

Dungeon S 1231

Chapter 1231: Recruitment Drive

"Just being curious, why are there no high level cultivators around? I feel a little bad bagging all these prizes for myself!" Rong asked as he bagged the prizes and told the counter staff to send them to the Tree Mall. His room where he was currently staying with his parents had all the things he needed but the room which Jin offered him was bare. These merchandise, especially the Playbox 5 would be a huge delight for him when he is on break.

"Did you not see? There ARE high level cultivators around." Lian, the Demon Fox Cultivator, showed him the scoreboard where other cultivators were already queuing to redeem their prize and there were not many left.

"Eh, seriously? That guy is a grade 10?" Rong tried to see the cultivator by tinning his eyes with chi so that he could gauge his strength. For some reason it was his chi was weaker but does qualify as a grade 10 cultivator.

And as he glanced around the area, there were grade 11 and even 12s in the area. Some even gave Rong and the gang a few nods and stares which Rong unknowingly ignored but his friends acknowledged.

"Gah, okay. I think I saw an acquaintance I did not like." Rong quickly turned his back towards the group and finally accepted the fact that they were not the only ones here. "But honestly speaking, how the hell did we even manage to get the top prizes when our grades are considered mediocre compared to all those around us?" Rong questioned.

"I am just glad they kept quiet about our identities. Do not want people to be poking around to find us for some recruitment drive." Lian said and Su Zhen shook her head.

"You can never get away from those people. One of them is already making their move." As they could see a rather handsome and well built gentleman in his army uniform walking towards them.

"Greetings, I am Major Wei, part of the army ground force sixth division. I will -" Before Major Wei could even say finish his sentence, Lein the Demonic Qilin Cultivator quietly showed his Demon Exorcists' badge. The rest did the same as well to show that they were not up for grabs.

"Ah, I see! No wonder you guys are able to manage to clear this quickly!" Wei exclaimed but continued to stay instead of moving away from the group.

"There are no rules stating that people with affiliations to certain groups were not allowed to join the mini competition." Su Zhen reassured her friends that they had done nothing wrong winning the prizes.

"No no no. What I am trying to give is just a mere statement of congratulations. I am not implying that you guys cheated or anything. In fact, we are more than happy to know that there are still capable Demon Exorcists within our midst." Major Wei remarked and somehow everyone got ticked off immediately. Initially, they thought that upon showing their badges, they would step away, but now passing such a sarcastic remark to the Demon Exorcists especially towards this group of battle hardened members caused their blood to boil. (Obviously, the Major did not know he had a poor choice of words.)

But for once, instead of reacting against the Major's remarks, Rong quietly broke off from the group and walked away from the conversation. The rest did the same with only Su Zhen saying an insincere apology before joining the group.

"Wait, guys. All I needed was just one minute of your time." Major Wei had decided not to let go of them since it was not easy to find high ranking cultivators. And that goes without saying that the sponsors of the Symposium were the local Armed Forces.

And thus, Major Wei performed a flash step moving towards the sight of them wanting to have a proper word with them since he was 'obligated' to do so but the Demon Exorcists were getting rather annoyed by him.

"Hey, Lein!" Suddenly someone shouted Lein's name and the group looked back for a moment. His hair was slightly messy, eye bags the same as Jin's but his appearance was insignificant. Donning on standard office wear with a lanyard hanging over his neck, it seemed like he was some random person off the streets. Lein had no idea who this guy was but before he could speak, the Demon Exorcists noticed that his badge was from the Ministry of State Security. That was when Lein discerned that the State agent was sneakily showing him a picture of a Postman Panda from the Pandamonium App from his phone while blocking it from Major Wei.

At that moment, he also received a message through his smartwatch which Lein slyly took a look at by trying to scratch his forehead as if he was trying to remember the name of the state agent to avoid any suspicion from Major Wei. "Ah! Yu... Xuan, was it?"

"Yes! yes! I liked your performance, especially after what you did in King's Monster's dungeon instance! Man, that double backflip was sick." Yu Xuan said and he started to congratulate each of them personally with each of their names. Major Wei was immediately ticked off the moment he saw the lanyard on Yu Xuan and he had no idea how the Ministry of State Security was able to find them before him.

And it also looked as if the agent had already made contact with the Demon Exorcists but he was not going to let any possible chance go until Yu Xuan stepped forward by telling the Major to give it up. To make things even worse for him, Su Zhen cleverly said that they wished to consider signing up with Yu Xuan, causing the Major to reluctantly walk off. After which, Yu Xuan told the Demon Exorcists to follow him as he provided them a cover to walk out of the Symposium safely.

"Nice catch over there." Yu Xuan commented and the group laughed except for Rong who did not exactly comprehend the situation until Lian explained it to him in very simple terms.

"I was equally surprised as well that the State Agents would help us." Lein thought that this recon mission was just to enjoy and experience the Symposium. They had no idea the State Agents would provide support for them.

"Like you, we have our very own mission too. While there are still the same old probable threats being thrown out on the internet, we cannot ignore them. Our boss placing one of us here is for safeguard and if the situation arises, send in a quick backup. But since everything had gone relatively smoothly, the boss felt that there wasn't any problem for me to do a second job as a babysitter. Oh please pardon the pun, I am not exactly saying you guys are kids. I recognised how you all had survived that 'incident'.

Thank you once again for helping the nation.” Yu Xuan said but before they could get to exit, the group suddenly felt a shake in the ground.

Looks like ‘relatively smooth’ has always been a red flag.

Chapter 1232: Cut Off

“Is that an earthquake?” Someone besides the group asked his partner but the cultivators who had been through various battles knew the feeling. There was no earthquake or tremor.

It was an explosion.

And to make things worse, another went off in the distance and this time around, the group could feel a slight aftershock as compared to the first one. Only then, the fire alarm goes off and everyone started panicking.

“Sorry, guys. Looks like my babysitting ends here.” Yu Xuan said as he speed dialled his boss with regards to the current situation.

“We will go with you. If this incident is the same as that previous one, you would definitely need a few Demon Exorcists by yourself.” Lein proposed that going to safety was not exactly their style.

