

Dungeon S 391

Chapter 391 Extra - Ke Mi's New Job

Ever since the Ladies Night that was filled with laughter and karaoke, Zither Mistress Ke Mi had been wondering about all other new kinds of music this particular world had yet to offer her.

She had been playing around with some of the tunes she still remembered from the karaoke with her zither and had been changing them bit by bit each night for days until she finally not only recreated but even improved the entire song in her mind.

The day she played it to the living armour plants, they became so enthralled by the new music that they collectively grew 0.2cm larger in length, width and thickness. It might not sound much but their usual growth with Ke Mi's constant music therapy roughly measured between 0.02cm to 0.03cm a day which on its own was already a big step up compared to their feral brethren in the wilds. Under normal conditions living armour plants took years or even decades to grow that sturdy armour plate defence that could defend against modern day bullets.

It was so record breaking that the werejackals had decided to celebrate this occasion by personally cooking Ke Mi's favourite dishes for dinner. They were usually too lazy to cook and ate most of their food raw even though they possessed some decent cooking skills courtesy of Lynn.

After the young chef had started asking the were-humans to help her grow out some food to experiment, Lynn, in turn, taught them a few simple dishes they would be able to prepare. After all, they were Jin's familiars so there was no harm sharing some of her cooking knowledge with them. (If it were other strangers or even relatives, she would not even bat an eye to their request.)

The monsters never really had the chance to taste the yummy food Lynn provided in her Restaurant Instance, mainly due to the costly ingredients and Lynn's tight control of the flow of ingredients to ensure maximum profit. Additionally, the System already provided all monsters with basic food. After Jin had introduced a bonus system, monsters who worked extra hard could exchange their bonus to get yummiier food or improvements to their home instance. Still, those improved food quality provided by the System could never compete with the fantastic taste Lynn had casually cooked up for the monsters.

Ke Mi, unfortunately, missed the chance to taste it when Lynn had taught them the basics of cooking. While it was nothing too complicated, it was sufficient for the were-humans to enjoy a change of pallet, with their own cooked food every now and then instead of the usual raw meat, fruits and vegetables that the System provided. That was also why they preferred planting their own harvest and trade them amongst the monsters for more points, food, or even favours. (When the Digital Pet Cards came out, they also used their food to trade for cards with the monsters or used their harvest as a betting item.)

Although the visiting ninja penguin helped out today by covering most of the heavy cooking, the werocats skillfully assisted with the minor cooking such as ensuring the boiling of the stew, the timing of barbecued meat. Meanwhile, the werejackals helped with the pre-preparation, such as peeling the potatoes, ensuring the rice was washed, cutting of the vegetables etc.

At the same time, Ke Mi was brought into the mansion with the help of the Great White Snake after her day's work and was surprised to see Jin sitting at the side of the massive dining table. Apparently, the

were-humans reported to the System about the sudden growth and Jin got wind of it. She never expected her ever busy master would make time to pay her a visit.

"How have you been Ke Mi?" Jin smiled at her, which warmed her old tiny heart as she prostrated right in front of him with grace and courtesy.

"I doing fine. Thanks Master." Ke Mi now spoke Jin's language, albeit a little broken with the aid of Shu's Teaching. Usually, the System would translate the monster's language for Jin and vice versa, but Ke Mi was an exception.

Ke Mi had remained uneducated for many decades. Her only friends had been the Great White Snake and the Wyrms Ants, none of which spoke any language, so that she only communicated with them via her Zither. She always assumed that it was just something that those other humans had and a demi human like her did not. Neither did she know that she even had the capacity and capability to learn speech.

"I heard that you did some remix of your zither music, that enabled the living armour to grow way more than expected?" Jin asked politely and Ke Mi nodded her head vehemently. "When Master away, Yun brings us out, sing!" Ke Mi's smile was awfully cute and Jin was happy that she enjoyed her time with Yun and the other monsters. A slightly hungover Yun had told him in the morning, that they had a Ladies Night, and Jin had made a mental note, to encourage such behaviours more often in the future and allow all his monsters to enjoy some entertainment.

"Food is here!! Ah WOAHA, Master! I did not expect you to also be here." Gold looked quite different with an apron, carrying plates of food. (the quantity of food on those big plates were overwhelming!) Jin greeted the Werejackal Leader as he went forward and helped him with the dishes since Gold became a little unsteady the moment he saw Jin waiting in the dining hall.

"Be careful, there! All these are the hard work of everyone in the kitchen." Jin teased Gold, who finally collected himself before he immediately shouted back towards the kitchen.

"HEY GUYS, YOU BETTER BE BE QUICK! MASTER IS HERE!"

There was a unison of howls of agreement, and the kitchen quickly became more bustling than before. In no time, more food was served and the other werejackals, as well as the wercats, came out to greet Jin.

"Master, here sit and join us for dinner...it would be our pleasure. We just hope that the food is to your liking." Gold said with a bow and pointed Jin towards the end of the table where Gold usually sat during dinner time.

"No way, I am the guest, you are the head of this mansion in this home instance. You should sit there no matter what." Jin refused Gold's offer.

"Then at least be our guest of honour today and sit at my right?" Gold counteroffered immediately which Jin had no reason to refuse. With all the food sitting on the table, the ninja penguin came out and paid their respects to their queen's master.

"Master, please do enjoy the food but I apologise in advance if the food is not up to your liking. We were unaware that you would be visiting today. Else, we would have informed Queen Lynn and used top tier

quality ingredients for tonight's dinner. If need be, I shall perform hara-kiri to apologise for preparing food that's not pleasing to our Queen's Master." Ninja Penguin Kido said solemnly to which Jin bitterly laughed.

"Hey! What do you mean about not having top tier quality ingredients? Are you implying our farm does NOT produce top tier quality ingredients?!" Yellow got a bit irritated by the way the Ninja Penguin spoke, but Grey whacked his head once to simmer him down.

"Please, I can rest assured that you guys always do your best in cooking no matter the ingredients. Besides, didn't Lynn praise the ingredients here so much that she even regretted that you guys did not have access to a bigger farming instance?" Jin did his best calming both sides as he sat beside Gold. He initially planned to enter the instance for a short while, just to praise Ke Mi and did not expect himself to get involved in the daily lives of his minions. Still, a change in pace once in a while would be a good bonding session as well.

Thankfully, they acted quite naturally, despite their master's presence, especially the werecats who had already begun digging in the food, famished from all the cooking. Though Gold disapproved of their attitude, he allowed the rest to partake in their feast after Jin took the first serving himself. He even asked Kido their ninja penguin chef to join in since there was empty seat among the dining table. That was also when his monsters started to talk with him about a few things.

Some asked about their master's progress, while others took the chance to flaunt the achievements they had against some of the cultivators, especially the Pandawans. Even though Jin had a pile of workload to clear, he decided to stay after dinner to listen to their stories and also offered some advice. Grey reported the status of their homegrown farming and provided ideas on how things could improve given a few additional tools. (He shrewingly hoped to override the bonus system and get his Master's approval so that they could save on the points.)

Jin listened carefully and told Grey that those things seemed valid and he would see to it as soon as possible, especially if it could potentially aid Lynn's growth of home ingredients. However, he was more concerned about one thing — the future.

"The future? You mean expanding this home instance?" Gold asked and Jin shook his head.

"No beyond that. I have big plans for you guys. How does becoming leading agriculture industry in the future when the Dungeon Fortress City is up sound to you? I was unsure if you would like being the minister of agriculture, but at least the boss for the industry, are you up for it?" Jin asked as he was offered some grape juice. (Or maybe it's wine? Jin could not taste the difference. It was intoxicatingly sweet.)

"I can consider it if I will have access to the Farming World's workforce and soil. I cannot trust any other soil than my home world's." Gold said hesitantly and the rest of his vice leaders agreed, though it seems to Jin that he was hinting something else.

"That should be possible, though for some reason I seem to be having trouble accessing the market in the Farming World." Jin was willing to accept his conditions, though first, he would need to figure out how to get access again.

"Should we tell him about the Demon Rat invasion?" Grey whispered politely in Gold's ear.

"No, at least not now. We should not burden Master unnecessarily when he has other stuff to do...although I did inform Bellator Zeru about the topic. He assured me that he might be able to convince Jin to aid us, but it would take some time."

"Oh, is that is why Brown went away earlier this week with Zeru?" Grey questioned in a whisper and Gold nodded his head.

"Is there something I need to know about?" Jin asked as he saw them eyeing him consistently while whispering amongst themselves.

"No no, nothing Boss. You enjoy yourself while we clean up the area. Some of us still need to make the last round check to ensure that all the plants are properly watered and fertilised." Gold got up and thanked his master for coming to visit before he left.

In the meantime, Ke Mi was enjoying the fresh orange juice which Werecat Nyanmi had made for her. Finally, with the were-humans gone, he had a proper one to one alone time, to converse Ke Mi before she returned to her own home instance.

"Say Ke Mi, are you interested in making some more music tracks?" Jin asked as he got nearer to Ke Mi. "I was thinking about exposing you to more music, that way you could experiment with even more genres, maybe even creating a music style of your own?" Jin asked and Ke Mi had a long pause as if she was seriously contemplating.

"Of course, it would not be completely for free. I'll need you to help with our dungeons. Our Pandaflix erm ...those moving pictures Shu showed you before, the one that lets people watched themselves or others go through the dungeons." Jin said and Ke Mi vaguely recalled what her master was talking about.

"Yea, so far we're only streaming the pictures and the live feed audio. If you could produce music to accompany their adventures, like how you created the music remix from this morning, it would not just benefit the living armour plants but also help me out a whole lot. I would also love to share your music with a lot of other people." Jin elaborated as he wanted to provide her with a more meaningful task than tending to the Living Armour plants.

He knew how hard and perhaps depressing it could be for a person of her talents to be stuck in here and play their music for the benefit of his plants (though all the inhabitants also enjoyed listening to it, while working) even though they were considered to be very valuable. If she could accept the task, it would bring Pandaflix to the next level, not to mention that it would definitely save him and the System the cost of buying copyrighted music.

"But Ke Mi not know how to pro- pro- Prodew moosick." Ke Mi tried to articulate and it came out all weird. Jin giggled at how adorable Ke Mi was and patted her head gently. For that moment, he had forgotten that she was older than him by more than a century.

"Do not worry about that, Mind following me? I'll show you how it's done." Jin replied and the System prepared a portal for her and the Great White Snake, who had rested underneath her. To her surprise, they were back at her home instance, but she quickly discovered that there was a new second floor to her house.

The Great White Snake with Ke Mi on its back slithered the way up to the second floor. It had a modern look from the inside with various musical equipment waiting to be used, though everything had looked nicely from the outside with the traditional Chinese courtyard as her home instance. (Not to mention, those instruments were top of the line although they were cheaply bought by the System via its market. Jin nevertheless did some bargaining as well.)

While the list of instruments might not be exhaustive and mainstream, Jin however figured that with his current budget, it should be sufficient for Ke Mi to play around. When he becomes richer, he would consider getting more variants.

Jin then took out a unique pair of sleek looking headphones prepared by the System for Ke Mi to wear. Suddenly, her vision seemed to change and she saw copy silhouettes of her holding on to the various music equipment like the guitar, piano etc.

"This is actually one of the music modules which the System had kept aside since it was useless to me. Before today, I had no idea the System even had such functions, but apparently, it can create phantoms of whoever has those headphones to play an instrument." Jin explained as he asked Ke Mi to try it out. He did not bother to explain the advanced stuff because he knew the System would automatically record the songs she produced or teach Ke Mi certain functions when necessary.

With just her mind, she managed to command a silhouette to play some tunes on the guitar. It was the same for the piano. As she began to realise that she had now had access to a plethora of musical instruments at her fingertips, Ke Mi was having a giant smile on her face. She tried to play two instruments simultaneously, and it worked perfectly fine. Meanwhile, Jin watched there with his mouth open.

"Wow...I previously failed to operate two instruments at the same time. She makes it look so simple." Jin thought to himself.

"User is not as experienced in multitasking as a 200 hundred year old Demi Human. System had detected that Ke Mi possessed lightning fast task splitting abilities in the past when she fought against the user. Else she could not have controlled the Great White Snake and the Ant Wyrms movements together with just her Zither."

"Guess, we really underestimated her ability. Damn, then I should not have bought that Y-tunes and Spotific music premium account. Oh well, at least those songs in their database could give her some inspirations." Jin sighed as he could see Ke Mi was sucked into this brand new world of hers.

"Who knows, maybe someday she could produce some significant tracks that will wow the world with her music. I am sure her parents will look proudly over her, from above." Shu, the Sakura Tree Treant said while peering into the 2nd floor from the outside courtyard.

"I would love for that to happen for her too.." Jin was glad she had found her speciality and left her alone to enjoy her brand new toys.

Chapter 392 Breathtaking Bellflower Style

Unlike Bin Yong, Shi Zuo or even Luo Bo's animal cultivation styles that were passed down from previous generations as a part of the family heirlooms, Jia Le's cultivation style was indeed a relatively modern one. And it was not a pure eastern cultivation per se. The Breathtaking Bellflower was in substance, a fusion between Eastern Cultivation and Western Magic.

Western Magic usually worked best through magic circuits. Nevertheless, it did not necessarily require them nor did its spells need to be rewritten to be used with Eastern Cultivation since the concept of Mana and Chi had a few similarities.

As long as the cultivation style maintained the workings of the Western Magic used, it could provide the cultivator with the means to utilise their chi to cast those spells. With the East employing the five basic elements theory of Fire, Water, Earth, Metal and Wood, it already shared some resemblance to certain aspects of Western Magic.

This made it easy for certain atypical cultivations to adopt the practices of Western Magic. In turn, these eastern cultivation methods lightened up the practitioners' stress load in casting those spells as compared to pure Western Magic.

The advantages of such practitioners using Eastern Cultivation to cast 'western spells' were in the ease of casting and the flexibility of the chi techniques. A particular technique could be executed in dozens of ways as long as the cultivators were familiar with the procedure and had the know-how at the back of their head. (Like shooting a fire blast from the leg, from the hand, or even from the mouth.) Additionally, Eastern Cultivation excelled in the speed for their casting, and with a bit of practice, they could learn to regulate the power output of their spells.

