Chapter 58 : The Keys

It was dark. Baas couldn’t see anything. Were the lights turned out? No. That couldn’t have been it. He knew he wasn’t inside, he was suppose to be traveling. Yet it was dark. Night. It must be night. No. That wasn’t it. It’s because it wasn’t dark. It was black. Lack of light was not the reason why Baas couldn’t see anything. In the distance, there were noises. They sounded far away, yet getting closer. Slowly, becoming more clear. And, the ground was… moving. Baas could feel his body going up and down. He thought he might be sick. Nothing was making sense. Dark. Blurred noises. Baas’ body moving without him telling it too. Perhaps if he opened his eyes… That was it! It was black because his eyes were closed. Once that answer came to him, Baas began to understand. The world of black became a world of color; the blurred noises became clear; the moving ground… was still moving for some reason. Baas realized what had happened. He had been unconscious.

“Finally awake?” a voice came. It was a familiar voice. Baas turned his head to seem Atsuma smirking down at him. Atsuma? What was he doing there? Oh yeah. Baas had been traveling with Atsuma. With a team of Orange and one Grey. Vanessa. They had been looking for Vanessa. Slowly, everything was coming back to Baas.

But still, some things were still unclear to him. He looked around. Analysis. It’s what… somebody, no something had trained him to do. Something… the Center. It’s what the Center had trained him to do best. Everywhere there were barrels and boxes. Ropes hanging on the walls or scattered about on the floors. The feel of the air had the slight hint of water which matched the damp wood that the room was made of. The ceiling was not high, but far enough so that Baas couldn’t reach it should he stand up all the way.

“What happened?”Baas asked Atsuma.

“Well it’s a long story.” Atsuma said nonchalantly. “But basically, it’s all your fault.”

It was meant to be taken as a joke, and normally Baas would have laughed, however, he still did not fully understand what was happening. His body… No. Not his body. Everything was moving up and down in a slow, repetitive motion. And then it struck him. The pain in his jaw. Immediately, he wanted to comfort the pain with the rubbing of his right hand, but something was wrong. His hand couldn’t move. Neither could his arm. In fact, his whole mid body seemed glued to whatever he was leaning against. That was when he noticed the rope around his body. Not just his body, but Atsuma’s as well. They were both tied up, from chest to waist, to a supporting post in the middle of the room. Baas, instinctively, tried to reach for his sword in an attempt to cut the rope, but there was nothing there. No sword or shield, just a shirt and back. Tied up. Weapons taken away. These were signs of being held prisoner. But… when did…

And then, he understood everything. Baas’ brain brought him back in time to the fight. Back to when he had made the decision to attack, but not the decision to kill. He remembered his decision. The guy took advantage of it and used that opportunity to knock him out. Baas figured he must have then been used as leverage. That meant that his decision costs his team the battle. That meant he had failed.

The guilt of this made Baas’ head hurt even worse. Very quietly, he looked toward Atsuma and said, “I’m sorry.”

“Meh, it happens.” Atsuma said shrugging. “People lose fights.”

He did not see that Baas was truly upset. That he did not lose the fight simply because he wasn’t good enough. But because he had chose to lose it. Baas thought about explaining it to him. Explaining how he didn’t like killing. But to do so would be so… embarrassing. Everyone in the war killed once in their lives. It was a part of war. Baas was trained to be a part of war as well, yet he couldn’t do something as simple as taking a life. Though Atsuma was easily forgiving, Baas knew the truth. This was all his fault.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

“This is all Baas’ fault.” Koroko said angrily.

“How can you say that?” Pandora scolded. “He’s only been fighting in the actual war for a couple of months. It’s not his fault he’s not as good at fighting as the rest of us.”

“Yes it is.” Koroko said simply. “Sheina here held her own just fine, and even the Grey didn’t get caught. They’ve had the same experience in the real world as he has, but Baas had been trained in the ways of Koroko. Do you think, I spent all that time training that kid just to see him lose like that? I don’t think so.”

“Honestly, Koroko, I bet Baas would’ve beaten you when you were sixteen.”

“Coulda shoulda woulda. Point is, it’s his fault we’re here. Right Sheina?”

Koroko heard no noise from the young Leader. That was weird. Usually Sheina jumped at the chance to blame Baas for something. He tried to look at her to see if there was something wrong, but it wasn’t easy. The Blues had tied the three Oranges to a post in a room exactly like the one they had left Baas and Atsuma in. Unlike Atsuma and Baas, though, the Blues had spread out these three about the post. Thus, the three could hear each other, but they could not see each other.

