

Dungeon S 861

Chapter 861 Wecha Defence Continues On

Even though the Monster Horde had come to a stop in Jin's world, the assault on the town of Wecha had yet to conclude. While the shield generator was no longer under Peppers' control, its automated processes were doing an outstanding job against the Demon Rats' final push for the town.

Many of the militia were able to fight and hold the walls despite a few minor breaches. Any rats who broke through were handled by the Jacks. The rats in the sewers system were doing their best to dig a way out, yet whenever they managed to breach the surface, the women and children handled them in the same manner as they had done since the first wave.

Meanwhile, Sandy was rushing wherever she was needed to seal the entrance and put a stop to the flow of rats appearing. (At the same time temporarily strengthening the foundation so that when the System set off a blast, it would not break the entirety of the town.)

The Mousefolks were not to blame for the escaping rats underground. There were just too many of them crawling around, and they could only handle so many at a time. Their sword and gun fighting could already put some of the Royal Zodiac soldiers in Jin's world to shame. Poppy and Pippy were literally jumping from one rat to another, executing them by stabbing their necks or shooting their brains out. For such a small body, they were packing a lot of punch and stamina.

Even Meomi and Nyanmi, who were veteran fighters in Jin's army, had begun to feel the fatigue. Their claws were starting to get blunt from all the slashing and scratching they had done whenever they had to wait for their busy weapons to cool down.

At this point, Meomi's personal agenda to kill all rats was the only thing that kept her going through the fight. There were times Nyanmi fell behind, but Meomi still managed to cover her back when things got too tough.

Aside from the defences within Wecha itself, the Savants had done their best to gather as many Demon Rats as possible outside the walls. Though the shield generator had been changed to a mechanical device and did not have the same properties as Peppers' explosive knockback barrier, the Savants stood their ground, keeping the frenzied rats in check.

Sadly, even the 'unstoppable' Savants could be overwhelmed by sheer numbers. All of them were killed a few times because of the rampage those Demon Rats caused during their final push. But with each death, the almighty System resurrected them without delay and even restored them back stronger and fiercer to exact revenge for their deaths.

At some point, the rats had fallen in a state of frenzy and were getting even more agitated due to unexpected severe losses rather than the guaranteed win they had been promised. (Moloch had concluded there were no superior leadership around, making them fending for themselves.)

Both Nubwort and Qiu Yue gathered their troops into a sort of tortoise formation to deal with them. Their shields were forming a circle, the Goblins came in between the Orc Defenders and shot at their enemies.

Some of the Orc platoons even piled up the rat bodies and used them as a makeshift hill to create a height advantage for the goblins to fire from. There were also Orcs complementing their shields by tying rats in front of it to soak up projectile damage. It was an extremely bloody scene in which most if not all of the defenders were soaked in Rats' blood. If not for the distinct features among them, they could already hit each other since everyone was dark red in colour.

With the System temporarily freed from its obligations in the Cultivation World, it was finally able to focus a little more on the Farming World. As its first course of action, it widened the current portals that had been deployed, increasing the number of fodder for Jin's latest dungeon. Moloch had also used a few more luring devices at Wecha as well as the crashed flying fortress.

Speaking of the latter, the castle rescue had proceeded rather smoothly. The penguins, along with Lynn, had managed to rescue about two hundred humans. The only odd thing was that all of them very relatively young... until Lynn discovered a hidden door when one of the corridor's stench was overbearing for her nose.

Kido opened the hidden door with brute force and found that there was a pile of deceased humans waiting to be burned for the Demon Rats steam engine technology to work. "Is that why they decided to gather that many humans from the town for this particular assault?!" Lynn felt disgusted that they had apparently used their human slaves as biofuel.

Some of the humans that had been following them along vomited at the sight and Lynn could not blame them. She would have done the same were it not for the experiences of handling animal and monster meat on a daily basis.

"Not just the humans, even those rats who were killed had been brought here." After spending time amongst the rats, Sebastia had learned to discern between their features.

One of the bodies was the very same Rat Captain who had brought Kraft and her to the capital. Only now he was lying right in front of her, all tortured and crippled before being thrown here awaiting his incineration.

"Looks like they managed to trace the rat who brought in the enemy that stole their precious steam tech creator away." Sebastia thought to herself. "The rat empire did not even spare the body after torturing the captain. I wonder if this is called efficiency."

"Lynn, what do you want us to do with them?" Kido questioned.

"While they deserve a proper burial, we do not know when this castle will collapse from the previous explosion by Peppers. Let's find more of the survivors before the rats find them and lead these people away from such an undesirable demise."

However, the longer they stayed in the castle, the stronger the rat resistance got. Eventually, Lynn was forced to make the call to fall back.