However, this did not mean that it was necessarily superior to Western Magic. They were clearly structured to the point of being described as 'rigid' by many mages. Though this rigidity resulted in longer cast times, overall they were guaranteed to be stronger. Fortunately, there were ways to circumvent this limitation.

For Western Magic Practitioners, the preparations of spells before a battle was vital. If done correctly, the Spellcasters could cast their spells almost instantly, and the only limit was the maximum amount of spells which could be stored according to their Magic Level. Nowadays a majority of people also referred to the Magic Levels as Magic Grades, since the public hoped it would be homogenous with Eastern Cultivation.

Jia Le's parents had decided to embrace Western Magic fully and were Magic Practitioners to break the tradition in their families. However, the young Jia Le was heavily influenced by her grandma, who was her primary caretaker and an Eastern cultivator. Not wishing to choose one side, she eventually adopted both East and West styles and learnt a fusion style to compromise. (Fortunately for her, an uncanny affinity for the Earth Element was prevalent in the family, making it easy for her to use her current cultivation.)

The feral Deep Ones were neither as patient nor as understanding as the ones both Bin Yong and Shi Zuo had fought against. Not waiting for the team to discuss their strategy, the Deep Ones went on the offensive. Jia Le told her teammates that she would take the lead, but the rest readied themselves by enhancing their fists and legs with chi, just in case the shit hits the fan.

They may not have access to their weapons, but learning from the guys' mistakes from the dinner chat, they had used some advanced defensive inscriptions before they got teleported. The Pandawan group were relieved it was still on them upon verification when they teleported into the Deep Ones dungeon instance.

The grand appearance of the five bellflowers floating above Jia Le turned her into Enemy #1 for every feral Deep Ones. They had their eyes on the pretty, flowery smelling meat which they tried to swarm. Because of the dig site near Jia Le, it enabled her to effortlessly use her earthly cultivation powers without her weapon as a conduit to channel her attacks.

Moreover, her weapons were only secondary as she had grown up training with her parents to use her cultivation powers without the need for any tools. (Although having her weapon with her would definitely increase her offensive capabilities by at least a fold.)

Out from the soil, Jia Le summoned two large thorny vines. Two Deep Ones got pierced through their abdomens and subsequently were used as large projectiles against their brethren. The thorny vines then swiped across the carpark to prevent any Deep Ones from coming too close, even partially destroying a few of the pillars that could potentially be the ones that held the abandoned building intact.

Yet, Jia Le was unable to care at that point of time. It's either that, which caused the splinter rubbles to kill a few of the incoming Deep Ones, or risked those aggressive fish men to rush towards the group. She'd rather take her chances with the former.

However, some of the Deep Ones managed to dodge the projectiles, demonstrating how agile they could be, as they were driven by the hunger for such strong, healthy prey. That did not mean Jia Le was defenceless. The Deep Ones saw a small little bellflower emerged from the cracks of the concrete in front of Jia Le. They did not bother about it as they continued to charge forward.

Worst (and last) mistake of their life.

That small little bellflower glowed with chi supplied by Jia Le, and within a second, it blasted out an energy beam that took out multiple feral Deep Ones in one shot before the petals of the bellflower got scattered into the air.

The surviving Deep Ones who managed to avoid the beam turned berserk at the loss of their comrades. In retaliation, they screamed an annoying tone of a tortured goat which staggered the human cultivators by forcing them to close their ears. They thought they finally had gotten an opportunity to attack their meaty preys, but the bellflowers petals in the air remained afloat in the air.

Jia Le was still controlling them and merely waiting for the Deep Ones to take action by coming nearer. As soon as they did, the scattered petals created links with beams of energy towards each other in order to form a sort of energy net. The feral Deep Ones had been too late to stop or change their course, causing them to be turned into Sashimi by the energised net.

"Intermediate Bellflower Technique #57 and #32, Bellflower Petal Beam and Scattered Bellflower Petal Beam Net." Jia Le turned towards the group with a V-sign. They could see that she was already sweating from expanding such a large amount of chi to kill off that many feral Deep Ones in less than the span of thirty seconds.

"Do you think we are all in the clear?" Bin Yong asked and Luo Bo immediately turned on her Dark Sight to check if there were any more lurking at the dark.

"I don't seem to spot anything else aside from dead bodies. High chance we are on the clear." Luo Bo answered as she patted Jia Le on the back for a good job. Jia Le pushed her hair sideways and sat down to take a breather.

"I don't mean to make you any more tired but would you mind putting up one of those Flower Beams on standby? I don't want to find out those feral Deep Ones pretend to be dead, just to come and pounce on us when we let our guards down." Shi Zuo requested which Jia Le happily obliged.

She quickly summoned a Bellfower out of the cracked ground once more and later when into cultivation stance so that she could recover some chi while the others took their time to examine the box.

"Nope, other than that USB wire, I don't see anything that can be used to pick that fragment up safely." Shi Zuo sighed and then Bin Yong had a crazy idea.

"Erm...what about using the Dead One's flesh while we protect our hands with chi? That way it would corrupt the Dead One if it is a menace. That way, we can safely and quickly let go, knowing that there's still a chi barrier protecting us. Therefore, we can prevent anything from happening to us if there is any reaction." Bin Yong suggested, and the other two believed it was a decent crazy idea.

"Good pun there." Shi Zuo chuckled a little while agreeing to Bin Yong's idea.

"Who would like to do the honours?" Luo Bo asked. It was clear from her tone that she was not going anywhere near those Deep Ones.

"I volunteer as a leader. My Mad Monkey Style allows me to dodge quickly and can make my bare hands grow some chi claws as a reactionary defence if the Deep One turns out to be playing dead. Meanwhile, check if we have any WiFi reception in this place, I want to find out if the Pandamonium Map app would be able to differentiate a fake Grand Central Terminal and a real one." Shi Zuo told the rest as he went closer to the Deep One.

To ensure that it was really, truly dead, Shi Zuo plunged his chi formed hand claw into the Deep One's body and grabbed at what seemed to be the heart. He then pulled it out and threw it far away from the Deep One before dragging his entire body away from the other corpses and from the car too in case something freaky happened to him. (Like a corpse explosion, who knows?)

By distancing himself a bit from the group, he could make sure that if anything happened, it would not affect the rest of the team members. The constant need to play it safe was starting to get to them. They had no idea if they were just over analysing things or if they needed to expect anything as bad as a sudden explosion from the box too. Following Bin Yong suggestion, Shi Zuo first threw the fragment out of the trashcan and observed it a little. He noticed that its form did seem to suggest that it would be the perfect match to the lockbox.

Hence, he carefully enhanced his hand with a chi barrier to protect himself and then used the dead Deep One's webbed hand to hold it. It was quite tricky since the webbed hand was somewhat slimy, making it slippery for Shi Zuo to make delicate movements with it. Eventually, he managed to grab hold of the fragment using the deadweight's hand and pushed it into the lockbox.

Within an instant, a specific whirling noise was produced from the lockbox and it automatically unlocked itself, showing off a bountiful miracle in it. Even the spectators were at the edge of their seats when they saw the lockbox slowly open. In the end, they cheered loudly for the miraculous treasure within that small little metal can.

"Holy shit, we did it!!! This was totally worth it." Shi Zuo cheered as he let go of the deadweight's arm and took a breather.

"What did you find in there? Anything useful?" Luo Bo asked across the carpark as she told him that Bin Yong found the coordinates to what should be the real Grand Central Terminal.

"I found hope." Shi Zuo smiled at them peacefully as he shook the lockbox up high, but both Luo Bo and Bin Yong's face turned blue upon seeing his expression. He was not the only one to move.

His shadow changed form. It started to become longer and wider, before becoming corporeal and taking on the silhouette of that large snake shadow which Bin Yong had seen on top of the Empire State Building.

Right behind Shi Zuo, the creature's eyes in the darkest of shadows were glowing brightly and literally grinning from ear to ear.

Chapter 393 Storage Ring

"Babe watch out!" Luo Bo shouted as she stepped forward, only to be manhandled by Bin Yong in order to prevent her from doing anything rash. Shi Zuo turned only to see the monstrosity of the ever growing whale like looking shadow opening its mouth in an attempt to swallow him whole. Even the spectators instantly grasped at the cinematic with the dramatic jaw dropping music on cue.

Paralysed with terror, feeling just like a mouse in front of a snake, Shi Zuo accidentally dropped the unsealed lockbox to the ground. The contents spilt out of the box, revealing a number of accessories and among them was his own storage ring. Unknown to Shi Zuo, the storage ring reacted through the chi resonance coming off of from his claw hand, causing it to transform immediately.

This in turn, activated a special skill which not only illuminated their area with bright shining light but also managed to forcefully dispel the illusion of Shadow Dagen. The shadow slowly but surely bellowed in pleasurable sadistic laughter in response as it tried to maintain its form.

"Next Time!!!!!" The gloomy threat from the Shadow of the Fish God's voice echoed throughout the empty car park before it fully dissipated into the corners of the carpark. After a couple of seconds of silence, they breathed out a sigh of relief, as it appeared they were safe for now even though they knew the security of nothingness was just an illusion. Still, they will grab every chance of it.

Luo Bo elbowed Bin Yong to the face, who was still holding on to her. As soon as he had released her, she ran over towards her still terrified boyfriend. "Ahhh...now I understand ...*Gulp* What bro meant...*pants* about terror." Shi Zuo still trembling from the sight of Shadow Dagen had tears coming from his eyes and even his pants were slightly wet.

"Shhh...shhh it's okay. This is nothing compared to what we had to overcome in the Halloween Instance. Everything's going to be okay. It's gonna be alright. I am here now." Luo Bo hugged her, whispering in her ear, as she tried her best to console him.

Meanwhile, Bin Yong stayed close to Jia Le, who seemed to be finishing her chi recovery in her cultivation stance. He did not want to leave her behind and allow Shadow Dagen another opportunity to catch them unaware individually again. Though he could have woken her up, she was not in any imminent danger, and it would be better for her to recover her chi to be combat ready.

Having calmed her boyfriend somewhat, Luo Bo turned her head to check the accessories that lay spilt on the ground. She realised those appeared to be their missing storage rings except for one. The still shining ring appeared to be burning hot. Yet for some reason, she was unafraid of it. Even more peculiar, it exuded a sense of familiarity. Even while consoling her mate, she began concentrating on it and sensed an extent of Shi Zuo's chi signature coming from it.

Since this dungeon instance was always surprising them, Luo Bo ignored the glowing ring for now and picked up her ring to wear it. After everything, it would be great to have access to their prepared items as well as their weapons.

Using her chi access the ring, Luo Bo got a bottle of water for her boyfriend to calm down, but at that moment in time, the ring she was holding began to change with a similar glow to it. From a modest, pinkish silver design, it suddenly possessed a rabbit head insignia with pinkish ruby jewels as its eyes. Upon closer inspection, not only a rabbit head got added, but a bow and arrow sign right below it as well. It was frankly beautiful, a perfect depiction of her cultivation style and favourite weapon.

Looking back at the other ring, she identified a monkey with its mouth open. The monkey's eyes were emerald green, while above it was two hatchets crossing each other. Lost in her thoughts, she only remembered about the bottle of water she was going to take, when she heard Shi Zuo taking a deep breath.

She hurriedly took the bottle out and assisted Shi Zuo with drinking it. That was when she realised she felt something inside her was a little different. She felt braver, yet nothing had changed about their situation. This kind of bravery was somewhat similar to the time she had used the blue stone of courage she got from playing the Loot Box machine (A must have item, to conquer the Halloween Instance, according to some people). The only reasonable explanation she could come up with was the transformed ring being the cause for this.

Trusting her intuition, she picked up Shi Zuo's transformed ring and put it on him. He eventually managed to catch his breath, and his thoughts became more lucid. Turning to his girlfriend, he reciprocated her hug, which made her let out a sigh of relief.

"Did you all see what I saw?" One of the male spectators pointed at the scene at which Luo Bo's ring also transformed and the rest nodded in response. "What kind of rings are those?! Hey, Boss Jin I also want such a cool customised ring. Are you selling those rings, too?"

"Nope, those rings are not for sale. If you want one, then you have to earn them." Jin answered with a grin.

"Are you seriously gonna give each of us a ring?" A female cultivator had trouble believing such a thing. Just looking at the very cute rabbit insignia, made one understand that it was anything but cheap. Even if those Jewels were fake, just the operation of inscribing an insignia into a storage ring (without the latter losing its function) was usually only something very rich people could afford.

"Yes, anyone can get a personalised ring according to their cultivation and fighting style. Feel free to share this and also one of the rewards possibly include getting a discount for a custom weapon set just by completing a particular section of the Deep Ones dungeon instance, or should I say... Escape City Dungeon Instance." Jin finally revealed the true name of the Deep Ones dungeon to the entire group who were watching. There was no need to make a special announcement for this information because it would definitely be passed around with Mr Know-It-All in the crowd.

"So...they were right. It really is a kind of Escape Room instance. I was of half expecting you to do that for the Gentlebear Instance and not this soon." Mr Know-It-All replied to Jin's big reveal.

"Nothing is stopping me from doing something like that with the Gentlebear Instance. I had to start from somewhere to see if it works well with the crowd. Hahaha. This time around, the cultivators can complete it the Escape room way or brute force. Just that Brute Force also requires some finesse and brains as well, perhaps not as much as the former. After all, it's a story dungeon instance." Jin answered back and his intentions wowed everyone.

"But won't streaming this Escape City instance kind of ruin the whole point? Haven't you just revealed everything to all of us who were watching this? Now everyone here would know what to do to complete this part of the instance." Another male cultivator asked. While he himself did not particularly mind, he was sure that others would have preferred finding out on their own. Be that as it may, Jin shook his head and was about to say something.

"Hahhaa, bro! Do you really think Boss Jin is that stupid to show his whole hand that easily when he is charging us this much? I bet you, he has at least few dozen more of these puzzles should we ever try it out again. Who knows, maybe he is even going to remove this path until people start to forget." The male cultivator got pat on his back by his friend as he answered his concerns. Almost everyone on the floor agreed with that line of that, making Jin not having to add anything else.

