Chapter 54 : A Different Kind of Fight

“Dodge. Jump. Attac… wait no BLOCK! Can I get to… DUCK! Block. Block. Dodge. Block. Attac… no wait block. Back up. Behind you! Turn to block. Dodge. Block. Where’s Korok… dodge.”

Atsuma’s sword never stopped moving as he tried to fight off the multiple blue bands. Three. That’s how many blue bands he had to fight off. Two were skinny, but muscular males and the third was the same type of female. Atsuma was doing all he could to fight them. However, “all that he could” was only defending. These Blues fought differently than the other Blues Atsuma had faced before. They fought well. One on one, he could take any of them on, but they seemed to know that. Fighting as a team, they attacked his open areas. Atsuma wished he could make his way over to Koroko. With their teamwork, they’d be able to take out the guys together. This method wasn’t working though. Atsuma couldn’t use any of his tricks. He had to use direct attacks and all of his speed just to make sure he didn’t lose.

In another part of the opening of the forest, Koroko was wishing the same thing Atsuma was. That his best friend was next to him. Well… his other best friend. In the midst of the excitement, Koroko and Pandora had wound up fighting together. Koroko knew that he could trust Pandora’s skills, but this was not a battle of strategy. This was a battle of force. With the multiple people coming at him, Koroko had to find a way to get to Atsuma. He couldn’t though. Should he leave Pandora’s side, she would have no defense in this fight meant for Nears. For now, he would have to work with what he had.

Sheina and Keely backed slowly away from the open field toward the forest. Facing them were four blue bands. All big, muscular guys wearing bandanas. They all had curved swords. However, unlike the rest of the group, these people had not decided to attack yet. Sheina figured it was because they probably looked the most fragile of the group. But what was going to happen? The tension was too intense for her to bear.

Baas, on the other hand, felt the complete opposite of Sheina. The enemy had decided to only let one person attack him. That didn’t stop Baas from having fun though. His speed easily outmatched the large, muscular foe in front of him. With a smile on his face, he fought with the man, happy to be in a battle again after so long.

Atsuma took a split second to glance at Baas. Atleast he wouldn’t need watching. But Atsuma couldn’t watch him any way. He needed to stay focus. Analysis. It’s what the Center had trained him to do best. The enemies were all wearing the same thing. Blue bandanas, red and white striped t-shirts and brown, sturdy shoes. They also all had the same weapon, curved swords. Same as Atsuma’s. But why? Actually, it was pretty smart. Atsuma figured that it would confuse the enemy more if a team wore similar flashy colors and used the same type of weapons. It makes it harder to tell whose coming at you.

Okay, so the Blues had out strategized him this time, but that didn’t mean his team couldn’t win. They may have caught the team by surprise, but this was the best team in Orange. Atsuma knew he could trust his teammates, and that mean he could focus on his own fight.

The female came from in front of Atsuma with a horizontal slash. Atsuma wanted to block it, but he knew not to. For coming behind him was another horizontal slash from another person. So he ducked to dodge the first attack and immediately put his sword behind him in a vertical position using one hand to block the second. This would have been a good opportunity for the third guy to attack, but Atsuma knew he was currently out of range. He quickly focused his attention back on the female. With a curved sword, one could easily follow up a horizontal slash. She did. With a vertical one. Atsuma took this opportunity to block the attack. He could hear the first man approaching for a re-attack. Instinctively, and without losing his block, he lifted his right leg and kicked behind him. His foot made contact with the guy’s face who fell to the grass. The second guy whom had been out of range before now attacked from Atsuma’s left. Atsuma quickly pushed back the girl he was blocking to force her to jump back a couple of inches. This gave him room to turn to his left and block the attack. However, the attack was quick and not forced. This was good for Atsuma as he quickly turned to re-block the female. Going back and forth between the two, Atsuma continued to repel their barrage of attacks.

