

The World 78

Chapter 78: Joint Training (5)

The reason we came here together was for a private chat, solely dedicated to searching for signs of Norman.

Norman Amarathea possessed a unique ability, one that allowed him to stealthily infiltrate a bank vault and pilfer all the gold without raising any alarms. Sandra had discovered this skill during their encounter at the Black Market—it was called Portal Creation. This formidable ability enabled Norman to create a rift through space for seamless travel, making him a formidable adversary.

It was a skill I coveted, one that I wished to add to my repertoire. However, Norman being a man meant I couldn't simply copy his skill. While my ability could potentially work on men if I were female, I had no intention of changing my gender just to acquire his skill. The mere thought of such an act disgusted me. Norman could keep his skill; I wasn't interested.

Yet, that wasn't my primary desire from Norman. What I craved the most was his demise. That would be the key to reviving Martha. I had no intentions of prolonging the conflict. The moment I laid eyes on him, I would end him.

However, it wasn't as straightforward as it sounded. Norman proved as elusive as a snake. Catching him wouldn't be a walk in the park.

"It's a maze trying to bring down Norman. He's got this twisted knack for flipping your attacks in every direction, like a deadly game of pinball. You could end up hitting yourself, or worse, accidentally cashing in your own life," Artemis warned, a serious edge in her voice.

Sandra spilled the beans on that too, but fear ain't my style. The unknown extent of Norman's skills didn't faze me. Even if it meant getting my ass handed to me, I wasn't backing down.

"Doesn't faze me one bit," I nonchalantly remarked. "It'd take a million Normans to dance on my level. And even then, I've got serious doubts he could pull off a win."

"You're acting like you're a hundred percent sure you'd win. What if you get taken out effortlessly?"

"Do you seriously think I'd get killed?"

"I doubt it."

"Exactly. That's my victory right there," I flashed a confident grin. "Norman's only got one trick up his sleeve – that slippery snake act of his. If we could somehow corner him, taking him out would be a walk in the park."

"I can make that happen," she declared with a poker face, a glint of determination in her eyes. "I'll rally the student council members to concoct a trap that'll leave Norman reeling. But, fair warning, it's gonna take a hot minute. I doubt it'll be ready by the time Norman strolls in here with his grand plan."

"Alright. Just kick it into overdrive if you can," I replied, a sense of urgency in my tone.

"Got it," she nodded. "But let's be crystal clear – even if you manage to take Norman out, it's no golden ticket to bringing Martha back from the dead, right?"

"You're damn right," I affirmed. "That's why I've enlisted Sandra to scour the shadows for the perfect maestro for the job."

Sandra claimed she had the inside scoop on a sorcerer with a skill named Soul Summoning – a power that could yank a soul from the grave for any nefarious purpose. Sounds like a game-changer, doesn't it? But here's the kicker – the person Sandra raved about is a 98-year-old dame. A human. Wrinkled, frail, and probably needing a walker to get around.

Not exactly my idea of a partner in crime, but if she holds the key to resurrecting Martha, I'll dance with the devil, wrinkles and all.

Five hours had dragged by since my chat with Artemis, and dusk was settling in. The sun was nearly kissing the horizon as our crew trudged back to the plains. After what felt like an eternity, we finally returned. I headed back to my cabin, finding my cabin-mates engaged in their chatter. They shot me a glance as I entered, but swiftly resumed their discussions.

Retreating to my room, I sprawled on the bed for a bit. Eventually, I fished my phone from my pocket, shooting Sandra a text about the Soul Summoning master. She shot back that the old lady was a tough nut to crack, needing someone close to spill the beans on her recent whereabouts.

Wishing her luck with a casual 'good luck,' I kicked back, putting Amon's song on repeat. As I started to drift off, the world faded away.

When I blinked back into consciousness, the darkness had taken over. Amon's song still filled the air, looping endlessly since it was the only track on my phone. I grabbed my device, squinting at the time. It was a cool 7:30 in the evening.

