoil.

"No, I'll stay here. You go home with Mushu and Pharsa. Take Goldie to a casino and see what he can do," Ling Li ordered.

"Alright, I'll do that and come back to join you after." Shi Min kissed his mother's forehead before leaving.

Inside, the group of thirty-four struggled to adjust their eyes to the pitch-black surroundings. As the door closed behind them with a final, echoing thud, they were plunged into total darkness.

What stunned them were the myriad eyes staring back—red eyes, among other colors, blinking in the shadows. An eerie silence enveloped them until it was broken by the long, mournful howls of various unseen animals.

The group huddled closer, their senses heightened by the unknown threats lurking in the dark. Every rustle of leaves, every snap of a twig sent their hearts racing.

Chatty's grip tightened on his weapon, his knuckles white. "I really hope we know what we're doing," he muttered under his breath.

"Are...are those wolves???" Chatty asked, stammering.

"Shhh... Don't distract them." One of the Class A soldiers said.

When they could adjust to the dim lighting inside, everything came clear to their vision, and they were horrified. Some felt their legs turn to jelly. Two class C soldiers started to vomit, while the others couldn't stop feeling goosebumps and shivering.

"Are we really expected to survive?" Fatty asked.

"Be positive. Let us stay together. Our chance of survival will be greater if we stay together." Four Eyes said.

"That... that is a tiger. That.. that... That is a mastiff. Snakes! Snakes!" Chatty said, panicking.

"We are already here, and there is no backing out, so let's calm down." Four Eyes said.

"We will get through this," Shun replied, his voice steady despite the fear gripping him. "Just trust your instincts."

As they moved deeper into the forest, the oppressive darkness seemed to close in around them. The eyes in the shadows followed their every move, a constant reminder of the dangers they faced.

"Let's move this way. Four Eyes started to move, taking out his daggers, and everyone followed his lead.

"The wolves are following... I think they will attack us." Shun said, whispering.

"If they attack, we don't have any choice but to fight."

"But their blood will attract other animals." One Class A soldier stated.

"We have to gather them and feed them to others."

"Remember to use our guns as a last resort."

Everyone was exchanging ideas.

"Let us find a place where we can camp safely."

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It only took them three meters when the wolves launched at them.

With their daggers on their left and right hand, they fought with their might. They could hear the wolves howling around them and their comrades' voices in pain, but they could only remain focused on their own fight and had no time to care for others.

Each of them engaged in simultaneous combat with at least three wolves; they were not each assaulted by a single wolf.

Their fight indeed attracted other animals, and mastiffs soon joined the fight when the wolves were almost down to two dozen.

"Don't let your guard down!"

"Dammit!" someone shouted.

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"The wolves should fight the mastiff. Try pushing them towards each other." Another yelled.

"No, these dogs want human blood, which is what they smelled."

It was a fierce battle all night for the group. Wild beasts attacked them one after the other, each wave more vicious than the last.

It was almost daybreak when everything cooled down, and the attacks finally ceased around them.

"Oh, I see sunlight!" Chatty weakly said that he had been injured in his legs and arm.

"Yes, wow. The place is honestly beautiful but full of beasts," another soldier said with a chuckle. This soldier was the most injured. Both his legs might not make it and need an amputation.

"We have three severely injured, while most are wounded." Someone stated, his voice filled with anxiety.

Fatty's eyes gleamed with a mix of excitement and hunger as he pointed ahead. "Shhh. Look." His finger trembled slightly, not from fear but from the raw anticipation of the hunt. In the clearing ahead, a wild pig grazed, oblivious to the predators lying in wait. The air was thick with tension, each member of the group silently echoing the same thought:

"FOOD!"

The rapid release of bowstrings shattered the stillness of the moment.

Swoosh...swoosh... The arrows sliced through the air, each archer confident in their aim.

Simultaneously, Four Eyes and the men beside him shifted their focus to the sky, targeting the unsuspecting birds perched on nearby branches. The hunters who had aimed for the pig were left dumbfounded, watching as not the pig, but birds, plummeted to the ground, impaled by their arrows.

Four Eyes and his companions erupted in laughter, the sound carrying through the forest. They basked in their cleverness, having outwitted the others.

"Alright, let's gather our food!" One of the men shouted, his voice tinged with triumph and urgency.

