Chapter 41 : Atsuma’s Plan

Baas giggled to himself as he ran across the roof tops of the buildings. He could hear Brute’s guys talking from below. Though they weren’t near his location, they were the loudest people in the territory. What was so funny to Baas was the fact that they couldn’t find him. These guys claimed to be tough, yet it was taking them so much effort just to capture Baas. Baas could only imagine if they had ran into Koroko instead of him.

He soon came to a rooftop he thought was a good place to rest. He laid on his stomach at the edge of the roof to watch the street below. He could see Brute in the distance. It wasn’t too hard to make him out among the other Greys since he was the only one in a hurry. He had broken something out of anger. His group was with him. They were frantically searching for Baas. Baas continued to giggle. These clowns would never catch him. They just weren’t trained like he was. Baas was faster and could think quicker. And as long as they didn’t catch him, Baas wouldn’t have to worry about breaking the rules of Wig. The only hard thing was deciding whether he should keep messing with them until they gave up, or just lie low here. If he kept running, they would eventually realize that Baas was too much for them and give up. Even if he saw them again, he most likely wouldn’t have to worry about them. That would also be more fun than staying put. That would just be too boring, even if there was no chance of them ever catching him ther….

Before Baas could finish his thoughts, a hand grabbed his mouth from behind and pulled him back. Baas tried to scream but the hand over his mouth muffled it. Baas immediately deduced that he had been caught. One of Brute’s men had gotten him. He struggled to get away, but before he could, the person grabbing him leaned all their weight on him, also trapping his arms. Because he was already on the ground, Baas was having a hard time getting free. But no way was there a chance that he was gonna let one of Brute’s guys take him down. He continued his struggle. Maybe he could use the backpack to blind them, or maybe they would slip up just long enough for him to get loose, or maybe…

“Kid!” Came a whisper. “Will you calm down!?”

Kid. Certainly it was a common name to call someone, but the way it was said sounded familiar to Baas. Analysis. It’s what the Center had trained him to do best. He smelled the hand that was wrapped around his face. It didn’t smell of the grassy, clear air smell that the Greys did. It smelled like rock. Like someone who had been living in the mountains or in caves. There was also this weird smell. The smell of someone who had held a weapon many times in their life. Baas now knew who was grabbing him and the realization made him stop struggling. When he did that, Atsuma let go of his mouth and let him off the ground.

“Did you have to grab me like that?” Baas asked as he stood up.

“I didn’t want to take the chance of you screaming.” Atsuma answered. His usual smirk was gone. In fact, he looked kind of angry to Baas. “Now, what have trouble have you gotten yourself into? I can’t believe that I had to come out here and pull your butt out of danger. We’re suppose to be doing this with as little attention as possible. Yet here you are…”

“Why does everyone always assume I’m in the wrong?” Baas interrupted angrily. “Contrary to popular opinion, I don’t dump a bucket of water on every single person I meet.”

Baas thought about that statement. Then a smile came back on his face. “Although, that would be hilarious. ‘Hello they say my name is Baas.’ Bucket of water!” Baas then began to laugh at his own joke. He looked at Atsuma hoping for a chuckle. Atsuma did not find it funny. Baas figured. It wasn’t his best joke, but then again, they never were.

“But seriously Atsuma,” Baas continued, “I’m innocent this time. I was doing what you told me, shopping with Sheina, when these Greys just started attacking me for no reason.

“You didn’t fight back did you?” Atsuma asked.

“No.” Baas said immediately, “Though Sheina certainly tried to. I was able to block her attack though and get the guys to focus back on me.” Baas then went back to the edge of the building. “Now they’re searching for me for publicly humiliating them.”

Atsuma looked at Baas. It seemed like Baas was serious. If that were the case then, Atsuma would have to help him. Considering Baas was a part of his team, Atsuma would have to help him anyway. He smirked at that thought.

“Well,” he asked laying next to Baas, “What’s your plan.”

Baas spoke while keeping his gaze on the street.

“Well, I was debating on either waiting it out here…”

“That’s boring.” Atsuma interrupted

“I know.” Baas said smiling. “So plan B was to keep doing what I was doing. Jumping across roof tops and confusing them. The buildings next to each other are child’s play. I can just make the buildings across the street, but it would take all my effort. Plus I can only reach them with my hands. Eventually these guys will figure out that I only have one path to take.”

“Only one path to take…” Atsuma repeated. His smirk then grew on his face.

He then stood up. Baas followed his lead and stood up too.

“Kid,” Atsuma said, “hand me the bag sword and shield.”

Baas took off the items on his back and passed them to Atsuma. Immediately after, Baas felt lighter. In truth, he had completely forgotten the weight that had been on him up until now. He bounced up and down to test his new lightness.

“Hey!” Atsuma commanded, “Stop that. They’ll hear your shoes clinking.” Atsuma now had on the bag. Baas’ sword was in his right hand and the shield was in his left.

