

VILLAIN 53

Chapter 53 Reaching the Goal (1)

-Frey Starlight's Pov-

Reaching the gathering point took only a few minutes. Both Class A and Class B were already assembled, waiting in silence.

At the front stood Sophia, clad in tight jeans and a crisp white shirt tucked neatly inside, making her look particularly striking.

I subtly distanced myself from Snow, wary that he might figure out what I had done last night, and blended in with my classmates from Class B.

"Everyone, get ready. We leave in ten minutes."

The moment Sophia made her announcement, a hush fell over the crowd. No one knew our destination—except for me, of course.

A few minutes later, a massive bus pulled up beside the gate.

It was one of those high-end luxury buses you'd only see at major airports in my previous world—except this one was far more advanced.

The vehicle's exterior was decorated with the image of two football players, while the word "GOAL" was boldly printed along its side.

I frowned, failing to recognize the players.

Then it hit me—more than 300 years had passed since the Gate Catastrophe.

"So, no Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi in this world...?"

Yet another reason to return to my own world as soon as possible. How could I live in a place where the Don was nothing more than a forgotten name?

"Alright, everyone, board according to your ranking."

Most students were dressed in either the temple's sportswear or combat gear—except for a few who seemed to think this was some kind of vacation rather than a test. Naturally, I belonged to that last group.

The moment we stepped inside, we were struck by the sheer luxury of the interior.

I dropped into my assigned seat and immediately sank into the plush leather cushions.

My entire body relaxed, melting into the comfort.

"Damn... I could live in a bus like this."

As I was settling in, a scoff came from nearby.

Turning my head, I spotted Feyrith and his entourage seated close by.

Understandable, given our similar rankings.

It seemed the lesson from last time hadn't been enough for them.

I made a mental note to deal with them later.

For now...

"I'll just ignore them."

I closed my eyes, trying to get some rest. The trip would take a while, after all.

At the front of the bus, Sophia remained seated, sifting through some papers, when Prince Aegon approached her, clearly hoping to get a hint about the test.

"Miss Sophia, may I ask where we're headed?"

She barely spared him a glance before responding indifferently.

"Nightmare Lands."

Two words—yet their weight sent a ripple of fear through the bus.

"The Nightmare Lands? Did I hear that correctly?"

"Yes. You may return to your seat now, Student Aegon Valerion."

Sophia's tone left no room for further questions.

A tense silence spread among the students. Jan Dover, in particular, couldn't hide his fear, his entire body trembling.

What caught my attention, however, was Feyrith's reaction—completely calm.

Some students were smart enough to realize that the temple wouldn't recklessly endanger the elite, deducing that Sophia had left out key details.

But Feyrith? Where did he get that confidence?

Not that I cared much.

The temple was located near the capital, Belgrade. Right now, we were heading toward the Oclas Mountains—specifically, the lands belonged to the Starlight family.

There was no way I'd miss the chance to sleep on these heavenly seats.

Or so I thought...

Ahead of me sat the two maniacs, Danzo and Ragna, who refused to shut up for even a second.

And after hearing our destination, they unleashed a relentless barrage of questions, knowing I had survived there for an entire year.

"What kind of monsters are there?"

"Are they strong?"

"What do the Nightmare Lands look like?"

For every answer I gave, ten more questions followed.

I buried my face in my seat.

"Just let me sleep..."

After what felt like an eternity, we finally arrived at our destination.

The journey had lasted several hours, with the bus escorted by four armored vehicles flanking us on all sides. Thanks to this, we never had to stop along the way.

Unfortunately, I never got the sleep I wanted.

Stepping off the bus lazily, I surveyed the surroundings.

We had stopped at the edge of an empty road.

Ahead of us stretched a vast green forest, extending as far as the eye could see, ending at the base of towering mountains in the distance.

The Oclas Mountains.

At that moment, Sophia called for everyone to gather.

Beside her stood a middle-aged man with white hair and piercing green eyes.

"Allow me to introduce you—Eamon Starlight. He will be one of the supervisors for this test."

After Sophia's introduction, Eamon stepped forward.

"The test is simple. You all recognize the forest before you, correct?"

The answer was obvious.

"The Nightmare Lands..."

Eamon nodded before continuing.

"First, hand over your smartwatches and take these instead."

He gestured toward a box Sophia was holding, containing 20 sleek, black rectangular watches.

One by one, we surrendered our smartwatches and strapped on the new ones.

The moment I put mine on, a number appeared on the screen.

"0 meters."

Most of the students had no clue what it meant—until Eamon explained.

"The name of this test is 'Reaching the Goal.' These watches will track the distance you cover. Before you lies the Nightmare Lands. The Starlight family has cleared this entire forest, up to the distant mountains."

"We've eliminated the strongest monsters, leaving only those at your level to create a suitable environment for this test."

Eamon waved his hand, summoning a translucent screen displaying various locations within the forest.

"Miss Sophia, the temple instructors, and I will be monitoring you in case of emergencies. However, keep in mind—this is still the Nightmare Lands. Despite our efforts, we don't know what might unexpectedly appear. Stay vigilant... and reach the goal."

Testing his words, I took a few steps away from the bus. Immediately, the number on my watch changed.

"4 meters."

Hmm... so that's how it works.

This time, Sophia stepped forward.

"Points will be awarded based on performance. You are competing for yourselves and for your classes. The closer you are to the goal, the more points you earn. If a student is eliminated, their class will lose 50 points per person. So be careful. You have two hours to complete the test. Good luck."

It seemed Sophia was in charge of the exam.

Now that it had become a competition between classes, Class A and Class B immediately split apart.

