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She blinked, then replied, "Trinity School."

"Wow! Zac was also from Trinity School. This means that you two are about to become alumni of the same school!" The rest echoed.

In order to leave a good impression of himself on Cheryl, Lionel sang Zac's praises. "Do you know? Zac almost topped the college entrance examination in your school, but there was a mutant in your school that year who got a perfect score on the exam... But this doesn't matter; what matters is that Zac legitimately enrolled in Harvard through the college entrance examination. If you stay here and ever need help with your studies, you can just approach him!"

Lionel patted his chest and added, "Zac almost got a perfect score in Mathematics in the college entrance examination, you know! He's unbelievable! God C, do you want to know how to get an almost perfect score in Mathematics? If you do, you can ask the captain to explain it to you!"

Cheryl: "?"

She was stunned for a moment. After thinking briefly, she answered seriously, "Is it by solving one fewer multiple-choice question?"

Everyone: "?"

Lionel: "???"

What did she mean by solving one fewer question?!

What he'd meant to express was that it was impressive how Zac had achieved a near-perfect score in mathematics, but why was God C's response making it seem like she was a star student?

The corners of Zac's lips spasmed.

Suddenly, he found the kid in front of him pretty cute.

Still, he hesitated for a moment before he looked at the coach. "When our team was recruiting, we had stated that candidates must be at least high school graduates. Never mind that she's a minor; after all, there are players who started playing professionally when they were only 16. Is she going to be a pro player when she hasn't even finished high school, though?"

He broke into a frown and his tone turned serious, completely forgetting that the cute Cheryl in front of him was God C. "This is not right," he said.

"How so?"

The coach said, "She has already graduated high school! She even took the college entrance examination this year!"

In recent years, the game industry had been growing more and more rapidly. Many teenagers addicted to the Internet wanted to become professional e-sports players, resulting in many children neglecting their studies and getting preoccupied with thoughts of dropping out of school to play games.

Thus, there was now a new rule in the professional league—one must finish at least high school or vocational school before they could pursue a career as a professional e-sports player.

This rule was passed for the good of the children.

Lionel was stunned. "How can that be? She's only fifteen! Yet she has already taken the college entrance examination?"

Cheryl nodded.

Lionel found it a little incredulous. "You skipped a grade? Why?"

She had definitely skipped a grade.

Cheryl replied, "So that I could play games!"

Her parents had requested that she pass the college entrance examination before she started her career as a professional e-sports player, so Cheryl had to study as quickly as possible! If it wasn't for the fact that her brother was too demanding and insisted that she get a full score on the exam before she could skip a grade, she could even have taken the college entrance examination a year earlier!

Lionel suddenly understood something...

There were cases like this in the professional league too.

Some children had gaming talent, and ages between 16 to 22 were optimal for one to play professionally. To avoid letting those few years go to waste, parents of the really talented children would help them skip grades and graduate from high school as soon as possible so that they could compete

A kid who joined the league this year had mediocre grades, yet he kept skipping grades in order to play professionally. After graduating from high school this year, he finally became an official player!

Thus, Lionel thought that Cheryl's case was a similar one...

He smiled and changed the subject. "Does this mean you're not going to university?"

Cheryl shook her head again. "No, my parents requested that I go to university, but they have agreed to let me take a year off from school this year."

"Well, that's true. Aside from Zac, going to university would only be a boring affair for the rest of us. You're probably only eligible for a third-rate university like me, right?"

"... That shouldn't be the case," replied Cheryl.

"You mean it may be worse?"

Lionel frowned. He wanted to say something, but he suddenly realized that he was speaking to a delicate young girl, so he shouldn't rub salt into her wound. Therefore, before Cheryl

could explain, he changed the topic and said, "Alright, let's not talk about this anymore. Let's instead talk about what to do now. I see that you don't have much luggage with you. Shall I take you to the supermarket to get the things you need? Oh, by the way, there are only premium supermarkets nearby..."

After speaking, Lionel looked at Cheryl.

The teen girl looked dainty, but she dressed simply, and none of the clothes she wore had brand names on them.

