Chapter 11: The Third Room - Part 2

June 11th (11:01 AM)

Evan tries to catch up with the RV, but cannot. He simply wasn't as fast as the vehicle. However, that didn't mean that he couldn't keep pace with it. He thinks for a second, then holds out his right hand.

"「Third Room」!"

Three thick, ghostly blue ropes shoot out from the knuckles on his right hand, flying straight towards the RV! Typically, there is a hook near the back of most RVs, meant for towing things like boats or small trailers behind them. This hook was what the three ropes would latch onto, connecting Evan and the vehicle and leaving some slack to spare.

Still, just connecting himself to the vehicle wouldn't work if he wanted to start keeping up with it. Cars were dangerous, and although the RV would be moving a bit slower in the crowded streets of Albany, it was still faster than he could run.

Evan quickly scans his surroundings, trying to find a solution for his predicament-- and finally, he would see a dumpster close by, with the lid closed and ready.

Thinking on his feet, the man activates his stand ability again. All of a sudden, just within range, a small, ghostly orange race car appears on top of the closed lid! It wasn't much time until the dumpster or RV left his range-- so for now, he not only needed to stay within range of his own stand, but also keep the vehicle from straying too far away!

The race car begins to drive, eventually forming a perfect square around a section of the lid, outlined in a bright, similar color. But it wasn't enough. Evan needed more time!

As the muscular man runs, the ropes start to become taut. Soon, they begin to actually pull him along, and it is all he can do to remain standing as he is dragged forward.

After what seemed like an eternity, the car finished its second lap around the neon square it had previously created, and disappears, recalled by its user.

At the last second, before he would be forced to let go, Evan holds out his hand, and the same square lid that his race car had outlined appears, this time the same blue as the ropes connecting him to the vehicle!

Without wasting time or hesitating in the slightest, the pursuer throws the lid onto the ground in front of him, then bends his knees. In one fluid motion, he jumps on top of the square, and allows himself to be pulled by the RV. For a moment, he tilts, as if about to fall off-balance, but quickly regains his stance.

By using his stand ability on the lid of a dumpster, Evan had turned it into a rudimentary wakeboard-- except instead of being pulled by a boat, he was being dragged by a large RV through the crowded streets of Albany!

It was true that he wasn't in the clear yet, since he still needed to make sure he didn't hit any cars, and still had to catch up to the actual RV-- but at least now he didn't have to worry about friction ripping his feet apart if he couldn't catch up in time.

"Jozenby…" Evan thinks to himself, narrowing his eyes. *"I'll catch up with you, if it's the last thing I ever do."*

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June 11th (11:02 AM)

Kell sits in the passenger seat next to Jozenby, with one leg crossed over the other as she reads through a magazine they had picked up just a little while earlier.

"Huh, that's interesting." She comments, reading a scathing article about whatever new scandal there was between a famous couple. "Apparently, these pe-"

The woman's musings are quickly interrupted by a the faintest hint of movement in one of the side mirrors.

Intrigued, she looks out the window-- only to see a large, muscular Asian man with an orange and black cape riding the back of their RV, weaving through traffic in an attempt to intercept them!

Oddly enough, ghostly blue ropes overlapping his hand were able to be seen clearly, and his balance on top of some sort of similarly-colored sled was uncanny.

“What the hell? Where’d this guy come from?” Kell thinks to herself, shocked that someone had gotten so close without them noticing.

She turns to her companion. “Hey, JoJo? We’ve got a problem here. Some guy is chasing us. He doesn’t look happy.”

“Who looks happy when they’re chasing someone? That’s always an odd thing to say. You know, people never mention when someone approaching *does* look happy. Isn’t that strange?” Jozenby wonders. “Anyway, is he a stand user? He’s probably in my blind spot, since I can’t see him in the rearview mirror, so I won’t be able to do much against him.”

“Yeah. He’s a stand user. Want me to take him out? Or at least make him stop following us?” Kell offers. A bright stand aura shines around her, and a single blade of her stand, Scissor Sister, appears in her hand. “You need to keep your eyes on the road. Make sure he can’t catch up.”

“Go for it.” Jozenby nods, adjusting his goggles. “The best vantage point is on the roof. Use the hatch leading up to it. I’ll watch the road. You watch your head and make sure you don’t hit any street signs.”

With that, he turns back to the road, and begins to focus on it. He needed to make sure that they would lose this unseen enemy. But why would someone be chasing them in the first place? Were they related to Kell somehow? The zebra-striped protagonist would ponder these questions as his partner opens the roof hatch, and climbs out of the vehicle.

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Kell steps onto the white roof, shaking a bit and trying to get her balance. The transition from Thunder Road’s interior to the normal top of the RV was slightly jarring, and she needed a second to process everything before she could move on.

As soon as the young woman regains her bearings, she would see him; the determined stand user chasing the duo was slowly gaining on them, drawing his ropes in like a fishing like to get closer and closer.

