

VILE EVIL HIDES UNDER THE VEIL

Chapter 10: Eren vs. Dom!

“Erni boy, what are you doing here?”

Eren heard a voice behind him. He knew it was Dom. He must have thought that there was an intruder or something, so he sneaked past Eren to catch him off guard. Only when he confirmed that person to be Eren did Dom voice his query.

“Don’t call me Erni. My name is Eren.”

Dom could only scratch his head and smile mirthlessly at the kid’s little outburst. He thought the kid was in a hurry to grow up and be acknowledged as someone equal to the adults.

“Aah, yes. Eren, tell me what’s wrong? I thought I had told you to wait up the cave’s entrance.”

“That you did. But Elena’s condition is getting a little unstable. So I thought I should help you move the bodies and bury them so that we can leave the cave and go to a secure area where she’d be able to take rest.”

Eren cursed in his mind while making that excuse. He had thought a Rank E sedative would be enough for Dom to lose consciousness by this time. But apparently, he had underestimated the hunter. It still didn’t look like he would fall asleep anytime soon.

“Oh! Is she alright? I thought it shouldn’t take much time to bury the bodies because I knew their location but it seems they have been relocated by someone. Something, to be more precise. You really shouldn’t be here. We might need to prepare to bolt out of this area if the magic beast who did this is stronger than me.”

“What if it’s a demon beast you guys were speculating about?” Eren asked to buy time. The more he engaged with Dom, the better it will be for the sedative to take effect.

“Hahahaha! Eren boy, do you think a demon beast would just roam around everywhere in the woods without any aim? A demon beast would be usually found in the deepest parts of the wood where they can control the maximum and more powerful magic beasts, which will be present in the deeper parts of the forest.

The demon beasts are like army generals of the beast army. That’s why their existence is feared by many. Not only for the individual prowess they are capable of unleashing but also for their ability to lord over the magic beasts.

Will you find an army general at the front or back of the army encampment?”

Dom refuted Eren’s assumptions like they meant nothing more than a kid’s curiosity.

But Eren’s next question caught him off guard:

“What if the demon beast finds out that it can locate the resources needed for its evolution here in the cave?”

Eren asked him meaningfully. Dom wanted to counter his logic with his words but he found them stuck between his throat. He soon realized what Eren was hinting at.

That’s right. It can consume the dead bodies of Dom’s comrades to complete its evolution. They all were in great danger right now at this place.

Coming here was a mistake. Dom thought to himself and halted his steps from going deeper into the cave.

Eren wanted exactly this effect to be felt by Dom. If he hurried his steps and got to the demon beast first before the sedative kicked in, it would be horrible for Eren.

Dom’s mind was in a conflict. Should they proceed and check if a mere kid’s hunch was correct or should they just get the hell away from this place?

He took his time. But Dom’s greed finally showed itself. He realized that there was an opportunity hidden in this danger. What if the demon beast is going through its evolution right at this moment and he intercepts it? He’ll be able to gain a demon beast as a familiar. A beast that lords over the Osan forest. It had to be at least an E Rank beast trying to promote itself for a D Rank.

Dom's estimation was half right. The was beast indeed going through the evolution process. But it wasn't an E Rank one. It was a D Rank beast vying for promotion in C Rank. Dom wouldn't have risked going to the site had he known this beforehand.

But Eren knew about it. And this time he didn't raise his 'hunch' about the beast being a D Rank. Otherwise, Dom's conflict would end and he would immediately decide to retreat. That would also spell doom for Eren as he had already killed Elena.

Although he had hidden Elena's body for the fear of it attracting a magic beast, it wouldn't take long for a hunter like Dom to locate it.

Eren wanted Dom stuck in his place just for a while more.

"Damn. I must be tired of travelling back and forth between the forest and the city without taking a rest. I'm kinda feeling sleepy."

Eren waited for this very moment. The guy sure took his time. It was only when he stopped in his tracks to think did the sedative show its effects.

