

VILLAIN 54

Chapter 54 Reaching the Goal (2)

Time Remaining for the Test: 1:34:55

Explosions thundered through the vast forest...

Students were scattered chaotically, each racing to cover as much ground as possible.

At the forefront, Danzo and Ragna bulldozed through anything in their way. Strange creatures occasionally emerged from the shadows, but none were strong enough to slow them down.

Danzo crushed the skull of a Nightmare creature—a goblin-like being, only taller—before glancing at his watch.

"Distance: 3220 meters."

"Looks like we're leading the pack."

Danzo called out, grinning as Ragna smirked.

"Let's keep moving! The others could catch up at any moment."

The two had been running nonstop for nearly half an hour. Even in battle, they never halted, giving them a significant edge.

"Let's pick up the pace!"

"Got it!"

Like unstoppable war machines, the two blazed ahead, widening the gap between themselves and the others.

Meanwhile, farther back, a girl with violet hair found herself surrounded by five towering goblin-like creatures.

The beasts lashed out with their long, razor-sharp limbs, aiming to tear her apart. But the moment they entered her range, she cut them down with a single strike of her spear.

Wind gathered at the tip of her weapon, amplifying its power as Adriana lunged forward, eviscerating the monsters with lightning-fast precision.

In an instant, all five were annihilated.

She retracted her spear and let out a relieved breath, believing the fight was over.

But just then, a goblin lunged from above, using the trees as cover for a surprise attack.

It had waited for Adriana to lower her guard—seizing the perfect moment for a fatal strike.

The creature thought it had succeeded—until it realized its body had been cleaved clean in two.

Blue blood and entrails splattered across the ground.

"Adriana... How many times do I have to tell you not to leave your guard open?"

A calm voice spoke from behind her.

Adriana turned to see Sansa standing there, her palm still outstretched.

Still in shock, Adriana struggled to process what had just happened.

"Prince— I mean, Sansa... Was that you?"

Sansa sighed as she stepped up beside Adriana.

"Who else?"

"That was incredible!"

Adriana's admiration was genuine. She hadn't even seen the attack, let alone reacted to it. The fact that Sansa had struck so effortlessly proved she was no ordinary opponent.

"Incredible? What are you talking about? You're the incredible one. You took them down yourself."

Unlike Ragna and Danzo, who charged recklessly ahead, Sansa and Adriana moved at a steady pace, simply walking.

"It wasn't anything special..."

Unused to compliments, Adriana shrank slightly, embarrassed.

"You're strong, Adriana. But sometimes, you need to fight for yourself."

Hearing Sansa's words, Adriana lowered her head. Praise had always flustered her. In truth, she was shy about almost everything.

After a while, the two stopped to rest.

They checked the watches on their wrists, revealing the distance they had covered.

"Distance: 950 meters."

"I'm sorry... You have to keep stopping because of me."

Sansa apologized sincerely, but Adriana quickly waved her hands.

"No, no! Don't apologize... We're doing fine. Besides, it's only natural since you're a Wave Controller."

Sansa, still catching her breath, muttered under her breath,

"Even a Wave Controller shouldn't be this weak..."

Adriana remained silent, patiently waiting for Sansa to recover.

By now, everyone knew about Sansa's poor stamina. The reason was obvious.

The two sat beneath a tree, silence settling over them—until suddenly, everything changed.

Sansa sensed a surge of energy hurtling toward them.

She reacted instantly.

A split second later, a devastating bolt of lightning obliterated the spot where they had been sitting.

A young man emerged from the trees, golden eyes gleaming beneath tousled blond hair.

He laughed, arcs of electricity crackling over his sword.

"Well, well... if it isn't my dear sister?"

Sansa's expression darkened the moment she saw him.

"Aegon..."

"What a surprise to run into you here."

Forcing a smile, Sansa faced her brother.

"A surprise? I find that hard to believe."

"You know me too well."

Aegon lazily swung his sword. Even that careless motion sent a bolt of lightning surging toward Sansa.

In an instant, Adriana stepped forward.

She gathered an immense amount of wind aura at the tip of her spear and stabbed forward, deflecting the attack.

"Adriana the shy one? Since when did you become so brave?"

Aegon laughed as he dashed toward them, completely unfazed by the 2v1 disadvantage.

Sansa, of course, didn't just stand by. Black mist gathered around her arm before she raised her palm.

Sensing danger, Aegon threw himself to the side, narrowly dodging.

Behind him, a massive scar carved through the trunk of a colossal tree, toppling it in an instant.

"Seems like you've got some dangerous attacks."

Aegon steadied himself, while Sansa's expression darkened.

Adriana was watching in astonishment. Once again, she hadn't seen Sansa's attack at all.

Sansa stepped back.

