

The World 75

Chapter 75: Joint Training (2)

And so, our training commenced. A few members in our crew still hadn't bothered to slip into their workout threads. Our uniforms resembled the simplicity of gym attire – just a casual tee and sweatpants.

Titania and I were ready to roll, clad in our gear. The sight of her was striking; her uniform, sleek and all black, sported gold stripes racing down the sides of her joggers. That singular gold stripe signified her status in the first-year gold class. The number of stripes denoted the academic year – one for first, two for second, and so forth.

She looked striking in the uniform, a blend of beauty and a subtle allure. Her usual gyaru style, with twin buns, had given way to a more casual look, making her appear exceptionally cute.

On the flip side, I rocked a brown tee paired with matching sweatpants, simple and devoid of any fancy designs. The color, akin to shit, offered no frills. The difference between us first-years and the upperclassmen was nonexistent, in stark contrast to the silver and gold classes. Speaking of silver class, they too donned black tees, but there was a distinct feature.

Theirs wasn't noticeably darker than the gold class, and the stripes they showcased were a crisp white.

After a brief session of limbering up, we immersed ourselves in the intensity of our training. Our initial focus zeroed in on refining the art of swordplay, delving deep into the core techniques.

Titania cast a discerning gaze my way and remarked, "Hmm? Your swordplay... it looks like poetry in motion," she said.

"Does it?" I queried.

"Yeah," she nodded approvingly. "Your form is a masterpiece, each swing harnessing just the right measure of force without a hint of wasted energy. It's the kind of finesse that usually sacrifices power, but not in your case. Have you been sculpting your swordsmanship since childhood?"

"I have," I confirmed.

"I see... that unveils the mystery," she mused. "That's why it's so visually captivating."

"In the same vein, yours is nothing short of remarkable," I complimented, and let me assure you, it wasn't just empty praise – it was an honest acknowledgment. Her swordsmanship flowed gracefully, with minimal unnecessary movements. Despite swinging her sword, even her generously sized breasts, which would usually jiggle with each motion, remained surprisingly still.

Well, there was a slight sway, but it was so subtle you'd miss it unless you were specifically focused on them. It spoke volumes about Titania's skill in swordplay.

After a brief interlude, the decision was made to dive into a spar. This practice, a delicate dance of training, allowed us to intricately dissect techniques, reversals, and battle strategies without the brutality of landing actual blows. A crucial stepping stone for those aspiring to master swordsmanship, sparring thrived on the feedback loop, where flaws were revealed, and improvement ensued.

The authenticity of reviewing techniques came alive when pitted against the reviewer, providing firsthand knowledge of the impact each move carried.

Titania and I positioned ourselves at a distance of about four to five meters from each other. A gleam of excitement sparkled in her eyes, revealing her enjoyment. It seemed like this was her first time sparring with someone.

"Okay, on the count of three, we'll start, alright?" she announced.

"Alright," I replied, assuming a stance with my practice sword at mid-level and both hands gripping it to my right.

With that, Titania commenced the countdown. As she reached 'one,' I fixated my gaze on her, positioned merely four to five meters away. My eyes narrowed, focusing solely on the woman before me.

As the count reached two, Titania poised herself in a graceful stance, a display so flawless and fluid that it hinted at a mastery in the art of swordsmanship. The anticipated moment arrived with the release of the count of three, and simultaneously, we both surged forward. As we closed the distance, the exchange of blows commenced – my swing met with her block, her strike countered by my guard.

The dance unfolded without actual hits, a deliberate, sluggish pace fitting for sparring. It was only natural; this wasn't a fight to the death. The purpose was to review strategies, rendering speed and power pointless.

With time, our pace quickened, yet Titania's swordsmanship remained flawless and fluid. On the flip side, I feigned difficulty in keeping up, intentionally slowing down my swings.

Titania keenly observed this and adjusted to a more deliberate pace.

We sparred relentlessly for three hours straight, pausing briefly before diving back in. At some point, the sun had gracefully dipped below the horizon.

