Chapter 4 Part 5

 Day 11, just before 5:00 p.m. I had barely reached the last designated zone, J10, when I was startled by the sight. It is important to collect scores and homework objects, but even more important is to be careful with scoring. It's surprisingly difficult to keep 11th place at all times. You have to make sure you don't step on the designated area and get penalized, and you also have to keep up with those who score in 10th place.

Yesterday, on the 10th day of the test, the third designated area was announced as F4 followed by a random area in B9, and I gave up soon. I couldn't even get to C9, the fourth designated area, and had to pass twice in a row. I managed to get to the first designated area in the morning, C8, and avoided the penalty, but this time I couldn't get to the random area of H9, and had to get to I9, which was a tough day.

Once an area is designated as a long-distance destination, the next area continues to refer to it. I realized once again the main reason why my overall score was not increasing.

As I reached the end of the steep and rocky road I could hear a man and a woman talking to each other in front of me.

Maybe it's because the wind was blowing, but the voice was vaguely familiar.

I thought I might know them, so I decided to take a look. The voice comes from the west, the direction of the ocean. There, I caught sight of a group of three girls from 2nd year class B, consisting of Isoyama Nagisa, Morofuji Rika, and Shiina Hiyori.

… And there were three more from another group of sophomores. I haven't seen them since the first day of the exam.

It was Ishizaki Daichi, Takeko Nishino, and Hitomi Tsutsube.

I'm sure I've heard of them. The squares were supposed to be different at first, but did the designated zones overlap this time?

"What? Isn't it Ayanokouji-kun? "

The five of them were still talking and had not yet noticed my presence, but only Hiyori, who was in front of me, perceived my presence and noticed me. As soon as our eyes met, she waved at me.

"You look better than I thought."

"Everyone has worked very hard. We have expanded our group to a maximum of six people."

This is how they met Ishizaki and the others. Truth be told, it seems that many of the students of the group lack ability, but Hiyori can bring a lot in terms of brains. That's what she is for. However, her physical capacity is not as high as it should be. Taking into account the members of the group, I would say that they function in a balanced way.

"Did you plan to join Ishizaki and the others from the beginning?"

"That's right. We have several priorities for the merger, and this is one of those groups."

Without denying it, I turned my gaze to where Ishizaki and the others were chatting as they gazed at the soon-to-set sun, as if to ease their fatigue.

They seem to get along well with each other as they are basically a group made up of 2nd year class B. Tsutsube, the only one of a different class, integrated very well.

"Ayanokouji-kun, how do you feel?"

Hiyori didn't seem especially bothered by the fact that no one was coming after her. "Yes. So far, so good."

“I don't think there is anything to worry about, but you have to be careful." "I know."

She motioned for me to sit next to her and I did. "There are three days left."

"That's how it is".

I don't think she asked me for any particular reason. After that, we silently stare at the sea and feed our spirits. In most cases, when I meet a friend or someone close to a friend, they ask me how I am doing.

As it is a battle for survival, curiosity cannot be avoided. Hiyori, however, showed no sign of asking me what my score was. It is not so much that she is not interested, but that she is convinced that they will not expel me.

"Hey, Ayanokouji!"

I'm not sure if he finally noticed my presence or not, but for some reason, Ishizaki

smiled at me in a very happy way. The rest of the group seemed to notice immediately and grabbed Ishizaki by the shoulders as he tried to approach us.

"What the hell? Don't get in my way. "

"What? It's not that Ayanokouji doesn't like it, right?"

"Do not…"

"Nothing happens. That is one of the good things about you, Ishizaki-kun. " "No. Good point? I'd say you just can't read the air."

"Well …… yes, that could be undeniable."

Nishino and Tsutsube have become good friends with each other. This would be a common sight for many groups in a prolonged battle on an uninhabited island.

If we work together as much as we can to avoid being kicked out, we can easily overcome the smallest of barriers. But at the same time, it is also cruel. After this special exam is over, the class war will resume again, and the future awaits us as we kick each other out.

At that time, there will be few students who will not be able to make normal decisions. "Sorry to interrupt."

I was about to leave when Ishizaki came running up and grabbed me by the shoulder.

"Anyway, you don't have any more tests today, and you were planning to camp near I9, right?"

The designated area, J10, was not suitable for pitching a tent due to the strong wind and rocky ground. In that sense, I was going to avoid the seashore, as Ishizaki said, and I would go by I9 …….

"It's a great idea!"

Hiyori, who had just got up, approached me in agreement. These two people are relatively close to me and don’t have problems, but what about the others?

"Isn't it good? Ayanokouji-kun seems quite harmless.” "I know."

And apparently, there was not a single objection. What can I say; I found the group to have such a comfortable and friendly atmosphere that I almost forgot that we were doing a very tough special exam.

This kind of environment is often seen in Ichinose's class, but it seems that Ryuuen's class is also starting to change little by little.