

## Dungeon S 1171

### Chapter 1171 - In The Face Of Money

Once the major issues of the JODE Academy had been sorted out, Chancellor Ma Ge took the opportunity to leave the group early while informing Grandma Yuan to find him at her earliest convenient time to sort the minor details. "After all, we can't exactly discuss such stuff to potential students for the advanced classes, right?" Ma Ge said and Grandma Yuan agreed to it.

"I will set a date with your secretary and please be on time as well. I do not have that much to spare to begin with." Yuan replied and Ma Ge chuckled, nodding his head to promise Yuan he would try his best.

"By the way, Jin. Can I speak to you for a moment?" Ma Ge asked and Jin readily agreed and told the rest he would be back again. Once they were out of the room, Ma Ge took an envelope out of his storage ring and passed it to him.

"You might not be the principal of the latest JODE Academy but you built it as the capacity of the interim manager for Shenzhen's branch. I know that you have your own business to attend to and other hmm...side hustles."

"Side hustles?" Jin turned cautious a little as he did not exactly know what Ma Ge was referring to. (Mainly because he had countless of them at the sidelines, churning revenue and losses for himself.)

"Ah, I apologise for the improper term and should get straight to the point. What I meant is the rebuilding of your Panda Clan. If rumours are true, Grandma Yuan is going to join you as well, right?" Ma Ge questioned and Jin still did not get what Ma Ge was driving across.

"That expression... Sigh." Ma Ge was wondering if he should even say it straight to his face or let him figure it out for himself. "Alright, I am asking you to reconsider admitting Yuan into your clan for the sake of JODE's future."

"Why? Are you afraid that the other Royal Zodiac families would have some opinions of having a Royal Panda Clan member holding the principal post?" Jin shot back without warning and it placed Ma Ge in a predicament once more. "If you phrase it that way then by putting me as the interim manager of Shenzhen Branch and the builder of this JODE Academy, you are also putting yourself in harm's way from the potential backlash of those families. And trust me, no amount of money would be able to buy this particular dimensional instance off my hands because this is my property. If you wish to, you could have the other dungeon suppliers to try but I could tell you, they would not be able to achieve what I do in a short span of time. My team is that unique."

"Besides, isn't JODE supposed to be a neutral organisation?" Jin shot Ma Ge once more but he too knew that the world is black and white. The political ramifications behind every organisation's backing are complicated and this applied to JODE as well. Ma Ge simply kept his silence before Jin turned his back away for a second as a sign to cool his head before returning the conversation.

"How much are they sponsoring JODE?" Jin questioned and Ma Ge felt the discussion had diverted a little too much.

"I believe I am not under any obligation to say anything. The money they provide are from their foundations in believing to keep the world a safer place from possible demon incursions." Ma Ge gave a politically correct response but Jin was not buying it.

"I will double the amount of your biggest major sponsor." Jin said and caused Ma Ge to scoff unwittingly before apologising to Jin for the unruly behaviour.

"As much as I like to think you have a decent business in your hands, you cannot possibly expect me to – I would not be treated like an idiot even if you are the current Head of the Royal Panda Clan, Mr Xie." Ma Ge said and Jin's eyes were dead serious,

"How much?" Jin reiterated with his arms folded and unwavering.

"Sigh, fine. At least 10 million yuan (~1.5million USD) per quarterly annum. If you do not believe me, you can ask Lee Na. She has the accounts and considering you are still the interim manager; I can give you temporary rights to view what I say is certified true." Ma Ge did not know where the topic was going and then Jin instantly took out a cheque book from his storage watch. He beckoned one of Lynn's penguins NPC to loan him a table and they quickly brought it out in a matter of seconds.

"Alright then, here's a cheque of 20 million. If it bounced, then come find me. I can get my guys to provide you cold hard cash if needed." Jin said and Ma Ge dropped his jaw. What kind of business allowed him to have this amount of cash to spare? If he had that much, why was he stopping with just a Tree Mall? Suddenly, there were a ton of questions in Ma Ge's head that he was unable to comprehend the current situation.

It was not bribery per se but rather, flexing to show that the Royal Zodiac Panda Clan is not just some copycat clan, aiming to reach its former self. With this kind of money to throw around, this is the true and actual power of the Royal Zodiac Panda Clan! Legends said that they were the economic powerhouse among the rest of the Royal Zodiacs and that the fortunes of the Horse Royal Zodiac would pale in comparison.

And this act of throwing money to the JODE organisation was basically Jin's way of telling Ma Ge not to bloody disrespect the authority of the Royal Zodiac Pandas.

"I...understand. Once we verify your contribution, we will proceed to get the JODE Academy up and running as soon as possible. I will get my men to get in touch with you with regards to the supplies we talked about recently." Ma Ge's heart was racing and he was not as composed as he should be despite the title of JODE Chancellor. (In fact, he even thought the supplies thing was just a discussion point which he thought he could ignore. But now things have changed drastically.)

Jin always knew in the face of money, people would bow but he did not expect it to be this potent. Now he understood the true value of the dough the System, Claire and the other minions had been rolling in for the past few months.

## **Chapter 1172 - Recuperating Losses**

As Jin went back into the room, he saw Lee Na decided to leave early as well. "Thank you, Boss Jin for accompanying us. I received a text message from Chancellor Ma Ge that required me to do some last minute work." Lee Na said and waved to her daughter goodbye. "Claire, get the bill. I will make sure you are compensated for it. Don't forget the receipt like last time."

"Yes, Mdm. And don't you worry. Jin will provide ALL the receipts that you need if I ever lose any of them." Claire said and somehow Jin felt some sarcasm from her. When Lee Na left the room, Claire immediately stood up and did not hesitate to have a staring contest with Jin.

"Tell me. Just tell me. What was that about?" Claire asked and the entire group was confused by her actions.

"I..." Jin had clearly forgotten that the Sub System Accountant was in the same dining room as him and now she had some major questions to ask.

But instead of repeating the question once more, she took out a stack of yuan, a very fat stack of yuan and showed it to Jin. "See this money? How much time do you think you would need to earn this back via your stall? And if I might ask, how much do you think this particular stack of cash is worth?"

