**Chapter 108**

Running through the corridors. Turning through the caves. Making sure the body in his arms did not hit the walls. Diablo scurried through the darkness of the caves. Ahead of him, a possible chance of safety. Behind him, nothing but death. Well... almost nothing.

“Diablo, wait for me!” Henry screamed.

The Discrete cringed. Henry had not been part of his plan. Through the chaos that had consumed, the boy seized the opportunity and followed Diablo out of the commotion and into the caverns.

“Come on, don’t leave me alone!”

Silence and speed is what he needed, not this. Diablo was moving as quietly and as quickly as he possibly could but Vatti’s body was already slowing him down immensely. She was his priority, not the boy.

“You’re still going too fast.”

He could easily trip the boy, injure him or worse. That would buy time. 5 Seconds in the short run, but so much more in the future. That was a possibility... but one that lasted for only a second. Such a tactic was beneath the Discrete. The boy was here now and it was better that three lives came out of this than two.

“Wait up!”

Still the boy needed to be silenced.

Diablo stopped and turned to Henry.

“Finally.” Henry said catching his breath. “Can’t you just...”

“Listen to me and listen well.” Diablo spoke sternly. “Of all the Discretes that can track me when I’m alone, there are only three. With Vatti in my hands, anyone above Discrete F stands a chance. If I move slowly and make a lot of noise, any Discrete at all can find me. So head my warning when I tell you this... keep up and be quiet.” Diablo pushed forward again

Henry was a little frightened, but he was more angry.

“I would easily keep up if you just slowed down a lit...”

“You don’t want me to slow down so you can keep up, you want me to slow you can run comfortably. Now be quiet.”

“That is such a...”

Suddenly, Diablo was directly in front of Henry. The black band hadn’t even seen him move. He would’ve screamed, but Diablo’s hand that wasn’t carrying Vatti was covering his mouth. The skull of the mask stared into Henry’s eyes.

“I’m only going to say this one more time. Be... quiet.”

Henry had never been so afraid in his life. He really felt if another noise came from his lips, this man would end his life.

Diablo’s head turned suddenly.

“It’s him.” He pulled Henry along with him. “Come on.”

The corridors grew taller. He was getting closer. Still, there wasn’t enough time, especially with Henry and Vatti. Once again, the option of sacrifice entered. Once again it was tossed aside just as quickly.

The three entered into a very large room. The ground area was big enough for two people to walk side by side, but the walls grew separate the higher they got. Diablo tried to move forward, but before he could take another step, a body fell in front of his.

Diablo didn’t need to wait for the figure to stand up. He already knew who he was.

“Henry. Take Vatti and back away.”

Henry wanted to object, ask questions, and do all sorts of things, but before he could Vatti was shoved onto him. He struggled to hold the girl’s body. The force of her coming towards him caused him to fall over. She was older and taller than him, there was no way he could hold her.

“B.” Diablo said. “Seems you’re getting sloppy. I could hear you coming a mile away.”

“If I wanted to surprise you, D, you never would’ve seen me coming.”

“A Discrete should kill a threat the best way possible. EC.”

“And you, as a deserter, know all about what a Discrete should and shouldn’t do.”

“I can tell you this, I won’t be as honorable.”

“Of course you won’t.”

Diablo head twitched towards where Henry was standing.

“Don’t worry.” Discrete B said. “My focus will be solely on you. I don’t need distractions to know that I can defeat them. Besides, in the end, I’ll get them eventually.”

“Henry.” Diablo said. “Take Vatti and keep moving forward through the caves. It is vital that you get her to safety.”

“I can help you.” Henry said.

“You can do no such thing. This is something I must do alone.”

“Alone?” A female voice echoed came.

“He he he.” Another giggled.

“He always thinks he has to do things alone.” A male voice this time.

“But we know better.” The last voice came from directly behind Discrete B. As soon as he heard it, he turned to attack the person that was there. The man standing there was ready for the attack. He put his left arm up to block the incoming punch

“Gah!” Discrete B shouted. It wasn’t so much the pain of the impact, but the surprise of it. This intruder had some how not only blocked his attack, but repelled it. Even Discrete A wasn’t capable of such a feat. Suddenly, attacks came at the Discrete. A flurry of upper punches. Their speed was nothing to be impressed abou...

\*pow\*

In the midsts of measuring the speed of the intruder’s arms, a kick had suddenly emerged. The intruder kicked Discrete B in the chin, backflipping and landing while doing so. Again, Discrete B was more shocked by what happened than the actual pain he felt. The kick had not come so fast that he couldn’t dodge it, rather it came while he was focusing on the intruders arms.

