

VILLAIN 167

Chapter 167 Towards Another Hell

-Frey Starlight's Pov-

The games had begun...

The sound of pounding footsteps and excited shouting filled the air, as if we were in some sort of chaotic marathon.

The temple's army had already started to scatter the moment we stepped into the accursed forest...

The towering trees blocked out the sky, and green vines slithered across the ground like serpents.

It was a familiar environment... one that oddly made me feel nostalgic.

I moved in absolute silence thanks to Phantom Steps, avoiding contact with the other students as much as I could. After all, they were already causing a ridiculous amount of noise.

Nightmare creatures were drawn to certain things more than others—

Light... and sound.

Ssssss

Only minutes into the island, the vanguard ran into their first challenge.

Creatures the size of humans appeared, taking the form of grey-scaled lizards that emitted a foul, filthy aura.

They resembled Komodo dragons, if anything.

The moment they appeared, the smartband on my wrist buzzed, projecting detailed information:

Type: Mutated Komodo Dragons

Rank: E

Reward: One point for every three killed.

As soon as I finished reading, laughter erupted all around me.

"What the hell is this?"

"This is the test you've been hyping up?"

"Dragons my ass! They're just dumb lizards!"

Swords were drawn. Spears, bows, even bare fists.

There were a lot of them—these lizard things—but that was it.

Creatures like this... were nothing but pitiful.

Boom!

The sound of slicing and slashing rang out. The lizards bled just like us—vibrant, bright red.

Everyone charged in with reckless excitement, slashing them down in a frenzy, letting their adrenaline blind them.

Slash

I silently decapitated two of the creatures before they even saw me coming and moved on without pause.

They weren't worth much... barely offering any points. They were more of a bait trap than a real challenge.

Staying here would be idiotic.

And I wasn't the only one who thought so—many other participants were already moving on as well.

For now, my only focus was reaching my designated point... E6.

Time passed slowly as I sprinted through the terrain.

My running speed was terrifying, and my stamina was top-tier.

I must have crossed dozens of kilometers already—yet the map still showed me in the same square.

That's when it hit me.

This wasn't just an island...

It was enormous. Vast beyond comprehension.

Where even were we? Were we still inside the Empire's borders?

Ding

A sudden notification snapped me out of my thoughts.

"One hour has passed. Students are now permitted to attack one another."

So it begins...

I scanned my surroundings—no one.

I'd wandered off on my own without realizing it. I was completely alone.

Realizing that, I didn't lower my guard for even a second.

I could feel it. One second you're alone, the next there's a blade at your throat.

And that wasn't even accounting for the other students. I was sure this island was crawling with Nightmare creatures.

The smartband wouldn't give any information unless I encountered them directly—so there was no point in searching blindly.

I wondered what kind of creature I'd run into next.

And I got my answer, in the most unsettling way possible...

I heard screams.

Howling.

Wailing.

Miserable, haunting sounds that made my face darken slowly.

I erased my presence immediately and hid behind one of the trees.

Peeking out carefully... I saw them.

Creatures with thick gray fur. Skulls far too large for their bodies, sunken eyes, and grotesque features made up of torn, decaying flesh.

Their hands ended in long claws, and their limbs were unnaturally thin.

Some of them... were naked.

Some of them were covered in tattered clothes that barely managed to cover anything...

I covered my mouth, swallowing my dry saliva...

I didn't want to see them... I didn't want to at all...

I didn't need the smartwatch's warning to recognize them.

"Ganados..."

Ding

Type: Ganados

Rank: D

Reward: One point.

I observed them for a moment before moving toward them.

The dark aura slowly enveloped my sword... and, on the other side, they noticed my presence.

One after another, they charged at me, rushing toward me like madmen... dozens of them.

With a grim face, I swung my sword.

"I'm sorry..."

Slash

I cut through them violently. I didn't want to prolong the fight because I was irritated by the whole situation.

Five minutes...

After that, 30 nightmare creature corpses lay before me.

"This is the least I could do... as the one who caused this."

I wiped the red blood off my sword and stared at the bodies around me for a while.

I had gained 30 points from this fight.

That was a decent number of points.

Whether they were Ganados... or whatever they were called...

The situation around me made me drift off for a second.

And as I mentioned before... on this island, a second spent alone...

And in the next second...

A giant blade reflected in my face.

The aura of burning fire, and that strange young man who appeared out of nowhere, swinging his sword at my face, brought me back to reality.

"Damn it."

Boom!

I barely deflected his attack, retreating quickly, but as soon as I did, two girls appeared around me, each wielding a pair of daggers.

I saw lines of light shooting from their hands.

Rapid strikes targeted my vital points.

As a reflex, I spun around, defending with my sword, sending a wave of dark aura to push them back.

I immediately dashed between the trees as they pursued me directly.

Using Hawk Eyes, I noticed many more of them approaching.

"This many..."

And they all appeared to be bigger than me.