"Let's head back, everyone," Artemis called out. The group veered towards the direction leading back to the vast green plains. During our stroll, I sensed someone's gaze fixed upon me. Without turning, I knew the identity of the observer – Zeruel. Her eyes remained locked on me throughout our practice, a silent scrutiny that piqued my curiosity.

As we strolled, Titania nudged me, her voice a soft inquiry, "Did you provoke her again, Leon?" she asked. "Zeruel isn't exactly one to show interest in others, you know? She's always been the serious type. So, why is she locking eyes with you right now?"

"Don't know," I responded with genuine uncertainty.

"A-Are you still captivated by her?" she questioned, her tone betraying a hint of curiosity.

"Why the sudden interest?" I asked in return.

"You confessed to her, right?" Titania lowered her head. "That means you have a crush on her, huh? I mean, what other reason would there be to confess?"

I gently placed a hand on her head, running my fingers through her silky smooth, untied hair. "It's just a tiny crush. I don't think what I feel about her is romantic, though. It's more like admiration. I mean, she's the second in the gold class of the first years, right? A powerhouse in the academy.

Despite that, she trains as relentlessly as everyone else. I always catch her in the courtyard, practicing alone for hours on end. Her dedication resonates with me. It reached a point where I realized I wanted to get closer to that girl. Maybe that's what inspired me to ask her out. I think I just want to be friends with her."

"I... I see," she responded, a note of relief in her voice.

Feeling a desire to connect, I extended my hand to grasp hers. Titania visibly startled when my hand met hers, surprise flickering across her face. Yet, as she gazed at me and caught my expression, her eyes dropped with a blush coloring her cheeks. Strikingly, she didn't pull away from the gentle touch. It seemed like an unspoken agreement that it was alright for me to hold her hand.

Emboldened, I took a step further by intertwining my fingers with hers. To my surprise, she didn't resist and simply coiled her fingers around mine. Her hand emitted a comforting warmth.

This was confirmation. Titania was gradually falling for me. I couldn't pinpoint when or what triggered it, but it was undeniable now. I could propose sex at this very moment, and I was confident she'd oblige. However, I didn't want to rush things. My aim was to dominate Titania first, to acquire an upgraded version of her skill.

Still, having her fall in love with me early in the game was an advantageous development.

That evening, I decided to dine outdoors since the folks in my cabin weren't particularly close acquaintances. My meal consisted of a hearty soup with monster meat. It tasted satisfying, a rare treat that I enjoyed from time to time. As I leisurely sipped the soup, I sensed a presence nearby.

Choosing to remain discreet, I cast an Illusion Magic spell on myself to conceal my identity and observed the newcomer. To my surprise, it was none other than Charlotte Sierra.

"What could she be up to at this hour?"

A lone woman wandering in the dark, heading towards the forest, raised suspicions. Ordinarily, one might assume she was meeting a significant other for sex, but as far as I knew, Charlotte wasn't currently involved with anyone. Her affection was directed towards Professor Sesillian, who instructed Wizardry, but I doubted they were romantically involved.

The professor was acclaimed for his benevolent nature and amiable personality, though Gabrielle had alluded to some questionable aspects.

Charlotte might be venturing into the forest to meet this professor, and that raised concerns. I couldn't allow a target of mine to fall into someone else's hands. Worried about the potential consequences, I decided to trail Charlotte and intervene if necessary.

Setting aside the bowl of soup, I took a sip of water and discreetly began following Charlotte to ensure her safety.

After a while, she finally entered the forest. I concealed myself in a tree, my back pressed against the trunk. Soon enough, she halted her steps and called out, "Professor? I'm here."

Seems like my assumption hit the mark. So, she's indeed meeting him, huh?

"Oh, thank god," a man's voice responded. I discreetly peered through the foliage, confirming the figure to be Professor Sesillian with his silver hair. "I was starting to think you wouldn't show up."

"I-I wouldn't do that to you, Professor," Charlotte reassured with a nervous tremor in her voice. "So, why did you ask me to come here?"

The professor responded with a warm smile that seemed to cast a spell, "I want to be with you tonight."