“There.” Atsuma said “Now you should be able to make the jump no problem. Now then, we’re on the far East part of the territory, we’ll head West toward the end, but don’t go in a straight line.”

“But Atsuma, even if I don’t go in a straight line, with five of them on the ground, if I have a specific destination, they should still be able to figure out generally where I’m going.”

Atsuma gave one last smirk and said, “Not if there’s two of you.”

He then took a mighty leap across the street. Atsuma stuck the landing and kept moving. Baas could hear voices coming from below.

“Look, there he is! Split up and don’t lose him!”

Baas understood now. This wasn’t just about escaping. This was about having fun while doing it. He smiled at that thought. Then, he took a big leap across the street to the building that Atsuma had first jumped to. To his surprise, his feet made it onto the roof. In the mist of congratulating himself, he could hear morve voices from below.

“Wait! I saw him back there where we just came from.”

“Yeah,” Baas said to himself, smiling, “this is gonna be fun.”

Chapter 41 End

Chapter 42 : Multiple Baas's

Atsuma jumped over another street. Below he saw one of the goons Baas had talked about. He was beginning to recognize what they looked like now. They were always the one that said something about him when they saw him. Everyone else seemed to stay quiet or mind their own business.

Atsuma looked at his destination. It was still pretty far. He wished that he could run straight there, but if he wanted to keep confusing these people, he would have to keep changing directions. In the distance he heard another one shout. That one must have seen Baas. Between the two of them they could pull this off, but it would be much easier if they had…

“There you are.” Came a voice.

Atsuma looked to his right. There was Koroko across the street, running at the same speed Atsuma was on top of the roofs.

“Atsuma!” came another voice.

Atsuma turned to his left to see Pandora doing the same as Koroko. Atsuma grinned. This is exactly what he needed.

“Sheina told us what happened.” Pandora called out to him.

“Seeing that you have Baas’s stuff, I’m guessing you already know.” Koroko continued. “What’s the plan?”

“Here!” Atsuma called out to both of them. He then threw Baas’ short sword to Koroko and his shield to Pandora. “Head to some random destination and then meet at the west most part of just outside of the territory and make sure those weapons are seen as you do. Baas will meet us there. You know, where we met last time.”

“Well isn’t that a coincidence.” Koroko called out with a smile. “That’s exactly where we told Sheina to go.”

“That is a coincidence.” Atsuma called back. “By the time we all get over there, these guys won’t know what happened to us. Now, let’s go!”

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Brute kept running. He was sure he had seen that Orange kid around the area somewhere. If he had the time, he would stack some barrels and try to get on the roofs himself, but by the time he did that his prey could’ve been too far for him to get. So he would just have to keep his gaze into the air. He pushed aside the people who got in his way. They knew better than to mess with him. He was the toughest in town. And he was the only one who could show the colors what Greys could really do. He had done a good job so far. The others that he had fought showed no resistance as they didn’t want to break the rules of Wig. But this Orange was the first to make a fool of him. He couldn’t have his people doubting him. That’s why he needed to find him. That’s why the Orange was going to pay more than the other colored bands he’d fought. If necessary, with his life. So Brute kept his gaze in the sky. Knowing he’d see signs of the kid soon…

There. He had saw it. Brute smiled evily. Though the kid had stayed close to the center of the buildings, he had let his shield get spotted by Brute. Now all Brute had to do was call out. He knew the general location of the kid. He and his men could surround him and ambush him when he landed. Brute was ready. It was time to alert the others.

“Guys I found him! He’s over here!”

Huh? That wasn’t Brute who shouted that. Brute recognized the voice, it was one of his buddies. He quickly made his way over to where the call came from. Sure enough, a man with a long sword whom Brute knew was running. Brute ran to catch up to him.

“Hey!” He called getting the man’s attention. “Where did you see him?”

The man stopped and pointed in the opposite direction Brute had came from.

“He came from that way Brute.”

“Are you sure it was him?” Brute asked.

“Well, I couldn’t see his face, but he was holding a sword and had an Orange band on. Who else would be running along the roofs wearing an orange band?”

That was correct. The only person they were chasing was the Orange kid, no one else. But Brute didn’t understand. How did he come from the opposite direction of Brute if Brute had just seen him seconds before?

Suddenly, another call was made out.

“He’s over here now!”

Brute and the other man quickly ran to where the voice had come from. There was another of his buddies holding an ax running. Catching up to him, Brute questioned him as he did the other.

“He came from that way.” The man reported.

This time, he was pointing in the opposite direction the kid had started.

“Are you sure? Are you absolutely sure!?” Brute asked getting upset.

“Yeah.” The guy answered nervously. “He was wearing all white and had on an orange band. Though, to be honest, I couldn’t get a good look at him. But who else would be running on the roofs with an orange band?”

Brute grinded his teeth. He then hurried out to continue searching.