Though she could hear them, Sheina had not been listening to Koroko and Pandora. She had something else on her mind. To think, that she and Baas would run into Vatti. Of all the people in the world, for the Captain of this ship to be Vatti… All three of the supposed “Team Baas” were on the same ship, yet Sheina was the only one who knew. The question was, what to do with this information? Should she allow Baas’ and Vatti’s fantasies to come true? To allow them to reunite like Baas had dreamed? But what would that do to Baas once they had to depart? For best friends to meet after leaving the Center was highly unlikely. Sheina figured eventually he would face the reality that he and Vatti could not be together. But if he saw her now, he would forever believe that he would be friends with her. Never giving anyone else a chance to get closer to him than Vatti was. That part of Baas would be stuck in the past. Sheina couldn’t allow that to happen. Baas had to move forward, and in order to do that, he couldn’t learn that Vatti was on the ship. He could never see her again.

“Sheina!” Koroko called snapping her out of her planning.

“Huh?” She answered back.

“What’s the plan?”

“Plan? What plan?”

“The plan for escaping.” Pandora explained.

“You want me to think of one?” Sheina asked surprised.

“Well duh.” Koroko responded. “It’s kind of your job. We’re not Leaders. We don’t come up with plans. Usually Ats comes up with the plans, but you’re the only Leader here at the moment.”

Sheina was distraught. They were right. As the only Leader there, it was her job to come up with an escape plan. But, what should she do. She wasn’t used to commanding. Usually she was following someone else, be they Baas’ or Atsuma’s. Wait. That wasn’t true. She told Baas what to do all the time. And back in the main base, she told Atsuma what to do as well. In fact, she was in command of everyone who entered her eating facility. But that wasn’t in battle tactics. The only reason she could do that was because she was so skilled with proper behavior. Wait a second…

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Atsuma and Baas heard the approaching foots steps from the door in front of them at the end of the room. It appeared as though someone was about to enter the room they were in. Atleast, that’s what Baas thought until the footsteps suddenly stopped. About 30 seconds after they did, Atsuma began speaking.

“Okay kid, listen up. Here’s what we’re gonna do. These ropes are too tight for us to escape from now. The only way we’re gonna get out of here is if we wait until we get to the Blues’ main base and escape there.”

“Are you sure?” Baas asked. He was surprised to hear a plan like this. He figured Atsuma would want to leave immediately.

“Kid,” Atsuma said looking at Baas, “you weren’t conscious when I was speaking with their captain. She’s a brilliant strategist and I’m betting an excellent fighter. I’m sure she’s got some master plan for us should we escape. But if we wait until we get to their base, we can escape when she’s not there and catch the rest of the Blues off guard.”

Baas let out a sigh. That sounded incredibly boring to him. But, Atsuma knew more about the Blues than he did so he knew it would be best to follow his orders.

After the conversation had ended, Baas could again hear footsteps. This time, they were getting farther and farther away.

When the sound was gone, Atsuma immediately started squirming. His movements were making Baas uncomfortable.

“What are you doing?” Baas asked him.

“What’s it look like, I’m trying to get out of these ropes.”

“What?” Baas said now completely confused. “But… I thought…”

“What? That I was serious? As if I would wait to get to their base. That’s a horrible strategy. We’d be outnumbered before we’d even get a chance to try an escape. You never want to get caught in an enemy territory. They know the territory much better than you do and the enemy is everywhere. There’s practically no escape.”

“But then why did you say…”

“Blues have a lot of hobbies. Be it painting, or pottery or writing, they like to do artsy things. Which means they don’t like to sit around watching prisoners of war for hours. It’s always the same. They put us up somewhere and then check back once to see if we’re trying to escape. Once they believe we’ll stay tight, they go back to whatever hobby they were doing and leave us alone until we get to their destination.”

Atsuma stopped squirming realizing that it was no use. As he spoke, he looked around the room for another way to escape.

“The Blues are not going to win this war because they don’t take it seriously. They have passion for arts and whatnot, but they would rather let take their enemies prisoners then kill them. They would also rather do arts and crafts then watch those prisoners. They make some of the best performing equipment in Wig-Or-Log, but using it is another story.”

“So, when you said we would wait…”

“I knew that a Blue was listening and that they would leave as soon as they knew we would stay put. Blues are easily distracted by their wants. Hey, put your leg here. I’ll see if I can push myself up to get my arms free.”

As Baas moved his left leg in position in front of Atsuma, he was beginning to understand now.

“So that’s why you started complementing their captain.”

“Actually,” Atsuma said trying to lift his leg high enough. “Their captain is extremely good. She’s one of the Great Ones.”

“A Great One? Really?” Baas said getting excited.

“Oh yeah.” Atsuma answered. He decided it was pointless to try and step ob Baas’ leg, so he just decided to use his foot. “She’s about your age too. And she’s extremely pretty.”

These words excited Baas. Mainly the fact that this captain was a Great One. But the fact that she was his age and pretty did not lower his opinion of her.

“Hey kid, this may hurt.” Atsuma said about to step on his foot. Baas prepared himself for the pain as his mind went into a day dream.

Perhaps he would fight this Great One. They would have an incredible battle. One like no one had ever seen. In the end, they realized that they were on equal terms with each other and would have to call it a draw. Baas would then be recognized as a Great One throughout the land of Wig for performing so well. Then, just as a reward, the captain would give his a kiss on the cheek to show her secret affection for…

“OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW!” Baas hollered in pain. “ATSUMA STOP!”

“Sssssshhhhh.” Atsuma hissed as he hopped off of Baas’ leg. “They’ll hear you yelling like that. Besides, I told you what I was about to do. Next time, prepare for it.”

“It wasn’t the pressure on my leg.” Baas said making a face that showed he was holding in pain. “You stepped on my knife.”

Upon hearing that word, Atsuma was quite for a couple of seconds. He then asked, “You’re what?”

“My knife.” Baas said still holding in pain. “When we first saw Diablo, he threw one of his weird looking knifes at us. I kept it and tied it to my leg since I couldn’t fit it on my back. You stepped on it and it started to go into my skin. I don’t think I’m bleeding though.”

Again, Atsuma was silent while Baas continued to make his pain face. Then, Atsuma spoke calmly to the young Leader.

“Baas.” He said non threateningly. “You understand that I am trying to escape from these ropes right?”

Baas nodded. “Yeah, and you almost took my leg off doing it.”

Atsuma smiled at Baas. The smile had a hidden meaning that Baas did not know. “If you knew that,” he asked calmly, “why did you not give me this knife earlier so I could cut us loose?”

Baas stopped moving his whole body and stared at Atsuma. He now knew what Atsuma was trying to tell him. He had had the key to their freedom this entire time tied to his leg.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

One of the lean Blue males walked into the room where Sheina, Koroko and Pandora were tied up. It was the Blue whom had pulled on Koroko’s bonds when they were on the deck of the ship. Koroko immediately recognized him and was glad he was the one whom had walked in. The Blue, however, paid no attention to the prisoners. He walked right past them to his destination. After shuffling through some barrels, he pulled out a thin brush. He then turned around intending to head right back to the door. He was, however, stopped when he tripped over Sheina’s foot. Thinking he had been tripped on purpose, the Blue turned to talk angrily to the Leader, until he saw how upset she was.

“Oh, I’m sorry sir.” Sheina said with a tired look on her face. “Please forgive me. I’m just so tired. Atsuma makes us walk around without proper breaks and… well… finally being able to relax, I just let my foot hang out there. I hope I didn’t hurt you.”

As Sheina talked to the Blue, he couldn’t help but feel pity for the lovely young lady. Thinking of how he was about to yell at her, he began to feel guilty.

“It’s okay.” He said leaning down to show more comfort.

Suddenly, Sheina’s legs began bouncing up and down. The Blue immediately understood this notion and asked, “Do you need to use the restroom?”

Sheina looked away as though she were extremely shy.

“I’m sorry.” She said “I didn’t want to say anything because I didn’t want to bother you guys.”

“It’s okay.” The Blue said pulling out a knife. He then sawed through the ropes that were tying Sheina down. “If you have to go to the bathroom than you should just…oof.”

The man could not finish his sentence. In the midst of focusing on the innocent looking Sheina, he had forgotten that the ropes holding her down were also holding Koroko down. Once he was released, Koroko immediately ran behind the guy and knocked him out.

“I would have done more.” Koroko spoke as though the guy were still awake. “But you guys took my sword. Don’t worry though, I’ll kill you later.”

“Koroko, will you stop playing around.” Pandora ordered. “And great job Sheina. I knew you’d get us out of there.”

Sheina blushed. “I just figured that any decent human would fall for this trick. If you begin to see someone as innocent, you start to forget that they’re a threat.”

At that moment, a realization came in Sheina. She sounded exactly like Baas after he just performed one of his dazzling moves. She understood now. All Baas did, was put what he knew into his fighting style. For her, she knows how a person is supposed to act. The key to their escape, the key to her being a good Leader, the key to succeeding, was with her the whole time.

“That’s true,” Koroko said scavenging through the supplies to find a weapon “but you also have to put into account that these guys are Blues. They are extremely gullible.”

Finally, Koroko found where the weapons were being stored. The Blues kept them in the back away from their many art supplies. Getting everyone their signature weapons, Koroko was now ready for action.

“Alright, let’s go take on some Blues.”

“But, what about Atsuma and Baas?” Sheina asked. But it was too late, Koroko had left.

“Don’t worry about them.” Pandora said about to follow Koroko. “Knowing Atsuma, he’s already escaped by now and is causing havoc somewhere on the ship.”

Pandora then left after Koroko. As Sheina followed, she thought in her head.

“And knowing Baas, he’ll try to search for the best fighter on the ship and challenge them…”

Realizing what that meant, Sheina grew wide eyed. Then, she hurried out after her teammates, hoping to run into Baas before he did what she knew he would do.

Chapter 58 End

Chapter 58 Her Face

“Twin swords. Twin swords. More twin swords. Ax. Ax? First time I’ve seen one of those on a blue ship. Geeze, where in the Wig are all the… oh. Here they are. Curved swords.”

After cutting themselves loose from the ropes, Atsuma and Baas were gathering supplies since their’s had been taken. Well, Atsuma was gathering supplies. Baas was keeping watch.

“Get me some of those twin swords.” Baas called back. “I’ve been using the short sword and shield for too long. I’ll get rusty with my other weapons.”

“Practice is for back at the base kid.” Atsuma said still shuffling weapons. “When you’re in enemy territory, you stick with what you know.”

Baas blew air from his mouth in disappointment.

“Kid, catch.” Atsuma called out to Baas. Baas turned to see a short sword and shield being tossed at him. He noticed the way they turned, the speed at which they were flying toward him. He waited for the right moment, before catching the sword by the handle and the shield by the strap.

He looked at the weapons which he called his favorites.

“What in the Wig are these?” He asked out loud.

“Short sword and shield.” Atsuma said twirling the curved sword he found.

“Well I know that, but… the edge seems… dull. Both the shield and sword are much bigger than the ones I’m used to.”

“I told you, the Blues like to dabble in arts and crafts. Our Orange weapons are based on killing our opponent. Blues care more about how weapons look, than how they perform.”

Baas gave a whined look at his weapons as though he were a little kid being told to eat the healthy food on his plate that he hated. Then he strapped the shield on his back and placed the sword in its usual position. They were indeed bigger. Baas hoped it wouldn’t throw off his fighting style.

“Haven’t the Blues realized that their weapons suck? I mean, it’s nice to have a hobby, but you should let it go if it hinders your job.”

“Their ‘hobby’ can also help them though.” Atsuma replied, trying to stick the fancy looking curved sword on his hip. “They may have the worst killing instinct of all the colors in Wig-Or-Log, but other things that they build are of great envy. For one, no matter how hard they’ve tried, the Golds can’t seem to build a ship as good as the Blues.”

Baas looked around the room. Indeed, the ship was a work of art. He noticed how the pole he and Atsuma had been tied to was supporting a great deal of the structure of the room. It probably wasn’t only for this room, but other rooms below and above this one. Though this place was made of wood, there were no holes that could let in water, yet the cracks allowed air to flow in just fine. It was extremely artistic as well. Parts of symmetry and attractiveness could be seen in the room’s design. He remembered at his sword. It too had this artistic feel. However, Baas felt the sword was made more to look pretty than…

“Baas.” Atsuma called to him.

“Huh?” Baas replied snapping out of his daydream.

“This is the absolute worse time to lose your focus. If we get captured again, we might not get another chance to escape. Blues may be gullible, but they can still get angry. If the captain finds out we’ve escaped, she’ll make sure it absolutely does not happen again.”

“I really wanna meet this captain.” Baas said thinking to himself.

“Well, you go do that.” Atsuma said walking toward the door. “I’ve got stuff to do.”

“Wait, Atsuma,” Baas called out, “what’s the plan?”

Atsuma stopped walking, turned and smirk. “The plan? Cause as much havoc as you can. The funniest thing in the world is the look on a Blue’s face when they’re surprised or scared.”

“Then, you’re just gonna leave me hear alone?”

“Why not? This isn’t their territory kid. It’s just a ship. Practically a playground. If we were fighting Golds it would be different, but when it comes to fighting Blues, the best thing to do is have fun. Now, stop bothering me, I’ve got things to do.”

And without another word, Atsuma ran out of the room as though he had someplace to be. For a second, Baas attempted to follow him, but then Atsuma’s words hit him.

“Have fun.” He repeated. “My orders are to have fun.”

A big grin then came across his face. “This is the chance of a lifetime. How often do I get told that?”

Baas suddenly stopped moving. He heard footsteps coming his way. They were approaching fast. The grin on his face turned into a smile as he looked around. No buckets of water. Well, he would have to try something else.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

“Koroko slow down.” Pandora called out to her friend as she chased him down the wooden corridors.

“I refuse!” Koroko called back.

“Why?”

“Because you want me to.” Koroko replied with a huge grin.

As Pandora sighed from her inability to figure out Koroko, Sheina began to ask questions.

“Is it okay for us to just be running around like this? Won’t we get caught?”

“Blues aren’t very cautious.” Pandora answered. “They don’t do a lot of patrolling and whatnot. Most of them are probably in their rooms or on the deck working on some art.”

“Right.” Koroko called back. “And that’s where we need to be if we want to have some fun.”

He then faced forward again. “The chances of us running into someone down here are extremely…”

“BOOGALAFROOGABAHNAFRA!”

“AAAAHHHH!”

From the sound and sight of the person jumping out, all three of the Oranges stop and simultaneously screamed. Someone had been hiding in a nearby room and had jumped out in front of them. After a second of realization, the three recognized the young man who was now laughing hysterically.

“Baas!” Sheina fussed. “What is wrong with you? Are you trying to get us caught by yelling like that?”

It took Baas sometime to stop his laughter. After catching his breath, he finally answered the question.

“Sorry. I heard footsteps and I thought some Blues were coming. Without a bucket of water, I figured I would just scare them as they came by.”

“Didn’t it occur to you that maybe they’d kill you after they found you?”

“From laughter? Yes.”

Sheina shook her head. She really could not understand this kid.

“Where’s Atsuma?” Pandora asked. “The Blues took him with you.”

“He ran off somewhere.” Baas said. He then made a pretend noise as though he were crying. “And he left me all alone.”

“Oh boy.” Pandora sighed. “We need to get to the deck of the ship now.”

“Oh great idea.” Koroko said sarcastically. “If only some super macho member of the team had thought of it.”

“ I know.” Pandora smirked. “It’s too bad we don’t have one of those.”

Koroko squinted his eyes at Pandora but he couldn’t help but smile. It was a great reply.

“Why the deck? Atsuma said to have fun.” Baas pointed out.

“He would say that.” Pandora answered. “The thing of it is, Blues are very proud of their ships because their ships are the envy of all others in Wig-Or-Log. They’re so proud, that they intentionally put multiple weak points on the lower levels of the ship so that they could sabotage it should it ever get in enemy hands.”

“And of course.” Koroko finished. “Ats figured out where all those weak points are. Whenever he gets on a Blue ship, he can’t help but strike at their ego.”

“So that means… this ship is going down?” Sheina asked.

“Exactly.” Both Pandora and Koroko said at the same time.

“Well, in that case.” Baas said. “There’s something I got to do quickly.” He then took off running down the hall and turning the corner.

“Baas.” Sheina called out running after him. “Baas wait.”

“Should we go after them?” Pandora asked. “They are Leaders after all.”

“You can if you want.” Koroko shrugged walking in the opposite direction. “I’m going to the deck to have some fun.”

“Well, it is just a Blue ship.” Pandora said following. “I’m sure if they stick together they can handle whatever trouble they find.”

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Sheina tried her best to keep up with Baas, but it wasn’t easy. Baas was already much faster than she was. Also, for some reason, he had no trouble running on a ship that rocked back and forth. Every so often, Sheina would trip or stumble and Baas would get even farther ahead. The only thing that kept her from losing Baas when he turned corners was the sound of his feet hitting the floor. No one else wore metal shoes. Finally, Baas stopped in front of a door with a mini ship-steering wheel on it.

Sheina, out of breath, showed her dissatisfaction.

“Baas, what is so important that you have to do it now?”

Baas marveled at the door in front of him. A dark waterish blue color. Made of wood, like everything else on the ship. He wondered how old it was. It didn’t seem really well kept, but that didn’t necessarily mean that…

“Baas.” Sheina called. “I asked you a question.”

“Huh?” Baas asked snapping out of his analysis.

“Why did you suddenly take off like that?”

“I want to see her.” Baas answered still staring at the door, smiling.

“Who?”

“The captain of this ship.”

Upon hearing that, Sheina heart began beating fast.

“Atsuma said she’s one of the Great Ones.” Baas continued. “If I can’t fight her before go, I atleast want to know what she looks like so I’ll know to fight her later. This is her room right? I’m betting it is since it stands out among all the other random doors.”

“If she sees you, you’ll give away our escape. You’re going to put our lives in danger just because you may fight her later.”

“Of course not.” Baas ssaid. Then, a smile came on his face. “Atsuma also said she was really attractive and my age. If she’s asleep in there, I can sneak a kiss without her knowing. That’s worth risking our lives for”

“A what!” Sheina asked almost shouting.

“Relax.” Baas said chuckling. “I’m only kidding… mostly.”

He then began to reach for the knob on the door.

“Baas wait.” Sheina said abruptly. “You can’t see her.”

“Why not?” Baas asked.

“Because…” Sheina stuttered. “Because we don’t have time for this. Atsuma could sink this ship any minute.”

“It’ll only take a second.”

“Baas wait.”

But Baas was no longer listening. He turned the knob of the door and slowly poked his head inside.

Blue. That is what he saw. Everything was some shade of blue. The walls even had the same shade of blue as the door. This room definitely stuck out among the others of the ship.

To Baas’ left was a wall covered in papers. The papers all has some drawings on them that Baas wasn’t really interested in. To his right was a nice looking bed. The sheets, a slightly darker blue than the walls, were fancier than any Baas had seen before. But the captain was not in her bed. Baas knew where she was though. Directly across from him there was a filled chair and a desk. The chair was tall, so the person standing at the door could not see the back of the head of the person sitting in the chair. Baas noticed that it moved slightly with the ship. While the seat could spin in a circle, the base was connected to the ground. Baas understood. That way, when anyone entered the room, the captain could simply turn and face them without having to stand up.

Though he couldn’t see her face, Baas could see the arms of the captain. Her left arm stuck out suggesting that her head was resting on it. On it was a blue band with the arrow of a Leader. Her right arm held a flat sword pointed toward the ground. Baas deduced that in order to sit like that she must’ve been asleep in the chair.

This wouldn’t do. Baas had to get a better look. He tiptoed in the room, careful not to make noise with his metal bottomed shoes. As he got closer, he began to see the hair color. Black. A kind of smooth black that seemed to match the theme of Blueness in the room. Still, he couldn’t see her face.

“Baas.” Sheina whispered urging him to come back.

Baas looked at Sheina and held up his index finger to his mouth.

“Shh.” He said gently. There was no anger in it, more as though he was completely ignoring Sheina. He then continued his tiptoeing. Now he could see her dark shaded clothes but not her face. Her hair was leaning to the left so he could not see it. He would have to go further.

“Baas.” Sheina pleaded with a whisper. She had to stop him. If he continued now, he would see Vatti. Maybe there was someway she could prevent it. But how? She couldn’t just yank him back. Any move she made might wake up the sleeping Leader. But she couldn’t let him see his friend. She couldn’t.

Suddenly, the ship rocked. Harder than it normally did. As though something were wrong. The sudden shake cause Baas to stumble. Still aware that the captain was sleeping, he tried his best not to fall. Trying doesn’t always work in Baas’ case. He tumbled and landed against the desk.

Sheina looked at the captain’s chair. The person sleeping there had not been disturbed by the noise.

Baas rubbed the back of his head in pain. That had hurt. His eyes had closed due to the impact. He slowly opened them as his hand rubbed the back of his head.

He opened them… and saw her face.

Chapter 58 End

Chapter 59 : Reestablished Relationship

Baas’ eyes stared at the person in front of him, the person he had spent the last couple of minutes trying to get a glimpse at. When he tried to view her, he had expected to see a beauty of that which he had never seen. Someone even more beautiful then Sheina. Someone whose first glance would leave an everlasting impression on him. The site of the captain left an impression alright, but it wasn’t because he had never seen a face like hers. In fact, he had seen that face almost everyday since he was little.

Sheina watched Baas from the hall. It was too late, he had seen the face of Vatti. He had seen his friend. Now, Sheina could only watch as the events in front of her took place.

It seemed like a while to Baas before he actually stood up. In reality, it only took five seconds. He gazed at the person in front of him. Could it really be her? He reached his arm out as though to wake her. No. He pulled his arm back and turned away. What if it wasn’t her? What if this was some sort of dream? He looked back at the sleeping girl. She was still there. And she still looked like his best friend whom he grew up with.

Baas slowly came closer to her. Analysis. It’s what they trained him to do best at the Center. Still wearing her favorite outfit. And she called him predictable.

Asleep peacefully, she breathed in and out deeply. She looked like a completely innocent and sweet girl sleeping that way. Her skin was somewhat tanner than before. Almost, if not, the same shade of Sheina’s. Her skin seemed flawless to Baas. No blemishes or anything. A real jewel.

She didn’t look exactly the same as she did when Baas last saw her. In truth, she was a little skinnier. But it was an improvement. The outside world had made her look more like a woman, while still keeping her good, sweet childish features. When Atsuma said she was attractive he wasn’t lying. Still, to Baas, her looks had never really mattered. It was her presence. She had always been there with him for as long as he could remember. Her presence made him feel more at home no matter where he was. And he had gone almost a year without that feeling.

Those words made Baas ponder. Almost a year? That’s right, she was still 16 like him. Her birthday would be coming up soon. Wow. He had gone almost a whole year without seeing her. He wondered how he did it. Back at the Center, he rarely went a day without seeing her face. How did he go so long without her? Baas wasn’t sure, but she was here now and he needed to make the most of it. But what should he do? Should he wake her up and… no. That just did not seem like the best idea to Baas. But how could he make the most of this time? Vatti was here, and Baas wanted to reestablish their relationship somehow… wait, that was it!

Sheina watched as Baas slowly examined Vatti. It was clear to her that he knew who she was. How could he not? They had grown up together. The relationship they had was deep. No doubt, Baas would want to rekindle that relationship. But wait… what was he doing? Sheina watched as Baas’ face got closer and closer to the sleeping Vatti. She immediately thought of what Baas said earlier.

“If she’s asleep in there, I can sneak a kiss without her knowing.”

Would Baas really do that? Why not? This was Baas, he was crazy enough to do anything. Sheina’s eyes stayed glued on Baas as his face got closer to Vatti’s. She wanted to stop him, but should she? It seemed wrong for her to interfere now. But to watch what Baas was about to do to Vatti…

Suddenly, Baas’ face stopped moving. His was about a foot in front of Vatti’s. He gave her a serious stare. Then… he stuck his thumbs in his ears and stuck his tongue out at Vatti and wiggled it like a worm.

Sheina… had not expected that.

She then watched as Baas made a series of silly faces at Vatti, only stopping when trying to hold in a laugh. Sheina put her left hand on her forhead. Of course. This was Baas. When you think about it, you just can’t see him passionately kissing anybody. And of course, seeing Vatti for the first time in a long time, he would feel the urge to do something that would annoy her. She giggled at herself for thinking Baas would do anything more than make faces.

Baas himself was having a blast. He had not had the opportunity to make fun of Vatti in far too long. Sure there were other people to show his annoyance to, but it was different with Vatti. Baas knew she hated when he made faces at her. He just found it hilarious that she would never know that he was doing this.

His next face was in a fish like manner. He puckered up his lips, sucked in his cheeks and tilted his head back and forth in front of Vatti. It caused him great pleasure.

Suddenly, as Baas was doing that, the ship experienced another violent shake. His body remembered the pain it felt when it fell back on the desk, so Baas tried to keep himself from repeating that. Trying tends to work in Baas’ case, but succeeding in preventing a backwards fall caused him to fall forward.

Both Sheina and Baas grew wide-eyed at what happened next. Baas had had no choice but to fall forward, but doing so caused him to fall on Vatti. He was able to keep most of his body from touching her. All but his face. No only that, but his lips had been sticking out. Those same lips were now pressed up against Vatti’s as though the two were passionately kissing. It took Baas only miliseconds to realize what had happened and as he did he feared for his life. His lips were in contact with Vatti’s and his eyes were right in front of hers. He hoped, he really hoped that what he saw would not change. That he would continue to see Vatti’s eyelids and not the blue pupils that rested behind them. But Baas’ hope was in vain. The force of him on her had been enough to wake her up. The scene of eyelids changed to blue pupils. Vatti opened her eyes and woke up.

Chapter 59 End

Chapter 60

The peace of sleep. Though the brain is still active, thinking is not heavily inclined and all you see is black. Not the sleep where you’re dreaming, or where you’re partly awake, but one that makes you breath deep and rests your mind. That is what Vatti felt. Her mind felt as though it was not active and all she could see was black.

Suddenly, Vatty’s mind became active. Something had disturbed her sleep. What that was, she had to wake up in order to find out. Yes, wake up. There was light piercing into the blackness of her sight. The light slowly became a blur of shapes. Soon, though, Vatti could make out the shapes. Eyes. There was a face in front of hers. Yes. A face. But that wasn’t all. She felt pressure somewhere on her face. Under her nose. Her lips. There was pressure on her mouth. A face in front of hers and pressure on her lips… She was being kissed. Yes, she was being… wait… WHAT!?

Vatti slowly opened her eyes to the sight of the boy kissing her. She blinked once to clear the blur and sighed. After realization, she blinked again questioning whether this was happening. A small “huh?” could be heard from her busy mouth. Then, when she realized it was true, her body was no longer still. It squirmed in the chair as though trying to back away from the person in front of her. She tried to scream, but her mouth was encased so it only appeared as a squeal. Eventually, she figured the one way out. She pushed the Person covered in white off of her using her free hand and jumped out of her chair, never letting go of the sword with which she had fallen asleep with. The person landed against the desk in front of where she had been sitting.

Vatti took a moment to let her mind clear. She was breathing hard, part from the struggle but mainly from the shock. Someone had… had kissed her while she was sleeping! What kind of random person would so such a thing? She looked at the person. Analysis. It’s what they trained her to do best at the Center.

The creep wasn’t one of her crewmates. His all white outfit was a dead give away. That and his orange band on his left bicep. But he was carrying some Blue weapons. One of the short swords and shields from the storage room. His hair was brunette and he had a really well built body…

Wait a second…

As the young man rubbed the back of his head in pain from falling, Vatti gazed at him in disbelief. She knew this guy. But it couldn’t be him? As her mind questioned the events, her mouth spoke the name of the person she thought it was.

“Baas?” She asked.

Upon hearing his name, Baas stopped rubbing his head and looked up at his long lost friend. He immediately pulled his hood over his face, forcing the opening to stay close with his hands.

“Noooo.” He howled throwing a voice. “I am the mysterious hoodman! I travel Wig-Or-Log scaring people with my monstrous face. But when I saw yours, I was truly frightened beyond belief. Thou must have the scariest face in all of Wig-Or-Log to scare one such as me.”

Yep, it was Baas. Only he would be so bold. As her old friend took his hood off, he gave her his signature smile. One she had seen almost everyday of her life back at the Center. It spread all the way across his face, teeth closed as though he were snickering at the funniest joke he had ever heard. Seeing that smile, not in her mind but actually on Baas in front of her, Vatti couldn’t help but let out a smile of her own. A small one formed and a little chuckle was let out. Then, the smile slowly left. Vatti’s left hand came to her mouth as though wiping away something. She looked down at her wiping hand for a few seconds. Then, she closed it into a fist shape. Her eyebrows came down to demonstrate her anger. Her mouth opened to reveal grinding teeth. Her right hand, which held her sword, was shaking.

Baas knew that look. He dreaded that look. He feared it more than he did the punishment of the Discrete. That look meant he had crossed the line. He quickly stood up and began talking nervously, stuttering all the while.

“Now… now, now Vatti. Let, let me explain. I know you’re upset… and, and I would be too if someone had kissed me. (Actually no I wouldn’t) But… but this isn’t what it looks like. I didn’t do it on purpose. I was, see, I was standing in front of you while you were sleeping and making faces at you when…”

“You were making faces at me?” Vatti asked still boiling in anger.

“No.” Baas said pointing to Vatti with a silly expression. He then laughed nervously hoping Vatti would join. She did not. She stood there staring down in anger, her sword arm still shaking. Her eyes were not on Baas, but staring at the floor as though figuring out what to do next. Baas could see that talking would not work here. He had been in this situation before with Vatti though, and there was one thing he could do to save his life. The only thing he could do.

Without any warning, Baas dashed, as fast as he could past Vatti, out her door and down the hall. His only words to Sheina as he past her were “GET OUT OF MY WAY!”

Sheina was startled by Baas, but not more so then what came next. Not even a millisecond after Baas passed her, a sword flew across her face. It almost hit her but was closer to hitting Baas. The sword became stuck in the wall but was not left there for long. Vatti dashed out, sliding as she came, to chase after Baas. Without even thinking about it or slowing down, her left hand grabbed the flat sword and yanked it out. She then charged after Baas, without even acknowledging Sheina.

“I’m gonna kill you!” Was the last thing Vatti said before turning the corner and running after Baas. Then, Sheina was left alone there in front of the now empty room. She tilted her head to the side, confused at exactly what had just happened.

Chapter 59 End