The first man whom Atsuma had kicked got up and gritted his teeth. Atsuma had his back facing the man meaning his attention was toward the other two. The man, using both his anger and his wits, saw his opportunity to get his revenge. He quickly sprinted toward Atsuma. Atsuma saw it out of the corner of his eye, but was not fast enough to dodge it. He screamed as the foot of the enemy went into his side.

Rolling in the grass, Atsuma landed a few feet away on his back. He wanted to grab his side and groan in pain, the kick had not been a light one, but immediately and instinctively he lifted his legs straight up. The reason was, the girl had followed him and did a vertical slice toward the fallen man’s legs. Atsuma’s instincts saved him as the sword hit nothing but grass. Not even a second after the, the female followed up her vertical slice with a horizontal. Her sword stayed low to the ground, going under Atsuma’s legs and toward his back. Atsuma could barely see the sword, but his body knew what to do even from that glance. His legs had not stopped moving from the dodge. Atsuma continued his momentum in his legs and had them come back down. As he did that, in a worm like fashion, his body followed his legs, going up then down. The sword that came under Atsuma hit nothing but air as he landed on his feet.

Seeing the move, the girl finally stopped her constant movement. She stared in awe at Atsuma. Her face went from serious to frustrated and the words that came from her suggested disbelief.

“No way!”

Atsuma smirked at this. He looked at the three he was fighting with a raised eyebrow and said smugly, “Is that all you got?”

Koroko swung his sword toward the man attacking him. The man was able to block it. He wanted to push the man back and finish him, but another Blue came from the right to attack. Koroko pushed his current man away to attack the incoming man. He couldn’t let either one get past him. Should they, then Pandora would have to fend herself off from Nears while she was simply a Far. As he stared angrily at the man, Koroko’s mind emptied from his environment. The first man decided to take that opportunity to attack again. He came toward Koroko quickly with a vertical slice. Koroko saw him, but he couldn’t stop him. His body wasn’t in a good position to move nor block. The man’s arm came down to finish Koroko.

\*Shing\*

The sword pushed away from hitting Koroko and the man stumbled. Though still gripping his sword, he looked at Pandora angrily for disturbing his attack with her arrows. Koroko also looked at Pandora while still holding off his foe.

“Hey, how about we kill the people instead of just pushing them back?”

Pandora took another arrow out and began targeting.

“Just keep your mouth shut Koroko. If you knew how difficult this was, you wouldn’t be talking.”

“Difficult? Aren’t you suppose to be the best Far in all of Orange?”

“Says the supposed best Near who can’t even defeat two guys.”

“Hey, be quiet. If you knew how difficult this was, you wouldn’t be talking.”

Sheina felt like a cornered mouse, waiting for the cat to strike her. She stared at the men. They seemed to have a bloodlust in their eyes. Sheina was terrified. Would she live through this?

“What are we gonna do?” she asked to herself aloud. However, she had forgotten there was another person listening.

“What kind of question is that? We fight them of course.” Keely said.

“But…” Sheina stuttered, “the odds are two to one. We’re not like Atsuma and Koroko. We can’t fight as fast as them. And these aren’t amateurs like the guys you fought in your territory.”

Keely’s attitude still did not change.

“Maybe for people calculations it’s two to one,” Keely said still facing forward, “but both of our techniques make the fight a little more interesting.”

Sheina looked at Keely. There was an intense smile on her face. She was actually enjoying all of this. Every last second. Even though she was younger, she was not scared like Sheina was. She was not a cornered mouse waiting for the cat. She was a dragon waiting for the fool to challenge her mighty power. Seeing this gave Sheina the confidence she needed. She was not about to be the worst one on the team. Especially not if one of the team members was someone with no training.

Keely looked at Sheina with her intense smile. Sheina returned it with one of her own. Nodding at each other, the two then jumped forward to attack.

The Blue’s were taken by surprise as they did not think the girls would attack them. This allowed them to be separated into groups of two. Keely had two and Sheina had two. Keely pushed her people to her right while Sheina had her guys jump to the left.