"Erm-" Before Jin could even have a proper reply, Claire already took that stack of cash and slapped Jin in his face with it.

"Do NOT! EVER! Use the company's money without discussing it with me." Claire said and Jin immediately went down to his knees and prostrated right in front of her.

"I am sorry. I thought I would like to show Ma Ge that the Royal Pandas should not be messed with. They wanted to stop Grandma Yuan from becoming our Royal Panda clan member. They said there will be consequences for allowing her to take up our membership and thus, I decided to throw that stack of money at him and made him listen to us instead." Jin finally explained and Claire released a puff of air from her mouth.

"Fine. If it's for Grandma Yuan, then I would let you go for wasting that amount of money." The Sub System Accountant said and the rest did not expect Claire to be this fierce. "That money could be used for the Farming World but it looks like we need to find another way to fund it."

"I thought you had investment accounts in the Black Stock Market?"

"I am waiting for several prices to rise and drop before I could do anything else. It's a waiting game for me and there's no guarantee I can earn back that amount before our fight against the Farming World. Not especially when Kraft had decided to use our funds to have his revenge match in the Dungeon World."

"Erm... Is there anything we can help with?" Su Zhen asked, hoping to break the tension in the air between Jin and Claire.

"You guys?" Claire thought for a moment and then it clicked. "Come to think of it, I believe there is something which you all could do which might alleviate the current crisis created by Jin."

"What can we do? Is it some raiding mission?" Rong asked excitedly since he would rather do something that could bring some Moolah on the table than some boring scouting mission which Jin initially wanted them to do.

"Hmm... You could say something like that." Claire thought to herself and sat beside Jin. "But this is a mission which would need Jin to approve."

"Why would you say that?" Jin asked and looked curiously at Claire.

"Sources tell me that the Farming World has a gold mine in the Eastern Region. The thing is, the place is well guarded. And it is solely because that gold mine has unique gold seeds which would allow the mining town to prosper. I asked Gold well as ironically as it sounds to show me a gold seed. He told me that he did not have a sample because it would endanger his entire stash of seeds if that ever happened." Claire said and the Demon Exorcists somehow got a little too excited about their upcoming mission.

"Is that why the Eastern Region had decided to keep their hands off the current matter? They believed they had enough wealth to prevent the Rat Demon Invasion?" Jin questioned and he knew money could only buy that much.

"Hmm, on the contrary, their nobles have been living luxurious lives because of that gold mine and do not give two hoots about current world affairs or the people's quality of living. They assumed that their private army would be sufficient to stop any incoming threats and so far it had been working quite well. Especially for the Duke of the Eastern Region. Gold had once said that it was because of the Duke's generosity that allowed him to put seed stash in every region just for political leverage. This shows the amount of power and wealth he has although we know that is insufficient if the Rat Demons come onshore or underground." Claire explained.

"And considering that we lack money, having just one gold seed would be sufficient for the System to duplicate it and start growing them. We might need a few samples of their gold product and then we can even improve the purity of the gold before we sell it into the black market."

Jin thought for a while and knew that this was his fault to begin with. Thus, he volunteered to go for the mission instead.

"Aww man, let us go instead! If not, with you too. Besides, I think you have better things to settle than hitting a gold mine." Lian said as she wanted to prove herself like how Rong had the itch to scratch.

"No," Jin said and both Lian and Rong whined while the other two was visibly disappointed. Even Claire had her eyebrows up until she saw Jin continuing his sentence.

"Scout the Eastern Region first. Prove to me you can blend in easily and learn there are any counter forces. Talk to the Farming Minions and familiarise yourself with their culture, or at least the basic one. Only after that when you guys have a viable plan, then I will allow you guys to raid all you want. Is that acceptable?" Jin said and it was pretty obvious to Claire and Grandma Yuan that the JODE Branch Manager was teaching them an impromptu lesson as well.

"Yes!" The four of them agreed with Jin's conditions willingly.

## **Chapter 1173 - Expansion Of The Tree Mall**

After that steamboat dinner, all the wants and needs of Jin were coming together. The Tree Mall was accepting new occupants through batches and they were currently assigned to the first and second floors.

Small and medium enterprises had set up offices at the far end of the second floor and access was restricted to their workers and visitors. For a cheaper rent, and the possibility to change their office interior without much money was a boon. So much so that Jin even allowed an interior design company to come in, taking over the job of designing the interior view for most of the customers. And for a small fee, the offices could change their theme anytime they want.

Once the interior designers had done their job in agreeing with the office managements, Jin would then proceed to create as what they had desired. This eliminated Jin as the middleman, allowing him to create the end product without too much hassle. He even made it so that once the interior designers were done creating the layout, there can never be any further changes unless it affects the office that would be detrimental to their workers. Else, any changes would be charged as a second makeover.

It reduced the time needed for Jin to get those office themes up since the System was able to replicate what the designers had already envisioned. And it was a win win for Jin, the middleman and the offices. Because of Jin's sudden openness to allow companies to work in the tree mall, MNCs had started applying as well and Jin 'believed' that they wanted to tap into the potential of the various small and medium enterprises as well as the service sectors in the Tree Mall.

This was because Jin allowed those major multinational companies to enter into his Tree Mall on one condition, they had to aid the small and medium enterprises within the Tree Mall to grow as well. Not by giving them a lump sum of money but a sub contract or else, the rental on those spaces would be significantly higher than the usual.

He had also revealed to each of the MNC representatives that he was the new upcoming leader of the Royal Zodiac Panda Clan and by having a foothold in the Tree Mall meant that they understood the consequences of that particular branch to be part of the Panda Clan's property. Most if not all were shocked to hear this and while most of them needed more time to discuss, a couple quickly acknowledged. This was because the companies had heard rumours that the Dungeons and Pandas store owner had invested a huge sum of money in JODE.

Not just that, JODE was well recognised to be something akin to a private military organisation despite their mission to serve the people in ridding the demons and their outward 'neutral' allegiance to no one had always been used as a strong political statement. However, everyone in their higher hierarchy knew that they would serve whoever was paying them the most.