“Hmm. Fine. You guys are after all Jin’s official employees and all of you had proven yourselves previously.” Yu Xuan nodded his head and told them to follow him. “Let’s hope that it’s just some cultivator causing some ruckus.”

While the security forces seemed to be on high alert, the symposium participants seemed to be quite oblivious to it and in fact, wanted to see what was going on. Perhaps it was because of the fighting that the Demon Exorcists group had gone through, they were a little frustrated how the public was taking this so nonchalantly. But at the same time, the group honestly hoped that they had severely overestimated the incident.

Even as they tried to walk through the crowd, Yu Xuan’s phone rang a few times and it was apparent he was talking to his higher ups as they relayed information between each other while the Demon Exorcist group continued to scan the area. Su Zhen had also taken the opportunity to contact the main branch stating that there was an explosion happening in Shenzhen World’s Exhibition and Convention Centre where the Symposium was taking place in half of the total halls. The rest were supposedly used as buffer areas to support the Symposium as well as a concert hall for the end of the Symposium.

And with the modern Dungeon Suppliers’ heavy reliance on machines, there was a hall that had been dedicated to the technical aspects so it was easier to keep track of the servers as well as maintain a cooling system for the machines rather than spreading them out in several halls. The Demon Exorcists did not know this initially until they informed the System with regards to it and were immediately given the floor plan of the Shenzhen World’s Expo.

“More eyes would be on your way,” Jin said as he summoned Que Er, the Magpie Queen to get her birds to the scene as soon as possible. Even though he was busy with the preparation of PandaVerse and the

Farming World, he could not ignore if it was a threat similar to the incident related to the Banned Emperors. Thus, with the help of the System's teleportation, a team of magpies and ravens had already gone to Shenzhen's World Expo to have a look.

From the bird's eye view, images of the fire came from Hall 13 which was kilometres away from the South Entrance which they were at. Lein quickly informed Yu Xuan that he did not question where he got his information and decided to use his chi so that they could do massive jumps across the convention centre's large hallway to the site of the incident.

However, as much as they tried to activate their chi, it was not coming out from the Dian Tian. There was a 'what the fuck' moment from the entire group but Yu Xuan kept calm and started chanting. It looked like he too knew a bit of magic though he was not a full hybrid like Jin. The magic spell fizzled too and thus the last resort he had was taking out a scroll from his storage ring.

Seeing how prepared and how calm Yu Xuan was despite his demeanour kind of brought a little awe to the Demon Exorcists when they were not as prepared or as versatile as him. The inscription scroll somehow worked.

"Looks like it's no normal fire. There's an anti chi and magic barrier in the works but for some reason, the inscription scroll works so I had no idea what kind of barrier this is." Yu Xuan said as he took out exactly four more scrolls and passed them to the Demon Exorcist group.

Once activated, they would have a "Fleeting Foot" buff which allowed them to travel similar to how one would Qing Gong through the halls. (Qing Gong is a kind of martial art that is visually reminiscent of parkour.) Yu Xuan decided to give another call to his reporting officer but as it tried to dial through, the connection snapped as well.

"Fuck. Are you serious? Even a satellite line can be disrupted?" Yu Xuan said as he tried to call once more. Unlike the public who now had trouble sending out calls because the comms towers could be busy, the State Agents all have a special line and a dedicated military satellite to handle their queries. To have it cut off meant that something dangerous was pending and it was not a good sign.

Fortunately, the supposed barrier could not cut the line between the signed contracted employees of the System. Lein was close enough to discern that Yu Xuan had troubles connecting his phone and he also noticed his phones were not receiving any signal bars.

"Yu Xuan Sir! We still have a connection to our boss! Then my boss can inform yours!" Lein shouted as he requested Yu Xuan to tell him what to say so as to not expose the System too much. The State Agents might know a thing or two about it but Lein did not know how much they knew.

"How do you even have a connection up?!" Yu Xuan stopped for a while at the side of the convention main hallway.

"Our Boss had set up a blood pact of some sort with us. Nasty stuff but he said it is the best way of communicating." Su Zhen tried to bluff since this was the closest thing similar to a celestial type communication network that was not affected by magic, chi nor technology.

"Wow, you guys are so sure to be his employees till death? Not that I can say it's the best way to live. But I will do anything to take any information out of this fucked up situation." Yu Xuan said as he relayed

whatever he could to Lein. On the other hand, the System had already connected Kong Rong to a separate channel to the Exorcists Group and he was hearing what Yu Xuan said in real time.

“Shit. This kind of barrier spells lots of trouble. Inform the Defence Ministry and Home Affairs. We are not going to be idle this time around as well. A barrier of this kind would definitely have an activation point like a totem or relic. Send the alarm out and call up the off duty teams! Get me the blueprints for not just Shenzhen Exhibition Center but the area surrounding it as well as the underground maps if there’s any!” Kong Rong ordered and in his mind, he wondered if Jin had to be involved once more.

Chapter 1233: The Criminals

As expected, the crowd started to panic when they realised that their phones were not receiving any signals and the compounding effect of the fire alarm was not making it any easier. The employed security staff were trying their best to keep the peace as they attempted to vacate premises. However, there seems to be a ripple effect of shouts and screams at the far end of the south entrance when people were saying that they were not able to leave.

The screams got even more horrifying when someone tried to use force to leave the area and his hand was burnt upon placing force through the said barrier. The panic from the crowd upon seeing the incident increased tenfold and the whole place turned to chaos.

Some did not believe and tried to attempt the same thing, only to have been thoroughly burnt and losing their arms or legs in the process. Without chi, cultivators trained in the art of healing were unable to save them even when they were able to put the fire out. The inability to use chi once again caused another layer of anxiety among the crowd and the security forces were unable to contain it even further without the coordination from the head office.

Everyone who was trapped in this World Expo had basically become the hostages of the masterminds behind it. “Everything is in order, proceed according to plan.” Shang Xia spoke through the ‘network’ and his criminal partners acknowledged. Among the chaos, the cleaners abandoned their work carts and started walking to their objective until... a new message came into their thoughts.

“Overlord, I picked up chatter outside the barrier. The police are coming.” One of the technical operators said as he monitored the situation.