Lionel had only decided to pursue a career in e-sports because his financial situation at home was not good.

Over the past two years, he had earned more than a million dollars in wages and bonuses in the club each year, so one could say that he was now exposed to various luxury brands. Since there weren't brand names on the teen's clothes, this meant that her clothes must be from fast fashion brands.

With that in mind, Lionel thought of how he had only thirty bucks on him when he first came to the club back then.

He had gone to the supermarket for daily necessities, but after entering the premium supermarket, he accidentally spent \$300 just shopping casually inside.

He had been dumbfounded at the time.

Why was a towel \$15 when they were sold for two or three bucks back in his hometown?!

He couldn't pay at all!

It was Zac who noticed his embarrassing situation and then footed the bill for him...

After recalling his own situation, Lionel looked at Cheryl even more kindly and said, "Come on, let's go, God C! I'll take you shopping. I have a membership card, so leave tonight's bill to me!"

"I can do it too!"

"Me, I can do it! I have money!"

Two other teammates also scrambled to pay.

Zac looked at them, the corners of his lips spasming. He said, "You can ask the coaching team for an advance on your first month's salary."

... That isn't necessary at all, thought Cheryl.

She touched the black card in her pocket and said quietly, "Um... I can pay for myself."

"How much can you possibly have?"

Lionel beckoned to her and said, "Come on, I'll drive you there."

Cheryl originally wanted to refuse, but when she heard the word "drive", she let out a quiet sigh.

She wasn't old enough to even get a driver's license yet...

Even though she could clearly drive and even ride a motorcycle...

Cheryl could only follow Lionel out the door. There was nothing in the room, so she did have to buy things like shampoo, shower gel, etc.

After Cheryl left, Zac suddenly picked up his cell phone and sent a text message to his former homeroom teacher: 'Hey, are you there? Can I ask you about a student?'

He wanted to know what Cheryl's grades were like so that he could decide if she needed his help in finding a good school after the college entrance examination.

After all, his family did have some status. Lionel's college entrance examination results had been mediocre back then. It was his family that had helped him enroll in an acceptable university. Otherwise, he would not have even been able to enroll in one.

As captain, Zac showed his teammates a lot of concern. If there was anything he could help with, he definitely would. He was much more reliable than their boss, Chester.

After he sent the message, his homeroom teacher replied: 'Who are you asking about?'

Zac: 'Do you know Cheryl Smith?'

His teacher: 'Of course! She's famous!'

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Famous?

Zac was a bit taken aback as he stared at the reply. He asked: 'What's going on?'

However, his homeroom teacher left him on a cliffhanger: 'Wanna guess?'

Zac: "..."

Guess? What for?!

He sent another message to the teacher: 'I'll bring you a couple of bottles of good wine when I go to New York for a competition during summer vacation.'

Only then did his teacher laugh and reply: 'Cheryl skipped two grades in a row, jumping directly from freshman year to senior year in high school. I heard she did it so that she could take part in a professional competition for the same game you're playing. Oh, by the way, she is also a star athlete. She was specially head-hunted by the school.'

A star athlete?

Zac thought of Cheryl's docile and soft appearance. She probably wasn't a student specializing in track and field, was she?

His attention was successfully diverted, and he asked: 'In arts?'

His teacher: 'No, shooting.'

Zac: "..."

He thought of how thin and frail she looked, yet she had enrolled in her high school as a shooting sports specialist. In addition, there was a charming contrast when he thought of a cute girl like her holding a gun.

The teacher sent another message: 'She stopped practicing during the last few years, though. But with the awards she has won, she won't have any problems enrolling in university...'

Zac suddenly realized what was going on.

So, that was what Cheryl was doing.

As an important sport and even a competitive segment in the Olympics, shooting had indeed become very popular in recent years. If her family's financial situation was good enough and they had exposed her to the sport since she was a child, this was indeed a viable option for her.

By now, he was already under the impression that Cheryl had poor grades and could only get into university by being a specialized student.

Thus, he stopped asking about her grades. Instead, he asked: 'She won't have problems enrolling in university?'