"Since you all appeared to be interested in the rings, let me share a little tidbit. Some of you might have already noticed by the behaviour of the Pandawans, but those rings do more than just look pretty. One of the prizes from the loot box vending machine, you know, the one used to sell tickets to the Halloween and Qixi instances. Oh, which I have to add! It is currently pending another new dungeon in-" Jin paused for a while, be it on purpose or accidental, he returned to his main subject though the cultivators who heard it and felt it was exclusive information but did not dare to interrupt.

"It had been blue stones of courage and white stones of calming. I have added the same functions as basic inscription properties into the transformed cosmetic skin for the storage rings and they should be a permanent effect." Before Jin was done with his explanation there suddenly was a shout from the crowd.

"Wait! COSMETIC SKIN?! You were able to achieve that too! And did you say PERMANENT?!" That shout came from none other than Sea Mesh CEO, who had been trying to stay undercover, but his quirk made

him spoil his disguise. Even Mr Know-It-All started to giggle at the sight of Ke Loong quickly adjusting his fake beard as well as his black sunglasses.

"Cosmetic Skin?" To the younger cultivators, it sounded like a vaguely common gaming term, and one asked the poorly disguised man what the deal was with that. His presence had been noted, but since he was harmlessly watching with the rest, they thought of him as just a cosplayer rather than hiding his identity. (After all, there are too many weird people in the world which the society had to tolerate.)

"While more commonly known as 'Cosmetic Inscription', the proper term is decorative enhancement inscription. The reason why it's such a big deal is that it should be impossible to create them, much less mass produce these inscriptions. While simple in theory, in praxis they turn out to be not very practical nor functional. This is because of how inscriptions work." Ke Loong coughed a little, realising his voice was his original one before he tried to change the tone a little.

"Inscriptions utilised the chi for them to stay active. Hence, the decorative aspect is only as temporary as the amount of chi you placed in it. It is something similar to a disguise just more aesthetically pleasing." Ke Loong explained as he smiled while pushing his glasses up. (Some of the cultivators began to think Boss Jin should make him a better disguise upon hearing it.)

"However, there are too many disadvantages to it. As aforementioned, they require a constant supply of chi. The second one would be occupying an inscription slot. But considering that storage rings do not usually have inscription slots attached to them, so unless he chang –"

"No, I did not change the structure of the rings. It is too much effort transferring the storage data and I would need their chi signature to be able do so. Way more troublesome than personalising the ring's design. While contradictory yes, I made it such that the inscription was added into their storage rings even though there are no inscription slots attached to it." Jin told the customers as he pointed back to the screen.

"But right now, the main focus should be the ongoing dungeon instance." Jin said hoping to leave the topic as it is. He did not expect Ke Loong to be in here to be so knowledgeable about the cosmetic inscriptions. (Seems like his disguise somewhat worked!) And he hoped that the cultivators who were currently way more interested in this Cosmetic Inscription to return their attention to what was happening since more was yet to be revealed.

"Holy shit. And there goes one more possible IP (intellectual property) to him. Why couldn't we have figured out how he does it." Ke Loong placed his two hands at his head. He was aware of the impacts of cosmetic inscriptions. If Jin could incorporate such a concept on rings, he would eventually be able to do it on clothes, other accessories and even weapons. While it might sound a tad ridiculous, it would be highly likely people would spend money to acquire these kinds of cosmetic items since they would definitely be cheaper than buying the real stuff, it would not clutter any space and not to mention size free.

One thing was for sure, Jin had struck gold with this invention.

Unaware of the commotion outside, Luo Bo handed Bin Yong and Jia Le their own rings. All of them checked their inventory after the transformation of the ring, but nothing seemed to be missing. "I

wonder if these designs are permanent. It would be a shame to lose it. I'd pay to be able to keep it." Jia Le wondered as she admired her ring.

"Oh...?! This..." Jia Le squint her eyes a little as the ring design triggered her memories.

"...This could be it. Guys, I think we found the passkey for the door I was mentioning earlier." Jia Le blurted out. "It's our newly formed rings. I remember seeing the imprint of my flower, but the rest were too detailed to make out the design. Not 100% sure, but I honestly think this should be it." Jia Le commented and later cleared her doubts as she spoke.

"Then what are we waiting for, let's go. Don't forget about your phone Bin Bin!" Luo Bo reminded him as she helped Shi Zuo stand up and going up the stairs. She was not going to leave him alone by himself even if it's just a few metres away, not in this particular dungeon.

Bin Yong unplugged the phone and guessed 36% was better than nothing. He was surprised it charged that fast for a broken down car. Perhaps, Boss Jin did not want them to wait around for the phone to be charged in a realistic time frame.

The entire group took their weapons out as well as a few potions to hang them by their waist in case their storage rings were ever gone again. (This dungeon made them rather paranoid!) After ensuring that they were well equipped, they climbed up to the 6th floor where the locked door was waiting. True enough, the lock was designed to be unsealed with their four new rings.

There was a unique flat click sound that triggered the unlocking mechanism which subsequently made their rings fall off from the lock. Bin Yong then took the initiative to open the door only to find four pendants kept in a glass box like some museum centrepiece. Everyone else stepped back as Luo Bo took an arrow and shot the glass in case of any laser or trap triggering. To their surprise, nothing happened. Still, they did not wish to take any more chance as Luo Bo took out a special arrow coated with ferret magnetic metal. (Don't ask how but the weapons store sold it!)

The arrow picked up the four pendants rather easily and Luo Bo managed to get the arrow back since it was tied to a hiking rope. "I will give it a try." Luo Bo told the group as she felt that she should be the one to show Shi Zuo that she was willing to take a risk for the group too even though she was equally afraid.

"No, it's okay, dear. I am fine now. You can let me do—" Luo Bo ignored Shi Zuo's rambling and put on the pendant. In an instant, her appearance changed into that of a black suit. White blouse, black short skirt and coat, brown stockings and a rather comfortable pair of dress shoes. Luo Bo wowed herself as she realised her hair was all tied and bun up rather nicely too. She did not know why she was dressed so formally until Bin Yong and Shi Zuo told her that it was a disguise by the Deep Ones.

The rest wore the pendants and all of them turned into the Black Suits too. "I see, so by getting these suits, we might reduce the probability of being stalked by the rest of the Deep Ones." Shi Zuo said as he adjusted his black sunglasses. Little did they know that this was the cosmetic inscription that Ke Loong had been raving about.

The CEO became even more fervent at seeing Boss Jin's new shop item in action. It was a genius move of him to introduce a new product via a dungeon instance.

"Just like in your spy movies. Let's hide in plain sight" Bin Yong encouraged his buddy as they prepared to move to the Penn Station Exit A to meet Captain Hei with the aid of their new disguise.

Chapter 394 Cosmetic Inscription

Ke Loong, who initially thought that Boss Jin achieving the Cosmetic Inscriptions on the rings was already an understatement achievement of the year, became nearly insane when he saw the Cosmetic Inscription being utilised as a full costume.

That was because he thought of reverse engineering Jin's concept by paying a few veteran cultivators to play the dungeon and get that particular Cosmetic Inscription for research. That way, he might discover a way of creating a clothing based cosmetic inscription before Boss Jin did and perhaps sell it country wide.

Yet, this young guy in this store packed with incredible inventions had once again beaten him and his company to it. Ke Loong could not take it anymore and decided to push Jin about it even though Mr Know-It-All advised him not to.

"Jin, I would like to have a sample of that Cosmetic Inscription. Just tell me the price." Ke Loong went straight to the point and Jin furrowed his eyebrows at him.

"Not interested," Jin said as his attention went back to the Pandawan's dungeon instance.

"How about just lending it to me for a while? I just want to see how it feels (and maybe figure out how this works). After that, I will return it to you. Promise!" Ke Loong begged as he was desperate to experience this one of a kind item. As he had seen their own failed cosmetic inscriptions before, Ke Loong was very intrigued with how Jin's inscriptions differed from theirs.

Jin sort of implied that the cosmetic inscriptions, he created did not need a constant input of chi. That was also evident when he saw the footage of Bin Yong and the rest using their rings, especially when they took their rings off while the cosmetic inscriptions stayed intact.

He came up with two deductions. One was that the inscription consumed very little chi to be activated and maintained, hence it might last for a fixed amount of time before it needed to be charged with chi again. Another possibility, which was far more intriguing, was that no chi was ever required aside from the activation phase though perhaps, there should also be a kind of switch to remove the cosmetic appearance of the inscription.

"Not interested. It's a Trade Secret. If you want it, you will have to attempt the dungeon just like any other customer." Jin replied with an indifferent expression but deep inside, he was hoping he wasn't going too far.

Jin knew that Ke Loong could be pushed around if he wanted something desperately enough though the opposite was true too. If Ke Loong despised something, he would do his best to make sure the process or item to be fixed or scraped away. Jin did not want Ke Loong to become a business rival nor did he

want Ke Loong to see that he was easy pickings allured by the greed of affluence. All he wanted was Ke Loong to respect him and see him equally as possible lifetime business partners.

That was seen during the negotiation of the Portal Device when Ke Loong was willing to take uncalculated risks to obtain something that he wants. While his advisors warned him otherwise, Ke Loong would not budge because he believed that the portal device would make the company prosper. So far, as a practical visionary, he had been right on the spot, especially when his company stocks were still soaring high up to this day.

"C'mon, just name your price. I'm sure I can make it worthwhile for you, Boss Jin!" Ke Loong was sounding absolutely desperate. Just when Jin was about to give way for Ke Loong, he decided to remain staunch in his stance the moment he saw Mr Know-It-All coming to aid his old buddy.

"Please don't push him anymore, Boss. I am sure, you two can work something out. He has already bent his back over for you in the portal device deal. You won't regret giving your business partner some leeway." Mr Know-It-All tried to be the mediator and Ke Loong went all puppy eyes for over his buddy aiding him so much. Jin pretended to sigh and asked Ke Loong to follow him into the meeting room, which once housed the 'Tiger Princess' Yang Ling's guests when they were participating in the demonstration of the Gearbox device.

Jin then closed the door shut and called Kraft to enter about a minute later in case Ke Loong had some other tricks under his sleeves. After all, Jin knew his limits when it came to negotiations. (But bargaining? Jin believed that he could win over Ke Loong with his pants down!)

After a short explanation, Jin took out a sample ring and the same pendant that was awarded to the Pandawans the Escape City Dungeon Instance. Ke Loong hastily picked up the ring up and inserted some chi. As expected, the ring turned into a fashionable storage ring with a Hawk insignia on it. Ke Loong was extremely delighted but noticed that there was neither a shining light nor a weapons insignia on it.

"Well, you caught me. Truth be told, we prepare the inscriptions for the cultivators beforehand. The shining light is only to make it look more spectacular and giving the illusion that there was some magic involved. Through the Pandamonium App data, our specialists pulled their info and create the inscription for the rings." Jin had prepared such a story for his cultivators since he could not explicitly revealed the true identity of the maker for these rings, the System.

"This is the fastest we can create, hence there were no weapon designs on it. Besides, you've yet to participate in any of my dungeons, so my employees do not have sufficient data on you." Jin explained and Ke Loong realised that was the possible reason why Jin had acted so disinterested!

He needed to stall for time for his inscribing specialists to create Ke Loong's cosmetic item in advance. Ke Loong was happy to learn that Jin had no such intentions to refuse him from the beginning, while at the same time being a bit embarrassed thinking back on how he had acted.

"Oh, Boss, you are too nice and cool. Making a cosmetic inscription on the fly for me. If possible, I'd be interested in meeting your inscribing specialists. You know get to know them and personally thank them." Ke Loong said as he examined the new Hawk insignia ring, checking the edges and admiring the fine details on it. Although he reinforced in no manner that he wants to steal his employees right under Jin's nose.

After which he tried the pendant and, in an instant, his original clothes were overwritten by the Black Suit. It was extremely comfortable and not to mention it fit perfectly. As a CEO, Ke Loong needed decent suits to impress his clients and other investors. When he wore the Black Suit Cosmetic Inscription that was on the pendant, he immediately realised that the quality was top notch and the dimensions were perfect, seemingly as if it had been custom made for him.

"This is simply unbelievable. Well, a little scary too. You seem to have more than just my three sizes. As I am in this information gathering field too, I know that superior data collection is damnably vital, but it is also all about implementation too. In my opinion, your secret employees have done more than a wonderful job. Now I might take my words back for I am so tempted to find and poach them away from you." Ke Loong spoke honestly since he knew, that Jin more than just a one time business partner.

If there were no significant problems between the two of them, he could foresee them creating the next big thing in the next five to ten years. Jin would not only revolutionise the dungeon supplier industry but many other fields too. Then he and Ke Loong could possibly be the ones leading the industry. All Jin needed now was just proper funding and exposure which Ke Loong could both provide. Thanks to that particular advantage, he was going to make Jin shine properly. (Well, and ultimately his company too.)

"Hahah, too bad for you. Even if you find them, I already signed them on to a contract of slavery which they can never break. Hahaha! At least, I provide them with sufficient entertainment, decent housing and food." Jin joking said in his current situation, filled with half truths and Ke Loong laughed along heartily.

"Boss Jin, you sure know how to crack jokes! Entertainment, housing and food? I bet you are simply housing them in some dungeon instance! Hahahah!" Ke Loong replied.

"Even if that were the case, I am sure you saw how nice my dungeon instances can be. Hahaha. But you can be assured that I pay them well enough, in fact so much so that I could go bankrupt anytime if I do not manage my finances properly. That was why the absurd contract for the portal device." Jin mixed his lies with some truth to the point that Ke Loong bought it.

"I must say, that's a daring move. Youngsters these days will never do something like you did. They are too protected by their little bubble. I truly respect that about you." Ke Loong commented as he took off the pendant and noticed he returned back to the original clothes. After which, he experimented by putting the pendant back on and off. It was slightly hilarious for Jin because he had done the exact same thing when he obtained that technology from the System.

Aye, the System had decided to assist Jin to boost his sales by unlocking this Cosmetic Inscription option after he reached Grade 8. It was a reward that Jin did not expect and even starting to wonder if the System had changed its ways.