“Keep looking!” He called back to the two he left behind.

Something wasn’t right here. How could that kid be in three places at once? It would make sense if he were just fast, but to come from different directions was just impossible.

Brute thoughts were interrupted, though, as once again one of his teammates signaled that he had seen the kid.

“I found him!”

Brute turned to head that way when suddenly another signal was given from the opposite direction.

“He’s over here!”

Brute was distraught. The calls kept coming, all from a different location. Some of them were even made simultaneously. How was this happening? Were the guys just messing with him because they didn’t want to fight the kid? Fine. He would just have to find the kid himself.

He continued his journey down one of the crowd filled streets. There. He had seen the bag that the kid had been carrying in the distance. Now all he had to do was catch up to him and…

“Hey you! Get down from there!”

Brute turned around. He didn’t see the whole body, but some one had jumped across the roof behind him. Before their body was out of site from below, Brute was able to catch site or the left arm wearing an orange band and hold a sword. A cold sweat dripped down the side of Brute’s face. How? How was this possible? How was there more than one of that kid? Suddenly, something jumped over Brute’s head. It was an amazing jump. Many marveled at the site as they knew they could never themselves jump the width of one of the streets. That wasn’t what Brute noticed of though. This time, he could see the entire body of the person jumping. Though they were holding the shield he had seen earlier and were wearing an orange band, they weren’t the person he was looking for. In fact, this person was a female.

Brute punched his fist into a nearby wall. He understood now. Somehow the kid had contacted more Oranges and without being seen they took his stuff and began traveling by rooftop like he did. Brute ground his teeth even harder than before. How could these Oranges have tricked him? And even though he knew the trick now, there was nothing he could do about it. His men were chasing these guys all over the territory and had no idea what the real target was. It was likely that they were all going separate directions and were going to meet up somewhere. But Brute had no idea where.

He closed his eyes. He had been outsmarted. He knew that everyone in the territory would remember this. No one would respect him any longer.

“Excuse me. I’m looking for the nearest exit.”

Brute’s ears reacted to the voice. It was one he had heard before. He looked up and in the distance. There, he saw something that made him grin.

Chapter 42 End

Chapter 43 : Orange versus Greys

Baas looked around. He had not been followed. It appeared Atsuma’s plan had worked. Though in reality he was sure that he would have been able to make it here by himself. He crept out of the bushes he had been hiding in toward the outer wall of the Grey territory. He was now outside the territory. He hoped this had been the right spot. Though it was light out, the clouds still made it hard to see the exact position of the sun. He really hoped he had gone west.

“Baas?” came a familiar voice.

Baas turned to see Sheina approaching him. In her hands were the clothes he had seen her with at the store. Baas smiled as she came toward him. The fact that she was okay meant that his plan to make Brute forget all about her had worked.

“Baas,” Sheina continued. “Are you okay? Did they catch you?”

Baas gave Sheina a big smile.

“Are you kidding me? Those guys were a piece of cake to lose.”

“Then why did Atsuma ask us to help?”

Sheina and Baas turned to see Pandora and Koroko emerging from the bushes. Baas noticed that Koroko had his sword and Pandora had his shield. He then began to realize how he was able to get away even easier then he had predicted when Atsuma had left with his things.

“So you guys were in on it too?” Baas asked with a smile.

“Would I be holding this toothpick if Atsuma hadn’t asked me to?” Koroko asked. He then threw the sword for Baas to catch. After doing so, Baas went to take his shield from Pandora. He then proceeded to place both of them on his back.

“By the way,” Koroko continued, “nice mess you made. This place needed some excitement.”

“I didn’t…” Baas started, but then he just ended with a sigh. He was tired of explaining how it wasn’t his fault. Besides Koroko wasn’t upset about it, so Baas decided to let him believe what he wanted.

“By the way, where is Atsuma?” Sheina asked.

Pandora and Koroko looked at each other with the same expression. One that said they knew exactly where he was.

“Knowing him,” Pandora explained, “he’s probably gonna make some grand entrance.”

“It’s what he always does when we split up.” Koroko agreed shaking his head. “He waits for everyone to appear before him and then he makes a grand stand by saying…”

“The Great One has arrived!” came a voice.

The group turned up to the large wall that was behind them. Standing there with a smirk on his face was Atsuma. His arms were crossed and his feet were spread as though he were holding a position.

All the faces of the ones below were different. Pandora rolled her eyes, showing she had seen this before. Koroko laughed and shook his head, showing he knew something like this would happen. Sheina looked at him confused, wondering exactly what he was doing. Baas had marvel on his face, showing that he wished he had thought to do that.

“So my trusted companions.” Atsuma said jumping down from the tall wall, “I trust my plan went off without a hitch.”

“Plan?” Sheina asked.

“You know that guy who you tried to punch earlier? Well his gang chased me down the streets but they lost me when I found a way to get on the rooftops. Atsuma found me and made a plan to confuse them by having everyone take my stuff and run around on the rooftops.”