"Adriana! Focus on the enemy in front of you!"

Hearing Sansa's sharp tone, Adriana snapped back to attention, gripping her spear tightly.

"Listen carefully... We have the advantage. We can take him down!"

"Understood!"

Adriana wasn't naive. She understood exactly what Sansa meant.

One was a spear wielder.

The other was a Wave Controller.

Together, they made an almost unbeatable team.

Adriana lunged first, her wind-enhanced spear streaking toward Aegon.

He blocked effortlessly—but before he could counter, he felt another attack coming. He barely managed to dodge.

Once again, a deep scar carved into the ground where he had stood.

"If I take one of those hits directly... I'll be out."

Aegon chuckled, keeping up his defenses. Sansa was stronger than expected. Even with his enhanced lightning reflexes, he could barely dodge her attacks.

He couldn't see them at all.

"Keep up the pressure!"

Aegon found himself drowning in relentless attacks—close-range and long-range alike.

And yet, that grin never left his face...

Meanwhile, in the most chaotic battlefield...

Scarite Sunlight gritted her teeth, exhaustion washing over her like never before.

At first, fire and ice had been evenly matched.

But now... she could barely hold her ground.

The overwhelming frost devoured her flames, sapping away their strength.

Dozens of massive ice swords and spears floated around Seris, shimmering with an almost blinding brilliance.

Then, all at once, they shot toward Scarite.

Her celestial orbs had already shattered. Her flames were being smothered.

She knew she wouldn't survive if she took this head-on.

So, she unleashed everything.

"Skill: Flame Cage!"

A whirlwind of blue fire spun around her, forming a dome to block the oncoming barrage.

Ice melted at an alarming rate, steam flooding the air and creating a thick mist.

Somehow, she managed to hold off Seris's assault, but she was now gasping for breath, struggling to think.

She needed a way to turn the tables.

"Damn it, damn it, damn it! I won't lose to her! Not again..."

But as she clenched her fists, she realized—her legs were freezing over.

"What?! No...!"

She tried to burn through the ice, but Seris's cold voice silenced her.

"It's over, Scarite."

Scarite looked up.

And what she saw made her blood run cold.

Above Seris...

A colossal ice spear loomed, blotting out the sky.

Without hesitation, Seris hurled it down.

Scarite could only stand there, staring in shock at the devastating attack descending upon her.

Evan was locked in battle against Clana.

Both were exceptional duelists, making them well-matched opponents.

Evan Sunlight wielded a sword engulfed in flames, while Clana's blade radiated a blinding white light.

From afar, the battlefield was a spectacle of red and white streaks colliding in midair.

Each clash of their swords sent ripples of aura surging through the surroundings.

Evan held the advantage in raw strength and endurance, whereas Clana was faster and more technically refined. Their duel reached a deadlock.

Then, in a split second, everything changed.

A massive surge of aura erupted from nearby, pressing down on both fighters with overwhelming force.

Their eyes widened as they turned—only to see a towering ice spear in the distance.

Evan's heart clenched in panic. He spun around, shouting,

"Scar!"

Clana wasn't about to waste this golden opportunity. For the first time, her opponent had let his guard down.

A terrifying surge of light aura erupted around her as she prepared to unleash her most powerful strike.

Three radiant stars shimmered around her heart, marking her as a third-stage Stardust user.

"Stardust: Northern Star!"

Clana's foot slammed into the ground as she shot forward, becoming a streak of blinding white light.

"Damn it!"

Evan cursed, raising his sword in a desperate attempt to block. But she was too fast.

"Too late."

Her radiant blade struck, engulfing Evan completely, threatening to cleave through his chest.

But just before the blade could pierce his skin, a strange light wrapped around his body—then he vanished.

At the same moment, Scarite was enveloped in the same glow before the colossal ice spear crashed into the ground, burying her beneath its sheer force.

For a moment, neither Seris nor Clana understood what had happened. But then, a mechanical voice echoed across the battlefield.

"Fatal strike!"

"Fatal strike!"

"Scarite Sunlight A-5 and Evan Sunlight A-6 have been eliminated."

High above, atop a mountain watchtower, two figures materialized behind Emon Starlight, the test overseer.

He chuckled at the sight of them.

"Well, that was unlucky for you."

Evan and Scar frowned in unison.

Amidst the battlefield's destruction, Seris and Clana regrouped.

"Well done back there... thanks to you, I managed to finish him off," Clana remarked with a smirk.

Seris gave a silent nod as she checked her watch.

Distance: 500 meters.

Her expression tightened as her wings unfurled once more.

"We need to move."

"Got it."

The two girls surged forward, racing against time.

"Our situation isn't bad. We've taken out two of their strongest fighters."

"It's too soon to celebrate. We have no idea what could happen next."