"Something's wrong..."

Whoosh

Arrows charged with aura flew around me.

Meanwhile, I barely avoided the fiery projectiles constantly flying toward me.

Every now and then, some of their fighters would close the gap and engage me in close combat.

"Haha, look at this! You older students are coming at me in such numbers..."

Boom!

I pushed away a swordsman who had been tailing me, continuing my sprint through the forest.

"Is my neck that enticing to you? What an honor."

Crack

I heard a snap, followed by a grunt.

I carefully watched their movements and continued to retreat.

There were so many of them... dozens...

And all of them were from either second or third-year students... most likely the latter.

Seeing how agitated they were, it must have been a source of shame for them, chasing a first-year student.

So it must be orders from someone higher up, not their own will...

With a terrifying grin, dark aura surged around me.

"So this is how you want to play, huh?"

"Stop, Starlight! There's no point in what you're doing..."

The older students shouted unexpectedly.

"We don't want to drag this farce out... give up, and let us eliminate you from this test. It'll be the worst thing that happens to you."

In other words, you want to eliminate me, then leave to finish your test?

They were all clearly either regular students or Abyss students at best...

I had gathered enough information... now... shall we begin?

The moment I passed by one of the trees, something unusual happened.

"Where did he go?"

The pursuers were stunned.

The prey they had been chasing just moments ago had completely vanished.

But that wasn't the case.

"What do you think you're doing?"

"From above!"

Boom!

A black meteor struck down above their heads.

The sword, infused with dark aura, created several paths.

One sword, then two, then three, and then an endless array of blades...

My hands moved at an insane speed, relentlessly slicing through the bastards.

Each strike was lethal, leaving them powerless. While my attacks were blocked, it wasn't by them—it was by the shields protecting them.

Killer Strike !

Killer Strike !

Killer Strike !

Their defenses were shattered, but that only meant they had failed. The shields sent out a powerful shockwave, knocking out those I had struck down.

They were eliminated.

With a swift motion of my sword, I sliced through the arrows, dodging the various attacks from the Wave Manipulators.

A terrifying smile spread across my face as I walked toward them.

"What kind of drugs are you on? For people like you to think you have a chance against me ..."

It's true that I don't use Balerion...

But my style... Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow...

It was ranked SSS, as you know.

"Don't get cocky!"

The same giant from earlier, who had attacked me with that massive sword, appeared.

"Go home, you fool."

With just two strikes, the first sent his sword flying, and the second took him down. I walked calmly.

"I really should thank Aegon... for these free points..."

"Take him down!"

They all attacked, and I rushed toward them as well.

The sound of clashing swords filled the air...

One of them, enveloped in darkness, overwhelmed all of his opponents.

It was almost laughable...

...

...

...

Huff

I took a deep breath, leaning against the trunk of a massive tree as I sat quietly.

Another hour had passed.

It had been two hours since I entered the island.

I had taken down the third-year students who had been chasing me—28 in total...

Five points for each of them, plus the points for the Nightmare Creatures I had killed...

I glanced at my watch.

Frey Starlight: 170 points.

This was better than I had expected...

I raised my hand, glancing at the bloodied wound on my right hand, which had almost healed.

I had been rushing during the last fight, and an arrow had pierced my hand out of nowhere.

Though I had handled it, getting injured like this wasn't ideal.

They were all in the C-rank...

But that was all.

They didn't have anything that qualified them to fight me...

Still, I couldn't underestimate them.

And the injury on my hand was proof of that.

But the last chase made me realize something important...

I casually drew in the dirt.

There are two types of pursuers on this island...

"First, the bastards who want to kill me."

They were the extremists from the Moonlight family that Ghost mentioned... and perhaps some of them were from outside that family as well.

They wanted me dead... but that would be very difficult since the island is under surveillance. Just seconds after I defeated the third-year students, they disappeared immediately, indicating that someone had transported them away—likely one of the professors or sorcerers.

So, those individuals won't act recklessly.

The bigger problem... is that I don't know most of their identities.

"Secondly, the bastards who don't want to kill me... but want to eliminate me..."

At least, they were sent by Aegon...

The latter can't kill me directly because that would mean an uprising against Starlight.

So, if he wants to get rid of me, he'll need some kind of trick...

Instead, he's playing with me by attempting to crush me.

That's why he had the third-year students attack me... and this is probably just the beginning.

Aegon has built many strong relationships throughout his life... Most likely, he controls the strongest elites of the third-year students, who in turn control the rest of the ordinary students.

Most likely... I will be attacked the entire time I'm here, by stronger individuals... up to the big heads.

I don't know what he's planning... but that's fine...

"Keep sending me those free points, Aegon... I'll play with you as much as you want."

Dealing with them, alongside the Nightmare creatures that some say even belong to the S rank...

"I've just stepped into another hell..."

I sighed in frustration as I dashed forward once again...

I must be reaching point E6 soon...