

The World 87

Chapter 87: The Kidnapping Incident (6)

Observing my feigned ignorance, Shredica shot me a penetrating glare before exhaling audibly and rising from the bed. With determined strides, she closed the distance between us and seized me by the collar, her grip tight and unyielding. There was an intensity in her gaze, as though she was on the verge of unleashing fury upon me. Yet, I remained unperturbed, maintaining a neutral facade.

"What's your game?" I inquired coolly. "Could you release your grip, please?"

"Just experimenting," she retorted curtly, her tone edged with impatience. "No need to be so defensive."

"If it's merely an experiment, might I suggest toning down the death glare?" I countered wryly.

Ignoring my comment, Shredica brought her face closer to mine, our noses almost touching. I felt her hot breath on my face, mingling with the scent of soap. She must have showered before coming here.

"I heard you went head-to-head with the second top student in the gold class," she began, her voice low and probing. "You claim mediocrity in every facet and downplay your abilities. So, care to explain how you managed to spar with her and hold your own?"

Her purple eyes bore on me, like she wasn't going to let me get away with this.

"I'm just trying to make an impression. Remember how I confessed to her last time, only to receive a cold response, with her bluntly stating she wasn't interested?" I explained. "You might not grasp it, but us men often strive to impress those we desire by pushing beyond our limits. And sometimes, we do it for those who rejected us, to show we're not the person they think we are. Is that sinking in?"

Well, I don't expect you to fully comprehend, being a woman yourself."

Her gaze bore into me, skeptical yet contemplative. While my words may have resonated with some truth, she remained unconvinced.

"Sure, perhaps that's part of it, but it doesn't quite explain how you managed to hold your own against her," she pressed, her skepticism evident.

Despite my explanations, she remained wary. I knew mere words wouldn't suffice to dispel her doubts.

"We weren't precisely on equal footing," I clarified. "She was holding back, which allowed me to keep up. She wasn't going all out. Whoever told you otherwise must have misunderstood. You only got a second-hand account, but I can tell when someone's taking it easy on me. Miss Zeruel was doing just that because she knows I'm not as strong."

That's the whole story."

She still seemed doubtful of my words. "Don't feed me lies, Mr. Leon," she retorted sternly. "If you possess such power, ascending the rankings would be much easier for me."

"I'm not lying. And why assume I'm strong when you haven't witnessed it yourself?" I countered.

A heavy silence enveloped us. Her grip on my collar tightened, her glare intensifying. Then, after a tense moment, she released her hold and walked past me.

"...Heading back to your room now? I suggest you avoid giving others the impression you just left mine," I advised, wary of potential rumors.

"Don't worry, Mr. Leon," she replied, opening the door. "I share your sentiment," she added before exiting, leaving the door ajar without a backward glance.

I sighed heavily, turning to walk towards the door. With a click, I locked it securely before returning to the bed.

It had been four days since the joint training began, yet Norman remained elusive, his kidnapping scheme yet to unfold. Only three days remained until Martha's revival window closed, beyond saving.

Artemis had set a trap for him, one that should have alerted me if he struck. So, with a measure of confidence, I settled back into bed, trusting the alarm to rouse me if needed.

Yet, that alarm never sounded.

Norman had indeed struck that night, but to my dismay, the trap set for him failed to trigger.

Hours before Shredica went to Leon's room.

Sesillian's POV

I entered the cabin where the staff monitored the movements within the joint training ground. Inside, a bored-looking academy staff member stared at a bluish screen hovering in the middle of the room.

The screen was a magical device that allowed them to observe anything within the large magic circle in the village. It displayed various pairs of feet moving about, indicating the presence of individuals. Some even showed four feet in one area, suggesting the presence of two people. It was clear what they were up to.

Observing the yawning staff member, unfazed by the display, I realized this occurrence was routine. Well, it made sense. While sexual encounters were officially forbidden on academy grounds, as long as you weren't caught, it was generally overlooked. This staff member must have decided to turn a blind eye, understanding that indulging in such activities was perfectly normal.

Or maybe he was just too bored to care? Nonetheless, this might be the perfect time for me to counter this unfavorable situation I found myself in.

The heightened surveillance in place now not only monitored all the students but also had an alarm to alert against any unauthorized intrusions. This was why Norman couldn't make his move. If he dared to enter, the alarm would undoubtedly sound. Sure, he could take on the professors, faculty, and staff, but there was someone particularly troublesome within the academy.