His teacher: 'Of course not. She's very talented in shooting...'

Cheryl was so sought after by various schools precisely because she was a hot favorite for marksmanship champion in the next Olympics.

Of course, his homeroom teacher didn't dare to say this out loud, so he could only hint at it vaguely.

After all, Cheryl was so young. If they put so much pressure on her, she might not be able to perform at her usual standard... Therefore, the coaches of the national team never let teachers show off to outsiders.

She was the national team's hidden trump card for the next Olympics.

Zac understood now. He asked: 'I see. By the way, which university did she choose in the end?'

His teacher: 'She hasn't picked one so far. The college entrance examination scores aren't out yet.'

Academic scores were taken into consideration for specialized students too.

As a result, Zac felt that the teacher must have been exaggerating when he said that she had a lot of talent.

If she was really that talented, why would she still need to take part in the college entrance examination? Schools would just find a way to directly recruit her...

Zac felt that he now had a better understanding of Cheryl.

Her family's financial situation was not bad and her grades were average. However, because her family was rich, they groomed her interest in shooting, where she then used her talent to enroll in a top high school and eventually university.

C had been playing games since she was five, and she had spent a lot of time playing games over the years, so her forte was still gaming.

Zac, who seemed to have realized something, ended his chat with his homeroom teacher.

However, the head coach of the team walked in with a sullen look on his face. "This is too much!"

Zac was surprised. "What's wrong?"

The head coach picked up his cell phone and handed it to Zac. Only then did he realize that their team was being roasted on social media.

Only Cheryl's back was pictured, but someone had taken a photo of Cheryl, Lionel, and the others shopping at the supermarket, as well as of her entering the club.

The paparazzi must have taken the photos.

However, as soon as the photos were released, all hell broke loose.

Team HS had failed to win the championship this year and came in second place because their gunner had injured his hand during the last season. This had angered the fans.

In the beginning, everyone was just sad, but because of these photos, the fans now behaved as though they had caught on to something and started roasting the team.

'No wonder they lost the game! Their minds are no longer on the game after they made some money, right? Are they just having fun with girls now?'

'Us fans can't even go to a sacred place like the club, yet they brought a girl in? Has HS given up on themselves after losing the competition once?'

'The whole team was performing below expectations in the competition. Their success has obviously gotten into their heads!'

'Hah, they still haven't officially announced their new gunner. Has the club given up on recruiting? Has everyone given up?'

'If you have given up, then please let your fans know, lest we continue to foolishly wait for the champions to return!'

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Their comments were extremely unpleasant and unbearable.

After losing a game, even dating would be seen as a sin.

This was the reality that professional players had to face.

Seeing this, Zac's expression darkened. "Get rid of it, lest the kid sees such a disgusting thing and has her mood ruined when she has only just joined."

The head coach sighed. "I'll go clarify the matter, then."

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The head coach quickly logged in to the club's Facebook account and posted a clarification notice.

Club HS E-Sports: 'We believe that our players have the freedom to engage in romantic relationships, but we would still like to clarify that Lionel is currently not in one; the young lady is a new member of our club. As for who she is, we're keeping it a secret for now.'

Players easily became targets in e-sports competitions.

C was an expert gunner who could be said to be among the top tier of players in the league. Because of this, there were many who liked to study her habits and play style.

This made it easy for her to become a target for other teams.

Though she would reveal her presence in competitions sooner or later, having their competitors study her play style after the start of the competition was still preferable to revealing her identity at this point and giving them sufficient time to target her.

They would just keep it a secret for as long as they could.

It would be ideal if they could keep it a secret until the first round of the competition so that they could catch the opponents by surprise.

This was what everyone in the club had agreed upon previously.

As soon as the coach posted the notice, the fans calmed down.

To be honest, the fans were just expecting better from Club HS, that was all. They were the champions every year, yet they had come in second place this year. The retirement of the top gunner in the league due to injury had led to everyone paying special attention to Club HS.

They were afraid that the club would not fare well in the future.

Therefore, now that the club had cleared the air, the issue was resolved.

Nevertheless, when some looked at Cheryl's side profile in the photo, they couldn't help but raise a few questions.

'Is the new gunner a girl? Isn't she the first female professional player in the league?'

'What's wrong with female players? Can't we girls take part in the competition? What a joke! What age are we in now? Are there still people discriminating against girls?'

'Men have better reflexes in e-sports than women, right? Besides, the people who make it to the pinnacle of various industries all seem to be men.'

'LMAOing at the guy above. Here, let me tell you a story: the most famous surgeon in the world is a woman.'

'Here's another piece of trivia: Yanci, the top car racer in the world, is also a woman.'

'Chiming in to add that Q, the most well-known hacker in the world, is also a woman.'

•••

After receiving a crash course from the rest, the person who had raised the question in the beginning immediately wussed out.

'I'm not discriminating against her. I'm welcoming her... In any case, the godly Zac is so strong that he can carry anyone anyway!'

'Yes, I welcome female players!'

The comments were relatively peaceful. After all, women had successfully achieved high positions in various industries over the years. Though there were few female competitive e-sports players, they did exist.

The head coach looked at the rest of the staff with a smile and said, "It's fortunate that women have made it into the ranks of top performers in every industry over the years, so

there aren't many who question their abilities anymore when they become professional players."

However, among these comments was a question:

'Judging from her side-profile, she seems very young, though? Is she an elementary school student?'

The coach immediately replied to the message: 'Don't worry, our new member just took her college entrance examination this year. She reported for duty right after that.'

'Then it's fine.'

The problem was resolved easily and smoothly. All the dissent online seemed to have disappeared, and not many had raised doubts about girls participating in e-sports.

Even though the coach knew that there wouldn't be that much opposition in the first place, wasn't this going a little too smoothly?

Little did he know...

In New York, Alexander stretched lazily and said, "Tsk, tsk. Trending on social media when she has only just reached the club. As expected, Cherry can't manage without her big brother!"

As he spoke, Peter, who was sitting opposite him, slowly looked up.

Differences were already starting to show in fifteen-year-old Peter and Cheryl's looks.

Cheryl still looked cute and adorable, but there was an additional sense of toughness in the same facial features on Peter. In addition, Peter had trained in martial arts frequently over the years, so his features were more defined, and he didn't have any baby fat. He looked absolutely dashing.

He slowly said, "You mean big brothers."

"... Fine," said Alexander.

He pulled his hand from the keyboard and said, "Write a program and keep an eye on the Internet. If anyone says things like 'girls can't be professional e-sports players' again, ban their accounts! Also, Cherry's side profile is more than enough on the Internet; all full-frontal photos must be deleted. Don't go too soft on them. I have something on, so I'll go for now."

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The incident was resolved quietly. When Cheryl returned to the club after she was done shopping for daily necessities, she didn't yet know that she had trended on social media.

Her teammates enthusiastically escorted her to the room and even helped her clean it up.

When the head coach came over, he immediately saw Cheryl seated on the sofa while the rest of the team was busy with chores.

The corners of his lips spasmed.

Generally, whenever there was fresh blood in the team, everyone treated them with mild skepticism. Moreover, they were all still young and hot-blooded. The head coach had been worried that they would get into a dispute with the new member.

But from how things looked... It seemed despite having only been here for two hours, Cheryl had already become the club favorite!

However... the head coach looked at Cheryl.

The teen girl sat quietly on the sofa as she munched on a potato chip she was holding between her fair fingers. Her little mouth was moving constantly, making her look cute and well-behaved, like a little squirrel. Even he didn't dare to raise his voice at her!

So, it was only natural that she would end up as the club favorite, right?

While the head coach was musing, a staff member suddenly came over. The man looked serious as he said, "Coach, Club JQ is so shameless!"

Surprised, the head coach asked, "What happened?"

"Take a look at this!"

The staff member took out his cell phone, opened up Facebook, and handed it to the coach.

Only then did the head coach realize that Club JQ, their archrival, had officially announced a new member in their team this year!