“Should not be a problem. It is slightly earlier than expected but within the plan parameters. All units, proceed.” Shang Xia ordered once again. When it seemed as if the criminals who were instigating this particular incident were delighted that the plan was as simulated, they did not expect the police to come into the scene that quickly.

They had ensured that all communication lines were cut including the satellite phone which they picked up at the very last minute so there was no way people would be able to call the authorities and even if they did, the police would not have enough manpower.

One to two cars worth of police officers would investigate the situation and only much later they would get more help. That was the scenario the criminals had and they knew that they could complete their

objective before the reinforcements arrived. But as luck would have it, the situation did not roll as expected. Their technical operators who were drinking a cup of coffee to calm his nerves suddenly saw not one, not two but columns of police cars howling in the background. Even two helicopters had been deployed to the scene and they were already scanning the area.

To make things worse, there were not just patrol cars in the mix, SWAT vans were seen and even black armour SUVs which indicated that they were going to respond to the threat with punitive force. The operator immediately sent another message through his thoughts and to Shang Xia telling her the police were here in full force. They had no idea that the Ministry of State Security had already asked the district police in the nearby regions to be on standby for the Symposium and one word from Kong Rong was what needed to send these police to the current situation.

“That does not change anything. The barrier will hold and they cannot do anything to us at the moment. Everyone! Focus on completing the objective. Jack, find an alternate way to get out of this damn place. I do not care if we need to fight through the police and hijack their cars. Get an actionable plan out and we will do just that.” Shang Xia ordered once more as she walked along with the VIPs who were currently being escorted to a safe zone. Masquerading as one of the sponsors’ representatives for the Symposium, she was able to have the opportunity to be in the same room as her target, the Minister of Defence He Fei. As she scanned the guards, they were the very same people she and her team had ID except for one conspicuous female bodyguard who wore a surgical mask and large pair of sunglasses.

The worst of all, there was no sense of professionalism coming from her with her hair partially dyed in tranquil blue and wore clothes that were not befitting of a bodyguard. An overly sized jacket and skin tight yoga pants made her stuck out like a sore thumb. The odd thing was that she carried an umbrella everywhere she went and there was no wet weather according to the forecast.

While she was not in the list of guards that the criminals had obtained, Shang Xia could only assume that she was either some mistress or a plaything being brought by the Minister or his entourage.

“We are being escorted to the makeshift bunker. He Fei had already sent people to get the item. Get into position to snatch it.” Shang Xia said through her telepathy network and the other operators already performing their second objective in search of a particular suitcase. The suitcase was ordinary but the contents inside was what counts.

The killing of the Defence Minister was just a step in their grand plans as the suitcase contained the relic that would summon their old master back. The only drawback was that it required souls for it to work and the hostages within the expo were precisely the best way to harvest them. No massacre nor killing was needed, as the relic would do the work. The only caveat was that criminals needed the protective chants sat aside with the relic. Those chants upon activation would negate the relic incessant killing ritual and that would allow them to complete their objective.

Why would the relic be brought to a public event such as the Dungeon Supplier Symposium was not of concern to Shang Xia. The only thing that matters is that both the minister and the relic were indeed here and she would take whatever it takes to complete the task.

For the Banned Emperor.

Chapter 1234: Jin Knew Something

"A Barrier that is unable to allow you to use chi, magic and even blocking communications?" Jin thought to himself as he stopped his current work to think about it. "Why does that sound so awfully familiar?"

"The System is unable to find any particular magical spell that matches such effects. Even anti magic barriers and anti chi barriers have their own set of rules to set it up. The System had also looked into trap formations since the current situation had entrapped people from going in or out." The System stated and Jin furrowed his eyebrows.

"They cannot get in as well?" Jin asked and the System said that the birds which Que Er employed had not detected any movement by the police officers as well as the SWAT team. They are discussing the course of action while employing people to find the root cause. "Oh wow, they even brought in the army people. Kong Rong sure acted fast on this situation."

"Not only him but the other Royal Zodiac Clan Heads when they heard of the incident. This is because there are VIPs within the Symposium who attended as guest of honour, primarily the Minister of Defence who was there to see the latest development in the Dungeon Instance technology. If proved to be substantially useful for the army's training purposes, the Minister would then ask the vendors to draw up a proposal for him to consider."

"Ah. Doesn't that mean the security should be extra tight?" Jin shrugged whether he should even get involved. It seemed like the other Royal Zodiac Clans had some stake in this and the Dungeon Supplier had already done his part."

"It is tight but time is of the essence. Without communication into the building, this terrorist attack would be one of the greatest hits against our country. I am starting to suspect that the Banned Emperor is very likely to be involved in this." Kong Rong suddenly chipped in.

"Aren't you supposed to be swarmed with coordination?" Jin asked as he decided to go to the loo in his Dungeon Maker.

"Coordination doesn't do jack shit when we have no eyes inside the building. We are wondering if you can connect some video feeds to us. Probably through the System and your Demon Exorcists employees."

"The System does not wish to risk exposing itself to the enemy. If the enemy is as Agent Kong Rong had said, there might be a chance they could detect the System and eventually block the signal." The System replied and Kong Rong could not force the System to do things that it doesn't wish to perform.

"Say, have you tried getting some of your men into the Convention Expo?" Jin asked as he flushed the toilet and washed his hands and face. There is something bothering him about the barrier and that it felt like he should know the answer but it was at the tip of his tongue.

"You want my men to needlessly sacrifice themselves to go through the barrier? Didn't you hear what your employees said? They reported that those who tried got burned thoroughly and with them unable to receive aid, they might be in danger of dying." Kong Rong felt like Jin suggested something stupid and unproductive for the current situation.

“Erm, you have healers ready to heal the wounds and you can activate a few defensive inscriptions before trying. I see no reason why you do not give it a go.” Jin tried to reason his rationale and Kong Rong sighed.

“Fine. Give me a moment.” Kong Rong answered reluctantly and requested the onsite team to do just that. One of the SWAT officers immediately volunteered and he was quickly buffed with a series of defensive spells on him to try entering the barrier. And in the event that he could enter, the officer had also brought with him a few medical kits and a few high grade tonic ampoules with him.