Initially, most spectators thought Dungeons and Pandas paid them because of the new upcoming JODE academy which they had announced but when the MNC representatives realised that Jin was their newest biggest benefactor because of his status as the Panda Lord, they immediately knew that he has strong enough of a backing to lean on. Thus, those MNCs had decided to place a branch in his Tree Mall.

One of them even decided to move their central headquarters into Jin's Tree Mall and it was none other than Hua Wee. The nearby factory campus had created enough buzz about the Tree Mall that the management decided to place the headquarters in Jin's business building because of the confidence from their employees.

It was also a perfect move since they had been wanting to push their headquarters closer to their main production campus for some time but never had the chance to do so. Now that the management had decided to put the new headquarters in Jin's Tree Mall, the ripple effect of this major move had drastically increased the land value around the Tree Mall.

However, the Panda Lord was ahead of any other property investors. Because of his newly minted status as the Panda Lord, he had been in talks with Shenzhen's mayor as well as the land owners within his Tree Mall's vicinity. One could say that he managed to flex his wealth and status to bargain for the surrounding lands in a hush hush meeting. However, the MVP was not Jin who decided to swoop the lands around the Tree Mall but Xiong Da, his newly appointed lawyer who was present for almost all of the meetings and settled all the paperwork. (After all, he managed to convince those people to take up the offer with the allure of money and charisma. He also did not deny that the cultivation training under Jin worked wonders for his line of work as well.)

Property investors did not catch wind of it because the transaction was almost immediate with Jin providing cold hard cash on the spot for them in the millions (of Yuan). Thus, a five kilometre radius around the Tree Mall was now under Jin's jurisdiction before he started to take in batches of occupants.

As for the development of the five kilometre radius, Jin placed it on halt first since he needed to take care of his Tree Mall before moving on to bigger, loftier goals. But because of the transactions he made, Jin believed he would be able to see returns in less than a year and the profit margin would be high enough to possibly attract foreign investors to develop the Tree Mall even further.

But for now, he was focusing on getting his Tree Mall occupied with both famous brands and local entrepreneurs who wished to have a shot in business. Besides, Jin had the supplies for everything for them to try out, and thus all the new businesses needed was demand. If they do grow big, Jin would like to tap into their business and earn some dividends from them too.

"Help others and ultimately, they will help you." Jin smiled as everything was going smoothly with the aid of the System.

### **Chapter 1174 - New Jins**

And even though he appeared to be extremely busy with his occupants, most people had forgotten that he was able to create 'Another Jins' to assist with his work. And now that he had Grade Up considerably, the strain on him to produce Another Jins was not as difficult as before. However, the restrictions still played a significant part where he could not exit the Dungeons and Panda Store without releasing them.

What's more was that the newly minted Another Jins were less stupid to say figuratively. Previously, they could only do one task at a time, and the System had to guide them closely to make sure that they knew what to do. If needed, the System would merely merge two Another Jins so they could perform the task with ease before splitting them again. Still, it was sufficient enough for the Original Jin since what he needed them to do were very specific tasks such as bargaining in the black market along with the buy and sell of goods.

But now that Jin had grade up in his cultivation, the other Jins were like exact copies of him, with his current knowledge and skills all combined into the copy. So effectively, the System did not need to

closely handle the Another Jins and they could still do the work that he needed to do. Once the original user knew the capabilities of his cloning via astral projections, he immediately sped up his workflow.

He basically became an army of 'one' by splitting his jobs throughout the store and even the minions were unusually happy with the change. This was because they usually have quite a load of requests and suggestions that needed to be attended to. Some were very minor requests like the scientists asking Jin to test out some new equipment but some were priority one such as the training regiment of the Southerners and the Farming World war plans updates. Even the latest mission given by Jin to his personal Demon Exorcists was also dealt by Another Jin.

Furthermore, with the System's capability to connect and relay information from one Jin to another, the flawless communication between each clone had enabled the original one to have the latest intel and updates of everything. Suddenly, everything was coming together nice and quick because of the System User's ability to handle and this made his end users, minions and even Sub System Users to be happy with the current dealings of the situation.

Thus, the Cultivation Zoo Instance was able to accelerate its timeline nearer to its official opening ceremony, no doubt with the help of the latest Zoo Team and JODE Academy had already begun enrolling students while the interior infrastructure as well as the curriculum were being reviewed.

The only time the Jins were not available was when he was forced by the System to take a quick nap. As much as Jin wished to have a clone to be working on stuff as he sleeps, the System forbade Jin to do so. "Even as the User had the capability to do it, one has to look out for his mental health. The splitting of clones might be perfect iterations of yourself but they remained to be Astral projections. Your body still needs time to rest and consolidate itself before User continues with his usual work."

Jin could only assume there might be untold side effects if he was not careful and thus, he listened to what the System said and took his nap. Also the nap Jin took would usually be in a capsule but ever since the Panda Cultivator had been able to control his sludge, the System had finally approved him to sleep in his own room. (Obviously it had been renovated to accommodate time compression and dilation so he could take this time.) It even teased Jin that he could finally find a proper girlfriend and sleep with her without any issues.

As much as Jin rolled his eyes, he honestly believed at this certain point of his life, it was not the right time to settle down. He needed to assert himself as the Panda Lord to stay competitive against the other Royal Zodiac families. Not to mention, the time grace which he had was about to end within a month or so. Clearly, he was too busy to think of it since there were other things in his mind.

And by busy, he meant the continuous creation of the Virtual Reality Dimensional Instance. Even though he has a prototype ready for the Symposium, he was already two steps ahead thinking of the mass production. With the help of Ke Loong, Sea Mesh CEO, he was finally able to get some finetuning done as well as procuring an elite team of tech engineers through the System contracts.

Rei continued to work closely with the selected engineers and they provided input in order to make it viable for mass production. It was a huge step forward and Jin (with the Another Jins) had begun procuring those materials en masse to ensure that if it was approved in the Symposium, they would continue on with the global sales. But regardless of approval or not, both Jin and the System were ready to push forward.

With the advice of the Sea Mesh tech engineers, they had also started procuring the required safety certifications for the prototype. Naturally, the System was already ahead of Jin in manipulating the certifications since everyone knew how long and tedious the extensive safety review could be. It was doing just how the System had done for Jin's dungeon supplier licensing since most of these 'official' records are in major databases rather than hardcopies.

And with that in mind, Jin had started assembling the factories Pandapolis for the production of the Virtual Headset. There was no time to hear whether the Symposium approves it or not, Jin was going to proceed with the production. This was because he only wanted to use the Symposium as a platform to flex his work as well as his store's name. After all, social exposure was important especially when he noticed how influential Kraft's actions were during the Demopolis Raids.

Also, speaking of Kraft, that old crafty fox was indeed going to attack one of the biggest cities owned by the Church of the Afterlife.

## **Chapter 1175 - Military Coup**

"Why do you even have to bring me with you?" Pei said with some reluctance as she was squatting at the top of a cathedral alongside her nasty coworker.

"I figured you needed the exercise. Like Jin had not been working out much lately. All those business models, earning profits and creating some pathetic alternate reality probably tired you out, no?" Kraft said as he took in a deep breath when a breeze blew through them.

"I thought you wanted to have some fanciful invasion against the city? Like with the latest airships and stuff." Pei did not want to answer Kraft since either way, he would ultimately coerce her to his bidding.

"Hmm, yea. I thought about it. It's more fun to create havoc by myself." Kraft said with a nod of his head as if he had gone through a phase of enlightenment. "But myself would be truly boring. Having a competitor always spices things up."

"More likely, you already knew Jin had no money to spare since he had been investing more on his business. Also, the upcoming war with the Farming World has been ramping up rapidly and you are now penniless, without an army."

"What? Penniless? Please! My coffers are with Demopolis, and Rex is taking hold of it very well! I told him to invest in the Seven Cities' infrastructure and soon enough, I would have sufficient pocket change to build an army of my own." Kraft shrugged off Pei's accusation.

"Well, who was the one who resolved the Seven Cities bullshit?" Pei rolled her eyes.

"You mean who was the brilliant one who started the chain of reactions that lead to this day?" Kraft twisted her words while Pei waved off Kraft's bullshit. Indeed, that Seven Cities 'bullshit' turned out to be a miracle which Jin and Kraft had not expected. (with the help of some celestial intervention.)

Upon learning the existence of Pandapolis and a new 'god' who was able to resurrect them without charging a single cent. The Army Generals were shocked and understood why the Church of the Afterlife



had their suspicion in the leader of Pandapolis. Perhaps, there had always been someone or an organisation who were able to have the same powers as the Church themselves all along. Yet, the incumbent had always done what was necessary to root out the competition.

But this time around, they did not expect their new adversary would be able to literally hold its fort against them. Not to mention, the armies were not only being resurrected for free but kindness was paid doubly so by giving them accommodation and warm food while their new 'god' prophesied their return should not be too prompt.

Because of Kraft's devious plan to spread the 'stomach flu' virus in all the cities simultaneously, the armies had concluded that the Church of the Afterlife had either branded them as enemies or wanted to take the opportunity to grab the cities when they were defenceless. (Not to mention some misinformation from the Night Foxes.) The generals who were given the gift of telepathy by their new god, saw the real truth behind the Church of the Afterlife's intentions.

Furthermore, their god had even prompted his servants to provide the army sufficient antidotes for the particular virus, portraying benediction and salvation for their small and humble cities. It was as if it was preordained by the god's oversight to show them the way to the real truth.

Thus, when the armies had decided to make the grievous decision to perform a military coup to take control of their cities back from the Church of the Afterlife, they found out they were not abandoned by their new gods even when they were outmatched against the Church's Knights' armies. In fact, they were resurrected at a safer location near to their fight zone and continued the skirmish against the Church's Knights.

Even more, they realised that some of the new god's servants were in the mix against the Church, allowing them to subsequently have an upper hand in the fight. As the servant's assistance was minimal and the coup was mostly their efforts, the military somehow felt liberated from the Church's embrace and claimed their city as rightfully theirs. (Because in name, it was their city but in essence, the majority portion of the dungeon core's rights belonged to the Church.)

And as they heard the words of their new God through their ears when the armies turned victorious, they cried in joy as all their God wanted the exact opposite from the church.

They can have full reign of their own city.

But because these cities' cultures were predominantly about honour, all of them instinctively became servant states for Pandapolis, in hopes that their cities would have the same benefits as Pandapolis does. And now, Pandapolis and Demopolis were taking swift action to establish a foothold in those cities the moment their protection bubbles came up.

"I am surprised that the System had been talking to them behind our backs without consulting any of us. In fact, I AM surprised I was not the new god they all had been raving about."

"If you have a voice telling you stuff and everyone hears the same thing, there is no doubt about it being a higher power." Pei shrugged her shoulders. "In fact, by establishing the System as the one true god made even more sense than making Milk and Peppers their new goddesses. They are too lazy and irresponsible to do such a thing. But as servants of the true god? That makes more sense and freedom."

"Bleargh. Fine, I agree that the System handling the god component is way better. None of us, even me, would have bothered with each and every petty request to be fulfilled in the near future." Kraft surrendering the thought of being a god. "Besides, it's time for the System to do some work of its own. It had been relying on us way too much."

"There you go. Glad to hear that you have sorted out your problems with my consultation. Besides, you don't need to be a god when you still have your own group of followers which brings back to the point. WHY. DO. YOU. NEED. ME?" Pei asked once more as the Night Foxes could be seen emerging in every roof in the vicinity and that made Kraft chuckled hard.

"I said it once, and I will say it again. Stop being a poor sport and have some fun!" Kraft said as a wave of his fingers and the Night Foxes disappeared, merging themselves with the shadows of the night.

He then stood up and extended his hand to Pei. "The series of military coups which the System single handedly prompted had made history in the Dungeon World but also incurred some serious deficits in the numbers. Care to earn some profit? Loser got to buy the winner a week's worth of dinner."

## **Chapter 1176 - Extra -The Ivory Tower**

Pei stared at Kraft for a while but instead of agreeing to it, she queried what he was about to do.

"Nothing much really. My foxes and I are going to hit their vaults as anonymous raiders. This place is essentially their bank. Many armies and adventurers had always challenged it."

"Doesn't that mean their security would be as tight as that Paradise whatever prison in Demopolis?" Pei asked but she did not want to use her powers that much if possible. Just a warm up exercise would have been fine.

"Hmm yeah. From what I heard; they are quite infamous for creating a labyrinth that spirals underground too. Remember what some of the Demons said? The Church of the Afterlife introduced that concept to build that prison." Kraft said as he took Pei's hand without her permission, forcing her to move along with him.

"Wait- a minute!" Pei startled for a moment before she stabilised herself from Kraft's quick leaps before forcing him to release his hand and followed unwillingly behind his back. "Then, what is that tower right in front of us? It seemed to spiral endlessly to the sky." The white ivory tower looked similar to one of Jin's buildings in the Islands Instance which he later hoped to implement in the Virtual Reality Instance.

"Oh. You have to go through the underground first before going up that tower. It's kind of like you reached the bottom level and then you go up. And as usual, greedy people tried to skip and wanted to crash gate into the higher portions of the tower. The funny thing is, those adventurers merely dissipated into thin air." Kraft explained.

"Shouldn't we be at better position to enter from the top? I mean those adventurer's power level could not match with us a single b-"

"A few of the Night Foxes gave it a try but paid with their lives. They even used some of the extreme magic that I wielded in the Graveyard Technique and it did not work for some reason. It's like a law of nature protecting the ivory tower from intruders. Perhaps, it's the working of a unique Dungeon Core just like those Moloch had mentioned before. Those bastards got lucky to receive it and utilise the core to its maximum potential."

"Then, why bother raiding?" Pei asked the obvious which Kraft found it totally unnecessary.

"Why not? They opened their bank for all to try because they were confident that adventurers or even city armies were not able to clear the entire tower." Kraft said as he stood at a rather tall building and beckoned Pei to have a look at the horizons. She then understood the problem immediately.

Even though the city had been fortified with walls and guards, the Ivory Tower itself had its own set of walls... No, Multiple sets of walls each with their army protecting the area. That was for other rival cities to give it a try against them but for the groups of adventurers attempting to win some money, all they had to do was to register at the front gate with a condition attached.

By surrendering all the gold in their possession before they could proceed.

And considering the Church of the Afterlife was in each major city, they too control the financial situation of each and every adventurer. So should the adventurers lose a fight, 20% of their entire wealth would be confiscated by the Church of the Afterlife.

However, Kraft was not going into the dungeon as adventurers or city armies. They were going in as raiders. The term raiders were given to adventurers who decided not to follow the norm and fight their way through. As long as they could make it to the Ivory Tower's entrance, the guards would harass them no further as dictated in their rules. They would then be able to fight against the challenges stored for them within the tower.

That's not all for raiders as the fun part of it is that any guard they killed before going into the dungeon would also yield them some Dungeon Dollars by the Dungeon Core itself. It was part of their Dungeon Core System which they had to oblige and thus, the Church of the Afterlife tried to mitigate their losses by installing one of their few strongest available guard companies in the region as the Ivory Tower's defence.

Naturally, there were more heinous creatures and guards that protected each and every level of the Ivory Tower and rumours stated that the lowest number of floors any selected group of army soldiers or adventurers could only pass the 5th basement level.

Thus the Ivory Tower was known throughout the Dungeon World as the Tower of Blood Money and only desperate people would attempt their fates against it, just to have a quick turnover. Moreover, despite all these risks and dangers, the number of adventurers and cities that attempted these Ivory Tower were numerous to count. So much so that cities had to pick a date to invade or adventurers had to wait for their queue to enter.

Naturally, as a team of raiders, none of those matter to Kraft and the rest of his Night Foxes. If they were as menacing as the rumours had said, Kraft would then admit defeat and send a proposal to Jin as well as the Nine Foxes to petition an assault against the Ivory Tower. That way, they did not have to worry about money for quite some time.

But for now, it was for Kraft, Pei and the rest of the Night Foxes to give it a try.

"Even if you do not want to compete, I could use a competent healer for the raid," Kraft said and Pei sighed heavily as she saw the Night Foxes were fully geared. Once again, they were equipped with newly improved Gearbox suits as well as a magic amplifier mod that somehow looked like Jin's System Rider's belt.

"Don't you worry, even as we wanted to copy the original, those Living Armour plates are a pain in the ass to grow, so we improvised by using the System's Fusion powers which were previously performed on the Dragon Devils. You know, those metal looking dragon fusions? The System and the Science Research Team were able to create a mass production prototype that temporarily allowed power armour fusion." Kraft got way excited explaining as he passed one to Pei.

As much as he knows she was an all powerful cultivator, it doesn't hurt to let her 'power up' a little more. Not to mention, it sealed the deal of her going into the Ivory Tower alongside the Night Foxes when she accepted Kraft's gift.

## **Chapter 1177 - Vassal States**

Even as Pei, Kraft and his minions were trying to gain money from the Ivory Tower, Rex was in his office more concerned about the state of the Seven Cities. Reluctant to get any help from Jin, he decided to take things into his own hands. Although Jin knew the state of the Dungeon World through his System, he was more focused on completing his Virtual Reality Instance as well as the preparation of the Farming World invasion.

It might not look like much but the System and Jin were concurrently preparing for the big fight against the Demon Rats. Every single day the System had been communicating with various spirits of the land to get as much information on the Demon Rats as possible. They learned that they were indeed digging tunnels beneath sea beds to get to the other regions. And from what the System had learnt, it seemed as if they were going to coordinate a three way invasion at once.

Thus, even with the System at Jin's side, the counter invasion would require more resources and manpower, unlike any other wars or battles that Jin had been through. While Kraft and some of his war masters gave their opinion that they should let the Demon Rats invade the East and West regions in order to thin their numbers for the counter invasion, Jin felt it would be way too messy.

It was mainly because as long as a few rats survived the attacks, they could repopulate again and fight back. Jin had already seen several nesting areas of those Demon Rats and knew how his minions were consistently ambushing those nests to drop their numbers.

But it merely dented their war force. So, it was more important to contain if possible before the fight was let loose.

That was also why the System kept getting information from the Spirits of the Land to ensure that they knew the progress of the Demon Rat's digging projection. And from that information alone, it was not

some minor mini tunnel that they were building but a transportation network system similar to transporting heavy cargo under the ground to the other three regions under the sea.

Jin and the System had no idea how they were able to produce that much metal and other resources needed to reinforce the tunnels. So they could only deduce that it was the by products of the Farming World that they had somehow taken advantage of.

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"Is that why you decide to burden yourself with the responsibility of the Seven Cities?" A familiar voice could be heard when Rex's doors opened as he buried himself in several mountains of paperwork.

"Jin? I thought you were busy. Did not expect you to come to Demopolis to pay me a personal visit." Rex replied.

"Sad to say, I am not Jin." The voice turned and Rex looked upwards to have a better look. "But it sounded much like him, didn't it?"

"Moloch... Why does your puppet look so..." Rex could not describe whether it was such a foolish idea to use their master as his puppet's new glamour.

"Meh, it tricked quite a number of people and that includes you now that you know that it's not Jin. It was fun using his face as my new puppet but obviously, I have to make a few adjustments since the System said that having an exact replica would only confuse people. So, I have to add a mole at the side of Jin's cheeks." Moloch commented.

"I mean yeah, I totally agree with the System. If those newer minions had yet to see Jin personally, it would only confuse them further especially when I heard that he is starting to use Astral Clones to speed up his work." Rex said as he kept his fountain pen aside and gently pushed the paperwork aside to give Moloch the attention he needed. "So, what can I do for you?"

"While I understand that those Seven Cities were to be vassal states under the Pandapolis Banner, I think it's too soon. Even though they have the Dungeon Core protection right now and the System has been injected into each and every core, I honestly do not think it's a great idea especially when Pandapolis is like wayyyy in the East."

"Mass Transportation Magic should not be an issue once we install the Gates under the benefit of the Vassal States Programmes," Rex recommended but Moloch was still not satisfied

"Well, yeah. But it's mainly because they are vassal states, they are more vulnerable to attacks in the coming days once the Dungeon Core Protection is over."

"You know that we do not have men to spare at the moment. Most of the Orc and Goblin Engineers are prepping the weapon production here in Demopolis while most of the Demon Citizens who were now situated in Pandapolis were getting the miscellaneous items up. Besides, we already sent quite a fair bit of resources into their cities. It should weather them through the difficult period."

"Duh, I know the situation we are having right now. Everything is tied down for the Farming World but that is also the point. Because we are too focused on the Farming World, we might lose the Dungeon World's spoils if we are not careful. These Seven Cities while considered as third class cities- well, not all.

Like Aljun City is a first class city. Anyways, they are producing quite a lot of products, produces and even military hardware initially, but the coup against the Churches had brought nearly everything to a halt." Moloch voiced his concerns. "If we do not do something soon, those cities might plunge into chaos when the Dungeon Core protection is over."

"Moloch, my friend." Rex sighed as his expression to voice something suddenly became clear for the cotton butt minotaur to view. Did Moloch speak too much too soon?

"That is why I am writing to all the City Council members of those Seven Cities to have a meeting at Demopolis tomorrow."

"Well! That's brilliant, why did you not say it earlier... oh oops." Moloch chuckled a little and stopped talking, allowing Rex to finish what he wanted to say.

"Doesn't matter. But I would need you to do something for me since you have decided to take an interest in this matter. Get me Qiu Yue to be free the entire day tomorrow." Rex asked and they both knew that the Empire Building Sub System User was the key to get this mess sorted.

## **Chapter 1178 - Requests And Demands**

"Yo, Rex. What's up. I heard the situation from Moloch." Qiu Yue waved casually at Rex as she entered the meeting set up by him. The rest of the council members were surprised how casual this lady came into this important meeting, calling King Rex just by his name. This was also because most of the Military Generals that entered the room greeted him with respect. When asked by their fellow politicians, the Generals told them that there was a drastic difference in power level between him and the rest of the Generals combined together.

If they knew that he was the King of Demopolis, they would not have bothered fighting against such a strong opponent in the first place. However, considering the circumstances, most of the generals were happy that they did at least attempt to invade Demopolis or else, they would not have known the truth that the Church of the Afterlife was hiding all these times. Now they understood how Pandapolis withstood the might of the former Demopolis's armies combined.

However, as Rex saw Qiu Yue, he was delighted by her presence and at the same time relieved. "Lady Qiu Yue. It's fantastic that you are able to make time for us."

"Nah, when I heard about your planned meeting, I instinctively knew you would need me. Besides, it's great to see that the rest of them are here to join us too." Qiu Yue eyed the generals and they too smiled with pleasure.

"Who is she?" One of the politicians questioned the military general's aides.

"Lady Qiu Yue? If I am not wrong, she is the one that will revitalise our cities, gaining the very same might that allowed Demopolis to withstand the combined military power of the Seven Cities. She showed the wonders of the True God which was why the generals had decided to rebel against that obnoxious church." The military aide said with much positivity that it was kind of scary. Obviously, the

council members who never went to war had no idea what to expect from her but those who were defeated by Demopolis' army understood her prowess. (Obviously, the aide was wrong since Jin was the one who aided with the creation of the Demopolis fortress.)

"So, we are doing all of them a huge favour?" Qiu Yue sat close to Rex and started to look at the additional requests by each and every city upon pledging their vassal states to Pandapolis.

"Surely, you jest. Lady Qiu Yue. You know how your ability in creating new infrastructures would be vital in getting our cities out of the current pinch. In return, we pledge manpower for your 'expeditions' as well." General Yaega from the City of Taris said.

"Ho ho... You got the news about my expeditions that quickly?" Qiu Yue looked at him with sly eyes.

"We merely heard of it from King Rex." Yaega responded instantly, hoping not to offend Qiu Yue.

"I told them the gist of it when we were waiting for you," Rex replied.

"You are so sure that I will come for the meeting?" Qiu Yue questioned as she flipped the pages of requests. They might look simple but the Empire Building Sub System User was not going to agree that easily until she saw the layout of their city. Unlike the Southern Region's Capital in the Farming World, the recreation of that particular Southern City allowed Qiu Yue to start from scratch since everything was turned into debris. But for these cities, she needed to consider their existing infrastructure before building their supposed requests.

While she could take the lazy way out and merely build what was requested, it would hurt her dignity and pride as the Empire Building Sub System User for doing such a subpar job. And also, she needed to consider the future of these vassal states. If Jin was willing to invest in them, the half baked infrastructures had to be taken down again and it would ultimately waste time and resources. So, it was best to plan carefully before proceeding ahead.

"I need to talk to each and every city builder or planner you guys had so that they could help me with the latest layouts."

"City Planners? City Builders? Layouts? If you mean the castle layouts to improve our defences, we have those but I am afraid we do not have any other layouts on paper nor those city planners you talked about." One of Taris' council members said and it hit Qiu Yue that they were not as advanced as she was.

"Then, the Sewers System? Your Housing? Gosh, you know what. Give me access to your Dungeon Cores and let me communicate with it to have a better idea of your city." Qiu Yue demanded if they wanted a revamp of their cities. There and then, the various cities' council members were mumbling to themselves, asking the military generals if it would be safe. That was when Rex stepped in and announced to the entire group his opinion.

"You wanted to improve your lives which was the reason why you raised hell against the Church of the Afterlife. And now you are contemplating as if your lives are depending on it when we asked a very simple request to look at your dungeon core." Rex said.

"But it's because we do not know what Lady Qiu Yue could do to our Dungeon Cores-" One of the city council members from Aljun said and Rex cut in once more.

"But you guys already put your faith in the one True God. Right?" Rex said and the military generals interrupted the conversation.

"By my name and title, Yaega, the City of Taris would accept your demands," Yaega said and soon the rest of the other generals accepted her conditions as well, causing the council members to have their opinions mooted.

"That's settled then. We will go city by city. Yaega, let's get the work started." Qiu Yue said and a teleport portal appeared right beside them. The rest were surprised when they saw the opposite end of the portal was their dungeon core despite the security they had laid upon it. The Military Generals then reiterated that there was little use hiding things against them, especially when Qiu Yue was a direct disciple of the True God.

And this action alone proved to the other council members that the people in charge of the current Demopolis and Pandapolis could be the newest driving force in the Dungeon World.

## **Chapter 1179 - Trouble At The Ivory Tower**

As Qiu Yue settled the matters of the Dungeon World, Rex decided to give Jin a courtesy update. "Ah, I see. Thanks Rex. Really appreciate what you are doing. I would have personally advised on the matter but it looks like my clones could only do so much."

"A pleasure. So, how is your endeavour in the Virtual Reality Instance? Making much progress?" Rex queried for the sake of getting the conversation going a little but also hoping that it would not be too much of a drag. Besides, both of them clearly had agendas to fulfil for the day.

"The Symposium is in less than two weeks time but the Virtual Reality Instance is ready, including the accessories needed like the Virtual Reality Headset to access it," Jin said as he was extremely relieved how fast and efficiently the engineers at Sea Mesh were able to smoothen out the kinks in the Virtual Reality Headset. The only problem was settling on a name for it. Some wanted to call it simply VR Gear, but a few of the engineers felt it needed a more fanciful name.

There was even one who proposed to make a limited edition Panda version of the Headgear to promote Dungeons and Panda even further. While it was not a bad idea, Jin felt it should be placed on hold temporarily as he wanted to be seen as practical rather than the possibility of it being a cash grab. (Even though the systems in place would eventually be a cash grab.)

"Also, I heard your sworn brother had already gone off fighting to his delight." Jin questioned since he only received a message from Pei that she would be busy dealing with a 'crafty' situation.

"Speaking of him, I do not have much information since he said he was hitting the Church of the Afterlife's Bank. An Ivory Tower of some sort." Rex commented and the System instinctively connected Kraft into the whole conversation.

"What's up?" The Old Fox said as there were lots of background commotion at his end.

"Brother Kraft, how's the raid going?" Rex asked but all they heard was his laughter.



"Excellent! In fact, we have yet to breach into the Ivory Tower itself despite a day of fighting. Looks like we had been subjected to mere insects from the Church of the Afterlife. System, give them a glimpse of my situation." Kraft requested and immediately the System pulled out live footage via Kraft's vision. Surprisingly, there was a bit of lag in the transmission and the System attributed to Kraft's peripheral vision to be wider than normal.

When Rex and Jin saw the battlefield, they were stunned by the number of enemies in the area as well as how strong they looked. Not only there were Church Knights that had been documented into the System's Database through the military coup but variant versions of them in stronger armour and weapons. Items that are considered to be 'mythical grade and above' or that was how the captured Church Knights had dubbed them.

"It's irritating because the moment you thought you killed them, they would revive back again. I thought the System just did not bother to catch them but it seems like each and every one of them have some relic item that allows them to instantly resurrect the moment their heart stops beating despite being slashed into pieces." Kraft said as he gave a first person perspective of crushing the skull of a Church Knight and letting him go. In less than a few seconds later, he was able to walk again with a crushed skull.

"Zombies?" Jin questioned and Kraft shook his head.

"I pulled their limbs apart to check whether they were androids as well but they were still able to move after replacing their displaced parts into their original position. It is some magic I could not identify. But hey, from what I see on the Ivory Tower's counter, we are earning quite a fair bit of gold."

"I suggest we just head straight into the Ivory Tower and earn better money." Pei interrupted the conversation and Kraft beckoned Pei to say hi to Rex and Jin. Naturally, she ignored and continued to slice things apart.