Team JQ had also welcomed a new player this year, and everyone had been guessing who it might be...

However, they had just made an official announcement, and the new member was also a well-known player in the game—the female live-streamer, Jimy.

A female player!

Well, that was some pretty hot news.

The problem, though, was that Team JQ had made a special mention of Jimy's education when they introduced her—because she was a rare one with relatively high academic qualifications among the group!

She was an undergraduate at a prestigious university!

After the news went public, fans of Team JQ took the opportunity to create the image of a highly-educated intellectual for her...

They were clearly facing off with Club HS by doing this!

Fans of Team JQ were even starting to antagonize them on the Internet.

They outright at-mentioned Club HS' official account and asked, "How high can your new member score in the college entrance examination?"

The head coach: "!!!"

This was an e-sports competition!! What was the point of obsessing over the players' college entrance examination results?!

What a ridiculous way of antagonizing them!

Had they let their win go to their heads after becoming the champions just once?

They had practically come all the way to their doorstep to bully them now!

Yet...

He glanced at Cheryl.

Sensing that he was looking at her, Cheryl looked up, whereupon she saw the head coach smile kindly at her as he said, "It's okay. College entrance examination scores aren't everything. We don't look at one's college entrance examination results in this industry."

Cheryl: "??"

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Cheryl picked up another potato chip, took a bite, and then looked at the head coach. "Oh, okay."

Then, she saw the head coach pacing back and forth in front of her as he looked at her earnestly, looking like someone who wanted to ask her something yet didn't dare to.

"... Coach, is there something you want to ask me?" Cheryl asked.

The head coach coughed and said, "Um, I'm just asking about this casually. I am absolutely not insinuating anything, nor am I looking down on you! But, well, what kind of university do you think you can get into?"

After speaking, the head coach wanted to give himself a tight slap.

What was he even asking?

The teen obviously looked easily embarrassed. What if the young lady couldn't even get into a university at all? How was she going to answer him?

The head coach immediately tried to repair the situation. "No, what I mean to say is, it's okay even if it's just a specialist school. Er, it doesn't matter whether you go to university or not..."

"Yes, yes, that's right! I also think that academic qualifications aren't important in our industry!" Lionel had also seen the posts and comments on Facebook. He came over immediately to comfort her and said, "Look at me, I only attended a lousy second-rate university while these guys here went to even worse ones!"

The rest of the team also hurried over and comforted her.

"Exactly, so it's alright no matter how you score in the exams!"

"It's okay even if you don't attend university!"

"Haha, mutants like Captain Zac are a rarity in our industry. Nobody can ace their exams while being an expert gamer too, right?"

"We compete with our abilities, not academic qualifications!"

...

While they were talking, Cheryl sensed that something was amiss.

The smart girl blinked a couple of times and then opened up Facebook, where she saw that someone had at-mentioned Club HS.

As she stared at her cell phone, her big eyes widened in disbelief.

Upon seeing this, the head coach next to her became even more distressed. "D-don't cry, Cheryl... Everything will be fine, they are just jealous that you're pretty!"

"Yeah, you're so much prettier than that live-streamer lady, so she could only try to make up for the difference with her academics..."

"Ignore them. They're just trying to embarrass you!"

"Their fans all seem to feel some kind of sense of superiority to others online. Ha, it's not like having good grades will let them win the championship, right?"

As everyone comforted her, they saw her look up.

On her flawless little face, they didn't see any sadness in her eyes but faint... excitement instead?

The head coach felt like his eyes must be playing tricks on him. He was about to speak when Cheryl said docilely, "Coach, can I reply to the message?"

The head coach: "?"

The teen spoke so innocently that he couldn't even make himself say no!

The corners of his lips spasmed as he considered the proposal for a moment. Then, he replied, "Alright, go ahead, but don't argue with them. People online are just being led on by others... Don't cry, either, nor do you have to feel like you've let the fans down just because your grades are poor... Oh, and don't use foul language. We'll deduct \$30 per swear word you use."

"Okay!"

Cheryl opened up her Facebook settings and changed her name to Cherry HS.