Though his praising thoughts did not last long after the System explained that it was part of the rewards for the completion of the secondary objective for his Goblin War Mission. The System also stated that there were more pending rewards that would be unlocked once Jin required them. "Delayed gratification is always better than instant gratification", or that's how the System replied when Jin asked about those rewards.

"By the way, how is the portal device going? Please tell me it's doing okay." Ke Loong asked since he had invested a lot in promoting the prototype, which made his stocks soar so much that he too was scared of the repercussions of not being able to deliver.

"Ah, about that. Could you come back in a few days time? I will send your secretary a text as soon as my employees have done the last few checks for the working prototype. I'm sure you can understand, how we have to make sure that everything is perfect." Jin offered and Ke Loong shook his head.

"Just call me directly. Sometimes, my secretary does not know the importance of secrecy. Her mouth should be marked as dangerous." Ke Loong opened a QR code to his MeChat for Jin to scan so that they could exchange details.

"If the portal device works well, I will not hesitate to make you my official dungeon supplier partner." Ke Loong said as he was about to walk out of the room, only to be stopped by Kraft.

"I appreciate that gesture you are making for my Boss, but please return the ring. I do not recall my Boss Jin ever letting you keep it, just because it has a hawk insignia on it." Kraft said while wearing a half fox mask as a disguise...which somehow did not bother Ke Loong but rather terrified him a little. (just as the fact, that he had not noticed Kraft ever coming through the door)

"Ahahaha! I am so so sorry!" Ke Loong hastily took out the ring and placed it back on the table next to the pendant. "I really assumed that Boss Jin was giving that to me since it has a hawk insignia on it."

"No, Ke Loong, just take the ring. I too must apologise that I did not inform my staff to let you have it." Jin hurried his steps, grabbed the ring and placed it back into his hands.

"Oh no, no. I really cannot keep it. I am content just seeing it, and trying out your pendant. People fought hard for that reward, and I cannot just take it like that. It was my fault for putting you into that situation!" Ke Loong tried to play the typical 'refusing the gift so I do not owe you, but if you insist. I will take it' method.

"Okay, I wouldn't want to burden you. I shall keep it then." Jin said and Ke Loong was slightly appalled that Jin did not follow the usual protocol in such a situation.

"Ah, must be because he is still young and does not know the ways of business making. But still, I cannot offend him that much. I guess, he is aware that he does have the higher ground in terms of negotiation this time." Ke Loong thought to himself and decided to let it go for now. But then he realised that would be stupid of him. So he decided to try his luck for a counter offer.

"What about this? You give me the ring when I make you my official business partner? Until then how about I sell those cosmetic inscriptions out for you too?" Ke Loong tried to compromise.

"Hmmm...How about this? Instead of selling, you give me designs of outfits that could be popular to recreate? In return, I give you a 25% profit for the sales of those cosmetic inscriptions. Both you and I know this could be rather big money." Now Jin was in his element, bargaining for something.

"35%. A trial period of 3 months and if the overall sales are promising, we can go for an extension." Ke Loong was quick witted enough to reply.

"30%. You can liaise with popular high tier brands to make more money out of it. As long as you can get them to allow it, my team will be able to recreate and refit their designs into it." Jin suggested and it was Ke Loong's turn to sigh.

"33%, since it will be on me to procure the rights for the brands. You drive a hard bargain that even I cannot refuse when I think of such a possibility." Ke Loong remarked as Jin handed the ring as a sign of affirmation.

"Should not be too much of an expense for you since its just three months," Jin said as he shrugged his shoulders a little.

"True, but my brand name would be affected. People would be like...since when have they gone into clothes designs?!" Ke Loong answered before he smiled a little.

"Still, when I think about it, it is about dungeons too...Maybe I can open a side company to deal with this kind of stuff as an experiment too." Ke Loong then thought about it as he thanked Jin for the cosmetic ring. As he turned around, to his surprise Kraft had disappeared just as unnoticed as his earlier appearance. One more glance at Jin, who just gave him a mysterious smile, and Ke Loong hurried out.

His heart was pounding fast at the prospect of being able to find out the properties of Jin's ring. Rumours had it that all his researchers and engineers had worked overtime to figure out this brand new cosmetic inscription. (They were that enthusiastic about it.)

Chapter 395 Escape City Second Phase

While Jin had been busy discussing business with Ke Loong, the Pandawans had successfully navigated through the crowd with the help of the Pandamonium App's navigation map system. On their way, they indeed passed a fake Grand Central Terminal, which the navigation system had utterly ignored.

When the two guys looked at it closely, they noticed the doors changed to a metallic door design with glass windows. Shi Zuo felt a little foolish for his past mistake even though it was the first time seeing the Grand Central Terminal.

As they were disguised as the Black Suits, none of the crowd bothered them. It was uneventful compared to Bin Yong and Shi Zuo's earlier adventure when they got harassed by all the endless staring. Yet there was still something that bothered Bin Yong.

The Whispers.

Ever since he saw that prodigious black phantom that had formed from Shi Zuo's shadow, he also heard the echoing of the whispers again. Despite it happening again, they were not as severe as the first run which Bin Yong believed it had something to do with the transformed rings or the pendants that they were wearing. But since it was muffled down, Bin Yong ignored most of the murmuring throughout the whole walk.

The rain continued to pour and the group had to make stops under some shelters to check the map since Bin Yong's phone was not waterproof. They did not wish to risk the water screwing up his phone,

which Shi Zuo complained about repeatedly. (Though Bin Yong swore he would throw his phone at Shi Zuo and bet it could still work.)

It came as a pleasant surprise but, the suits were surprisingly waterproof and so were the shirts and blouses. The only thing that got wet was the exposed parts of their bodies, which was not much of an issue for the boys, though it was a little irritating for the girls. They instead prefer to stay dry, but the guys insisted that breaking the character of the 'Black Suits' might be doing more harm. "Just bear with it a little longer." Shi Zuo pleaded and the girls grudgingly agreed to it.

Within fifteen minutes, they managed to reach the real Grand Central Terminal, which was bustling with people. However, there was no little girl in pyjamas in sight, no matter how hard they tried to spot her. "Come to think of it, we don't know how to contact her." Shi Zuo said as he was observing the ocean of people running for their station terminals or busy shopping (or pretending to shop in Bin Yong's view) in this iconic landmark.

"Maybe, she might have left her contact on your phone?" Jia Le suggested and Bin Yong quickly picked up to check. Suddenly, his phone buzzed on its own. He promptly answered the phone, and it was none other than the voice of the pyjama girl.

"Hello...? Hello!!? Hi There! Sorry, reception's a little poor because of the place I am in. Took you longer than expected to reach the Grand Terminal but hey at least you reached it. Anyways, it is unfortunate that I am unable to meet you in person. The Deep Ones have found me so I suppose you have to take the train to Penn Station yourself. Remember Exit A! You will find that conspicuous Panda sitting down near the corner reading his newspaper!" The girl spoke so fast that Bin Yong had no chance to interrupt her before she dropped the call on him.

At that point, the Pandamonium Map App immediately showed an updated route, including the trains that they should be taking to Penn Station. "Do you think we have to buy tickets to ride the trains? I don't think our MeChats wallets can work for Jin's dungeons! Hahah!" Luo Bo cracked a joke as she began to look for the exit that they should be heading towards.\

"That will be a major rip off if Jin made such a petty, realistic move. I think I paid more than enough to play this dungeon." Shi Zuo said, and even the spectators seemed to be agreeing to what he said. (Jin did unknowingly sneezed at that point while he was talking to Ke Loong.)

"Eh, I think we should think about moving faster rather than worry about the tickets." Jia Le nudged Shi Zuo as they suddenly saw every individual in the Grand Central Terminal stop in their tracks and turn their heads towards them the same moment the Pyjamas girl dropped the call on Bin Yong.

"I guess, we are officially in Phase 2 of the dungeon." Shi Zuo readied his weapon and removed the disguise pendant in case it got damaged in any way. He was also afraid the defence inscriptions might not work with the Black Suit Cosmetic Inscription Pendant was on. (An ungrounded worry, as they later would learn)

"SIX MINUTES!" Bin Yong shouted as he saw the app indicate the train at Grand Central Subway Station would be leaving soon. "We need to find the Train Platform 7!" Bin Yong shouted once more to get the attention of the crowd as they all began to transform into Deep Ones. He ran the other way while signalling the others to take the exit that leads to the subway stations.

"I am starting to have no doubts that this dungeon instance is really named Escape CITY! HOW DOES BOSS EXPECT US TO RUN AWAY FROM THESE MANY DEEP ONES?!!" Luo Bo shouted in panic and frustration as she nocked her bow and pointed it 45 degrees towards the Terminal's ceiling. It was an explosion arrow similar to the one she used against Orc Scout previously but this time packed with a lot more power in it. By inserting as much chi as she could safely infuse into the arrow, Luo Bo hoped that it would be potent enough for the ceilings to be destroyed.

"Here goes nothing! Loose!" Luo Bo released her bowstring with all her might that she was pushed back by her own draw. Surprisingly, her inscription on her bow activated as she saw a magical red circle appearing at the front of her arrow when she shot it out. The arrow went through the magical ring and bright yellow sparks spiralled around it as a stylish effect to indicate the arrow was enhanced by the inscription activation.

Luo Bo saw and clenched her fist towards her face as if it was a sign of victory. It was a fire based inscription that caused her arrow to deal out a set amount of explosive damage at a random chance. She mainly used that inscription to make her opponents flinch or knockback since the explosion the inscription caused, was rather minor. Thus that was sufficient enough to give her an opportunity to either run from the enemy or slip in a second arrow shot to end their lives.

This time round, it was different. As she was using an explosive arrow, the explosive damage from the inscription multiplied with her maximised chi infused explosive arrow, and it was bound to make a massive explosion. To Luo Bo, it felt like time had slowed down when she saw the moment the arrow make contact with the ceiling.

BADABOOM!

The arrow explosion was substantial enough for the impact waves to destroy the surrounding glass windows and the entire ceiling began to collapse at the stationary Deep Ones who were still in the midst of transforming from their human disguises to their real forms.

"Oh gosh! What are you waiting for? A stray rubble to hit your head?!" Shi Zuo grabbed Luo Bo by her hand who was staring in awe by her own work and the couple jumped to the 1st floor as they headed to the basement where the subway station was located.

"Guess, we aren't paying for the tickets!" Jia Le leapt over the ticket gate machine and threw a kunai on the floor, packed with two spells worth of vine wall barriers. Should the first vine wall barrier's integrity drop to less than 50%, the second vine wall barrier would emerge from the kunai.

It was a nifty trick she learnt from her Western Magicians parents where spells could be placed like a simple straightforward programming code. (On a separate note, her grandma grudgingly acknowledged that was one aspect of Western Magic which Eastern Cultivation could not copy. Her mother laughed and hugged Jia Le's grandma who seemed to come to terms with her own magician status through Jia Le.)

"Wait, where is Bin Yong?!" Luo Bo asked as she ran ahead with Shi Zuo and Jia Le was right behind her.

"He said he is taking the other exit route from outside the Grand Central Terminal and into the Grand Central Subway Station as a distraction and to learn how terrible the situation is outside." Jia Le replied as she ran side by side the other two.

"Why is he always taking this kind of unnecessary risks. That Bin Bin!" Luo Bo shook her fist in anger when suddenly a fully transformed Deep One came out from the corner armed with a spear. Shi Zuo was ready for that as he threw his axe towards the fish man.

The Deep One was able to parry the axe but did not realise that there was a chain attached to it, causing it to wrap around the Deep One's spear. Shi Zuo smiled as he saw the Deep One's bewilderment and clicked on a trigger which emitted a bolt of electricity to pass through the chains and the axe. It subsequently shocked the Deep One which allowed Shi Zuo to move in closer with a spare offhand axe and slashed its head off.

This new sort of weapon was something he and the Three Headed Bear had collaborated together while Bin Yong was busy taking notes the whole afternoon. It was a one of the reward options purchasable with Goblin Raid Points.

Cultivators would buy a ticket to spend a set amount of time with the Three Headed Bear to craft a weapon together. It became such a big hit that there was a schedule that needed to be followed due to the number of people trying it out. Accommodating his customers, Jin quickly added the possibility to book a timing in the Pandamonium App. If the cultivator missed their turn, it would be a free for all for that particular time slot which Shi Zuo luckily managed to sneak in during a missed cultivator's time slot.

The Three Headed Bear just gave a stern look at the late cultivator who had been delayed by traffic and he obediently chose another time slot (his ticket got refunded as it was not used up and thankfully, he did not need to wait for long).

Within that time slot, Shi Zuo had purposely crafted a weapon that should prove to be very effective against the Deep Ones. His only regret was that the inscription choices were rather general and the lightning inscription the shop was selling was as 'weak' as the one Luo Bo used. (Though, it was really useful in earlier dungeons, just not in the more advanced dungeons.)

Therefore, he decided to make a lightning based weapon with a multiplier effect along with the axe he was using. Unlike Luo Bo's and Se Lang's inscription, which were based on chance, Shi Zuo decided to take a flat lightning based inscription damage which was less powerful than the random chance inscription, but he figured he would make up for it with his speed

Bin Yong had noticed the new weapon of his friend, when he came back boasting about it. Still, his friend did not seem very impressed at the time and teased Shi Zuo if he got duped by the number games which Boss Jin had placed on all the weapons when Bin Yong queried. "You do know in real life, there are no floating calculable HP bars above our heads right? Those numbers are worth jackshit."

"But what if Boss Jin somehow managed to make it calculable? Like those wuxia novels where we can have 10,000 elephant powers and our weapon provide us another 5000 elephant powers!" Shi Zuo countered and Bin Yong shook his head.

"I know you love your numbers, but don't you think that is a bit unrealistic?" Bin Yong remarked though Shi Zuo honestly believed that Boss Jin had revealed those numbers on their Pandamonium Stat page for a reason. He might doubt any other person but Boss Jin had proven to him that nothing in this shop instance nor in the Pandamonium app was there without a reason.

Be it an experimental feature or a quality of life update, there was always something that Shi Zuo looked forward to whenever Jin implemented any changes. Everytime that happened he got even more inspired to do the same for his IT security job. In a way, he secretly idolised Boss Jin's technological edge and would love to talk with whoever was responsible.