The moment he was ready, everyone in the area was looking at him teeming with anxiety hoping that he would succeed. And as Jin watches the officer through the raven’s eyes. He could see that the SWAT officer dashed into the barrier with a spear too. The spear was supposedly imbued with barrier penetrative properties designed specifically for the police to ambush against barriers. The only problem was that it was not supposed to be used against an area wide barrier and the single use meant that he had one way in and no way out as the barrier would probably regenerate once he broke it.

And as he ran through the seemingly empty Convention Expo, the spear tip suddenly touched onto something when the officer got up to the stairs. The only problem was that it did not break nor burn as per Kong Rong’s report. It merely deflected away the police officer holding the spear and despite attempts to slash at it, it did not seem to be doing anything damage to the barrier at all.

“Lol. I knew it.” Jin saw the entire commotion and the officer’s futile attempt in breaking it. “Boss, you can tell your men to stand down. Even bombardments are not going to tear that so called barrier down for you.” Jin said as he stood up and teleported himself to his room for a change of clothes.

“What do you mean?” Kong Rong demanded answers immediately.

“I must say, they are really quite clever to even think of this, knowing that all the experts would be trapped in there.” Jin remarked as he prepared to wear a comfortable shirt and jacket and a pair of combat pants. “The answer is literally in your face. Even I would not have guessed it if not for the clues given to me.”

“Stop beating around the bush and-“

“It’s a dungeon instance. A god damn authentic one.” Jin said as he made sure that his Bam and Boo as well as his System Rider Device was buckled onto his belt. “Well, I hope it’s authentic because I will be very disappointed if the terrorists used the local servers to whip this beauty of a dungeon instance up. - which sadly, I believe is the case.”

“And as your one and only dungeon supplier expert that is currently not being invited to the Symposium, I might have a way to intervene this.”

Chapter 1235: Dimensional Instance Explanation

“What?” Kong Rong could not fathom that what they were dealing with was a dungeon instance rather than a barrier.

“That is the theory that I have and it fulfilled all the conditions when I think about it. Tell me, a barrier is supposed to have one particular property and perhaps two, correct? But if you think about it, there is no way for an anti magic and anti chi barrier to be placed in the very same place considering that they have many conditions to meet.” Jin explained.

“If you do not create an anti magic barrier with chi, the only way to do so is to put magical inscriptions and with the barrier that size, there is no way the terrorists would be able to do so without getting notice with stringent checks. Especially if you said VIPs are there, your men would have swept the place a few times thoroughly including any weakness in the Expo centre or underground tunnels.”

“That is true and vice versa for anti chi barriers too.” Kong Rong was getting what Jin was talking about and it made sense.

“Even if it is a relic that enables anti chi and magic barriers, you need power to supply it and there is no other way to do so without a large ‘battery’. And from my birds, I do not see any excessive magic presence that enables it.” Jin reinforced his explanation.

“True, if there is, we would already have pinpointed the relic and start to search for it.” Kong Rong now looked at his map for a nearby place where his agents and police force had already checked, allowing Jin to secretly teleport to the area. “I pinged the location where you can teleport and I will meet you there.”

“You do not want to hear more of that theory?” Jin said as he instantly activated his portal to move when Kong Rong had situated.

“I have other stuff to deal with but if your theory holds water, then I suppose it also explains why people get burned attempting to come out while no one is able to go in. A selected dimensional instance where certain conditions are placed to not let its participants out. Also, no idiot terrorist would be that dumb to drop themselves to be as powerless as the hostages. All the more it proved that this is potentially a dimensional instance where the terrorists could have power advantage against the guards.” Kong Rong deduced and Jin was glad that he does have a Mr Know It All in his midst.

“But I cannot do this alone. I would need some help with from the inside.” Jin said as he had already teleported to a nearby car park and switched his conversation while awaiting Kong Rong or his men to fetch him. “I hoped you guys have overheard what we had been talking about, I purposely asked the System to let you guys eavesdropped the explanation portion.” Jin remarked while he waited for the Demon Exorcists to reply.

“What do you need?” Lein asked as he felt way too powerless in the current situation.

“I heard from you guys that the inscriptions are still working.” Jin queried and the current leader of the Demon Exorcist band acknowledged stating that they had used Agent Yu Xuan’s inscription to run around.

“The only problem is the duration. Agent Yu Xuan said that it should have lasted longer but Su Zhen assumed that there is the absence of chi to cause it to have a shortened duration.” Lein commented.

“Ahh, that could be true. With the absence of chi, the inscription could only work as much as the energy was supplied. Most inscriptions have some chi stored within it to not allow instant activation but also enough for a short duration of time. But that depends on the grade of the inscription. The higher the

grade meant the material used- never mind. No use talking too much now. I want you all to go to the hall where they have their tech stuff.” Jin ordered while he saw the commotion from afar.

“Then what about the explosion?” Lian the Demon Fox Cultivator asked. “Shouldn’t that be a concern to us as well?”

“That is probably a diversion.” Rong understood a little now that Jin had somewhat explained the situation they were in. “There would definitely be someone there to cause a distraction and injure people so that the security forces would be diverted to that area to aid people and suppress the threat.”

“I concurred with Rong despite him being dim witted at times.” Lein said and told Agent Yu Xuan that they would be moving to the hall where they have the servers. “With no communication going through the dimensional instance, the security forces only clue is to move towards the explosion site.”

“Dimensional Instance?” Yu Xuan did not exactly understand how Lein got to the conclusion and only assumed that they were communicating with their boss but there was no time for questions at their end. So, he quickly pointed out where it was and they tried their best to reach there as soon as possible.

“Wow, if you think about it, the terrorists are cunning enough to use it in this Symposium. Trapping all the dungeon suppliers here and they have no way of getting the information out to the authorities.” Lian thought about it as they ran through the crowd.

“Well, good thing our boss had decided not to do so.” And so much for this Symposium to be free from attacks. Here I thought I could have a nice decent outing without anything to worry about.” Rong remarked.

“Don’t lie. Your face tells another story. You are practically elated that this is happening right now.” Lian could see Rong grinning side to side. “It’s as if you are waiting for this and thinking that Jin had brought us here for a reason.”