Keely started her attack by jumping and swinging the Dragon, sword and Sheath, vertically, using both her hands, toward the first guy to her left. The other guy on her right took this opportunity to attack her with a diagonal slice. Keely’s right hand was on the handle part of her sword. Using it, she separated the sword from its sheath to block the man’s attack. Now the sheath was in her left hand and the sword was in her right. The men once again found themselves shocked as they had not expected her to use her sheath as a weapon. Keely smirked. She then took a quick hop backwards to get out of the hold they had her in. Once she felt her feet hit the ground, she instantly pounced forward. Trying to remember what her father taught her, she attacked the men with a barrage of slices.

“When it’s two on one, keep them aggravated and distract them.” She thought to herself. “Don’t allow them to work together or they will catch you off guard”

Meanwhile, Sheina was holding her own with her fight. As she attacked and defended using the speed and confusion of a twin sword user, she did not allow herself to slow up. These men were more experienced. Chances are, they would be able to finish her should she let up. However that wasn’t about to happen. She kept turning, attacking one then the other to ensure they were too busy to think of another strategy. The least she could do was hold them off until Atsuma or Koroko could come help her.

Baas had been having fun the whole fight. Now… he was starting to get bored. He looked at the guy the Blues had decided would be his opponent. Like the others, his skin was darker shade of peach then those of Orange. He was young, like the others. He was also big and strong. Baas would be in trouble should the man ever get hold of him. That was the last thing Baas was worried about.

“Um,” Baas asked the man. “Exactly why did your group figure that everyone else got to fight many people, while I just got one?”

“You look the least experienced.” The man answered in a friendly like manner. “You’re obviously younger than most of the people on your team and you decided to wear all white in a fight. White stands out more than any other color when it comes to a fight. It’s like painting a big target on yourself.”

This philosophy was true, but it wasn’t the first time Baas had heard it. Still, he didn’t have time to think about it as the man began to attack again… Huh. Maybe he did have time. The man’s moves were slow. Baas did not have trouble dodging any of the man’s blows. In fact, he was so comfortable in doing so that he began talking while dodging.

“You know, you’re really not that good.”

“I’m really getting bored here.”

“So, if I was the weakest looking and they sent you on me, does that mean you’re the loser of your team?”

That last particular comment struck a nerve. The man then rushed at Baas, trying to use his fury to fuel him. Baas had seen worse. He dodged the attacks that came his way, not even needing his sword or shield. Then, he saw his chance. He blocked one of the man’s forward thrusts. Using his shield on his right shoulder, he swung it around to slap away the man’s sword. The man was surprised, as Baas expected. Baas then charged the man in the stomach and sent him crashing to the floor. Raising his sword in his left hand, Baas was ready to strike down his opponent. Now. This would be it. His first kill...

“If you think so badly of death, why have you spent you’re life learning how to give it to others?”

“No.” Baas said aloud as he shook his head. His hand began to shake. “Just push past it Baas. I know! Killing someone is the hardest part of…”

Baas could not finish his sentence. Losing focus, he did not see the man get up and charge forward toward him. Baas rolled away and was followed by the big guy. He looked up, to see the man’s sword coming down right toward his face. Baas quickly rolled to his left to have the sword stab the ground. The man saw that he missed and pulled his sword out. Baas had only rolled a few inches and the man pulling his sword caused his body to roll back. The man tried again to stab the boy. This time, Baas head rolled to his right. When his head came back this time, there was a smile on his face. This was kind of fun. The blue band sped up his stabs, stabbing the exact same spot. Every time his sword went down, Baas head wasn’t there. Every time it came up, Baas head was back. Baas rolled to his left, then smiled at the man. Baas rolled to his right, then laughed at the man. Baas rolled to his left, then smiled at the man and said “you missed!” Baas rolled to his right, then stuck his thumbs in his ears and waved his tongue out at the man in a wave like fashion. The man gritted his teeth in frustration. There was Baas’ opportunity. He took his left leg and trip the man who was standing over him. As the man fell to his back, Baas jumped up to his feet. Now he could…

“If you think so badly of death, why have you spent you’re life learning how to give it to others?”