Eren quickly suggested to Dom that he should find a corner before sitting on the ground to catch a breath. He'll give him some potions to curb Dom's fatigue.

Dom was tired. Before Eren had walked into the cave, he had spent quite a bit of his energy to eradicate SR snakes from the cave completely. The culling of those vile serpentine creatures wasn't driven by logic. It was an act of revenge. Dom had cleared the cave for Eren to take his rewards without any worry.

When Dom sat down, Eren gave him more sedative disguised as a stamina recovery potion. But when he was handing over the potion, Dom immediately caught his hand and asked him gravely:

"Why am I sensing a killer vibe from you? There's also a faint smell of blood lingering around you.

I don't think we have ever let you come close to any injured animal. Tell me honestly...

What have you done?"

Dom's grip over Eren's hand was getting stronger. Eren felt some pain and he expressed it by yelling, as any inexperienced teen would:

"Old man, I think fatigue has affected your brain. What and why would I do anything to you guys? What will be my gain here? It was you who dragged me here. And now you want to blame me for doing absolutely nothing.

That's it. I'm not helping you guys anymore. The smell of blood would probably be because of me tending to Elena's wounds which she didn't think appropriate to show you. But turns out I was wrong. I shouldn't have treated her wounds and come here in the cave to help you.

Now that I think about it, I shouldn't have accompanied you to the forest in the first place. After risking so much, what do I get in return? An injury to my wrist and a strong threat by a hunter for HELPING him?

I'm out. Release me, old man. I don't want to stay here."

Dom's now-fading consciousness was sending him mixed signals. His instincts screamed at him that the kid was bad news. But all the points laid out by the kid pointed in the other direction.

That amount of hesitation was enough for the sedative to finally work its magic. Dom fell asleep. But he didn't release Eren's hand before doing that.

After confirming that the hunter had finally fallen for his trap, Eren breathed a sigh of relief. That was a close call. He was almost caught in his act.

Eren had underestimated Dom and his superhuman senses. If it wasn't for the sedatives, Eren's act wouldn't have lasted long. Dom would have seen through his bullshit.

Eren again removed the surgical knife from his shoulder bag. He was fearing Dom might wake up after experiencing an injury on him. That's why he first tried to get his right wrist out of the guy's vice-like grip. It took him a while to do that.

Then Eren positioned himself in such a way that he'd be able to run away after dealing damage to Dom in case he wakes up.

Instead of the neck, Eren decided to target Dom's eyes. He didn't have the luxury to make Dom die as smoothly as Elena. The guy was on the verge of getting promoted to D Rank.

Eren prepared for the worst and the worst happened. Eren used two surgical knives on Dom to pierce both of his eyes simultaneously. The combo attack landed. And he managed to injure Dom's eyes but the layer of mana was deployed soon after. Dom's natural defence had kicked in and prevented Eren from piercing his brain.

Dom woke up with a roar. He couldn't see now that both of his eyes were damaged. But Eren was quick on his feet. He quickly got away from the hunter right after the attack had struck. That presence of mind saved him from the grim fate.

Eren knew he couldn't kill Dom as of now with his current state. The hunter was all fine except for his eyes. His other senses had also been dulled by the sedatives. But Dom was forcefully circulating his mana through his body to get over the sedatives at the cost of injuring himself.

Dom was agitated to his bones. Approaching him from any angle spelt instant doom for Eren. He was alive because Dom couldn't see him. Had he targeted the hunter's neck or any other crucial part, that would have resulted in both of them dying together.

Eren had also benefited from using the body enhancement potions beforehand. He could quickly change his course of direction whenever Dom was making almost-right guesses.

The fight, or more like the cat-and-mouse chase, went on for a while till both of them were exhausted. Dom couldn't help ask Eren in suppressed anger about his motive after they both non-verbally agreed on cooling down a bit: