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In this chapter, the protagonist reflects on the circumstances that led him to become an Expendable, revealing that he voluntarily chose this perilous position under the guise of becoming an "Immortal." He recalls his recruitment experience on the colony ship **Drakkar**, specifically his meeting with Gwen Johansen, a no-nonsense recruiter who outlined the various dangerous tasks he would face, all of which would likely result in his death. Despite the risks, he felt desperate to leave his home planet, **Midgard**, and saw signing up as an Expendable as his sole option to gain passage.

During the recruitment session, Gwen informs him of specific jobs—external repairs during interstellar transit, exposure to local flora and fauna, necessary medical experiments, and potential combat situations. The protagonist acknowledges his lack of practical skills and understands that, although he would often find himself in life-threatening situations, he signed the contract to escape Midgard quickly.

As Gwen explains the reality of being an Expendable, the protagonist learns the grim truth: most Expendables often do not end their own suffering when facing death, contrary to his initial belief that he could simply reset his existence through a backup mechanism. Furthermore, Gwen reveals that he is the only applicant for the position of Expendable, despite thousands of applications for other roles on board the **Drakkar**.

Gwen challenges him on what makes him feel suited for the role, considering his background as a historian in a society where knowledge is readily accessible to everyone. With the absence of low-level academic opportunities, factories, or military positions, the protagonist expresses frustration at the lack of purpose in Midgard that drives many young individuals to seek riskier paths, concluding that he responds to this ennui by gravitating toward trouble. This chapter sets the stage for understanding the motivations behind his choice and the bleak environment of Midgard that he desperately wished to escape.