A more cautious voice from the group, a Class A hunter, cut through the camaraderie. "Don't let your guard down!" He warned, his eyes scanning the surroundings for any signs of danger.

The forest, rich with its bounty, also held countless threats. And so, the soldiers moved with both haste and vigilance, collecting their surprising haul while remaining alert to the unpredictable nature of the wilderness.

"Ah! Cobra! Dammit! Retreat!"

One of the men yelled, his voice shaking as he clutched his leg. Panic rippled through the group. "I was bitten! Ah!"

But one of their comrades, a sturdy man with a calm demeanor, ignored the retreating steps of his friends. With a swift, practiced motion, he advanced toward the slithering threat. In one decisive swoop, his blade found its mark, and the cobra lay lifeless at his feet.

"I grew up with many snakes lurking in our house," he said, his voice steady. He knelt beside the bitten man, carefully examining the wound. "You can leave the snakes to me. You guys retrieve our food while I tend to his snake bite."

The rest of the group moved cautiously, their eyes darting around for any more surprises. They systematically collected the fallen birds and retrieved their arrows. Simultaneously, they scanned the forest floor for medicinal herbs, recalling the survival skills taught by their Class A comrades during training.

A voice broke through the quiet hustle, firm but tinged with urgency. "Let's go back, don't be too greedy!" One of the men shouted as he noticed a companion venturing too far.

The lure of the hunt was strong, but so was the peril that shadowed their every step. With their bounty secured and their injured comrades attended to, the group began their cautious retreat, their minds already on the safety of their camp and the meal that awaited them.

"There's a lake over here!" The other guy called, excitement evident in his voice.

Upon hearing the word "lake," Four Eyes felt a chill run down his spine. Ling Li's words echoed in his mind, a dire warning: 'Don't be deceived by the lake.'

"Come back! Don't go near the lake! We don't know what's in there!" Four Eyes shouted, desperation lacing his voice as he tried to keep his fear in check.

"The water's very clear. I can actually see the bottom!" The other guy responded, his tone casual, oblivious to the impending danger.

"Come back first! We will check it later!" Four Eyes shouted again, his urgency growing as he began to run, albeit with a limp, towards his comrade.

"I'll just try to wash!" The man insisted, already bending down towards the water.

"No! Come back! Come back!" Four Eyes's voice cracked with desperation as he saw his friend dip his hands into the invitingly clear water. But it was too late. The lake, with all its deceptive tranquility, had already claimed its unwitting victim.

Splash... The comrade had jumped into the lake. Blob..blob..blob..blob...

They never saw him come up from the water again, and a wave of dread washed over them. The realization struck hard: they could never afford to let their guard down.

Silence blanketed the group as they processed the loss, their faces etched with grim determination. Each person instinctively resumed their tasks, moving with a newfound sense of purpose and a silent, unspoken agreement to survive.

When Shi Min returned to the camp and saw his mother, her solemn expression made his heart skip a beat. "Mom," he called softly, kissing her forehead. "How are they

doing? I can see from your eyes you didn't sleep all night."

"We lost one. Three were severely injured. The rest are surviving," Ling Li replied, her voice tinged with sorrow.

The group had no idea that Ling Li, from her vantage point, could see everything happening within the training ground. Every corner was monitored, allowing her to observe the character and actions of each trainee.

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This surveillance was crucial not only for safety but also to prevent any treacherous soldiers from attempting on each other's lives, a grim reality that had been tested several times before.

"How did we lose one?" Shi Min asked, his voice heavy with concern.

"The lake," his mother responded, the weight of the word hanging in the air.

"That lake never fails to attract," Shi Min murmured, a bitter edge to his tone. The lake's serene surface hid deadly secrets, a reminder that in this harsh training ground, even the most innocent-looking surroundings could prove fatal.

"What was the result of your mission with Goldie last night?" Ling Li inquired.

"Goldie was a blast!" Shi Min said with laughter, reminiscing the night's events.

That night, Goldie made a grand entrance into one of the city's most luxurious casinos, looking dashing in his tux. Pharsa, in her plush evening dress, clung to his arm while Tod, Goldie's personal aide and bodyguard, followed closely behind. What truly caught everyone's attention was the gold mask covering Goldie's left eye and half of his cheek, adding an air of mystery.

Shi Min and Mushu arrived discreetly, blending into the background until Goldie and Pharsa were settled. Pharsa had secured a VIP room and had thoughtfully ordered muffins for Goldie. As they settled in, Pharsa began making loud, flirtatious comments, drawing the attention of other players to their table.