I hoisted my body upright and stretched, feeling the knots in my muscles protest. It was at that moment that a knock echoed through my door.

"Excuse me. Are you awake?" a male voice inquired. I recognized the owner of that voice.

"Ah, yeah," I replied. "Hold on a sec." I paused the song. I then got off my bed and made my way to the door, swinging it open. There stood a silver-haired young man, roughly my height. His black uniform adorned with golden embroideries signaled he belonged to the gold class. However, he wasn't in my year.

This guy was the cream of the crop in the second year's gold class.

"Good evening, Leon," he greeted me with a smile that could make any woman swoon. Too bad it was just me witnessing it. "It's dinner time. You coming out?"

"Oh, sure," I said.

"Mind if we go together?" he suggested.

"...Alright," I agreed.

I strolled out of my room, shutting the door behind me as we walked together. Johanne Whitlock shot me a smile as I sauntered by his side for a moment before focusing on the path ahead.

Johanne, the first son of Duke Whitlock, was the knight assigned to the second princess of the Milham Kingdom, Myrcella Odette Milham. His skill, Limit Break, allowed him to surpass his limits, amplifying his power by three times. However, it came with a hefty price – a rebound effect that left him heavily fatigued. Prolonged use could even damage his body.

His skill was no joke, packing a punch of extraordinary power. Yet, in all my time at the Academy, I hadn't witnessed him unleashing it. Still, he soared to the top of his class without relying on the damn thing. Gifted, no doubt.

I had no clue why Johanne kept looking out for me like this, even last night when he knocked on my door, letting me know it was chow time. Maybe it's because I tended to be a lone wolf.

"...What's wrong, Leon? Something on my face?" he asked.

I must've been staring without realizing it. "Ah, no. It's nothing."

He gazed at me for a moment, then let out a soft chuckle. The way he laughed was so damn enchanting; I felt like I might go blind from its brilliance. "Are you finding it odd that I'm going out of my way to let you know about dinner and asking to grab a meal together? Seriously, there's nothing wrong with that. Is it a crime to invite someone you want to be friends with to have dinner?"

"Friends, huh?"

I knew he was bullshitting, of course. Maybe he couldn't stand seeing me alone all the time, finding me an eyesore. Frankly, I didn't give a damn about whatever he thought of me.

"You seem skeptical. Well, that's normal, I guess. Just blurting out that I want to be friends might be a bit hard to believe," he admitted. "I know it's a stretch, but I genuinely want to get to know you better, Leon. If I've been pushing too hard, let me know."

He sounded sincere. Maybe he genuinely wanted to be friends. Plus, the way he said it was almost like a woman confessing to me. Strange. "Alright," I finally said.

While making our way to the cafeteria for a bite, he shifted the topic, "Oh, by the way, I heard rumors about you and Princess Titania. Anything to that?"

"It's not true," I replied, setting the record straight. No lie there. We weren't officially an item. I hadn't given her an answer to her confession. "I don't think we match up much, with me scraping the bottom of the bronze class, and she, not just a princess, but also shining in the gold class."

"Come on, it's not like you can't make it work. Positions and titles are just hurdles in a relationship that can be overcome if there's genuine love, right?" he suggested. "Besides, I think you two look good together."

"Really?"

"Yeah," he grinned.

"...And what about you? I've heard you and Princess Myrcella have been tight since childhood. Is there... something between you two?" I prodded.

"No, no," he quickly denied. "We're not in a relationship. She just sees me as her best friend, and that's mutual. Those rumors about us having a thing are just baseless gossip, I swear to you."

"...Is that so?"

"Yes," he confirmed. "Oh, looks like they're dishing out our dinners now. Let's go, Leon." He quickened his pace.

At that moment, a metallic chime rang in my head. I froze.

"It can't be..." I muttered to myself. I checked the information, and...

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You've captured the interest of Johanne. You can now proceed to dominate her.

Name: Johanne Whitlock

Race: Human

Requirements to dominate Johanne:

1. Win against Johanne in a duel

2. Unlock

3. Unlock

4. Unlock