The man had stopped attacking but held a defensive stance as though waiting to be attacked. Usually Discrete B would’ve used this opportunity to attack back, but he needed to analyze. The man in front of him was tall and lean. He didn’t bother hiding his face, which showed him to be in his late twenties to early thirties. That number could’ve been off if he was a Discrete, but Discrete B was sure the only two missing Discretes were D and the former A who was a female. The opponent dressed in all black, but more loose than a Discrete’s attire. An open vest, dark pants, and even black boots. This set of clothes would’ve given him an advantage if he wasn’t facing someone wearing purge visors. His right arm stood out as well. It glowed. Was that...? It was. No wonder he was able to block the earlier attack. This meant so much more and answered so many questions, but not the primary one Discrete B sought. Who was this man?

Discrete B’s eyes flinched, searching his purge visor for data. But... again an unexplainable problem. No data whatsoever was appearing before Discrete B’s eyes like they usually did. According to the glasses, this man did not exist. Only trained Discretes were absent from the Log database. Could Discrete D have had another Discrete on his team? An insider? No. This man had a band on his left bicept. He clearly should be...

Then, Discrete B noticed something he hadn’t before. The color of the band.

“A green… Now I see. I understand everything D...”

The Discrete turned to face Diablo, but before he could, a figure leaped over his head. It was Diablo. He held Vatti in one arm and Henry in the other, a jump only a Discrete could make. The three landed behind their savior.

No! Discrete B couldn’t let Discrete D get away! But before he could do anything about it, another punch came towards him. The Discrete was fast enough to...

\*pow\*

The other arm came from a blind spot. Discrete B felt the impact... it hurt. He turned his body with the punch to keep from losing balance. That did not stop the intruder. More attacks. An upper kick. A lower punch. The intruder kicked off a wall and prepared an attack with his right arm.

\*Pow\*

Once again, Discrete B mistimed the attack. Every attack came at easy to calculate speed. Every attack, except the ones from the right arm. At times, they came normally, but other times their speed randomly increased.

Discrete B blocked an incoming horizontal punch and stared the man in his eyes. “You’ve modified that shield haven’t you?”

“Tinkering is a hobby of mine. I recently got fascinated with shields.” The man spoke sarcastically, but there was no sign of it on his face nor in his tone.

The attacks continued. They all became slightly faster.

“You lead with open, predictable attacks, but the real attack is deceptive, letting me think I know what you’re going to do.” The Discrete continued. Another attack. Another block.

“Rule one, if you can’t overpower them, outsmart them. Rule two, if you can’t outsmart them, overpower them. You’ve mastered an art not for your kind, boy.”

“How flattering.”

The attacks continued, but none landed a blow. The intruder was no longer in control of the fight.

“The Discrete fighting style is the most advanced in all of Wig-Or-Log.” Discrete B began to increase his speed even further. “But deceit doesn’t work if I know it’s coming.” Even faster. “And I’ve got the upper hand because I can follow through with rule 2.”

The intruder clenched his right fist. That was Discrete B’s cue. He instantly changed his speed to move faster than the punch. In the midst of it, he grabbed the throat of his opponent and lifted him. Discrete B knew his opponent was strong enough to break free, so he immediately added several punches to the man’s stomach.

The man breathed in and out trying to catch what little breath he could.

“You may fight like us, boy, but you’re certainly no Discrete. We know our kind, because there is none like us.”

“I guess... you’ve figured out... all the mysteries.”

“All but one. Who are you, boy?”

The man said something so low that even a Discrete couldn’t hear it.

“Speak up, boy.”

After a cough, the man opened his mouth again. “I said... rule one.”

\*FEWM\*

A sudden flash of light. Discrete B let go of the intruder as pain shot up his arm. It may have came unexpectedly, but Discrete B knew where it had come from. He looked up at the ceiling above where Discrete D was. Two females standing… upside down on the ceiling. One with dark hair, the other a blonde. The dark haired one is what caught the Discrete’s attention. In her hands was a Syntic weapon. Where did she get one of those?

Before Discrete B could ponder long about it, the intruder before him continued his attack.

“Decson.” The blonde female spoke. “That was supposed to be a head shot.”

The dark haired girl reloaded her gun and took aim

“Not my fault. Zordo didn’t set up the shot right.”

“That’s what you get for carrying too much about people’s safety.” The blonde grasped one of the orbs she was holding onto. “Zordo better get out the way when it’s my turn, or what happens will be hilarious.”

“I don’t understand it, Eve, but somehow I missed you.”