Shi Min, initially playing and winning at another poker table, eventually joined Goldie's table, piquing the curiosity of even more players. By the time half the deck had been laid out, Goldie's table was full. Shi Min only bet when he was sure of winning, helping to control the game and ensuring Goldie's success.

As the night progressed, Goldie, with his almost uncanny ability to predict his cards, began to dominate each round. To avoid recognition, Shi Min left the table first, blending back into the shadows.

When Goldie finally won the round, he and Pharsa departed, leaving the other players astonished and dismayed, wondering about the identity of the mysterious winners.

Back at the camp, Shi Min recounted the night to Ling Li with a smile. "Goldie was just popping muffins one after the other while playing and winning, which was so intimidating."

Ling Li laughed, "Goldie is still him. He never disappoints us!"

The mother and son chatted for a while, and their laughter slowly faded as they turned their attention to the screens, ready to face the next challenge that awaited them.

Now down to thirty-three with three heavily injured, the trainees moved through the forest in a sad procession, the weight of fatigue and fear visible on their faces. Sleep had come in restless shifts, and those who could not sleep tended to their wounded comrades.

"Can you hear that?" One of them broke the silence, straining to listen.

"Sounds like streaming water," another answered, hope flickering in his eyes.

"Let's follow where it is coming from," someone suggested.

The sound of water grew louder as they trudged on, finally leading them to a ten-meter waterfall, its cascade feeding a clear stream.

"Let's check it out first," Four Eyes suggested. Several members followed him cautiously while others kept watch.

"There are live fish!" One shouted triumphantly, his voice echoing against the rocks.

"The water must be safe."

This observation came from the man who had killed the snake the previous day, earning Four Eyes's respect.

"Let's catch some fish and take turns washing," the man suggested.

"Let's wash the most injured first and clean their wounds. Others catch some fish. The rest stay on guard," a Class A comrade commanded. The group nodded in agreement, moving with purpose.

They caught enough fish for everyone and began to cook. As the aroma of roasting fish filled the air, one of the men voiced a concern.

"Did you notice that no other animals are in the surrounding area?"

"That is why I suggest we leave this place immediately after eating," another responded, casting a wary glance around.

Four Eyes squinted, sensing that this man knew more than he was letting on.

Having finished cleaning the injured, Four Eyes joined Shun, Fatty, and Chatty to wash. Once clean, Four Eyes approached the man who had spoken earlier.

"What is your name?" Four Eyes asked, gathering wood planks to start a fire.

The man recognized Four Eyes and bowed. "Master!" He called.

Four Eyes frowned. "Just call me Chu Yan."

The man seemed hesitant, then bowed again. Internally, he struggled with the idea of 'How am I supposed to address him on a first-name basis? He is our Supreme Commander's husband.' The thought made him shiver.

Four Eyes, sensing his discomfort, could almost read his mind and said, "We are all equal here. So please don't call me Master. Like you, I'm also training. We fight together or die together."

The man's face broke into a smile of admiration. He extended a hand to Four Eyes. "I'm Jackson. You can call me Jack." His dark face was illuminated by a broad grin, teeth shining against his tanned skin.

"I know you're not telling us something. Instead, you just told us to leave after we eat immediately." Four Eyes whispered to Jack, his suspicion evident.

Jack was both amused and impressed by Four Eyes's perceptiveness. Jack hadn't wanted to alarm the group but had been on high alert. He had found traces of alligators around the waterfall, deep in the inner parts where he was the only one to venture.

"Yes, let's eat fast and leave immediately. But let's not scare everyone and be on the lookout," Jack replied, his tone measured.

"Tell me, what is it?" Four Eyes insisted.

Jack met Four Eyes' gaze before leaning in to whisper the truth. "I found traces of alligators in the deeper part of the falls."

Four Eyes's eyes widened as he processed the information. Four Eyes glanced back at the waterfall, his brows furrowed in concern. Seeing Chatty and Fatty still lingering by the water, he immediately sprang into action, pulling them out.

"You two, help cook our food and stop stalling time in the water!" Four Eyes scolded as he guided them towards the fire.

Introducing them to Jack, Four Eyes quickly organized the group. They ate as they cooked, sharing the fish among themselves. The atmosphere was tense but controlled, each member on high alert.