“And seeing how none of us were followed,” Atsuma observed, “I guess they couldn’t tell which one was the real Baas.”

“We didn’t need to know which one was the real Baas.” Came a voice from the nearby trees and bushes. The group turned toward them to see Brute and his gang emerging all holding weapons.

“Panda,” Atsuma complained, “you didn’t see these guys coming?”

“Well I wasn’t exactly looking for them Ats.” Pandora complained back.

“See,” Brute explained, “I knew that eventually you would reunite with your little female friend there. So I just had to follow her. You know, you really should’ve let her in on the plan.”

Atsuma’s team bunched together as the Brute’s gang spread out around them. Behind them was the large wall, so there was no where to run.

“Oh way to go Sheina. They followed you here.” Baas accused.

“Well how was I suppose to know…” Sheina began. However she couldn’t finish before Atsuma stopped her.

“He’s just messing with you Sheina. Baas, now is not the time to be getting us angry If you want to use your joke powers use it on them, not us.”

Baas nodded as he kept his attention on Brute.

“What the plan here Atsuma?” Pandora asked.

“I’m thinking.” Atsuma answered rushed. He was stuck. He knew they could beat these guys easily, but there was the whole “rules of Wig” thing. Had it been just him, Koroko, and Pandora he knew they could also easily run with probably just a few scratches. However, he wasn’t so confident in Sheina and Baas’ abilities.

“Atsuma, do you really have to think that hard?” Koroko asked. He then pulled his long sword from his waist. “It’s obvious what we have to do.”

Atsuma staired at the people in front of him. He looked at the people next to him. He then took a deep breath.

“Koroko’s right guys.” Atsuma then took his curved sword from his waist. “We don’t have a choice.”

And with that, Baas, Sheina and Pandora all pulled out their weapons. Baas quickly tossed his sword to his left hand and slapped the strap to his shield on his right shoulder. Sheina took the twin swords from her waist and twirled them in both of her hands. In the process, all of the clothes she had fell on the floor. Pandora took her bow and quickly readied it to fire. The Oranges were prepared to fight the Greys.

However, Baas still had doubt in his mind.

“Are you sure Atsuma? The rules of Wig…”

“Sometimes Baas, you have to break the rules. These guys aren’t really giving us much of a choice. I say the chance of the Discretes seeing us and turning us into outlaws is worth not dying from these guys’ blades.”

Baas understood. There would be no point in trying to follow the rules if it meant they were just going to die anyway. But what about miss Vanessa? Would they still be able to save her if the Discretes made them outlaws?

Meanwhile, Brute’s group were having second thoughts of their own.

“Brutes, these guys aren’t playing around.” the one with the ax said, “If we fight them, they’ll take us out for sure.”

“Then let them do it.” Brute said. As he did, all the members of the group looked at him confused.

“Don’t you see? This is just what we wanted. To show the colored bands true colors. The way they treat us is just wrong. One of two things will happen here. We’ll beat these guys and prove once and for all that we’re just as good as them, or they’ll defeat us, showing what colored bands cruelty is capable of. We’ve got nothing to lose.”

“Hey Brute, Don’t you think you’re taking this too far?” One with a long sword asked. “Sure we’ve taken out some colored bands, but we’ve never killed anyone before.”

“And yet our people suffer anyway. If you want to be such cowards then fine. I’ll do it myself and get all the glory.”

The members of the group looked at each other. They could leave Brute right now and forget about this. Their looks to each other said it all. No. Brute was their friend and he was right. The only way to get back their peaceful life was to take it.

And with that, they each grasped their weapon of choice tightly, and then charged in toward the Orange team.

“Okay guys.”Atsuma yelled out, “let show them what we’re made of!”

The team of Orange was ready. They each sought their target, knowing which one would be best for whom. Baas would take on the one with the ax. A close range fight. Sheina would take on the one with the short sword. His one sword training would be no match for her two swords. Koroko and Pandora would take on the two with the long swords. They were Koroko’s specialty. Plus Koroko had to stay near Pandora as she was a Far. Naturally, the two leading the groups would fight one on one. Atsuma knew that his team would win easily, but at what cost? Was the search for their Commander really going to end there?

“That’s quite enough!”

Upon hearing the voice, the Greys running all stopped. They looked up at the wall behind the Orange team. Atsuma’s team did the same. On the wall was a female scowling at what she was seeing below. She wore a brick-red tight top. Her pants were black and hugged her legs. Her hair was a dirty blonde with light blonde highlights. On her left bicep, there was a grey band. What was most noticeable about her though were two things. One, the black mask she wore that covered all above her nose and below her forehead. And two, the weapon she was carrying. There was some type of loose belt around her waist and attached to the left side was some type of sword. The sheath it was in was black with yellow and red flames. The handle of the sword itself had a creature on it.