“Erm, not really. I am truly busy and working my ass off which is one of the reasons why I could attend it. With this distraction in sight, I would have another sleepless night ahead of me. The schedules...oh my schedules.” Jin complained upon hearing their situation and the Demon Exorcists quietly giggled.

Only an ignorant businessman of Jin’s calibre called this current predicament a distraction.

Chapter 1236: A Diversion Against the Diversion

“Jin?” The agents who rushed to the second level of a carpark drifted their car as if they were in some racing competition and came to a halt when they were close to him.

“That’s rather cool. I honestly thought I would get hit.” Jin said as the agents unlocked the door to allow him to get in.

“You too, for not moving even though we are this close to you. Please get your seatbelts on and we will be on our way.” The agents said as he reversed a little before accelerating down the ramp or the car

park. One would wonder if the agents did it as a test to see how Jin would react or if it was an accidental act. Either way, Jin did not mind as he buried his face into his phone.

There were other agents with him as well but they had their eyes peeled through the windows and their hands on the trigger to make sure that they were ready for any external threats. In the meantime, Jin was pretending to communicate to the Demon Exorcists via his phone by texting but in reality, he was sending them telepathy instructions.

—

“Anything I can do?” Yu Xuan queried and the others agreed he should do what he does best.

“I know it sounds stupid but right now, I think the one who is in danger is you, not us.” Rong was the one who smacked the truth right in front of Yu Xuan’s face. “Without Chi, you are a person with martial arts skills and against those terrorist cultivators, it might be too much of a risk.”

“I am a State Agent. If I cannot handle it, I do not deserve to carry this badge.” Yu Xuan felt a little offended but continued his best to keep his cool.

“We are not saying you cannot do anything but I believe it is better if you assist us from the shadows. Stay hidden and do not let the other terrorists find you.” Su Zhen tried to salvage the mess Rong brought them. “Besides, you did casually remark that your name is officially not in the list. All the more, assisting us in the shadows would be a better choice.”

Yu Xuan felt slightly embarrassed that he got to be schooled by teenagers many years younger than his age but they did make a point. He quietly accepted the fact that in this situation, he was the one that was at the disadvantage and if being in the crowd and allowing him to blend in would serve as an additional trick against the terrorist, it would definitely be more than welcome.

So as the Demon Exorcists made their flashy way to the Hall where all the servers and other technical hardware would be kept, they noticed that there was a tight layer of security preventing people from going near it. Despite the crowd’s anxiety after the mysterious explosion, the security at the technical hall got even more stringent, as if to not let people from passing through and stealing any equipment.

Some of the dungeon suppliers who were in the midst of the crowd, demanded that they wanted their equipment back or at least have access to the servers because of their precious data but the security was not letting anyone through regardless of clearance.

But even though it was that strict of a rule, Lein was suspicious and requested the System and Kong Rong if it was possible to have a list of employed security. Kong Rong only needed to make a phone call and the list was instantly uploaded to the System which then transmitted the information to the Demon Exorcists’ phones.

Su Zhen gave a quick look and immediately recognised that that particular layer of security was fake. “Wow, that was fast even without any chi usage.” Lian commented and Su Zhen accidentally snorted as if to signify her delight in the acknowledgment of her analytical abilities. Aye, her high grades and studious demeanour came from the ability to remember things she once saw. Photographic memory at its very best. Unlike Jin whose cognitive abilities were enhanced by the System and his cultivation, Su Zhen’s photographic memory was a natural talent which people nearly called her a freak for being able

to remember as such. That downfall forced her to learn that it's sometimes best to act unless the situation demands for it.

However, the current group that she was with knew her well enough that she did not have to hide from them. Especially with situations like this, allowed her to showcase how terrifying her memory was and to identify whether they were within the list of employed security.

"Wow. All of them?" Rong needed to know whether Su Zhen had made some mistake.

"You can either trust me or take an hour figuring out whether they are not." Su Zhen said as she looked towards Lein, hoping that he could make a plan out.

"Boss, what do we need to find once we are inside the server room? We are not IT savvy enough to tell the difference."

"Do what you do best. Destroy everything. But if the theory of it being a Dungeon Instance holds true, it is very likely that they have the entire hall 'refurbished' as part of the new dungeon instance and the servers you find might be fake. At that point, the terrorist might potentially be alerted and you guys are on your own."

"Then? Any way to break out of that portion of the dungeon instance?" Rong asked and sadly, Jin said no. "If that's the case, why do you want us to hit the server rooms?"

"Because, it means that someone has figured out their trick and they will try their best to silence you. That would mean those terrorists would come after you and perhaps by beating them up, you might find some evidence. On the flipside, your internal commotion would allow me to do my magic with less of a hindrance."

"You mean, if you are expecting resistance even from outside the dungeon instance?" Lian questioned.

"They surely have eyes outside to make sure that we are unable to interfere. Else, if we can break this intricate illusion from the outside, whatever they are planning is for naught." Jin replied as he could see that the car was coming through the multiple barricades of police hovering outside the Convention Centre.

Chapter 1237: The Use of Inscription Charms

"Then what are we waiting for?" Rong decided not to waste any more time. He quickly took out a few inscription charms he had bought previously from Jin's store and stacked them together. Speed, Defence and Attack inscription charms were used out in the open and the 'employed security' instantly turned their heads towards Rong and the others.

With his Hammer out from his storage ring, he rushed towards the guards with the will to break the human wall that was blocking their path.

“That dumb guy! Does he always think that violence will solve everything?” Lian said but before she could do anything, the security guards unleashed a series of chi and animal silhouettes emerged right above them.

Instead of various animal silhouettes, it was a pack of black wolves determined to devour Rong with one swoop. With everyone’s chi incapacitated, it was pretty obvious the guards who were in cahoots with the people behind the current use of dimensional instance to entrap people. Still even without chi, Rong was able to dodge the chi attacks of the black wolves.

The security guards did not hide their smiles as it was apparent they had enough of such charades. Injuring a few people in the process of keeping the ‘peace’ was probably permitted by their mastermind and a show of force would shove them away from the hall. Besides, now that most of them were unable to use chi nor magic, compliance should follow suit after punishing Rong.