"Whatever those numbers are based off, at the very least his inscription works wonders." Shi Zuo looked before him. The Deep One was totally fried and when the head was cut off, Shi Zuo retracted the axe back and proceeded forward with the rest.

That surprise attack made them even more vigilant than ever as they took the stairs down to Platform 7.

Chapter 396 Subway Station - Part 1

Bin Yong rushed out of the Grand Terminal Station while cutting down any fish men that were in the midst of transforming. If not for his 'sacrifice', the entire mob of Deep Ones would have chased after his friends through the subway exit.

At the very least, the menacing crowd of Deep Ones had their attention divided into two but Bin Yong had to deal with the situation carefully and yet aggressively fast before all the Deep Ones had taken on their final form.

"You made the right choice splitting yourself away from the group. Come join us." Suddenly the whispering was louder than before. But beyond that sentence, a series of mutters were overheard by Jin and he could barely hear the fish men talking to each other.

"Join us... !" "Join us brrrrrotherrr!" "Kneel before the great Lord and be saved!" "You will gain powers you never have before!" "Be one with us!" The Deep Ones babbled all around him as they approached him slowly as Bin Yong finally reckoned they were in deep shit considering the situation where all the passers-by were indeed Deep Ones too.

He took a quick peek on his phone to confirm the location of the other entry to the subway station that was outside of the Grand Central Terminal. "5 minutes walk?! Make that a 1 minute run!" Bin Yong gritted his teeth to prevent himself from being influenced by the fishes' nonsenses as he kept his sword at the back of his waist and placed his buckler in the front while holding it with two hands.

"Intermediate Shield Art, Defending Wall of the Bombardier Beetle!" Bin Yong shouted as he inserted his chi into his shield. The buckler instantly energised by his chi, created a blue floating orb right in front of him, which expanded into the silhouette of a large blue triangular kite shield.

Acting like a secondary chi barrier, the blue triangle shield barrier bashed through the Deep Ones that were blocking his way, causing Bin Yong's enemies to be knocked to the side or even toppling over from the direct shield charge. This enabled Bin Yong to charge through the horde of Fish Men in a straight line without much difficulty.

However, the barrier still had its limits, which became apparent with the Deep one's overwhelming numbers. Whenever it hit a Deep One, a part of the barrier seemed to be chipped away by the attack. It

was even more significant when knocking over the transforming Deep Ones, but it was entirely another issue when faced with a Deep One who was prepared to counter the Bombardier Beetle Cultivator.

As the Deep One in front of him charged with two spears pointing forward towards Bin Yong, it smashed into him with tremendous impact and nearly managed to slow him down significantly to the point that the other Deep Ones could pile on him.

"Intermediate Bombardier Beetle Style, Bombardment Counterattack!" Bin Yong shouted as he shook the spears away by slamming his shield to the ground, causing a blast of gas made from his chi to spread outwards from the shield impact. The gas irritated the Deep Ones' eyes and lungs so badly that they staggered. The ones closest to him suffered the worst, with their eyes melting and their fins and lungs dissolving upon absorbing the gas.

Naturally, his own attack did not affect Bin Yong in any way, but he rarely used this particular technique as it had the risk of injuring his own teammates. However, he developed it since he felt that it might be useful in certain situations, and this particular scenario proved him right. With the Deep Ones immobilised by the hot toxic gas, Bin Yong reused his Defending Wall of the Bombardier Beetle to shield himself and charged his way to the entrance to the Grand Terminal Subway Station.

Instead of climbing down the stairs, he decided to jump across it since he still had the Defending Wall technique activated. "Woohooo!!! This is why I adore Boss Jin's dungeons, I can do crazy stuff like this!" Bin Yong shouted as he felt elated, especially when he fell on an unsuspecting Deep One.

The energised barrier incidentally became a secondary barrier against other threats Bin Yong was facing with the Deep One stuck to the barrier, blocking most of the other hits he could potentially encounter. The moment he reached the bottom of the stairs, he thanked the splattered Deep One who had acted as a buffer and jumped over the ticketing gate machine. Within a minute, he saw the rest of his team on the opposite side of the platform with the train arriving on scene at the nick of time.

"Come! You need to hurry!" Shi Zuo called to his friend as the train towards Penn Station seemed to be ready to leave slightly earlier than planned and without the cultivators despite stopping at the station's platform. Therefore, Shi Zuo did not wait for the door to open as he smashed the side windows with his axe and entered via it, proceeding to kill a few Deep Ones that were initially in the train waiting to assault them. (How courteous of them to be this patient even though they were such savage beasts.)

It escalated into a slaughter inside the train carriage as the Deep Ones holding their spears stood no chance defeating the Mad Monkey Cultivator who skillfully dodged their attacks and slashed (and electrocuted) his way through the crowd. By the time he was done, Jia Le and Luo Bo had forced the doors opened. Shi Zuo then bowed and greeted the two ladies who were coming aboard. "Welcome to the Polar Express. Today's menu; there is a selection of the finest fish for you to choose from."

"If the North Pole has any Deep Ones lurking, I will be removing that from my bucket list." Luo Bo said jokingly as she stabbed the ground with her arrow along with Jia Le's kunai further in front. They both smirked at each other as they quickly boarded the starting train while Bin Yong used his buckler to smash through a set of doors and rolled into the train carriage. He tried to wave at his friends but a Deep One took that as an opportunity to strike when his guard was down.

Fortunately, Bin Yong's reflexes were swift enough to block a direct claw strike, and his shield was definitely holding out better than the one he had in the previous dungeon run. Nevertheless, the Deep One was not stopping as it kept clawing in rage, attempting to destroy the shield that Bin Yong was holding on to his dear life without the chance to retaliate. Jia Le assisted him by throwing a Kunai at it, but the Deep One saw that coming metres away, allowing it to deflect the attack.

However, this was all that was required as the Kunai released a spell on contact which caused vines to wrap the Deep One all over, keeping him in a bind as the vines slowly absorbed the Deep One's essence until it turned into a shrivelled fish. (There were even signs of an after struggle)

The vines eventually bloomed into a beautiful white bellflower that released a sweet scent of fresh flowers, which also helped rejuvenate the entire party while the train started to pick up speed. "It's a kind of chi transfer spell technique. By using the life of a living being, it absorbs and transforms it into chi to be released to the surroundings." Jia Le grinned as she felt refreshed.

"That is pure wicked." Bin Yong was amazed that Jia Le had this kind of technique under her sleeves.

"Well, if you just let me fight more by myself, I could prove to you that I am more than just a supporter or sub attacker." Jia Le laughed as she flicked Bin Yong's forehead hard. "That is for doing things so selfishly even though it was for the sake of the group. Don't you know how worried I was? And don't you dare tell me that this is just a dungeon instance. I do not want you to develop such a habit if something like this really happens in real life." Jia Le reprimanded Bin Yong and he quickly apologised.

"If you still do not get it, she wants you to take her along when you do such dangerous things. Stupid. She really cares about you." Shi Zuo released a heavy sigh as he relaxed back at the corner of the train bench while the train moved.

"D'awww. But Bin Bin did a good job, right? Without him, we would have been swarmed by many fish heads and perhaps become part of them. Bloop~! Bloop~!" Luo Bo commented while she refilled her arrow belt from her new storage ring. Suddenly, they felt a series of rumbles emitting from behind them. Jia Le and Luo Bo looked at one another, each with a knowing grin on their faces.

Their previous kunai and arrow placement had been part of a combination spell they created together. Jia Le, who specialised in Earth chi techniques, enabled her kunais to release a massive load of razor sharp spiky vines that would protrude out of the ground to grab the Deep Ones who tried to chase after the train. To enhance her slow moving from the kunai release, they were propelled by Luo Bo's wind chi infused arrow. Upon grabbing an enemy, the vines would not just strangle and hurl the Deep around, but cause them to be more than just a simple projectile, damaging the basement integrity of the area as well as the masses of Deep Ones who tried to squeeze through the tunnel to chase after the train.

Soon enough, the vines were cut down by the amassing horde of Deep Ones, but that combination attack resulted in dozens of dead Deep Ones. (Or Dead Ones as Bin Yong punned them to be.) Though they tried to catch them, the train was undoubtedly faster than them... until a Deep Mage decided to summon a tidal wave to assist the Deep Ones on the ground to even up the disadvantage.

The wave wiped the entire station clean as it carried the numerous Deep Ones through the tunnel. Bin Yong, who was at the lookout from behind the train, noticed that the rumbling had stopped and instead, an increasingly loud sound of water gushing to catch up to them. Luo Bo who had perceptive hearing

immediately rushed to Shi Zuo, who had gone to the front, as fast as she could. (Meanwhile, Shi Zuo was slightly baffled to learn that the train was driver-less because he'd assumed a Deep One was piloting it.)

"DO NOT STOP! Do not stop at the next station! Push the train to our destination forward!" Luo Bo screamed as Jia Le immediately went to the back to check on the situation too.

"There is no escape..." Bin Yong's legs turned to jelly upon seeing a glimpse of the incoming Tidal Wave through the tunnel.

"Not when I am around." Jia Le drank two chi potions consecutively as she held onto a bunch of Kunais. "You are owing me more than just a work shift replacement." Jia Le smiled at Bin Yong before she prepared her kunais to throw towards the impending doom of Deep Ones.

Chapter 397 Subway Station - Part 2

Jia Le had initially wanted to throw her kunais towards them until Bin Yong had asked her what spell she planned to use. She had hesitated a little since their situation was not exactly the perfect time for questions.

Ultimately, she decided to humour her boyfriend and quickly explained that it would create various standing pillars to block the wave. Upon hearing this, Bin Yong advised her to tweak the spell a little to make them appear diagonally. (All she needed to do was to change the angle at which her kunai was thrown.)

The moment those kunais hit the floor, pillars of stone and vines came out in a diagonal towards the Tidal Wave of Deep Ones. As the force of the tidal wave couldn't be stopped, countless Deep Ones crashed into the pillars of stone. Some suffered a head on collision resulting in death, others, while slightly luckier, still ended up severely injured. Unfortunately, their sheer number did not seem to have decreased by much.

When she witnessed the effects of the diagonal Vine Stone Pillars at work, she was surprised at its effectiveness. Looking at Bin Yong, her boyfriend explained to her that one of his past works involved scenes of a sea town. He did some research to be able to illustrate the sea waves splashing against the piers, and some of that past experience stuck with him till now.

To effectively stop a wave, irregular structures needed to be erected to change the uniform arrival time of the impending tidal energy. "Especially when turbulence itself is a form of energy. I had to get some of my science friends to verify it for me and they even gladly performed an experiment in their labs for me to video record so I can draw and animate those waves the way I needed to." Bin Yong told her proudly though Jia Le was still focusing on throwing her kunais to impede the tidal wave of Deep Ones.

While Jia Le and Bin Yong were dealing with the problem at the back (well mostly Jia Le), Shi Zuo was figuring out how to override the autonomous driving system so it wouldn't stop at the next station. There was not much time left especially with the subway station appearing in sight.

"Fuck fuck fuck fuckkkkk!!!!!" Shi Zuo was banging on every button possible and somehow through some combination, the train finally listened to his wishes and quickly increased the speed, pressing forward and away from the Deep Ones.

"You sure we can skip every stop?! I remember seeing Bin Yong's map app. It showed that we would need to get off to transfer to another train in order to reach Penn Station?!" Luo Bo asked and Shi Zuo panicked a little.

"What?! I was not informed of that! Quickly get the information from Bin Yong or else we might be screwed!" Shi Zuo shouted and Luo Bo knocked his head.

"You don't have to shout at me! I am right beside you!" Luo Bo replied as she ran towards Bin Yong, but they did not pay attention, missing the fact, that as they passed through the station, a few Deep Ones from Bryant Park Station Platform took the risk and successfully jumped onto the train.

"Shit! AHHHHHHHHHHH!" Luo Bo realised Bin Yong could be too far to listen to her and the Deep Ones would only hinder her. Since time was of the essence and to get his attention, she thought that shouting was the fastest way to get through him.

So she did, focusing her wind chi into her voice, her shout became so loud, that it pierced and damaged the hearing ability of the Deep Ones, causing them to be temporarily confused. But, because of that stunt it managed to reach Bin Yong who heard the SOS for help and rushed towards her.

At the same time, Luo Bo was furiously releasing her arrows as fast as she could to occupy the Deep Ones, who had boarded the train and focused their attention on her. Without anyone else in between, her ranged fights would soon turn into a closed quarters fight.

"Argh! Once this is over, I better learn some more close combat acrobatics in the future! Maybe my sis could help me with that - WOAH!" Luo Bo dodged in time and threw any strayed thoughts away since it nearly kill her by accident.

"Hurry up, Bin Bin!" Luo Bo thought to herself as she was currently forced to use her arrow as a parrying stick to defend herself from the attack.

Fortunately, she always had a blade arrow as a spare for emergency close combat quarters. When she first saw it being sold, she thought it was ridiculous. Why would anybody want to shoot a sword like arrow and then she realised it was designed for close combat defence first and shooting it at that close range for maximum damage second.

Bin Yong finally arrived traversing through multiple carriages, charging in between the doors without any care and when Luo Bo saw him, she shouted at him. "How many stops before we transfer trains?!"

"From Grand Central? Two! We passed one, right? We need to get out at the next one! Time Square Station!" Bin Yong slammed the Deep One that was harassing Luo Bo.

"Shit! If only we had that little blue magpie with us like during the Goblin Raid War. It was super useful! Argh!! I have to inform Shi Zuo! You get Jia Jia! We might be reaching soon!" Luo Bo high kicked the Deep One which Bin Yong pinned down and shot the blade arrow into its chest.

"Roger!!!" Bin Yong quickly turned and ran back as fast as he could while Luo Bo did the same, though she was more like a ghost with her legs imbued with the chi powers of wind.

"It's the next station-" Before Luo Bo could say anything else, Shi Zuo was already up from his seat and grabbed her by the waist before exiting the driver's carriage. "Oof!" Luo Bo did not expect her boyfriend to be so heavy handed with his grab, but she could see that Shi Zuo was stressed.

