

## [David Lance POV]

The challenge I was facing soon proved to be difficult in its own way.

This creature was incredibly fast, so much so that I wasn't sure what exactly I was fighting, as this animal was nothing more than a blur as they circled around me at high speeds, pelting me with attacks from all directions.

If there was any solace to this challenge, it was that the creature's attacks didn't hurt at all.

At best, their attacks felt like an annoyance.

However, being able to take their attacks head-on would not grant me the victory Wioska so clearly demanded of me, so at every given moment, I tried to counter-attack to the best of my abilities by predicting the creature's trajectory.

This, sadly, didn't work.

No matter the approach I took, the result would always be the same, being that I couldn't even lay a single finger on whatever was attacking me.

It was infuriating beyond belief.

It was even more infuriating than the first two challenges because, with them, I had at first been severely outclassed, but here, I knew I was stronger than this animal.

I knew that all I needed was a single touch to end its life.

So, the fact that something so much weaker than me was toying with me was maddening beyond belief.

With each passing second, I didn't kill that thing; I could feel the ring beckoning me to use it.

It would be so easy to simply use the ring and crush that thing.

Oh, so very easy.

"Are you quite done letting that chicken attack you?" Wioska's voice rang out from the sidelines.

Did she say a **FUCKING CHICKEN** was the thing I had been struggling to kill?!

No... **NO!** I **FUCKING** refuse to accept an alien nugget is pecking me into a berserk stage!

She must be doing this to get a rise out of me. I really wanted to destroy her.

For things like things, I could feel my rage demanding her head.

But that was a laughable goal. After all, how could I even hope to land a hit on her if a FUCKING farm animal from another planet was toying with me?!

"You won't be able to hit your target, not while you let your rage control part of your deep self. Calm down for a moment and focus." Wioska added, her voice laced with amusement.

I growled in frustration. It wasn't easy to calm down and focus with all this anger within me. It was like trying to swim against the current of a storm.

But I said to hell with the current.

No one said I can't be calm, focused, and angry.

Taking a deep breath, I closed my eyes, and after an hour of meditation, one hour were I was being attacked by this creature without stopping.

I allowed my anger to recede into the background, where it would remain, waiting for me to call upon its power once again. Then, I focused as Wioska had instructed.

I focused on every sensation.

The attacks.

The interval between each.

My breathing.

How the earth felt beneath my naked feet.

The vibrations in the ground.

I remained in place doing this for the next few hours until, eventually, something changed. At some point, I began to feel something new. An odd sensation, like a ball of light moving around me; at first, this sensation would come and go.

But each time, it would last longer.

From this point forward, it didn't take me long to figure out that what I was feeling moving around was the bird. A ball of light that moved around me in circles as it attacked me relentlessly.

Chi sensing.

Or life force sensing.

If this was correct, it would mean I had tapped into this power during all of my challenges so far. However, unlike the last two times, this time, I was actually able to sense some sort of change, a sensorial one, but a change, nonetheless.

Reading the bird's movements through this newfound feeling, my hand shot toward my target at high speeds. And before I could know it, I had already caught my target, grabbing it by the neck before squeezing it tightly until I felt its body go limp in my grasp.

To think I struggled the most with an alien ostrich.

"That which you felt right now was the Chi that creature had," Wioska said as she walked over to me. "Chi is the life force that flows through all living creatures. By taking a better hold of your emotions, you were able to sense the Aloratis Chi, allowing you to better anticipate its movements."

So, I had truly tapped into this power.

"However, it took you hours to sense the Aloratis Chi," Wioska continued, her voice carrying a heavy tone of disappointment. "You must learn to sense it quicker if you want to stand a

chance against your enemies. No enemy will give you twelve hours to familiarize yourself with their energy."

Well, it wasn't like you were telling me what to do!

I mean... This training so far has been nothing more than Wioska throwing me at different enemies and then proceeding to see them break me apart for several hours before I can actually do something.

Her only instructive words so far had been the ones she just spoke.

Before that, all she had said was to defeat them.

That's like telling a sick person to try and get better. Of course, I have to fucking defeat them!

"But for now, though, your progress is nearly acceptable," Wioska said as she looked down at the dead animal in my hand. "Good job."

I grunted before turning to the animal I had killed. "Chickens on earth are smaller...."

"Well, to be fair, that's not quite a chicken, but it's the closest thing the natives here have," Wioska replied without even looking at me.

I see.

I guess it's time to see if this thing tastes good.

“I would not eat if I were you, the Aloratis meat is one that decomposes at an alarming rate the moment its heart stops beating,” Wioska added as she started walking away.

Alarming rate?

How bad could that....

It was here when I turned to see the Aloratis, seeing its flesh already full of maggots.

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It decomposed in the time I took to turn and look at Wioska.  
Hm. Not so different from any organic store back on earth.