Clana scowled at Seris's pessimism.

"Can't you be a little positive for once?"

Seris didn't bother answering.

Then, once again, the mechanical voice rang out.

"Fatal strike!"

"Fatal strike!"

"Sansa Valerion B-2 and Adriana Highjeforn B-6 have been eliminated."

The announcement struck like a thunderclap.

Even Seris was taken aback.

"What the hell are they doing?" Clana muttered.

Seris's expression darkened.

Adriana was one thing... but for Sansa to be eliminated this quickly?

"We need to move faster."

Just when Class B had gained the upper hand, Class A had flipped the tables.

Aegon Valerion stood amidst a massive crater.

Everything around him lay in ruins.

Deep gashes covered his body, yet strangely, his wounds were healing before the eye.

"Hah... that was rough."

Still grinning, Aegon waved toward the treeline.

A short girl with green hair and a childlike face hesitantly emerged.

Her voice trembled.

"D-Did we win?"

"Yeah. You did great... Emilia."

She nodded and approached him.

As she did, his wounds began healing at an accelerated rate, bathed in a soothing green glow.

Within moments, Aegon was back to peak condition.

"As expected of the church's saint candidate... your power is no joke."

Emilia Atarax A-8—the only healer in the elite class.

Even Aegon had struggled against the princess and her companion. But with Emilia's support, victory was his.

Yet, as he flexed his hand, a faint shiver ran down his arm.

"...What was that feeling?"

Earlier, he had overpowered Adriana and launched a relentless assault on Sansa.

As their duel dragged on, he finally noticed the true nature of her attacks—blades of pure shadow.

In the end, he deflected them and closed in, his sword an inch from slashing her throat.

But at the last moment...

Her eyes turned pitch black.

Aegon's instincts screamed danger.

For an instant, he was certain she would turn the fight around. But then... nothing happened.

He pushed the thought aside and gestured to Emilia.

"Let's move."

Elsewhere, Feyrith's faction had eliminated Aaron Smith A-10 and Thomas Newt A-9.

One was a swordsman.

The other, a Wave Controller.

Yet, Feyrith's trio crushed them effortlessly.

"That was incredible, boss! You're getting stronger!"

"Yeah! You took them down solo!"

Jan and Kyle were ecstatic. But Feyrith wasn't.

"Shut up."

His sharp tone made them flinch.

Feyrith checked his watch.

Distance: 4800 meters.

Time remaining: 57:50.

Fifty-seven minutes left.

His jaw tightened.

"Who the hell took out Sansa?"

Lately, Feyrith had been acting strange.

He was usually composed, but at the mere mention of Sansa, his mood would shift entirely.

Jan and Kyle exchanged glances.

Neither of them understood love.

At the frontlines...

Danzo and Ragna sprinted forward.

They had been running for an hour.

Even their monstrous stamina was wearing thin.

Ragna checked his watch.

Distance: 6400 meters.

Time remaining: 50 minutes.

"Damn it, how much longer?!" Danzo growled.

"We're close," Ragna muttered. "We're nearing the mountain's edge."

"Let's hope so."

Too focused on moving forward, they failed to notice the danger lurking beneath them.

Suddenly... their shadows darkened.

A head emerged from the blackness, its abyssal eyes locking onto them.

Danzo and Ragna—seasoned warriors—immediately sensed something was wrong.

They spun around, ready to fight.

But what happened next was beyond comprehension.

Dozens of black threads shot out from their own shadows, binding them in place.

A single moment.

More than enough for a trained assassin.

With twin daggers wreathed in black flames, Ghost Umbra lunged at Ragna's throat.

One strike—instant kill.

Ragna vanished.

Danzo's eyes widened.

His body erupted in light as he hurled a punch with the force of a missile.

"You bastard—!"

The explosive attack obliterated everything in its path... but Ghost was nowhere to be seen.

Suddenly, shadows slithered across the ground, moving at terrifying speed.

Danzo smashed the earth in a desperate attempt to catch him.

But from the debris, a swarm of tendrils lashed out, swallowing Danzo in darkness.

His senses vanished in an instant.

On the other side, Ghost's daggers formed an X as he slashed toward Danzo's neck.

One strike—instant kill.

Danzo disappeared.

"Fatal strike!"

"Fatal strike!"

"Ragna Cloud B-3 and Danzo Smasher B-4 have been eliminated."

A lone figure with pitch-black hair and eerie eyes sighed.

"What a pain... when will this damn test end?"

His gaze swept the battlefield.

"Seems like I'm far enough ahead."

Then, merging into the shadows, the ghost vanished once more.

From the very start, he had been hiding in Ragna's shadow, waiting for the perfect moment.

A true assassin.

With the human tanks eliminated... Class B was now in serious trouble.