"The next train is still at the station! We will collide in no time!" Shi Zuo explained as he ran towards the back as fast as possible. "It's either we die by train crash or a tidal wave in a tunnel!" Shi Zuo huffed and puffed as they saw Bin Yong and Jia Le running towards them from afar.

"TRAIN CRASHING! OUT OUT OUT! WE ONLY HAVE A SPLIT SECOND!" Shi Zuo shouted at the top of his voice while he and Luo Bo rendezvoused with the other couple. True enough, they suddenly felt the train's impact, but they had no time to stop and watch, as they threw themselves out of the train the moment they caught a glimpse of the platform.

"BAMMM!!" "WHOOSH!!"

The Pandawan group combat rolled on the platform only to continue running for their lives towards the exit before the incoming tidal wave would swallow them up. There was no other choice, Bin Yong was still exhausted, but had to use it here or they would potentially lose this dungeon instance, even after going through so much trouble to reach here.

"Guys! Hold onto me! Tight!" Bin Yong shouted as he rushed forward ahead of the group and lifted his shield up.

"Advanced Shield Art!" Bin Yong spoke it out and the whole group turned their heads towards him with sudden anticipation while grabbing onto Bin Yong's shoulders. "Jet Stream Bombardier Blast!" Bin Yong shouted and his buckler turned red hot in an instant. After hearing the name of the technique, the other three did not just hold onto his shoulders but instinctively grab anywhere they could.

The buckler enlarged into a large plated tower size shield, and within a second, as the name implied, two streams of hot air burst out from the edges of the shield that caused them to move at tremendous speed, destroying anything in their path. Thanks to that technique, the entire Pandawan group destroyed pillars, railings, ticket gate machines, benches and so on but they eventually managed to get out of the station before it got flooded by the tidal wave.

However, Bin Yong was totally spent and he was unable to move the moment his technique expired. As they had reached the subway entrance, Shi Zuo held his axe tightly and surveyed the new rotten situation they were thrust into. There were still voices of Deep Ones echoing from the exit they just came out from. It was not looking good when one of their teammates could not move at all.

Suddenly, an oversized caped figure appeared in front of them with a weapon attached to a large fuel tank. "Been waiting on you." The figure pulled his hood to reveal that he was none other than Captain Hei. All of them were stunned and at the same time, relieved. Weren't they supposed to meet him at Penn Station?

"This is the limit for your group. None of you is in any condition to deal with what's beyond. Do try again next time and get a true clear. Boss Jin purposely made this dungeon difficult, so don't be too harsh on

yourself. It was designed to test your situation awareness and ability." Captain Hei commented with a smirk on his face.

"You will be rewarded duly." Captain Hei's words were already like gold dropping from the skies to the exhausted group.

"But first, a little bit of entertainment for you to enjoy before Pyjamas Girl here teleports you back along with your rewards." Captain Hei remarked as the Pyjamas Girl in the full Panda Mask appeared once more. At the same time, he turned the knob on his weapon, and a fiery burst of flames emerged from his flamethrower. The arriving Deep Ones stood no chance against his flames of fury, and while Captain Hei handled them, Pyjamas Girl took the opportunity to debrief the Pandawans.

"Hey yo! Just to assure you guys, you did great handling the situation after the phone call ended, so do not worry too much! Oh and the train station was just one possible meeting point. There are also other ways to reach Penn Station, take your time to figure it out. That's the fun and challenge of this dungeon!" The girl said as she magically conjured a large chest and placed it right in front of them.

"Now tadas~!" A small clear sign appeared but it was not the usual 'Dungeon Cleared' announcement. The Pandawans heaved a sigh of relief as they were teleported to the Recovery Instance.

"How was it so far?" Milk personally saw to them in one of the exclusive VIP recovery rooms. There were some minor signs of chi poisoning due to the extensive use of techniques. That was also the reason why the System had cut short their dungeon experience since it would be detrimental for them to push themselves beyond their personal limits.

Milk told them to rest for a while as she would handle each one of the Pandawans' conditions but overall, it was a decent win for them. Though they were eager to open the rewards chest, they figured a nice proper rest in the recovery instance's beds was more of a priority.

"Job well done. Have a good rest." Milk said when she turned the lights off for the group after administering some medicine and sleeping spells.

Chapter 398 Kiyu

"It always feels so refreshing to wake up after a dungeon instance, my body feels lighter and less sluggish compared to everyday life." Woken up by the alarm in the recovery instance, Luo Bo yawned and stretched a little as she praised the dungeon instance they just went through.

"Yes but I just want to sleep a little while longer, do we have to get out of this resting area now?" Jia Le said to Bin Yong as she placed her head into the pillow.

"I must say, they always feel much more comfortable than my bed. I wondered if the bed is some kind of premium quality brand." Bin Yong asked. "But yea, I do feel more refresh than normal."

"In my opinion, it has to be the rumoured spiritual powers of the monsters we received upon killing them in the instance. How else would our cultivation advance as fast as ...this." Shi Zuo, who was on the bed beside her, smirked as he went into his cultivation stance and portrayed his cultivation out front.

The five highly defined monkey silhouettes were all clapping excitedly as if to welcome a brand new playmate.

The rest of the group watched the show from their own bedside as the monkey silhouettes circled round above Shi Zuo's head. As they danced, a glow appeared within their circle and out came a brand new monkey. He had finally surpassed the pinnacle of Grade Five Peak and entered the new stage, joining up with Bin Yong in the realm of Grade 6.

Everyone clapped and congratulated him for reaching the special milestone in the cultivation race. Upon entering this Grade, his body would be able to withstand the backlash of using Advanced Techniques.

Thankfully, they were in a private room in the recovery instance instead of the main hall where the bulk of the cultivators were. Else it was unlikely that they would have enjoyed such a decent rest. While being widely known had its perks, it was truly exhausting at times. It was mainly because of all the unwanted attention, especially when someone's grade increased. Not to mention the noise level would have been incessantly loud.

They guessed it was the perk of being a Pandawan and the group appreciated it a lot to be able to stay in a private room. Still, Jin took the feedback about that recovery instance very seriously. The reason why he had placed the beds in the main hall of the recovery instance like a gigantic makeshift military tent was that it was easier for the System to oversee the monitoring of the patient's vitals with a glance. (Though it was also primarily due to lack of budget when he first started out.)

But things would be changing. The goblin raid event had provided him with a steep increase in sales and a growing customer base, which allowed Jin to start planning to renovate the recovery instance. He no longer needed to worry about making every cent, since he knew that having a decently priced instance was able to bring in a constant amount of cash flow. Still, he found it hard to believe and was surprised that the sales already broke even merely a day before the Escape City Dungeon Instance was released.

Jin hence contemplated whether he should extend the duration of the Goblin Raid Event for just two or three more months, especially when the school's winter holidays coincided into the months of January and February for China. In that case, the students might become another lucrative source of income to his shop since the Raid's entrance were cheap enough. Jin just needed to ensure that the popularity of the Goblin Raid events was still popular and the way to do so was mainly by spreading it through word of mouth or via social platforms.

Word of mouth? Absolutely no problem at all. The cultivators here did an excellent job for him, but there were times that the customers questioned Jin why does he not have a social media account to spread the word.

Boss Jin did contemplate on making a social platform account for some time now since it would no doubt aid in boosting his shop's popularity a little more. (Though it would no doubt also be liable to part of the internet that received criticism too) But once more, he figured it was too much effort considering that he had a lot on his plate until Kraft stepped in.

"You shouldn't forget that there is no need for you to do everything by yourself. Why not ask Kiyu? She used to be a popular erm... Celebrity. Yes celebrity seems to be the most fitting term. You can ask her to aid you in that aspect" Kraft proposed.

Upon hearing her name, Kiyu suddenly came out from her bullet in a dash of purple streak and eventually ended up sitting on Kraft's head like a pedestal in her fox form. (Strangely enough, it made Kraft appear more regal this way.)

"You can put it that way, I was a rather famous entertainer in the past, going from one theatre to another before the System found me worthy to become part of it. I was not per se from the Panda Clan, but my ancestors did have connections to them before, so I had heard a rumour or two of their hidden capabilities." Kiyu said as she licked her paws.

"And from what I saw, the personalities of your moderators, Mr Patsu and Bear Cub One, they were probably created by the System who had used past data of my behaviour as a template." Kiyu stretched out a paw, which quickly turned into a peace sign as she started to transform into human form right in front of Jin in the Dungeon Maker.

Jin was baffled as this was the first time he saw her do so. He had assumed Pei was the only one in the System to be able to perform such a feat, but it seems he was mistaken. Were they meant to be Fox People or they appeared as Fox like humans under Kraft's command?

Her royal purple fur had turned into hair that was slightly black and purplish as it continued to flow out of her changing fox body. She ended up with exceptionally long flowing hair with straight bangs covering her forehead that reached down to her waist, coincidentally covering up her exposed chest while she still hung on to Kraft's head.

Her dimples were clearly visible when she grinned from one corner to another and her eyes were wide for a Chinese descent. Kiyu's skin was pearly white, but it exuded a sense of tenderness and a yearning to touch it. Her body was perfectly slender and yet at the same time broad, where it needed to be, which made one wonder how one could maintain such faultless proportions.

Jin was plain speechless as he felt more bewitched by her than Milk or any other girl he had ever known. His expression had been so brilliant, that Kraft could not help himself but secretly record it. Something which he would often tease Jin in the future about while avoiding any possibility of it leaking. (Even Kraft was worried about what Qiu Yue or Lynn would do to him if they learned that he was responsible for this encounter.)

"So do you have any doubts about her being the perfect person to lead your social platforms?" Kraft smirked a little before snapping his finger to cast a clarity spell to clear Jin's mind.

"I... I..." It was as if Jin just woke up from some hypnotisation spell and he quickly threw a shirt and shorts out of his storage ring for Kiyu to wear while he turned around.

"Oooo, Master's shirt. I bet not many enjoyed such an opportunity. I shall cherish it." Kiyu said and gladly wore the shirt and shorts behind Kraft before showing herself once more. Her fox ears and tail gave her the looks of a beautiful cosplayer though she hid it promptly unlike Pei who showed it out blatantly to Jin.

"So where were we? Oh yes, you just need to say the word and I can create the social platform accounts for you. Kiyu could help manage them for you and since she is one of my foxes, a bit of knowledge and ability transfer is not an issue. Any objections?" Kraft proposed.

"Social platform ACCOUNTS?" Jin exclaimed and Kraft was wondering if he said anything wrong.

"Why yes? Not just a Mechat account but Doban, MeiBo and even western media accounts too. I assume we are going to go for a western audience in the future, right? Might as well make those Facebook, Pinstagram and Tweeter accounts to make the Westerners a bit jealous that we are having all these awesome dungeon instances. Who knows, some of them might even travel all the way here to try it out. And putting Kiyu in charge will make that far more likely than you'd imagine." Kraft chuckled as Kiyu blew a kiss over at Jin.

If not for Kraft's previous spell, Jin would have fallen yet again for Kiyu's charms. He assumed it was her strong powers, which made her into 'troublemaker' and wondered if the entertainer bit was just a cover, but he decided not to probe any further. Jin sighed when realising that there was still one final fox under the care of the System. If those two were already a handful, he worried about the last.

"Alright, let's do it. I would love to see what she's capable of. Kiyu, are you up for it? I believe it will be a different set of challenges, influencing the new modern generation?" Jin asked and Kiyu snickered at his comment.

"No matter the era, two things will always stay important for any...entertainment platform. Looks and Charisma. Humans are driven by instinct, no matter how logical or ...how cultivated they believe themselves to be. Trust me...erm us. We can nail this down, and this way Kraft won't be so bored looking over your shoulders all the time. It could give you some breathing space too." Kiyu winked as if she was doing a favour for Jin.

"You remember how deadly her charming magic could be in her fox form for negotiations right? Wait till you see what she's capable in this form." Kraft smiled as he placed his face closer to the bracelet Jin was wearing.

"Pei, increase your master's psychological defence against Kiyu's magic to the limit later. That should prove a decent challenge for you since Young Master is still young and...impressionable." Kraft sniggered before he left together with Kiyu (in Jin's clothes).

"User, Pandawan Shi Zuo has reached Grade 6 as expected from the Escape City Dungeon Instance. Pandawan Luo Bo and Jia Le are estimated to be reaching the limits of Grade 5 Peak soon. A few more Dungeon runs should allow them to cross the threshold." The System stated as Jin returned to his work in the Dungeon Maker after Bin Yong and the others finished their dungeon instance.

"I see. How did they fare? Did anything happen outside your predictions?" Jin asked as he began to analyse some of the new techniques the group had used in their adventure.

"Everything was within the upper limits of the System's analytical prediction model. Does User wish to give them a clear status? The cultivators managed to perfectly clear the first part of the dungeon." The System asked and Jin shook his head.

"Nah, it's not a true clear. They would have failed if they were not rescued in the end. But I believe you've increased their rewards accordingly, right? If not, I might give them some additional concessions." Jin replied as he brought up the reward page to see what the System gave out since he was curious about the amount of rewards given the System's own metrics.

"670 Panda Medals in total. Eh, guess it's more than decent. Be a little stricter for the rest of the cultivators. We want to avoid them starting to feel that we are giving the medals a bit too freely." Jin commented, and the System acknowledged it in an instant. After which, he brought up his to do checklist, which the System had visualised for him. It was a nice little feature since he wouldn't forget anything this way and even asked the System to remind him periodically.

"Hahah, so many things to do. With only ten days left, it's best I prepare the December instance as soon as possible and later revamp of the recovery instance. Please put it on the list, System. Are there any particular mission for December?" Jin asked while he fiddled with the dungeon consoles.

"Does User really wish to start fulfilling the monthly mission criteria for the December now? Activating a monthly mission before the start of that month will lead to better rewards, but at the same time prove to be more challenging than usual since User will have more time to complete it before the deadline." The System warned him, yet Jin confirmed choice once more.

"Erm... Guess I'll have to try it at some point anyway. Worst case, I will handle consequences after that!" Jin somehow felt more ballsy than ever willing to face the challenge and he wondered if it was due to Kiyu's magical charms.

"Very well. System has confirmed that User initiated December's mission. Primary mission objective: Create an instance (Dungeon/Service) with 10,000 sales has increased to 15,000 sales. Additional primary mission objectives: Complete the foundations of the Dungeon City Fortress." The System stated and it was not the end.

"Please be reminded that the Dungeon Core assisted shield defence will end by the 7th of January. Secondary Mission Objective: Revamp the Recovery Instance and have an End User Approval of at least 4.7 stars out of five." The System stated and Jin's jaw dropped.

Before he started anything, he slapped himself once and began to rush out for the next particular instance until the System spoke up once more. "Secondary Mission Objective Number 2: Complete the Restaurant Train of Delicacy's service instance upgrade."

"YOU ARE KILLING ME!" Jin shouted in retaliation.

"It was the User's own choice to ignore the warning. Therefore, User just shot himself in the foot. Do not forget your promise with CEO Ke Loong and please also remember to meet up with Grandma Yuan." System stated with a manner of glee in its tone.

"Yes, DAD!" Jin replied in a sarcastic tone.

Chapter 399 Heavenly Pillar of Measuring

During the next few days, the Escape City Dungeon Instance proved to be the most frequented dungeon instance, mainly because of the amount of medals it was giving out. Some believed in Mr Know-It-All's speculations, but the majority had begun to realise that the sudden generosity of Jin had another reason, which everyone concurred upon trying the dungeon instance at least once.

There was a need to upgrade.

Most of the cultivators' gear was pitiful to begin with. Only a fraction of his customers possessed some sort of family heirlooms, which proved to be very valuable and not to mention strong against the Deep Ones. (Yet even with family heirlooms, those snobbish cultivators were not up to par in terms of skills. Regardless, the System analysed those weapons thoroughly for future references.)

Therefore many used this chance to upgrade their gear to better cope with the high intensity they felt in that particular dungeon instance. As a result, the once quiet sub forum for threads regarding weapons and armours became quite popular.

There were some die hard fans which were seemingly even more enthusiastic than Mr Know-It-All (or perhaps he just influenced them?) who had gathered a plethora of data from the weapons store and listed them on the forums.

The thread was so long that Jin as the administrator had decided to help them tidy the information up by changing it into something more like a glossary page with a well versed search option and interface. (Well, mostly it was the work of the System. Though it did not add any additional information, it beautified and also simplified the data entry process for future weapons.)

With that thread being stickied to the top by Jin, those die hard fans discussed, theorised and helped others by recommending a few weapons based on their statistics page, as if it was some MMORPG weapon list. Some even recommended the type of weapons and inscriptions that could be useful for each particular dungeon.

For example, they recommended fire based inscriptions for the Great Wall of China instance since the zombies were slightly weaker to fire or inscriptions that could enhance the area of attack for the Goblin Raid Events.

Unsurprisingly some doubted the validity of the list, claiming that the weapons were more or less the same and the stats that were introduced by Jin were just a facade. Yet, many still followed it diligently since a guide was better than none.

Eventually, some cultivators even went the extra mile and started to experiment with the weapons. One of them tried out the Western Diversion Instance with a pathetic Grade 1 Iron Sword which allegedly had a physical attack stat of 10 before switching it out with a Grade 4 Iron Sword to test if it indeed had an attack stat of 40.

To his surprise, he reported that it did seem to make some difference. However, there were still some critics stating that there was no proper way to test it after all, it could have just been a placebo effect. This heated discussion continued for a while until Jin decided to play along with their whines and placed a couple of Heavenly Pillars of Measuring into Panda Muscles Instance.

Those pillars were officially acknowledged as the international standard for measuring strength as they were made from a raw material rumoured to of the Grade 19 standard, if not Grade 20. (But many assumed the former since Grade 20 was akin to celestial like materials.)

Because of the material's sturdiness, they could be used to measure the strength of a cultivator and/or the strength of a weapon. In the past, people used to involve a cultivator well versed in the Earthly Elements to calculate and measure the strength used against these Heavenly Pillars of Measuring.

However, thanks to modern technology, this became unnecessary. A built in monitor had been invented to measure the strength, speed and chi power of a cultivator in absolute numbers and its estimates were so much accurate than the old ways.

Separately, the System derived the stats of the cultivators before the introduction of the Heavenly Pillars of Measuring through a similar method. But instead of such pillars, the System measured the cultivator's stats through the monitoring of their physical body vitals and activities after every dungeon.

Considering all those monsters that the cultivators were battling were not real per se but somewhat 'clones' created by the System, it wasn't a problem to calculate their strength when fighting them and update any progress accordingly. In the end, it was able to make a verifiable judgement which could be as close or even as accurate as the results of the Heavenly Pillars of Measuring.

When the cultivators tried to pit their strength against the pillars, the numbers were similar enough, if not the same as what was shown on the Pandamonium App. After trying it for themselves, the sceptics finally believed that those numbers in their Pandamonium actually meant something useful. Never in their lives would they know that those numbers were in fact results derived from the rarely seen Heavenly Pillars and not just gibberish information meant to entertain the customers.

This was because the cost of a Heavenly Pillar of Measuring and as the name implied, was astronomical in nature. Therefore, it (the price) made the pillars somewhat of a prestige object usually only found in Dungeon Supplier stores exclusive for wealthy patrons or in the main dungeon store of a dungeon supplier franchise like King's Monster. (Yeah, they have one.)

Even in those cases, it was the norm to be charged a hefty premium for each use. But in Jin's case, he somehow managed to procure not one but five of them! (Albeit significantly smaller than the standard sizes. 1.5 metres tall instead of the conventional 5 metres.)

It made the cultivators wondered and speculated what kind of backing Jin had, in order to get these expensive pillars. But when asked, he merely replied with his usual "Trade Secret~!". Not only that, Jin was still charging them the same price to enter the Panda Muscles instance and as a result, it made that particular service instance very popular again.

Cultivators were all queuing up to try them, to the point that they saw the need to implement a rule limiting each cultivator to at most five minutes with the pillar. Within that time limit, the cultivators could test out all the various skills or weapons they wished to know. (If anyone was seen deliberately overstepping the time limit, Zeru was there to intervene with some 'heavenly punishment'.)

Just as Jin had hoped, Mr Know-It-All had gone to the forums and revealed that the first part of the Escape City Dungeon Instance had been a giant Escape Room scenario. While he could not predict which escape room scenarios were being used after Bin Yong's dungeon screening, (which was also the only time the Shop ever showed the first phase of the Escape City Dungeon Instance in full), he provided simple tips like how Luo Bo had done for her group.

They were general but encompassed the concept of Escape Rooms, allowing many more cultivators to solve them. Anyone who managed to enter Phase 2 without resorting to the Brute Force way ended up earning a minor achievement in the Pandamonium App too. (Meanwhile, Jin started to consider if he should peg a few bonuses like panda medals, unlockable goodies for the Forums, like exclusive emotes or such to those achievements to make them more worthwhile.)

The Shop Instance nevertheless continued to broadcast the Escape City Dungeon Instance in the auditoriums once the cultivators reached the second phase so the other customers could preview it and motivate them to reach that far. (But also learn from the mistakes of others.)

To the collective cultivator's knowledge, there were indeed multiple ways to try and pass Phase 2. Especially when there were various starting locations and the pyjamas girl would ask the groups of cultivators to meet her at different locations.

That itself gave the dungeon multiple combinations to clear and it seemed that many cultivators preferred this somewhat open ended kind of dungeons over the previous instances where it was limited to just one particular place.

However, others criticised that this way the story became too vague and broad unlike Qixi or the Bank Heist. But overall, there seemed to be a consensus, that the majority of the cultivators appreciated the significant increase in challenge and...medals. (Wait till Jin released Goblin Forest Instance v2.0 with the new evolved goblin classes!)

Jin took all the feedback and criticisms as openly as he could. He was after all, just a dungeon supplier trying to make everyone happy even though he was aware that there were bound to be disagreements. Surprisingly, Yun consoled him by pointing out that there were too many other things he could be doing rather than focus on the complainers.

"Do what you need to do, and leech as much money from them as you can. That is the main objective." Yun said with a smile and Jin laughed at her practicality.

"System, how's the progress of the portal device after incorporating Ayse's knowledge of their lost technology?" Jin asked as that was one of the primary tasks given to the Elfish Researchers and Ayse to handle. He promised Ke Loong that the prototype portal device would be completed within a few days and he would keep to that agreement.

"Based on their design, improvements have been made for the latest prototype. It no longer uses any lost tech components. In exchange, it had been fully replaced with raw and synthetic materials obtainable in this world. While still functional, this change has resulted in a few major flaws." The System stated and Jin nodded waiting for it to explain further.

"One, the output portal does not strictly follow the input coordinates. There is a deviation of at least three to ten degrees. The substituted raw materials seem to lack some properties the original ones had. As a result, the traveller might be teleported up to 50 metres away from the supposed coordinates. " The System began explaining as Jin briefly looked at the schematics, hoping he could still understand if given his background as an engineering student.

"Two, the current electrical input is too large for the concept to become portable. Barring those flaws, safety through portal travelling is not an issue. There were no instances of portal breakage as long as the specifications were met. Strict adherence to the design specifications are required to ensure the continued safety of the traveller." The System stated as an Elfish researcher took the initiative to demonstrate it within the Northern Diversion instance as that was one of the larger few instances Jin had made. (Of course, there were no orcs invading them, hehe)

The researcher was trying to teleport from the town using the device made by the System to the said destination that was at the far end of the valley. Jin was glad when he noticed the portal device interface was straightforward too. It even used the Pandamonium Map App though Jin wondered if they could use any maps charted from his world like from the mini apps of MeChat.

The System then stated that for security reasons, it had only integrated the function via the Pandamonium for now. Jin acknowledged the reasoning and later suggested that it would be good if they maintained it this way. Perhaps he'd have to talk to Ke Loong about using that app. But long term wise, it might pose a problem since Ke Loong's engineers and researchers would probably wish to upgrade it in the future.

"User does not need to worry. The cosmetic inscriptions do not just apply on clothes and rings, but also on any other medium. That is why System also feels the need to point out that the main reason for unlocking the cosmetic inscriptions was for User's monsters to be able to disguise themselves as normal human beings." The System stated and Jin was stunned for a moment.

"Using it, Ayse and the Elfish researchers can learn more from this world's engineers while the System will be able to complement their knowledge accordingly. That way, the humans would not need to touch the System's apps since User's researchers would do the job. Which is why, Ke Loong will have a version of the portal device to play around with, but the changes he wishes to implement will be done by Ayse's team" The System commented at Jin's dilemma on long term cooperation.

"However, that specific cosmetic inscription technology must not be sold. It would be too dangerous in the wrong hands." The System remarked, which Jin completely agreed with, as he watched the elf researcher being teleported to the end and back again.

There was nothing wrong with him, aside from having missed the mark by 3 meters on the first try, but everything was still intact. Jin guessed they should be able to improve it further with time, but it was ready to show off to Ke Loong to hold up his part of the bargain.

With the collaboration between his researchers and Ke Loong's engineers, he hoped that they could soon announce the very first portable portal device so that his cultivators can enter his shop wherever and whenever. (Of course, Ke Loong had more plans than just a portable portal device.)

Chapter 400 Prototype Portal Device

Ke Loong was as excited as a kid about to see his beloved superhero. Even though his driver could see that Ke Loong was sitting patiently at the back of his car, he was too distracted with the news of the new Prototype Portal Device Jin gave him less than an hour ago.

He was initially scheduled to see a new, potential business client that boasted his new software to be revolutionary, claiming to be the next possible MeChat app. Of course, Ke Loong did not expect much upon seeing the draft proposal, but it was a favour he decided to do for the finance minister's aide to see if there were any talented developers to keep the app industry competitive.

However, one minute into the interview, Jin called and Ke Loong knew straight away that the prototype portal device was ready. He answered the call and Jin indeed met his expectations. "Come quick. I am busy later in the evening."

If his secretary ever picked up such a phone call, she would have dismissed it immediately given her attitude and possibly stating that Jin had no manners at all. That was why Ke Loong insisted Jin to call him instead since he knew Jin had a no nonsense attitude.

"Be right there." Ke Loong got up from his chair and answered promptly, which made the app developer very speechless.

"Wait, I have not even star-" Ke Loong stopped him then sat down and scribbled something down on his notepad before tearing a page away to give the developer.

"Go to this place. Observe, learn and triumph his app programming. If you are able to do that, then I permit you to knock on my door again." Ke Loong gave the developer Jin's dungeon supplier address and packed his stuff.

"But...is this not a dungeon supplier store?" The developer was stunned momentarily when he was given such a random address. He was expecting something more like an address to a software company.

"Exactly." Ke Loong believed that If Jin did not boast his all rounded Pandamonium app as the potential business rival against MeChat, this developer had no rights to say so either. Thus, he went off and asked his secretary to clear the mess up in his office while he called his chief engineer to meet him at Jin's place.

Upon postponing all the many tasks a man of his position was expected to fulfil. All he could do was to wait for his Pipi ChuXing* driver to reach Jin's address and couldn't care less about all that boring paperwork waiting for him.

The anticipation for wanting to see the portal device at work had made him feel like time was passing way too slowly. True, there were portal scrolls out on the market created by high grade mages, which allowed anybody to go anywhere and anytime. However, their supply has always been limited and controlled very strictly to ensure maximum profit. Besides, the materials used were uncommon and only a handful of professional mages were trusted enough to be privy of such knowledge to craft them.

Many western governments also cited the potential threat of using such portals for fear of terrorism and assassination attacks and justified the strict control over portal scrolls. Ke Loong's country, on the other

hand, did not care about those excuses, when it was an open secret that they just wanted to monopolise those scrolls.

The ability to copy and subsequently innovate in order to be one step ahead of others was always the goal for every inventor and entrepreneur. As long as it was something revolutionary or had the potential to earn big money, the Chinese did not care about any consequences.

Only results mattered.

Ke Loong was pinning his hopes on Jin to succeed in his part of the bargain for there was a huge amount of political clout and money riding on this. If the western governments wished for their method to remain exclusive, the Eastern Governments would just have to create their very own version.

Even before the speedy car could manage at a complete halt, Ke Loong was already too anxious to get out. If not for his Hovering Hawk cultivation, he would have fallen to the ground and suffered at least a few scraps to the knee and elbows.

"BOSSSSSS I AM HEREEEEEE!!!!" As quick as he could enter Jin's shop, Ke Loong shouted loudly with his terrible disguise on again. (Some of the cultivators had begun to nickname him Mr Potato Head for the terrible fake moustache and a round black hat whenever he entered Jin's shop.)

"Ah, Mr Ke Loong. This way, please." Bear Cub One was the one welcoming him, but Ke Loong stopped Bear Cub One for just one moment.

"I have a few more associates that will be arriving here soon, though I would love to check the portal device first! Please lead them to us when they arrive." Ke Loong said excitedly as he then hurried Bear Cub One to bring him to the assumed testing grounds.

When he arrived, he noticed it was the very same stadium that Jin used to host Yang Ling's gearbox prototype demonstration. He felt chills coming over him, remembering the Banned Emperor assassination attempt and was thankful that Jin was there to help not just him but everyone in that instance.

Was it merely the only place for a demonstration or was this a power play by Jin to remind Ke Loong how they met. "Aww, this cunning fellow! I'm starting to like him more and more." Ke Loong thought to himself.

Meanwhile, Jin was already there talking to a few of the Elfish researchers and Ayse, who now looked like a human with beautiful lush red hair and a sharp, slender face. All thanks to the cosmetic inscription that the System used on her.

She could easily pass as a killer model and surely would be one of the most beautiful women Jin had ever encountered. Still, he could not help but feel that her beauty paled in comparison to Kiyu. It seemed to lack something, but he could not pinpoint it. Perhaps, the foxy minx really did have some innate abilities that made her so enchanting.

The elves had turned to humans as well. They retained their near perfect features less their pointy ears. Even Ayse was shocked at first upon seeing them, since she never knew they could be that magnificent looking.

"You know, according to the System, they could look like this on their own, if only they had been given proper nutrition while under your care?" Jin asked and Ayse laughed bitterly.

She admitted that her former slaves had shown proved their competency in completing this particular project of Jin's. She had indeed started to show some respect for them and even treating them on equal footing as her previous Orc comrades. (If her father would learn of this, he'd surely turned in his grave.)

"BOSSSSSS I AM HEEREEEEEEEE!" Ke Loong shouted again from afar the field and Jin could not help but sigh a little.

"You are early." Jin replied back while he asked his 'employees' to start booting up the machine to prepare the demonstration.

"Wow. If your employees are half as competent as they are good looking, then I have no doubts about today's success. Are you some kind of perfectionist?" Ke Loong asked as he nearly drooled at Ayse when she flipped her red hair. "In any case, I would love to see the portal device in action before my chief engineer and his team of goons arrive." Ke Loong revealed with much anticipation.

"You sure, you do not want want to wait for your chief engineer and his goons to take a look at it before testing it out? Are you that confident that it will work?" Jin commented and Ke Loong laughed heartily.

"I'm willing to bet a panda that either you or your staff have already tried it. Otherwise, there's no way you would even dare to let me on here. I fully believe that your work ethics are on the moral high ground." Ke Loong praised Jin as he looked over the fairly large circular metal device with various pipes and ports connecting to it. If anything, it looked more steampunk than futuristic modern.

"Thank you for your trust. So, we have prepared to showcase two variants. One is a portal device without an active exit gate. You input the coordinates, and it will teleport you there. The other is a portal device that is linked to another portal device, acting as an exit gate, which is a safer, but a costlier option. I assume you wished to try out the latter." Jin looked at Ke Loong who ironically asked to try out the former instead.

"Let's keep the best for last. Surprise me with the first." Ke Loong replied, and Jin informed the Sea Mesh CEO about all the flaws of the portal device by repeating what the System had told him. Ke Loong still insisted on trying the portal device without an exit gate.

Jin shrugged his shoulders a little before telling one of the elfish researchers to teleport him to the far end of the stadium where the goal post was while Ke Loong stood ready at the device platform.

"Any last words?" Jin smirked as he asked, which made Ke Loong turn his head suddenly towards him. However, it was too late to say anything since Jin had already activated the portal device.

A blue light shone onto Ke Loong with him screaming his lungs out as he experienced an oddly weird feeling while being transmitted like bits of data and within a second, he disappeared, teleporting right beside the goal post. Ke Loong took a bit of time to calm down when he noticed the change in the environment. (He touched himself all over and checked whether all his body parts still remained intact.)

"It...worked...IT WORKED!!!!" Ke Loong yelled in celebration mode. " IT FUCKING WORKS HAHAAHAHAHA" Ke Loong began to run back towards Jin to congratulate him for this successful trial test. Coincidentally that was also when his team of engineers came in.

Looking at their superior behaving like a complete fool, they stood there with a perplexed look on their faces, before they got noticed. "Hey Bo Ze!!!! IT WORKS!! This dungeon supplier and his researchers beat you to it! Suck it!!! You owe me an exclusive dinner with your cousin at Shangri La! WOOHOOOOO!!!!" Ke Loong still in some kind of 'happy shock', could not believe it as he shouted at his chief engineer Bo Ze.

"I wait -what??" Bo Ze was still so confused by the entire scene which Ke Loong dragged him to the portal and asked Jin to fire it up once more. However, unlike Ke Loong, Bo Ze was having a head full of reservations with this portal device, especially when there were no known credentials for the dungeon supplier nor the researchers in this field. They were total nobodies to him. "No! Ke Loong! Don't UWAHHHHH~!" Jin did not care and accommodated his business partner's request.

This time, Ke Loong and Bo Ze were teleported together to a couple of meters behind the goal post, and the CEO kept laughing like a mad man. The first one could have been a fluke, but this proved that the concept worked.

"SEE! Bo Ze! He's done it! He really did it! You tasted it first hand!" Ke Loong felt so happy that Jin's prototype portal invention surpassed all their expectations. To him, it was already a success being able to teleport one human at such a distance, as long as it worked all the time, but Jin had one upped himself once more since his prototype was already able to teleport at least two people.

He couldn't wait to try out the other version if this was supposed to be the inferior one. With his CEO continuing to behave totally out of the norm, Bo Ze tried to rationalise what just happened. Even after experiencing it for himself, he couldn't believe it. "A mechanical device that managed to simulate the wonders of magic?" Bo Ze mumbled to himself.

"Magic is just a type of technology we haven't figure out yet. Everything can be explained with reason. (The Western Mages would surely kill him for such blasphemy) Nothing is impossible!" Ke Loong boasted as he subsequently introduced Jin to his chief engineer.

"I've looked through your credentials, and I hope you can forgive my doubting you. I've believed you were just another run off the mill engineer, who somehow bamboozled Ke Loong." Bo Ze apologised genuinely and Jin chuckled bitterly.

"It's alright. You aren't exactly wrong, I myself am just a run off the mill engineer. The credits due should be given to my employees who shared the same vision as me when I started to become a dungeon supplier to make people's life better."

"Ayse's the name." The red haired brunette took the initiative to step into the conversation and introduce herself but Bo Ze was struck mindless by her beauty.

"Erm, I uh *cough* Nice to meet you, I am Bo Ze, Sea Mesh Chief Engineer." Bo Ze subsequently introduced the rest of his team to Ayse before she did the same for her Elfish researchers. They began to start talking about the concept and theories behind it and used terms which both Ke Loong and Jin could barely catch up with.

Granted Jin actually knew most of them, but their application talk on quantum physics just gave him the usual headache and made him realise this was one of the partial reasons why he'd rather become the number one dungeon supplier than the world's best engineer.

Eventually, Ayse demonstrated the variant with the exit gate and explained how two portal devices make the travel safer and more accurate. (An idea by Ayse when she asked the System whether having two portal devices would improve the accuracy of the teleportation. Jin blamed himself for not thinking about it himself, especially since he'd watched a series with such a concept when he was younger.)

"Now since the techies are talking their own stuff, let's talk business, Jin."

Ke Loong said which Jin subsequently offered to talk over a nice warm meal which Ke Loong promptly agreed with. No negotiations could have gone better with Lynn's delicious food by the table. Jin brought his guest to the exclusive premium part of the Restaurant Train of Delicacy instance and Ke Loong adored the authentic Japanese looking interior design.

"I love it, it feels tranquil, the music's at the perfect volume and the scent aroma makes one feel relaxed. I'm really considering bringing my clients to your shop's restaurant instance for future negotiations. I've tasted the food, and to be frank, your chef could fight with those overly arrogant five star restaurants and besides, which businessman doesn't want some secret eating place of their own?" Ke Loong rambled while Jin had ordered the food for both of them and the penguins began making the tea at the side. (A simple tea ceremony as a part of the gesture by Jin since Ke Loong could be considered a VVIP guest.) Even the way those penguins served the Japanese Tea made Ke Loong intrigued.

"Anyways, where are we? Oh yeah. You held up your side of the bargain, and now it's my turn. When do you want the devices to be up for sale?" Ke Loong asked as he thanked the penguin NPC for serving him while he took in the scent of the freshly brewed green tea.

"To be honest, I would prefer your engineers to take a look at it and collaborate with my employees for a while longer. Ideally, I'd want it to be portable before we started selling them." Jin answered, stating his desires.

"Oh my friend, you really are a perfectionist. There's no need to be humble. What you've just shown us on its own is revolutionary. Besides, the world isn't ready for portable reusable portal devices. Too many possible scenarios of countries threatening us would arise." Ke Loong took a sip of the green tea and felt refreshed almost instantly.

"Just imagine us having a battalion of such special forces, able to teleport anytime, anywhere, ready to strike. It would no doubt be terrifying, and those Western countries wouldn't like to entertain such ideas. In fact, this kind of technology, if you manage to accomplish it, would better be kept a secret." Ke Loong, who was more experienced in business and politics, told Jin about this.

"Anyway, let's focus on the main issue, instead of that! Can you even imagine how much money we'll be able to earn?! If your two portal devices method truly works regardless of size, getting charged extra for cargo will be a problem of the past! Granted it will cause a lot of people to be out of jobs, but that's the sad reality with the progress of technology. Still, it would save a shit lot on transportation. Heck, we can probably market it as truly environmentally friendly, if you consider lesser plane trips for cargos. And here I am just talking about shipping and transportation of goods. What about travel? That would be another avenue we can improve on. Well, of course, we are going to keep this all to ourselves and make our country an even more modern society!" Ke Loong rambled with the possibilities.

"I shall leave that part in your capable hands. All I really want is my future customers to have an easier time teleporting to my shop instance. In fact, it would be ideal if my Dungeon Supplier Store will have the exclusive rights to get customers this way." Jin knew the implications of having the portal technology being spread region wide and hopefully country wide... If he dared to dream bigger, worldwide.

"I know, I know. You can leave that to me. I've figured you would be more worried about your shop. That is why my planning team had been tasked to distinguish a few majorly popular spots to put your portal device throughout the country. Places like Beijing, Shanghai, Macau and even Hong Kong! If we place it in a good spot and advertise it well, your shop instance will be more than a hit in no time. It won't be long that this small store in the corner of Shenzhen will just be a fleeting memory!" Ke Loong replied.

"Look, my friend. If you let me expand to these fields, I let you in with the share of profit too. That way you have more money to create whatever dungeons you want and maybe become an affluent figure in no time! Not to mention, you have the backing of the Royal Zodiac Tiger. There is no way this plan can fail if we time it nicely and execute it flawlessly."

"Pei, are there any signs that I am bewitched or enthralled by any spells? Because I feel that his sales pitch is just too perfect." Jin sent his thoughts to Pei.

"Not that I'm aware of. No magic nor chi powers are being emitted. He is being rather honest with you despite the wonderful sales pitch...or that is how I feel. He really wants you to succeed, and by doing all that was mentioned, he is willing to do most of the heavy lifting while you'll be reaping most the rewards." Pei replied as she based her opinion on the many bargaining talks she'd accompanied Another Jin to protected him from any psychic magic.

"I guess he believed that you and your monsters worked your asses off to make the portal device happen. Plus, you were recommended by Mr Know-it-all. That is why he was willing to take such steps with you." Pei added for Jin to consider.

"I see. Because it really seems to be the most perfect sales pitch I've ever heard. It felt too good to be true... Damn it, if I only Qiu Yue was around, right now." Jin presented some small talk as the food came, and they started to dig in. Ke Loong was keeping quiet, giving Jin some time for his proposition to sink in. If he pushed too much, he worried it could have an adverse effect.

"Actually, I am overhearing the conversation together with Lynn." Qiu Yue suddenly talked to Jin via his thoughts. At that moment, he was glad that the System was with him. "The System wanted me to be around to calm you down because it knows that you aren't fit for negotiations as long as they aren't pure bargaining, but I'd feel too awkward to join you midway." Qiu Yue replied as she was browsing at Lynn's office.

"But don't you worry, we are in Lynn's office and hearing the entire conversation, we even have video footage. If there's anything worrisome, I'll warn you. Damn Lynn, you mind making one extra set of that curry rice Jin's having?" Qiu Yue said as she sat at the office watching the whole scene as Lynn told her penguins to prepare two sets.

"In my opinion, this is possibly one of those life changing opportunities knocking at your door. His proposal is rather valid and I can see money rolling in the hundreds of thousands, if not millions of yuan.

It will be able to boost our financial account by craploads. Besides, the contract with him is still valid. It's a good thing you let Xiong Da change some of the statements, or else he would have done all these possible expansions without your acknowledgement." Qiu Yue examined from afar.

It was a pity she could not be in the conversation with him, but this was purely a Boss to another Boss kind of decision. She could only give her comments to Jin as any interference would show weakness in negotiations to the other party.

"Trust what your heart wants. Don't doubt the future. No matter the consequences, we will be behind you, Boss." Lynn gave her own opinion with conviction and Jin took his colleagues' word seriously.

"No input from you, System?" Jin laughed at Ke Loong's small talk while he asked for the last opinion.

"System has determined that User should have own his stand and decision long ready." System stated, and Jin smiled as he looked at Ke Loong. He placed his utensils down and raised his hand towards the Sea Mesh CEO.

"Don't worry, we will take this a step at a time and have some compromise if need be. But one thing is for sure. You will not regret this one bit. " Ke Loong grinned as he returned the handshake.

From that day onwards, Jin's reputation would no longer be isolated within Tiangong District.