One of the guards took his baton out and challenged Rong to a duel where the others had decided to step away from. Some were already giggling how the punk with a hammer would be beaten to submission. And as expected, when Rong slammed his hammer against the guard, it was no match against the guard’s baton which was infused with a high amount of chi.

“Judging from the chi, you are probably a grade 10 or so.” Rong did not fall back as he continued to struggle against the clash.

“Looks like your parents did not teach you any manners in obeying the authority. We have no choice but to use a force lethal enough to subdue you.” The guard said as his animal silhouette emerged once more and the black wolf growled even more sinisterly. Rong could feel the weight of the baton getting unbearable for him to handle despite the charms that he had used.

“But I shall give you credit for being able to withstand the attack. Most chi-less cultivators would have already succumbed to it.” The guard casually commented as he inserted more chi into his baton. It was pure bullying at this point and even the crowd knows that it was unwise to even go near them. “The inscription charms that you use must have been of a high grade or else, you would not even be able to last another second. Still, it does not matter as it seems like your charm is burning out.”

“Heh. You have yet to see the last of Dungeons and Pandas’ inscription charms and here you think you have already won, Mr Security Guard.” Rong said as he risked the stalemate by unleashing his storage ring with his left hand. “When I start, run into the hall and stir as much shit as you can!” Rong said via the System Channel, specifically to his pals.

“Do you think you can even take something out at your current state?! You cannot even use your chi at all!” The guard shouted as he got a little more serious and his black wolf silhouette howled before baring its teeth towards Rong but that impudent Demon Exorcist did not give a damn.

“Not if you use a high grade storage ring which does not need any chi! Demon Ox Dual Inscription Charm! Activate!” Rong shouted as the white piece of paper flew out of his storage ring and glowed with various symbols attached to it. Two Demon Ox Bull silhouettes emerged from the charm and bellowed before Rong absorbed its chi. For some reason, it managed to kickstart his dantian core and it started to produce chi furiously, allowing Rong to continue holding against the security guard. At the same time, the dual inscription charm also released a ton of steam as part of Rong’s cosmetic inscription activation

and that prompted Lein and the others to slip through the guards with speed inscription charms activated. While Rong had managed to distract the bulk of the 'security staff', one of them saw them zooming through the IT Hall's doors.

He wanted to shout out to alert the others but Rong, with his chi running through his veins again, threw his hammer towards the door, causing an explosion to happen right in front of the security staff, knocking away from it. This time, not just the guard who duel with him was surprised but the rest of the staff as well, prompting them to unsheathe their swords instead of batons and rushed towards Rong.

Some of them were still shocked that there was a cultivator who was able to restart his dantian core while the crowd quickly scattered not to be caught within the crossfire. In the meantime, Yu Xuan, who was at the far end of the entire commotion, saw the entire scene unfold and was amazed by Jin's employees.

"Holy shit, how the fuck did he get his chi up and running again? Is that why they secretly implied I was a hindrance?" Yu Xuan thought to himself before he noticed that there were a few people who were acting suspiciously coordinated amidst the panicking crowd. He decided to eye them and hoped for the best for the Demon Exorcists. If Rong could restart his chi production, Yu Xuan believed the other three might be able to do the same and thus they would not be a problem for him to worry.

In the meantime, the other three Demon Exorcists who rushed into the IT Hall had realised Jin was right. No computers or servers were in the supposed IT Hall but instead a pyramidal shaped temple in front of them with several workers working to fix the tip. When the workers saw three unknown individuals standing right at the entrance, they knew the operation was somewhat compromised and proceeded to take their weapons out from their storage rings.

"Let's see if Rong's tactic works for us as well." Lein said as he took out his dual inscription charm. "I had never thought that this cringey Christmas present would be of some use to us."

Chapter 1238: Re-coordination

"Intruders! Intruders!" The communications were going wild as Shang Xia was trying to assess the situation within the hidden bunker which the security forces were attempting to keep the VIPs safe. However, it was getting way too nonsensical for her that she tried to make an excuse saying that her legs felt weak and needed to use the bathroom.

"Mdm, your life is in danger and you wish to go to the toilet?" One of the guards asked and Shang Xia pleaded that she could not hold her bladder.

"Do you really want me to pee at the spot for you to watch? Are you in the fetish of seeing women peeing and disgracing themselves in front of these men? Aren't you guys the elites? Can't you protect us as we go to the loo?" Shang Xia made a commotion and even though they were in some long tunnel, her shouts echoed and made the guard leader panic for a moment.

"Lee, Cheng. Escort her to the toilet and come back at double time." The Guard Leader said and suddenly a hand raised up in the crowd too.

"I like to go to the loo too." Shang Xia saw that it was coming from the poorly dressed girl and she was swaying side to side, indicating that she too could not hold her bladder. The Guard Leader looked concerned and even more agitated that she wanted to go too but upon a moment of hesitation, he nodded his head and told his two guards to bring them to the nearest toilet as soon as possible.

"There should be one available fifty metres from here. Just try to tolerate it till then." The two guards immediately led the way and the moment they reached, there was a corner which led to a pair of doors that needed the guard's clearance to go through. Upon moving through the doors, the toilet was in sight and since the guards mentioned that it was a single toilet, Shang Xia decided to be courteous and asked whether the girl needed it first.

To her surprise, she quickly ran into the toilet without any warning and took it. Lee and Cheng looked away to sigh for a moment only to find that the woman they were with suddenly disappeared. They reached for their firearms but the reaction was a tad too late as Shang Xia had already sent the two guards to sleep by knocking them out. They did not have a chance to react nor tolerate the hit due to the lack of chi as they succumbed to the force of a full fledged high grade cultivator.

"Be glad that you two are fortunate enough to avoid bloodshed." Shang Xia guessed the girl did not matter and even if she did and knew a martial art technique or two, she could handle her with no problem. After all, she needed as many live sacrifices as possible for the relic to work. And now that Shang Xia knew where they were going, it was only a matter of time to strike but first, she had to handle this intruder nonsense her voice channel was making fuss about.