In Class B, we gathered around Sansa and Seris. Sansa was the well-liked leader, while Seris was the strongest among us.

Naturally, I stayed as far away from them as possible.

The two began strategizing.

"Should we move as a group?" Sansa asked.

Seris shook her head.

"I don't think that's a good idea."

"Hmm? Why not?"

Seris scanned the group before answering.

"Speed is key. If we move as one, some will slow us down... and we're not all on the same level."

Her reasoning was sound. The muscular brutes like Danzo and Ragna nodded in agreement, while others, like Adriana, frowned.

Sansa hesitated before voicing her concern.

"Are you suggesting we go solo? What if Class A attacks us?"

A valid point. The Nightmare creatures weren't necessarily our only enemies—Class A could very well target us.

Seris nodded, unfazed.

"Exactly. That's why we'll move in pairs."

"Pairs?"

"Two people of similar strength per team. That way, we can defend ourselves without being slowed down."

As expected of Seris, she devised the most efficient plan.

No one objected. Sansa was about to finalize the decision when—

Danzo and Ragna suddenly grinned like maniacs and bolted into the forest.

"Fuck that! We'll be the first to reach the goal!"

Like unstoppable tanks, they plowed through trees, creating a massive commotion.

Seeing this, Class A panicked and immediately mobilized as well.

All plans were thrown into the trash as everyone rushed into the forest.

Each person chose their partner and prepared to move.

At that moment, Seris took off alongside Clana, who seemed to be her chosen partner.

A massive pair of white wings formed from ice behind Seris, making her look like an angel.

Everyone was stunned as she soared into the sky.

"That's cheating! She's giving herself an unfair advantage!"

Scarite Sunlight's voice rang out from the side.

Seris didn't bother responding and simply kept ascending—until Emon Starlight suddenly appeared above her.

"Ah, I forgot to mention... Try not to fly too high. After all, we purified the land, not the sky. Who knows what might show up if you go too far up?"

Hearing that, Seris reluctantly nodded and descended.

"In that case, I'll just fly between the trees."

She was about to put her plan into action when a massive fireball struck her left wing, sending her crashing back to the ground.

From between the trees, Scarite emerged, flames surging violently around her arms.

"And where do you think you're going, Miss Moonlight?"

Seris dismissed her wings as she landed, facing Scarite with an impassive expression.

"Scarite... I should've expected this."

Behind Scarite, dozens of fiery spheres materialized, each radiating immense heat.

The orbs spun violently before unleashing a barrage of scorching rays at Seris.

"You're staying here to have some fun with me!"

Seeing the oncoming flames, Seris simply waved her hand. Instantly, a massive ice wall rose, blocking all the attacks.

"I don't have time to waste on you."

In her palm, a cold, pale-blue flame ignited—an eerie fire that froze everything in its path.

The frozen blaze flared wildly as it surged toward Scarite. Knowing better than to take the attack lightly, Scarite conjured an intense inferno, the heat escalating to the point where her flames turned blue.

With both unleashing their powers at full force, fire and frost collided, triggering a massive explosion that shook the forest—a clear display of the destructive power of two wave Controller's.

Within seconds, Clana appeared beside Seris, while Evan stepped in to support his sister.

A fierce battle broke out between them, both wielding their swords.

The test had officially begun.

I, on the other hand, remained standing near the bus... right in front of Feyrith and his lackeys.

Earlier, everyone had picked their partners.

Ragna with Danzo.

Seris with Clana.

Sansa with Adriana—I was particularly surprised to see Adriana carrying a spear. Turns out she was a spear wielder after all.

Anyway, since everyone else had already paired up, I was left alone... with Feyrith's goons.

Kyle Walker scowled.

"What are we supposed to do now? I don't wanna team up with him."

"Neither do I," Jan muttered.

I sighed. You guys do realize I can hear you, right?

Deciding to put an end to their whining, I clapped my hands to get their attention.

"No need to form teams, guys. You can go ahead—I'll move on my own."

Both Kyle and Jean's eyes lit up.

"For real?"

I nodded.

"Yeah."

Feyrith, who had been silent until now, frowned.

"Frey, what are you up to?"

I shrugged nonchalantly.

"Nothing. You three have known each other for a long time. It only makes sense for you to form a team together."

"And you?"

I let out another sigh. Why are they so persistent? Just leave already.

"I'm used to working alone. I'll be fine."

Jan leaned in to whisper to Feyrith.

"This is great, boss. If we leave him behind, he won't get many points. That way, we kill two birds with one stone."

In the end, Feyrith reluctantly agreed, and the three fools finally took off.

I turned my attention to the forest ahead.

Everyone was occupied—some were charging through the trees, while others were already fighting each other.

They were all so busy.

I smirked.

"Perfect."

My watch indicated I had only moved five meters.

Calmly, I walked back.

Four meters.

Three meters.

Two meters.

One meter.

Zero.

I climbed into the bus and returned to my seat.

Stretching out comfortably, I grinned.

"Finally, I can sleep."

Just then, Sophia boarded the bus, looking surprised.

"Frey Starlight, are you giving up on the test?"

I shook my head.

"Nope."

"Then why are you still here?"

I turned to her with a smirk.

"You told us to reach the goal—not to enter Nightmare Land."

Sophia blinked before chuckling in amusement.

"clever... very clever, Frey Starlight."

Closing my eyes, I relished in my own brilliance.

I wasn't clever—I was just a cheater.

After all...

I was the one who created this test.

I drifted off to sleep, ignoring everything else.

And if someone happened to glance inside the bus from the outside, they'd see me resting peacefully under the bold letters painted across its side...

GOAL!

The goal was right here, you idiots.