That someone was Gabrielle, a former magic knight turned professor for reasons unknown.

But even as a professor now, Gabrielle would prove to be a formidable obstacle for Norman. With her overpowered skill, the Guardian, I doubted Norman could even hold a candle.

And there's no way I could assist Norman in the fight. I didn't want to reveal myself just yet, and besides, my own skill, which only allowed me to charm others with my voice, wasn't exactly noteworthy.

That's why the only option left was this...

"Oh, Professor Sesillian. What are you doing here?" the staff member looked at me, surprise flickering across his features. It was understandable for him to be taken aback. As far as he could tell, all the professors should have been asleep by now. He might not have noticed the approaching footsteps towards the staff cabin because he was too bored to care.

"I'm just taking a look around," I replied casually, my gaze fixated on the large bluish screen hovering in the air. "With everything that's happened, I can't just sit back and do nothing, can I?"

"Oh, okay..." he said, his eyebrows raising slightly in surprise. "Well, do you want a coffee? I can whip some up for you," he offered, his tone friendly.

"Sure," I replied, a smile tugging at my lips. "Oh, and please grab me something to eat while you're at it. I hope I'm not imposing too much."

"Not at all," he reassured me with a warm smile. "I was just about to grab a bite myself. Plus, I don't think anything will happen tonight. The staff who sent the message to the supposed missing student's family received a response confirming he was just at home. It was a false alarm."

"Is that so? Thank goodness," I exclaimed.

"Yeah," he confirmed, his expression easing. "I'm starting to wonder if repairing the magic circle was even worth it, though."

"Well, it's not entirely useless if it can be used for situations like this, is it?" I pointed out, my voice tinged with optimism.

"You're right," he conceded, nodding in agreement. "Well then, I should go grab some food for us," he said, turning to leave the cabin with a determined stride.

As soon as he closed the door, my smile faded from my lips.

With swift fingers, I tapped out a message to the target, signaling that it was safe to leave. Almost immediately, the area where the target was stationed came to life, feet moving purposefully until they

disappeared from the bluish screen. That meant she was now outside the confines of the magic circle. A triumphant smirk played on my lips as I witnessed the success of my plan.

When the staff returned with food and two cups of coffee, I shook my head dismissively. "I don't think I'll be needing that anymore. Turns out, I've got some pressing matters to attend to in my room," I announced firmly.

"Huh?" the staff exclaimed, clearly surprised by my sudden change of plans.

Without sparing him another glance, I strode past him and out of the cabin, a sense of accomplishment swelling within me.

Charlotte's POV

Night had fallen over the green plains where we were gathered for joint training. With the staff and faculty finished with their tasks, they retreated to their cabins, likely exhausted from a long day's work. Sensing the opportune moment, I slipped out of my cabin once I was sure my cabin-mates were fast asleep.

As I stepped out, I caught sight of someone else leaving our cabin as well. I quickly hid, not wanting to be seen. Peeking out from my hiding spot, I recognized the woman with purple hair. Did she have the same agenda as me? Was she also sneaking off to meet someone, perhaps her lover? Frankly, I couldn't be bothered to care.

My sole focus was on meeting with the Professor.

After waiting for her to disappear from view, I ventured out as well, disappearing into the forest. The dense foliage threatened to disorient me, but I navigated confidently. The Professor had instructed me to follow the slashes on the trees, guiding me until I reached the outskirts of the village where he would meet me.

I flashed my light on the trees, following the slashes until I finally found my way out of the village. Just as I emerged...

"Hello, young lady..." a voice, unfamiliar and not that of the professor, echoed from behind me. Before I could react, before I could even turn around, someone clamped my mouth and nose with something. Struggling to breathe, I attempted to exhale but was met with nausea.

Despite my efforts to fend off my attacker and fight the rising nausea, consciousness slipped away from me. My eyes fluttered closed as the assailant released their grip, producing something to hold close to their ear.

"It's done, Mori——" they spoke into the device.

A chilling, emotionless voice responded from the other end, sending shivers down my spine. "Good w—, N—-man. Now with this, Se—-an will agree to w—k with ——."

My consciousness waned, some of the words slipping past me as darkness enveloped my senses. Eventually, consciousness faded entirely.