"Queen to all, what is the matter?" Shang Xia pressed onto her earpiece to activate speaker mode.

"Queen, The temple has been intruded by enemies. They... Their chi is fully activated! The workers are trying their best to hold them back but we need backup as soon as possible."

"What? They used an inscription? That is impossible. Their dantian should be blocked and there should be no way to activate it. I never heard of an inscription restarting someone's dantian."

"We have no idea, they used some special inscription charm, one even insanely shouting that it's from some dungeon supplier. Something to do with Panda. Anyways the shit thing is that the inscription caused their dantian to be moving. I already told you that we should have made the instance foolproof rather than having that inscription charm shit to bite us from the back!"

"Buzz, if we do that, we would have missed this window of opportunity. Besides, what is Black Wolf and his gang doing? Isn't he supposed to be stopping anyone from intruding through?" Shang Xia queried and Black Wolf replied back...just not the usual cheery arrogant tone.

"The fuck is wrong with this cultivator?! Look, I am busy here, get someone else and I will come once I am done with my side." Black Wolf turned his communications off and focused his fight against Rong.

"Get Falcon and Owl. They should be the fastest to respond to your threat." Shang Xia paused for a while and looked at her watch. "And Eagle too."

"Mdm, you sure? With the Police, SWAT and even the Army involved. The chances of getting out is nearly close to zero. You are pulling me out of your protection bubble if they succeeded in destroying

the dimensional instance.” Eagle immediately responded and Shang Xia sighed at the perplexing operation she was running.

“Yeah. We had already run the simulation and the worst case scenarios but things change now that there are wannabe hero cultivators. Things are not going as planned and we need to adapt. Rhino and Jaguar should be enough to hold the fort. If anything, they can use that technique to boost themselves for the fight. With that, the police or whatever security forces...no matter how strong they are, they would not be able to defeat them.”

“You are sending them to their absolute death if you do that.” Eagle remarked and the Queen did not care about his comments.

“Understood. Returning into the dimensional instance and providing backup.” Eagle turned off his communications and the silence in the room was deafening.

“You are clever to stay there. And for your own sake. Continue to stay there unless you wish to die.” Shang Xia said despite attaching an inscription that would explode if she tried to open the door. After all, the girl overheard the entire conversation and by warning her not to open was already an olive branch given to her if she did not do anything stupid.

“Interesting. Looks like the mastermind is here all along and here I thought my hunch would be wrong considering that you passed the background checks, even the most thorough ones. But I guess one cannot be too careful after everything has happened before.” The girl talked calmly through the locked toilet door while keeping a note to tell Kong Rong that he should revamped his checks.

“What can you do? Call the police? If you had heard, the police AND the army are parked right outside the Convention Centre, not able to do anything. And if you don’t trust me, go ahead and try to call the police if you can.” Shang Xia snorted after giving such haughty remarks. “I bet they would come save you and your sugar daddy.”

“Hmm. I got a better idea than staying in this toilet waiting for them. How about I be the police and knock the shit out of you?” Ryuli smirked and Shang Xia could already feel her smile was penetrating through the toilet doors and to her.

Chapter 1239: Blasting Out of The Toilet

“Hah!” Shang Xia laughed as she ignored the taunt while checking the guards’ belongings. And as the relic movement was being tracked by one of her comrades, it was about time to commence the theft as well as the assault against the defence minister.

But before she could even do a thorough check on the unconscious guard, the door exploded right in front of her and Ryuli slammed her umbrella right towards Shang Xia’s direction. Naturally, the mastermind of the operation was of a high grade and was able to absorb the brunt of the attack. However, Ryuli was not giving her any chance to recover and aimed for her vital points.

Even if Shang Xia could dodge them, Ryuli would opt for collateral damage and attack her joints to render her powerless. Yet, Shang Xia was battle hardened enough to unleash a counter which involved snatching the guard's firearm on the floor and returning the favour back at Ryuli. And just as the bullets were leaving the gun chamber, Ryuli had already anticipated the attack and opened her umbrella, using it as a shield to deflect the shots away.

Only upon seeing the umbrella in action, Shang Xia realised that she hit the jackpot and laughed. "You... You are that rumoured State Agent that uses the umbrella!"

"Wow, I am not sure whether I should be glad to know that I am rather infamous in the Banned Emperor's circle of assassins and terrorists." Ryuli said as she closed her umbrella once more and unleashed waves of chi towards the Shang Xia, causing her to move backwards. The Dragon Girl then moved forward and kicked the two guards to the sides of the room, hoping that they would not get hit by their duel. (Well, she hoped but could not guarantee if things get rough.)

"Always as ever, concerned about others. If you had been ruthless, my people would not have escaped and known your presence." Shang Xia said as she ditched the firearm and took out two daggers, both exquisite looking. Ryuli also noticed that those daggers had a peculiar arrow symbol on them. One was pointing up, away from the blade and the other down towards the blade's point.

"Thanks to them, we have also managed to find a few more shitheads that were willing to spill information. It's a fair trade I guess." Ryuli was calmly holding her ground as she assessed whether those blades would be a goner for her. "But from the looks of your face, you are more concerned how I got my powers back when you were very sure that there was no chi signature coming from me."

"Care to explain?" Shang Xia tightened her grip on the daggers and refocused her chi. She knew that fighting against the legendary umbrella cultivator which probably had more kill count than any other state agents would be suicidal and detrimental to her current plan. If Shang Xia falls, others could replace her easily since they had assigned roles but to delay Ryuli until her plan unfolds was her main concern.

"Maybe. When I see you in the afterlife," Ryuli said as she leaped forth and aimed her umbrella like a rapier, performing a frightening strike towards Shang Xia. Regardless of her prideful demeanour, she had to thank the heavens and stars that the conversation was on point. If not for the discussion between her comrades to give her the clues needed, Ryuli might actually be staying in the toilet like a prison cell.

She honestly could not believe that the inscription charm, the one that has a panda with a Christmas design, a fleeting gift from Kong Rong during their previous team up had actually helped her regain her chi. It had been lying in a storage ring for the longest time possible and she figured that if those cultivators that Shang Xia was talking about were using the inscriptions charms from a certain Panda Dungeon Supplier, it did not hurt to give it a try. Thus, the charm which was supposed to be a magical beam attack had been converted into a battery of sorts by absorbing the stored chi within it. Ryuli knew the chi was dense enough for a short term burst, forcing her to go all out if need be, but to her surprise, the chi resonated with Ryuli, helping her to kickstart her dantian core once more.

Based on her limited knowledge on chi regeneration, she could only deduce that the presence of the very same chi had prompted the inactive dantian core to awaken. Something like an electric shock to

boot up the heart during a cardiac arrest but this time, it was akin towards a very specific electric pulse to boot the heart up. But that's the thing that had her perplexed.

Her chi was literally a combination of chi and mana together and the way she understood it and it was something like a signature, the only person who could kick start her dantian core again was her very own maqi or...her master's.

And that was the reason why she felt extremely confused. How could the owner of Dungeons and Pandas, a supposed disciple to her master, have the very same Maqi as her? After all, if her master did help unlock Jin's Maqi, his chi would still be slightly different and that deviation would be sufficient to cause her dantian core to not react. The only conclusion she could draw was that her master was Jin himself but age wise, she had verified that he was born approximately a year or two later than her.

As if things were not that complicated enough in her head, the Banned Emperor knew about the relic which was why they had set this heist up for it. It meant that there was a leak of information or even a mole in their midst which was something she had to deal with when they were out of this messy situation.

For now, she had decided to place all of the confusion and frustration into her attacks, and release them out on Shang Xia as a means of distress. But one thing was for sure when this whole fiasco was over.

"Find that bloody panda owner and get the truth out of him."

Chapter 1240: Shenzhen Convention Incident -Part 1

Buzz threw a few bouts of tantrum upon learning that Shang Xia aka codenamed Queen only cared about the relic and not the lives of her comrades. While it was true that their ultimate goal was to revive the Banned Emperor once again into the living but once resurrected, does the almighty really care about the lives that had been lost for his cause?

"No, both she and our lord would not." Buzz knew deep down that it would never happen but the money that prompted him to join the cause was too great to ignore. He might not be a true convert but the money was more than sufficient for him to pretend to be a convert when he joined. After all, he had the skills and talent, just that he was not in the right place, right time nor right window of opportunity for him to succeed. So, joining the terrorist organisation was one of the ways to clear his debts. Still, the cracks of being a non believer were apparent the deeper he got into the organisation's ways of life.

And this operation had become the straw which would break his back for him. He knew that after this heist, he either would die or be in hiding forever if he failed. And even though he knew the consequences, the incentive for joining the operation was too alluring to move away from it. An immediate deposit of two million US dollars into his account the moment he agreed to it and another five million if he were to get out alive.

He had no idea where the Banned Emperor was getting the funds but because they were too big of a hidden organisation and too rich for his liking, Buzz had decided it was worth the gamble.

As a team lead for a certain dungeon supplier group, he had always been intrigued in creating the best dungeon instance. He even took a brief tour, trying out the dungeon instances for this year's Symposium to be utterly disappointed by it. The only one he was looking out for was actually Dungeons and Pandas but the announcement for him to be out of the Symposium was both a disappointment and relief.

Disappointed that he knew he would not be able to see the wonders that particular Dungeon Supplier had created one last time before he died or fled. Relief that he knew the Dungeon Supplier would continue to live on and perhaps one day Buzz would be able to check it out at least once in his life if he were to make it out alive.

But now, all he felt was annoyance when he heard the name of the very same dungeon supplier he worshipped being used against him right now. His items were so superior that they somehow managed to activate their chi back again in HIS Dimensional Instance where Buzz should be the one dictating the rules. With time not at their side, the only thing he needed to extend it was putting additional bodies against these cultivators and to do that, he had to crank up the energy and place resources dedicated for other purposes to this particular task.

Distract the cultivators.

This was because the cultivators that barged in were doing something he was not expecting. Instead of finding enemies to kill or locating the main culprit behind this, they were doing the exact opposite. By doing their best to destroy what they had built so far. It was as if they knew that the pyramidal temple they were building was vital in their plans. But in actual fact, the Demon Exorcist was merely following Jin's instructions.

"If you see something out of the norm, just destroy it. In Every. Way. Possible. If what you said was true, they are maintaining the barrier and not manipulating the landscape means that something out of the norm would be of an importance to them. So, just destroy it and the dungeon supplier maintaining it would need to either rebuild it from scratch or send goons to distract you. If he did the latter, it means that you are doing it correctly and continue to do so." Jin's instructions were fairly clear and the goons part did emerge when the Demon Exorcists saw men in black suits emerging from thin air. They were armed to the teeth with high grade weapons as they moved towards the Demon Exorcists. Su Zhen and Lian did not use their dual inscription charms as of yet since Lein recommended them to keep it first until they really do need it.

"Not necessary to show our hand to the enemy." Lein's words ticked Lian off since she knew that he just wanted all the fun to himself. He did complain how boring the dungeon supplier's challenges were and he nearly wanted to let Rong win because he could not bear to go through everything. Besides, having a car of their own was useless when they had the System to teleport them if it was urgent enough. The only thing that changed his mind was a taunt from Rong saying that he could not bother to complete it because it bored him.

Lein simply could not let Rong be proven right, because it was their way of friendship. To always be the top in terms of combat ability while not showing it outright was possibly his narcissistic way of living life for now.

Still, there were no complaints how much havoc he did as his attacks broke a major hole in the temple while the other two Demon Exorcists dealt with the minions. The only thing that they did not expect was

that the men in black subsequently turned to monsters when they were severely injured, boasting their strength.

Thankfully, Jin's single use inscriptions were strong enough for Su Zhen and Lian to hold them off while Lein took care of the monsters. But as Lein did that, the Temple he destroyed was slowly reconstructed back with Buzz's manipulation of the instance's resources. He had no choice but to alternate his attacks to make sure that his colleagues were protected as he dealt damage to the temple. But as usual, as things tend to go too smoothly, trouble happens.

"Your wilful rampage ends here, punk." An Eagle silhouette swooped in and clashed against Lein as he finished off a wave of monsters.