“Agh” Baas screamed grabbing his ears as though trying to reach his brain. Why was this happening? Why did he feel so bad about killing someone?

His opponent noticed Baas’ hesitation. He also noticed Baas’ feet were right next to his. The guy quickly used his feet to trip Baas, just as Baas had done him. Baas once again fell to the floor. This time however, as his eyes saw the floor approaching him, he knew he didn’t have to hit it. Baas’ turned his right arm to face the floor. It hit before his body could reach the floor, however it was not enough to keep up his weight with the added pressure of gravity. As soon as Baas knew that, without a second to spare, his left arm came to support it.

When he had tripped Baas, the large man quickly tried to follow it up. He got to his feet and came toward Baas. Baas saw the man coming while still trying to catch himself from falling. As time slowly went by, Baas could see his way out. The man’s stomach was wide open. Baas took his feet which were in the air and kicked off the man’s stomach. First the left foot, then the right foot. The man’s forward momentum against Baas’ feet aloud Baas to accomplish his task. With his hands still on the ground, his legs came back in the air, away from his opponent. For less than half a second, he was doing a handstand before doing a full back flip. He landed on his feet with a thud and quickly turned around. The guy was holding his stomach in pain. Baas’ shoes had metal bottoms, so kicking the guy had hurt worse than he was used to.

Baas grasped the sword firmly. He was gonna do it. He was gonna end this guy’s life.

“Killing someone for the first time is the hardest part of war.” He said so only he could hear. “Once this part is over, everything else will be easy.”

Baas took a deep breath. Then, he jumped in the air. Grabbing both the sword by the handle with both hands, time seemed to slow as he came down. This allowed Baas, one last glance at the enemy before he would kill him. Analysis. It’s what the Center had trained Baas to do best. Baas saw the guy. He saw the shock on his face. He saw the pain in his stomach. He saw the fear in his eyes. Judging from his featured, Baas guess he was just a few years older than him. To think, dying at the age of 19 or 20 or even 21. Baas was not only ending him, here and now, Baas was ending this man’s future. He would end every accomplishment he would ever do should Baas have not killed him. He would end any children the man had not yet had a chance to have. Baas was going to take away his life, the one thing this man would never be able to get back. And as he fell toward the man with sword pointing down, Baas came to a realization. To end someone’s life may be the hardest part of war for him, but it would never be over. He would go the rest of his life knowing he had taken someone else’s away. He couldn’t do it. Not now, not ever. To end someone’s life was something he couldn’t do. No, not couldn’t. Wouldn’t. There was a reason that Diablo’s voice was in his head every time he tried to kill someone. Baas had shaped it. Diablo was the first person to ever make him question killing. And he now knew why. He had chose not to become a killer. Baas stared at the man’s eyes which displayed fear. Then, to Baas’ surprise, they showed something else, determination. The guy’s determinant eyes were the last thing Baas saw before the darkness.

As Baas came down onto the man, the Blue knew what to do. Every time Baas tried to kill him, he hesitated. Probably due to Baas’ inexperience. The man waited for Baas to lower his guard… there it was, in his eyes, the sign of hesitation. He quickly lifted his legs straight up into the air. As Baas came down with his hands above his head, his chin came into contact with the bottom of the man’s feet. Baas’ body flew back away from the man, and he landed on the ground with his hood down.

The man quickly sat up and waited for Baas to get up. Baas didn’t. He waited again to see if Baas was just tricking him. Baas wasn’t. A smile then slowly came to the man’s face. Then a snicker followed it. Then, there was joyous laughter. The fight was over! He had won!

The man quickly went over to Baas and picked him up by the hood. The hood pulled on Baas’ clothes as though attacked to them.

“Okay Oranges!” He yelled

Everyone fighting stopped and turned their attention to the man. As they saw their unconscious team mate being held there, almost lifeless, a shock of fear came over Atsuma’s team.

The blue band held up his prize in front of him for all to see. He then placed his sword across the unconscious kid’s throat as though saying he would cut it.

“If you don’t want to your young friend here to lose his life, I would suggest you give up!”

Chapter 54 End