First thing in the morning, I left the campsite to use the bathroom in the nearby forest. When I returned with my sanitary disposal bag in hand, I caught sight of Ibuki crouching suspiciously beside my tent.

“What are you doing?”

“!”

Her head shot up with a look of surprise on her face. It seems that she had been so focused on rummaging through my backpack that she didn’t notice me return to the campsite.

“Were you trying to sneak a peek at my tablet, or was there something else you wanted?”

Unfortunately for her, it was impossible for a third party to gain unauthorized access to my tablet since I had enabled the lock screen.

“I wouldn’t do somethin’ like that! I just… I just wanted to make sure our trade was actually fair, that’s all.”

After saying that, she quickly distanced herself from my backpack.

“You’ve only got one bottle of water left in there, and you’ve already drunk some of it! I thought you said you had too much water?”

Although I had only been away for just under a minute, I guess I had been a little careless.

Apparently, that had been more than enough time for her to confirm the contents of my backpack.

That being said, I couldn’t exactly blame her given that I had gone through Ibuki’s backpack without permission just the day before. Even if I were to lie and say that I drank the rest of my water last night, she’d just have to ask where the empty bottle was. After all, it was against the rules to litter on the island.

“So what, were you trying to help me out to get me to owe you a favor?”

“If you hadn’t gone through my backpack, you never would’ve felt like you owed me anything though…”

“Grr…”

My words hit right on the mark, causing Ibuki’s cheek to twitch ever so slightly.

“In other words, I’m telling you that the truth doesn’t matter. It was a fair trade either way.”

“I ain’t convinced, but… I get it. If that’s the way it is, I’m not gonna give any water back to you.”

“If I did this to have you owe me a favor, would you pay it back?”

“No way.”

“…Is that so?”

Apparently, she had been compelled to rummage through my backpack simply because she couldn’t bring herself to trust me.

Since the conversation dried up after that, I went back inside my tent.

It was only half-past six when I heard sounds coming from over by Ibuki’s tent.

I unzipped my tent’s entrance to take a look at what was happening, only to find that she had already started to pack up her things.

If this had been the second or third day of the exam, I might’ve thought that she was just brimming with motivation, but…

The vibe she was giving off told me she didn’t want to be disturbed, so I simply looked the other way.

Before long, 7:00 AM arrived, and with it the first designated area of the day, which was announced to be area E4. I immediately decided to spend one point to run a GPS Search and pinpoint the locations of everybody else on the island.

This search was well worth the single point it cost to run it. My score was so close to the 10th place Kuronaga group that I might accidentally overtake them. By spending one point here, the gap between our scores would widen to 12 points. That way, even if I earned 11 points from taking the first-place Early Bird Bonus, I’d still be just barely outside of the top ten.

Looking at the map, there were about three other groups who had the potential to contest me for the Early Bird Bonus.

Among them, there was a certain, particularly formidable opponent sitting in an ideal position for sweeping up the bonus. With that being the case, I decided to give up on fighting for it, which worked out perfectly since my top priority right now was to replenish my resources. Incidentally, this GPS Search also let me see how many students were nearby the Tasks I was interested in. In other words, it opened up the door for me to predict what the competition would be like before I dedicated any time to pursuing it.

By the time I had finished getting ready and stepped foot out of my tent, Ibuki was already nowhere to be seen.

There was little to gain from taking action before the exam started for the day, but I suppose she just wanted to get away from me as soon as possible.