“It’s the Dragon!” came a voice from one of the grey men.

“The Dragon?” Baas asked, “That’s such a cool name!”

“I think they’re talking about her sword Baas.” Sheina corrected, “There’s a dragon on the handle.”

“It could be both of their names.” Koroko observed.

“That would make sense.” Pandora agreed.

While his teammates were talking it over, Atsuma stared at the female on the wall. She looked very familiar. The clothes, the height, the voice… they all matched.

“Keely?”

Chapter 43 End

Chapter 44 : The Dragon

The female looked down upon the quarreling group. They looked back up at her. She then gave a faint smirk.

“Brute, are you harassing people again?”

Brute ground his teeth before answering back.

“Dragon! Didn’t I tell you to mind your own business!”

“Believe it or not Brute I’m trying to help you. I know your upset about the Golds mistreating us but this isn’t…”

“SHUT UP! I’ve already ignored your stupid speeches plenty of times. This time I just won’t listen to it enough.”

“Well then.” The Dragon said “I guess we’ll talk with our weapons.”

“Ha!” Brute scoffed. “You think you can take on all of us!?”

“I have before.”

“Last time it was dark and you had us surprised.”

“That’s your excuse huh? Well this time, you won’t have one.”

The female then leaped over the group of Oranges to roll and land in front of the Greys.

“Oh my goodness that is so cool!” Baas cried out.

“She does have a certain grace.” Sheina said admiring.

The Dragon smirked. Though it appeared she was doing it to the Greys, she knew herself it was because she heard the compliments.

“What are you gonna do now Brute?” She asked in a cocky voice. “If your men kill a Grey, what does that serve into your plan?”

Brute continued to grind his teeth. He knew that killing a Grey would accomplish nothing to his plan. However, he was angry and need to get through.

Alright everyone, focus on the Dragon.

The men hesistated.

“What are you guys waiting for?” Brute shouted.

The men still did not attack.

“Looks like they’re remembering the last couple times they tussled with me.” Dragon said with a smirk.

Baas was ecstatic. This was the coolest thing he had ever seen. But at this rate he would never get to see any actual action. But he knew what to do.

“Looks like I was right Sheina.” He said aloud for everyone to here. “The Greys in Brute’s group can’t handle a simple girl.”

Dragon brushed her long hair with her fingers. Catching on to Baas’ plan, she played along with him.

“You got that right. I sometimes wonder which one of us is the girl.”

And with that, everyone man wearing a Grey band charged in to attack. They had substituted their fear with anger.

That was what Baas and Dragon had been hoping for.

Though that had charged at her, the group soon realized they could all not fight at once without getting in each others way. The first one to approach the female was the one with the ax. He began slicing wildly at her. Dragon continued her smirking as she dodged the blows. She barely had to move her feet as she was doing. Eventually though she did. Not to get out of the way, but to trip the attacker when he had come at her with all his strength. The guy came tumbling down.

Dragon let out a cute giggle and then looked at the rest of the group.

“Next.”

The one with the short sword tried this time. Screaming as he came, he charged toward Dragon with a downward slice. Dragon did not move her feet at all. In fact, she didn’t move most of her body. However, she did reach for the loosed belt around her waist. When the man was close enough, Dragon turn the belt to the right around her waist. The sheath attached to it slapped the man in the face before he was close enough to reach her. The belt proceeded to spin and then rested the sword and sheath back on her left waist.

Dragon yawned a fake yawn.

She then put her hands on her hips and shook her head to get some of her hair out of her face.

“Are we fighting yet?”

The two with the long swords decided to attack simultaneously. Seeing that, Dragon untied the sheath from her belt. She placed her left hand in the middle of the sheath and her right hand on the dragon handle.

Baas gasped as he saw this. He could tell by how she was holding, that she wasn’t just planning on using the sword. She would take out the sword to block the guy on her right and use the sheath to block the one on her left. Baas smiled as he saw this. If he were fighting her, he would switch up and attack her open lower middle. But that’s not what these guys would do. They would probably just continue thinking she couldn’t block both of them at once.

Sure enough, Baas was right. The two men continued their horizontal slashes toward the female. She took out her sword from the sheath to block one sword, and slashed the sheath at the same time to block the others. After surprising the two, Dragon quickly rushed forward along their swords. She then dropped down quickly and swept their legs. As the men fell, she quickly stood up.

“That’s what happens when you put all your faith into one attack.” Dragon said, “when it’s done, you’ve got no more spirit left to fight.”

Four of the men were now on the floor. Brute was the only one standing.

“Okay Brute.” Dragon said turning to him. “Do you want to try? Who knows, you might be able to atleast cut my hair.”

Brute’s cold sweat returned. Once again he was in the face of someone obviously better than him. And once again they had made a fool of him publicly. There was only one choice to take.

“Guys… let’s go.”

“What?” said the one with the short sword while trying to get up, “we went through all that trouble and you’re not even going to try?”