She knew that the club didn't want her to reveal her identity yet, so she didn't change it to "C". After the change, the head coach made a welcome post on the club's official Facebook page: 'Welcome to the club, @Cherry HS.'

With that, everyone now knew that Cherry HS was the new member of Club HS.

After that, Cheryl lowered her head and started typing a message.

The head coach watched her from a distance away and shook his head slightly.

Lionel was a little worried. "Coach, aren't you concerned that she may use abusive language or argue with them?"

The head coach replied, "She has promised me that she wouldn't. Besides, she's so innocent. Do you think she would argue with them?"

Lionel nodded after hearing this. He certainly didn't dare to even speak a little loudly to Cheryl. The girl looked so delicate that it was as if she would shatter like porcelain if he spoke even a little louder than usual.

The two of them thought that even if the girl panicked for real and argued a bit with the people online, she would probably just say something like "If you continue insulting me, I'll beat you up with my little fists".

There was no firepower whatsoever.

In fact, Lionel couldn't help but suggest, "Coach, should I help her hurl a couple of insults?"

The head coach looked at him coldly at once. "Ha ha, that would be \$30 deducted per word, then."

Lionel shut up immediately.

He was the embodiment of a miser.

While the two were chatting, a staff member of the club suddenly approached them anxiously. When he saw the head coach, his expression immediately changed, and he looked as if he wanted to cry!

"Coach!!"

The head coach looked at him. "What's wrong?"

He subconsciously looked at Cheryl and asked, "Did you use abusive language?"

Cheryl shook her head, the look in her eyes cute and innocent as she answered, "Nope!"

"Nope"...

She was just too cute!

The head coach completely believed her.

The staff member next to him was caught between laughter and tears, though. He said, "God C, it's true that you didn't use abusive language... but it might have been better if you had!"

The head coach was stunned when he heard this.

At last, he sensed something amiss belatedly and picked up his cell phone, where he saw that the welcome post for Cheryl had been pinned at the top.

In the post, someone had at-mentioned her and asked: 'Jimy scored 1300 on her SAT. Do you know how she scored so high?'

At the sight of the question, the head coach's heart suddenly sank.

He suddenly thought of Cheryl's response when Lionel mentioned Zac's near-perfect score in his mathematics paper during the college entrance examination.

He continued scrolling down, and sure enough, he saw Cheryl's reply: 'Did she miss out chunks of questions in one of the papers?'

The head coach: "??"

He felt his vision blacking out!

He was getting that vague feeling of someone showing off again!!

Nevertheless, he asked, "S-she must be joking, right?"

The staff member sighed. He felt as though the head coach, who was strict with everyone, had been blinded by Cheryl. He said, "Keep reading."

The head coach continued scrolling down.

Then, he saw someone at-mention her again. They asked: 'Oh wow, since you are so smart, which university do you think you can get into?'

Cheryl replied: 'I am considering Harvard and MIT, but I haven't decided which yet.'

As expected, the comments that followed were full of jeering. Everyone was guffawing.

The head coach: "!!!"

He looked up at Cheryl.

Still speaking in the same innocent tone, Cheryl said, "See? I didn't use any abusive language."

"It might have been better if you had!"

The head coach panicked.

If she had used abusive language, it would at least have been because the other party had provoked her first, so she couldn't help but retaliate, which would have made her reaction justifiable. But what was she bragging so freaking much for?!

Harvard and MIT? She was considering them?

Were those two schools something one could joke so carelessly about?!!!

His voice shook as he said, "Um, if memory serves me right, the college entrance examination results will be out in ten days, right?"

Cheryl nodded. "Yup!"

She was giving him that same harmless and adorable feeling again...

The head coach felt like he had been completely bewitched by her. The corners of his lips spasmed and he found himself utterly at a loss for words.

Next to him, the staff member couldn't help but ask, "What do we do, coach?"

The head coach replied, "What else can we do? Have the PR department ready! They'd better do a good job at handling this matter on the day the college entrance examination results are released!!!"

braggart?!!		

That girl was still so young and was even so pretty, but why must she be such a huge