Decson fired another shot. The piercing light came from her weapon and went imbetween Zordo and Discrete B. Discrete B flinched at the sight, Zordo did not. He continued his onslaught of attacks pushing Discrete B farther and farther away from Diablo. This was ridiculous. Discrete B was being kept on his toes... and not by Discretes, but mere humans. As much as he wanted to insult them, their teamwork was nearly flawless. The male in front of him attacked in ways he shouldn’t have. Discrete B was fast enough to counter, but should he do so properly, the girl would fire at him. It took all his effort to dodge her alone, leaving him open for the male’s attack. And the male did not waist his opportunities. He was a strong person and knew where to hit. His modified elec-shield gave him extra speed and power for his arms, increasing the damage of his blows. They had mastered the Discrete fighting style well, but he knew it better. There was a flaw in their plan. Their priority was to push him back towards the caves he had came from, but when that happened, he’d no longer be in sight of the sniper. He could finish the male there and come back for the others.

\*pow\*

Another blow across the face. Discrete B could taste his own blood. It had been a while since he had even seen his own blood. He came forward...

\*shew\*

Another shot fired. It scraped across his right leg. That was okay, it wasn’t his dominant leg. Even with diminished speed, he could kill this man. He trudged back into the caves of where he had emerged. That was it. He needed only for the man to follow, even if he didn’t, that would give Discrete B time to fall back and form another plan.

Zordo took a breath, then... he leapt forward towards Discrete B... this was it! But upon landing on his right leg, Zordo back-flipped screaming as he did it.

“Now, Savvi!”

A voice came directly above the entrance where Discrete B stood. The young man pressed a button on a control as he spoke.

“And this is the sound of my tech going...”

\*BOOM\*

The caves behind Discrete B erupted with noise. An explosion was causing the caves to collapse from within. There was only one route to safety, directly forward. In that split second, Discrete B ignored all his past plans. He rushed forward as fast as he could and turned his face as he did. But before his second step could be initiated, an orb was tossed just in front of him. Time seemed to slow. Discrete B watched the orb. As it came down, it started to glow. He knew what it was. He knew what it meant... and there was nothing he could do about it.

\*FOOM\*

The orb let out a force causing both Discrete B and Zordo to fly backwards. Zordo flew into the wall of the cave, Discrete B flew into the cave of falling debris. All watched as the cave finished falling and the entrance to it became filled with rocks. When the dust settled, there was an arm sticking out amongst the rubble, with blood flowing from it. It stayed where it was... lifeless

“I think that did it.”

Henry looked at the man who spoke. He was kneeling on the wall above the entrance as easily as anyone could kneel on the floor, just like the women above Henry who were just standing on the ceiling. What was going on! Flashing thunder! Weapons that shot lightning! People who were able to fly!

Zordo slowly got up. It hurt to move any part of his body, but atleast he could move it.

“Care to cut it any closer, Eve? You could’ve killed me.”

“Don’t joke.” Decson began walking down the wall closest to her. “She did want to cut it closer.”

“And I would’ve too.” Eve said following Decson. “If your babysitter hadn’t turned the dial on the spark grenade to seven.”

“You had it up to nine.”

“I wanted it at ten.” Even grinned with squinted as she spoke. “Besides, I wouldn’t have had to throw the grenade if you hadn’t missed the shot.”

“Unlike you, I wanted to escape this with Zordo’s life intact.”

“Pretty sure Zordo could’ve made the shot.”

“I agree!” The other man shouted across the room. He had made his way down the side of the wall and hopped to the floor.

“Shut up, Savvi. When you can even hold a tactical, come back and tell me how easy it is.”

“Hey!” A voice barked. Everyone immediately turned their attention to Diablo. “Line up.” Without hesitation, everyone lined up. Closest to Diablo was Savvi, then Eve, then Decson at the end was Zordo.

Diablo paced in front of the squad of fighters. As he spoke, he got close to the individual he spoke to. “Savvi. You announced your attack before it was delivered. While speaking may have given you an adrenaline rush, that isn’t what your task required. Eve, as much as you trust your teammates and as much as they trust you, it makes matters complicated to tease them in such a fashion. It could’ve lead to doubt within the team. Your opponents won’t hesitate to exploit this. Decson, your shot still needs work as well as your reload time. And you Zordo... that thing on your arm, did you even test it before coming here?”

“No sir.” Zordo did not look at Diablo as he spoke.

“I didn’t think so. Your arm is more damaged than any other part of your body and your... contraption is about to fall apart. What’s the point in gaining the advantage if you tear up your body in the process?”

Diablo began speaking to the group as a whole.

“All of you continually used each others names. Did you not think about the future? What if you had failed? Your opponent would’ve retreated with the knowledge of all your names. You wouldn’t have been able to hide anywhere any longer.”

There was a moment of silence as Diablo paced once more in front of the group.

“But... despite these flaws, you all succeeded in what you’ve been training to do all your lives.”

Everyone in the group felt a sense of happiness grow inside them. They let it show on their faces, all except Zordo who simply sighed.

“Congratualitions, you’ve killed your first Discrete. The fight is over. You’ve won.”

Chapter 108 End