“That’s what I said isn’t it!” Brute screamed, “Now let’s go!”

The grey men quickly got off the floor and proceeded into the thick of the trees. Brute, however, had one more thing to say.

“This isn’t over Dragon.”

“So long as you keep attacking people, it won’t be.” Dragon replied. She watched as Brute slowly back into the darkness of the trees.

“That was so cool!”

Dragon turned surprise to see Baas standing right next to her.

“The way you used both your sheath and you sword… and how you were like ‘pow’ ‘bam’… and then you had that entrance… plus what you said about your haircut… that was just incredibly AWESOME!”

“What Baas means to say,” Sheina corrected, “is thank you for helping us out.”

“Uh…” Dragon stuttered, “Sure. No problem.”

“They say my name is Baas.” Baas said introducing himself. “Who are you.”

“I’m called Dragon. Or did you not catch that?”

“Oh I get it.” Baas said grinning. “It’s a secret isn’t it?”

“Well yeah,” Dragon said putting rubbing the back of her head in embarrassment.

“Hey Sheina, check it out, she’s blushing. We’ve got a genuine heroine here and she’s embarrassed.”

Dragon continued to rub her head. She was glad she had been able to help out. Most of the time she was passed off as just a rumor, but an actual thank you from someone was a breath of fresh air. Still, she was not used to it and the attention made her blush a lot. She wish she could tell them her name was…

“Keely?” Atsuma asked from behind

Dragon twitched as she heard Atsuma’s voice. That’s right, she was suppose to get out of their before he had gotten a good look at her. Maybe she could still play it off.

“What’s a Keely?” She asked, “Sounds like some kind of fruit.”

Atsuma raised his left eyebrow.

“You’re not fooling me Keely. I just saw you wearing that exact same outfit. You might want to think of a better disguise.”

Keely let out a sigh.

“Okay Atsuma, you caught me.”

“Keely?” Koroko thought. “You don’t mean the old man’s daughter Keely?”

“Yep that’s her.” Atsuma responded.

“But, the last time we saw her…” Pandora started.

“I know.” Atsuma interrupted, “she was half that size. But who would’ve thought huh? Can you imagine what your father would think if he saw you like this.”

Keely shrugged. It was true that only one person knew that she was the Dragon and that was Elxa.

Atsuma smirked at the girl in front of him. He then ruffled up her hair.

“He’d probably be so proud.”

“Yeah that guys gotten very soft since he retired.” Koroko agreed. “Though he used to be a real Gold in the past, now he’d probably put on a duplicate mask and go with you.”

Atsuma and Pandora laughed at the joke. Baas and Sheina could only smile and listen since they didn’t know who they were talking about.

Keely had a smile on her face too. Suddenly though, she bowed.

“Please. Don’t tell him. Or anyone.”

Atsuma stopped laughing and his face grew serious.

“Okay. I’m not one to spoil secrets, but why? Why go by Dragon in the first place? Why not just be Keely?”

Keely stood up from her bowing. “It’s against the rules of Wig to fight. If the Discretes come here and hear about Keely fighting, they’ll turn me into a black band. But if they hear about Dragon fighting, then there’s nothing they can do about it since they don’t know who she is. I just want this place to be safe for me and my sister like my dad wanted.”

“But,” Baas asked, “You only defend people. You’re not starting fights with people like Brute is.”

“It doesn’t matter to the Discretes.” Keely said angrily. “To them, obeying the rules is what’s most important. That’s it. If they see me breaking them, they won’t stop to ask why. They’ll just do what they do best. Follow the Official’s orders.”

“It’s okay.” Atsuma assured, “We won’t tell anyone.”

Keely smiled at Atsuma. It was nice to know someone so trustworthy.

“Keely.” Atsuma began, “As the Dragon, I take it you know who comes in and out of this territory.”

“For the most part I do.” Keely responded.

“Well…” Atsuma began, “I need your help with something. I was wondering if you had seen…”

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!”

“What in the Wig was that?” Baas shouted.

“Someone’s in trouble.” Sheina answered, “Either that or really scared.”

“That’s was Elxa!” Keely said upset, “I told her to scream if anyone gave her trouble. But there’s no one in the territory who would bother her.”

“No,” Atsuma said, “but there are some who would bother the Dragon.”

Keely’s eyes widened as Atsuma said this. She quickly ran to find the nearest opening to the wall of the territory. Atsuma and his team followed.

Chapter 44 End

Chapter 45 : Three Lives, One Choice

Keely ran as fast as she could toward her shop. That’s where Elxa would be. As she did, she could hear those in the crowd talking.

“Look, it’s the Dragon.”

“Did you see her sword?”

“I thought she was just a myth.”

Normally she listened intently when anyone talked about the Dragon, but this time her sister was in danger. There was no time for stupid things like that. Following her closely were Atsuma and the rest of his Orange team. Whatever was happening, Keely was a friend. They would help her deal with it.