"But it would not be satisfying, in fact, it would leave me wanting to know what the hell is going on with these buggers." Kraft pouted.

"Should I connect this to Moloch and see if he knows anything?" Jin asked and the System once again took the initiative to get Moloch on board the conversation. Upon seeing the works of the Church Knights, he already deduced that they were at the Ivory Tower.

"If Kraft had already noticed, the Ivory Tower has its own unique Dungeon Core and they had designated that area outside the Ivory Tower with a very special spell that only this particular Church has. After all, it's their money warehouse, they have to be more protective with it."

"What is it?" Jin pressed for the answer since Moloch was going round and round.

"Immortal Domain. The Church Knights in that area are affected by the curse of immortality. They sacrifice their sanity for the defence of the Ivory Tower. You might think only hardcore cultists would protect it like crazy but trust me, I heard rumours that they used criminals, brainwash them and subsequently stripped them of their rights. Since execution is technically useless in the world full of resurrection, the Church of the Afterlife turned them this way." Moloch explained.

"As for how some of the boy parts returning together, those are the works of the items and accessories they possessed," Moloch said and suddenly that gave Kraft a wonderful idea.

"Guys, change of plans. Once you bring down a Church Knight. Confiscate their armour, items and whatever shit they had on them. If this is a battlefield, the spoils belong to us no matter what.. The dungeon dollars are just the tip of the iceberg!" Kraft said and the people in the conversation understood his meaning.

## **Chapter 1180 - State Of The Dungeon World Cities**

"This Kraft... When it comes to devious plans, he really knows how to put things into action." Jin said and Rex could not help to have a devious smile on his face.

"That is how we were able to survive long as sworn brothers," Rex said and asked if Jin wanted to send more people into the fray.

"Nah, let him have his fun. I had a feeling he was already giving me a lot of chances when I duelled with him but it allowed me to see a fraction of his powers. So, I am guessing that this current raid was a way to let him blow his top a little."

"You are not wrong but you are not right either if you think that he has only shown you a fraction of his powers," Rex remarked and Jin raised his eyebrows.

"What? No way. If I can handle some of that, it is definitely because he has not been trying hard enough." Jin found Rex's comments somewhat odd.

"Nope. I am not kidding you. While it was true he was not using his fullest extent of his powers, there were certain moments during that battle that his bloodlust was on point. He was raging hard against you without leaving any quarters. Perhaps it was his rage that blinded him but nonetheless, it would be an insult to say that he did not fully immerse himself in the fight." Rex explained. "Jin, As a System User, you have grown relatively strong and without a doubt, there are still a lot more ways to grow."

"I assume there is a but." Jin cheekily added in and Rex nodded his head seriously.

"But, as you already know, there is no way you can do things all by yourself. Even my management of the Demopolis is subpar without the System's aid. I would not say by the power of friendship, you will triumph against all because that's bullshit. However, by the power of an elite group of talented people and friendship, would do well against what the multiverse prepared for us." Rex said as he laid back a little and looked at Jin to his eyes.

"Keep growing Jin. You will make new enemies which would ultimately be your greatest allies." Rex stated and suddenly that made Jin remember something very important.

"System. If Rex praised me a little, is it okay to release one of those 'forbidden' minions that we had captured previously?" Jin queried and the System proceeded in analysing the possibilities.

"Diabolos is not available despite your new cultivation grade but for Maeve, the fae princess. That might be a possibility. Unfortunately, the System is currently too swarmed with processes to even have the time to properly disengage the locks." The System said and Jin's face turned sour.

"Is it because you are currently using her as part of your processing capabilities," Jin questioned and the System did not answer...which meant it was a yes. Thus, the Dungeon Supplier decided to switch the subject and thank Rex for his aged advice. In the meantime, he also procured certain information from Rex since Demopolis had Pandapolis' military stronghold. And by stronghold, what Jin actually meant was that it had become a place where factories, research and production of military goods were coming from Demopolis after the huge revamp.

Some of the demon workers who had basic work experience in Pandapolis were slowly returning to their homes and found out that their places had been upgraded much. There were no more slums and high rise buildings were in every street and corner. As for the richer noble demons, they were allowed a slightly bigger house to themselves but it was limited to how much they were going to contribute back to society. (Either in terms of personal wealth or expertise.)

Those who were previously relying only on titles and inherited wealth were forced to rethink their way of life. Either they start picking up managerial skills or off they go to the frontlines where they have to stand side by side with the workers to get the job done. This was because Rex had no need for that many useless nobles lazing around in Jin's new empire.

Thus most of them had decided to take up educational courses so that they could be of certain help to assist the rest of the foxes who were revamping the city's policies now that Jin had ensured that this city focuses solely on military stuff.

As for Pandapolis, some of the factories were already in use for the Virtual Reality Headsets while the rest were used for contracts taken in Jin's world. Also, the production of processed food required factory space as well so it took quite a chunk of space but other than that, the rest of the industrial area was allocated to the research and development team where Jin's orcs and goblins were reverse engineering stuff.

It could have been done in Demopolis but production mattered more in that area since the research done in Demopolis was more of the practical application like live firing exercises as such because of the vast areas the city once possessed.

Pandapolis on the other hand did the delicate building and invention of items. For example, the Flying Fortress which Rex had captured had been analysed by Rei and was reverse engineered in Pandapolis. They were going to that as a base to create those spaceships which would be used to transverse the Mecha World's universe. (Also, it was mainly because some of Jin's Science and Research Team felt that the space allocated to them had already been bogged down by too many projects from Ayse and Weslie.)

Not to mention, the Orcs and Goblins were still continuously improving their Golems to the point that Jin somehow felt that they were like mechanised robots which could be viable as a limited event in the Supa Robot Wars. (Those demihumans were also snatching ideas from the cultivators who played the Supa Robot Wars and shamelessly applying the players' designs to their current golems.)

Only when Jin confirmed with Rex the state of Demopolis, he returned to his Dungeon Maker to make a few more chances before officially opening up the Cultivation Zoo Instance to the public.