“Jozenby! Make a tight turn!” She shouts down into the actual RV, gripping her sword tightly. “Throw him off of our trail!”

Her companion hears this, and yanks the wheel to the right, turning onto a less busy street at a high speed. To match this momentum, the man riding the lid is flung off to the side, nearly losing his grip on the back hook.

However, at the last second, the pursuer swerves so that his feet and the lid are facing to the side as well, and ever so slightly adjusts his angle. Since this was a public road, and not a desolate one like in the rural parts of Massachusetts, there were bound to be other cars here-- and with some quick thinking, the lid slams into the passenger window of a car running parallel to the RV!

Bending his knees so that the impact would be lessened, the pursuer pushes off of the window, doing a rudimentary flip in mid-air to land upright on the pavement once more. For his size, this man was surprisingly athletic, and his technique and balance were almost equal to that of a gymnast. He definitely had practice in normal fights-- if not stand battles as well.

“Showoff.” Kell mutters under her breath, a bit surprised at the absurdity of the situation herself. Even she had to admit, a normal human performing a stunt like that was impressive.

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At this point, it was all Evan had to concentrate and focus on not slipping at all. He had already defied his own expectations for himself by avoiding an impromptu kiss with the ground in such a flashy manner-- now, all he had to do was catch up. Still, this young woman with the sword could prove to be a problem.

Before he could think about what to do next, she was already driving the blade into the roof of the RV, a determined, steely look in her eyes. In a split second, sharp blades erupt from the center of her attack, moving straight towards the hook-- or more specifically, the ropes *attached* to the hook itself.

“Shit! Is she trying to cut through my line? If I lose momentum that quickly, I’ll be guaranteed to fall!” Evan thinks to himself. *“And it’s not exactly like I can engage in a diplomatic conversation, especially when we’re going this fast. It’s a miracle I’ve held on this long already...”*

Sure enough, the sword-like protrusions eventually make their way down to the hook, sharpening it to a supernatural degree. The more Evan moved, the more the ropes moved-- and the more the ropes moved, the more they would be cut.

Of course, moving in this situation was inevitable. For a moment, the two lock eyes-- and in that second, they would realize that each of them had the same sort of determination locked away in them. The drive to achieve their goals, no matter what they may be.

Evan's expression wasn't one of bloodlust, and his posture didn't indicate that he was looking for revenge.No, this was a man who was determined to reach his goal. In the same vein, Kell's eyes reflected that of a young woman who was simply defending herself. Was this all a misunderstanding? Were they really two minds that thought alike?

Little by little, the ropes start to fray, and Evan grits his teeth. With his limited range, there was nothing he could do to stop this young woman or the sharpened hook from cutting his only connection to Jozenby!

Suddenly, his eyes widen, and with his free hand, he points behind Kell. "Duck!"

"Huh?" Almost instinctively, Kell pulls up her sword, and throws herself to the ground in an attempt to avoid whatever the man was pointing at.

...Of course, nothing passes over her in the slightest. There were no signs or traffic lights just yet-- in fact, there was no danger in sight. With the sword in her hand, the spikes retract, giving Evan a much-needed break from her assault.

Her pursuer had tricked her, buying a few much-needed seconds in order to regain some ground. For a single second, he lets go, and the ropes vanish-- and then, just as quickly, he lashes out with his left hand, keeping his momentum and sending three more brand-new ropes towards the hook! The lines quickly wrap around the back once more, and he pulls himself forward again.

Now, he was closer than ever. If Kell tried to cut the rope again, she would have to do it herself-- otherwise, it would take time to reach him. Time that she didn't have.

"I… I'm so close!" Evan clenches his fist, his heart pounding. *"Just a few more seconds, and I'll be back. Just a few more meters. JoJo… I'm coming for you."*

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Stand:「Third Room」
Stand User: Evan Khruangbin

Power: D
Speed: C
Range: C
Durability: N/A
Precision: A
Potential: B

Ability: Evan's stand, Third Room, is a reflection of his deepest fighting spirit, taking the form of a 'colony' of three small race cars, each one with a different color motif. While it doesn't have much of a use at first, its true ability surfaces after one of the cars finishes a lap around a set area. Once a lap is complete, the car 'saves' the design of the are. This can be done up to three times total-- although each subsequent area saved will require an extra lap around before it can be copied. After 'saving' an area's design, Evan can summon a ghostly 'copy' of anything inside (including walls) to aid him in battle. For example, saving a boxing ring would allow him to use the ropes as grappling hooks, and saving an area with a refrigerator within the boundaries would give him a copy of anything contained inside. Evan cannot 'save' anything outside of his range (5 meters), meaning the maximum diameter a saved area can be is 10 meters. In addition, he can only have three copies at a time, and cannot save another area until he discards an existing one.