The group of people turned the corner of the street Keely’s store was on. The sight they beheld made them all afraid and angry at the same time.

There was Brute and his men. In front of Brute was Elxa. Brute was holding a short sword up to her throat. Keely looked into her sisters eyes. She was alive, but terrified. Brute had not done anything to her… yet.

“Brute!” She called out to him. “What in the Wig do you think you’re doing!?”

“Oh, I’m sorry Dragon. Or should I call you… Keely.”

Keely gasped as her name was spoken.

“I can’t believe I didn’t see it before.” Brute continued to shout. “Of course you’re the Dragon. The only way you could handle weapons so well, is if you knew all about them. You know, you should learn to talk more quietly. I could hear you chatting with your Orange friends all the way from here.”

“Brute if you put one hand on her I’ll…”

“Ah ah ah.” Brute said wagging his finger. “Take one more step, and you’re an only child.”

Baas gritted his teeth. If he could, he would help, but there was nothing he could do. Then he looked around. There were people around. Grey bands were everywhere.

“Hey you guys!” He pointed at the ones closest to Brute. They looked at him when he called them. “Don’t just stand there, save her!”

The people near Brute looked at Elxa. She pleaded with them using her eyes. They then looked at Brute. He threatened them with his. His eyes were heard over Elxa’s and they backed away.

“What are you doing!?” Baas called out. “Someone help her!”

All the Greys near the area began to depart. Soon, there was a big gap between Brute’s men and Atsuma’s team.

Baas was getting furious. “Why won’t you guys help her!? You cowards!”

“Calm down Baas.” Atsuma said while still staring at Brute, “it’s not their fault. They came here because they chose to live a life away from violence. Due to that, they don’t know what to do when violence comes. Where as we’ve been trained to face our fears, they’ve been trained to avoid them.”

Baas ground his teeth some more. If he had known all of this would have happened, he would have never started this. Then he remember, this wasn’t his fault. This was Brute’s fault. But why? Just to prove he was as good as a colored band? Was it really that serious as he made it out to be? And if so, why did no one else feel this way? Baas didn’t have the answers to these questions. All he knew was that someone was in danger and he wanted to help them. Brute’s evil smile made him even angrier. He didn’t care about the rules of Wig any more, if he could, he was gonna make Brute pay.

“Baas!” Atsuma said snapping Baas out of his thoughts. “Don’t lose yourself here. Remember, getting your enemy upset is our best weapon, we don’t want it used against us.”

Right. Baas calmed himself down. There was nothing anger was going to do.

Once he saw that Baas wasn’t going to act, Atsuma turned to Pandora.

“Can you get a shot Panda?”

“No.” She responded, “I could if he couldn’t see me. But if he saw me reach for my bow, I’m sure he would threaten the girl again. Sorry. If Vee were here, she’d be able to get it. She can arch a perfect shot instantly.”

“It’s not your fault.” Atsuma said, “but we need to…”

“HEY!” Brute interrupted, “Tell those guys to shut up! I don’t want you guys making any plans!”

Atsuma and Pandora ceased talking.

“That’s more like it! Now, Dragon, I want you to do a little something for me!”

Keely felt her pulse rise as she listened to Brute talk.

“Walk over to the girl in the orange.”

Keely obeyed and approached Sheina.

“That’s it!” Brute grinned. He then turned and looked at Baas. “By the way, boy, you can remember that what’s about to happen next is your fault for the things you said earlier.”

Baas sucked his teeth.

Brute let out a sinister snicker.

“Now then, for the two girls who are supposedly better than me. Dragon you have that pretty little sword on you, but I noticed you never use the blade offensively. You only defend. I want you to take that sword…

And kill the girl in front of you.”

Everyone gasped.

“Of course, her friends may save her, but in order to do that, they have to kill you. If they save you in any other way, or if they try to run, well… my hand just might slip. So I’m letting you choose Oranges. Who would you prefer to die? Will you choose your teammate’s life, the life of this territory’s savior, or the life of this little girl. And to make things interesting, I’ll give our Dragon there til the count of ten to strike. One.”

Baas knew what he was doing. No matter what, his plan was to show that either a Grey could kill a colored band, or that a colored band was willing to kill a Grey. But why? Didn’t he see that there was no logic to this? It was only self satisfying.

“Two.”

That was it. Baas had figured it out. Brute really thought in his mind that this was right. He was so into himself that he couldn’t tell. Baas wished he could let him know that, but if he was that ignorant, there was no way he would listen.

“Three.”

Koroko began to grab his sword. Until he saw Atsuma raise his hand. Atsuma then looked at Koroko and shook his head. Whatever Koroko was thinking, attack Keely or Brute, Atsuma knew it was a bad idea.

“Four.”

Sheina looked at Keely. Though Sheina was older, they were around the same height. There was fear in Keely’s eyes. Sheina could see her reflection in them. There was fear in her eyes too.

“Five”

Keely grasped her sword and took it out of its sheath from her side. She was shaking as she was doing it. She closed her eyes, still trying to decide what to do. Tears began to flow down them.

“Six.”

Pandora looked over to Atsuma. Surely he would have a plan. Someway. There had to be someway to get out of this. Atsuma always came up with the answers. What was taking him so long?

“Seven”

Atsuma looked around. Nothing. No matter what he thought of, there was nothing he could do. He knew that Koroko was the fastest there, and he wouldn’t be able to reach them on time. He knew Pandora had the best aim, and she wouldn’t be able to prepare an arrow on time. If they had some combination of decent aim and speed… Combination… that was it!

“Eight”

Baas looked at Atsuma. He was trying to tell him something. His feet were tapping the ground. Why? What was he trying to say? Maybe if Baas mimicked him it would…

\*clink\*

“Nine”

Keely reopened her eyes. She had decided what to do. She raise the sword. There was no doubt in her mind. She was going to bring it down. She staired Sheina dead in the eyes.

“Do it.” Sheina said in a whisper. Tears were pouring from her eyes as well.

“Well, Dragon, what is your choice?”

Keely let out a yell as she brought the sword down. Sheina closed her eyes and screamed as well.

It was silent for a moment.

Sheina didn’t know what had happened. Was she dead? She opened her eyes to check. To her surprise, she wasn’t. And to an even bigger surprise, she was no longer staring at Keely. Baas was in front of her. In one hand, he held Keely’s arm with the sword in it. In the other, his hand was on Keely’s throat pushing her away. Why was he pushing Keely away? Sheina then looked at the sword. It was not pointed at her. The sword was pointed at Keely’s stomach. She had tried to take her own life.

“What have you done?” Keely asked distraught, “let me go so I can save…”

“I doubt killing yourself would do a thing. Brute’s not going by logic. He’s going by what’s making him feel better. Once you were dead, he was probably going to kill her anyway just to anger us.”

Baas then looked Keely dead in the eye. “Life is a precious thing. Who are we to decide who gets to lose it?”

“Hey brat!” Brute called out to Baas, “that wasn’t the deal!”

Brute then raised the sword he was holding to bring it down on Elxa.

Baas only had one shot. It was a long shot, but it was a chance. He pivoted on one foot, moving his arms so that they avoided hitting the two females around him. His body remembered his fight in the Orange base with Sheina. As he spun, his shield slid down his arm. Finally, it flew from his arm directly toward Brute. As soon as he’d realized it was off, Baas took off after it. Both were headed directly for Brute.

Brute was now prepared. He had an agreement and that had been broken. He brought down the sword to place it inside Elxa.

\*SHING\*

His hand bounced back. Baas’ shield had made it in time. The blade had come down to hit the shield and bounce away from Elxa.

Brute was distraught. He looked up to see what had happened. Seeing Baas running toward him though filled him with fear. Baas was now moving faster than before. He was moving at an incredible speed.

Baas feet ached from not wearing shoes on a dirt road, but that was not important. He had to use his new speed to reach Brute. What Atsuma had told him was to take off the shoes and catch Brute by surprise. Without them, he would be able to move at his proper speed.

Realizing what was happening, Brute re prepared for his onslaught. No! It was too early! Baas watched as the sword went back up. He pushed his legs as far as he could. He wasn’t going to make it. Baas watched as Brute’s sword began to remake its descent onto Elxa. Baas calculated everything in his head. He stretched his arm out to grab the girl, but he knew the truth. He wasn’t going to make it.

As the sword came closer to her face, Elxa wanted to let out another scream but fear gripped her. She could tell, the Orange kid wasn’t going to make it on time.

\*SHING\*

“Ow!” Brute hollered.

Something struck his hand forcing the blade to fall from it some distance away.

Baas kept running, and as he did, he grabbed Elxa from Brute clutches and held her in his arms as his momentum sent him crashing to the floor.

Brute looked at Baas and Elxa.

“Why you…”

“That’s quite enough.” Came a deep voice.

Everyone turned their attention to where the voice had come from. Just then, the sun came out. Suddenly, three shadows were looking down upon Brute. There were three figures looking down from the roof of Keely’s store. Soon though, the sun went back behind the clouds and the figures were able to be seen. They wore one piece black suits that covered everything except there faces. Over their eyes, they wore sunglasses and had serious looks on their face. The ones on the right and in the middle were brunette males. The one on the left was a brunette female.

Baas looked up at the figures. The site of them sent a shiver down his spine. Not that he was really afraid of them, they just brought that certain atmosphere whenever he saw them. But he knew that it might be the best that they had come. They were going to end this.

Everyone down below who gazed at the figures knew who they were, but only Brute said their name as he quaked in the fear.

“The Discretes.”

Chapter 45 End