"Mistress, a few of us will stay and continue to search for survivors. Please lead those we have rescued out of this hell hole." Kido told Lynn who quickly agreed. She had no doubts that her peggies were capable of finding the remaining humans with their abilities. Unlike other monsters, she knew her penguins were better suited for moving in smaller groups.

"Understood, go forth and be careful. If the rats' retaliation is this strong, it means that they are either hiding something within the castle or that's where their main barracks are located. Send me a message when you need a portal to be dropped even if it's just one survivor." Lynn said that she would not mind covering the cost of any extra portals if necessary.

Yet, as time went by, the elite ninja penguins found no other survivors after combing the area twice and decided to call the operation off. "There are no survivors left. It's all yours, Moloch." Kido reported through the System Channel.

"Alright, but do you guys mind rampaging around a little longer? Let me conclude the situation at the seaport first." Moloch replied as he rubbed his two cotton hoofs together.

Chapter 862 Fending off Rats at Port Bulwark

Everyone at the seaport walls was worried when Gold told them a hovering castle dropped a massive amount of rats to Wecha. As many of the soldiers were veteran survivors, they knew how terrifying the Rat Horde could be.

Thus, when the first wave of rats reached towards the defences of the seaport, renamed Port Bulwark as a sign of appreciation for the Northern Army's contribution, the defenders were befuddled by the number of rats running towards them.

The numbers were underwhelmingly less than expected.

Nevertheless, trained with the very same weapons used by Wecha's Militia, the Northern Bulwark Soldiers started to fire at the rats without discrimination. The small number of rats had also allowed the soldiers to adjust their formation further since it was the first live firing 'exercise' in which they used these weapons.

Even the Western Skies and Southern Stars who had been stationed in Port Bulwark had only received the chance to use these weapons under strict supervision. Obviously, the System had placed tracking inscriptions on them in case they would attempt to smuggle them out of the Northern Region. While it should be absolutely impossible to replicate them with the world's magic and technology, the same could not be said about possibly creating an alternate version following the designs via reserve engineering.

Ayse who had managed to recreate certain Steam Tech was living proof that it was definitely possible for great geniuses in other worlds to do the same as well.

"This is too weird. Why are the rats having such a frantic expression on themselves?" General Umiterus questioned Gold once the second wave of rats came through with even lesser numbers. All scattered before coming in the range of their weapons.

"They usually pride themselves on attacking with large numbers and if not stick together to show their ferocity of a horde in order to scare the defenders... Yet, they are defying all standard fighting protocols."

"Did you hear distant booming sounds minutes ago?" Gold smirked when he saw the actual results right at their measly stone wall.

"You mean the one behind us or the one above us?" General Umiterus pointed at his back and later at the skies.

"Hahaha, both. They are actually doing their job to reduce the horde size. I have received reports that my comrades managed to block the source of the horde at Town Wecha, so the numbers coming in are smaller than we might have expected and most importantly finite." Gold replied as he oversaw the current defensive battle at Port Bulwark.

That's right, Moloch was coordinating the attacks between Stalingrad's ship artillery bombardment and the ones from the skies. With Rei's brand new modified C-130 Artillery Planes, they were able to severely reduce the numbers from the skies and sea. (Well, Moloch was supposed to only do coordination since Kraft 'promised' to look after the counter assault demon forces at the castle. Needless to say, the Kraft teleported to Jin's side after learning he would have more fun there and told Cotton Butt to postpone the favour.)

The route from Town Wecha to Port Bulwark was mostly wide rolling plains with a few hills and a small desolated ruined village. This made it easy for the C-130 Artillery Planes to track the rats from high above. Of course with the help of the radar technology which Rei had installed based on the blueprints from himself and using the ones they received from Hou Fei as a guideline, they were able to predict the rats' movement.

The System would then set the projectile course for each and every artillery weapon on deck (or on the plane), so all the minions had to do was to press the fire button. The Demon Rats were massacred without putting up a fight without even knowing how.

Some of them had managed to spot the planes, but all the Rats could do was to scatter as much as possible rather than follow their instincts and keep moving in a group. And when Demon Rats thought that the artillery attacks were not able to have sufficient impact against the scattered groups, the big guns came in as if to prove that they were not out in the danger zone. Stalingrad's bombardments caused massive hurt to the Demon Rat groups when Lord Wolte and his new Demon Crew used scattered explosive shells against the rats.

While they were not able to witness it first hand, the camera footage from the C-130 Artillery Planes transmitted to the televisions on the ship was sufficient entertainment to keep them excited.

They had dreaded the power Wolte held when the Demons were on the opposing side, yet now when it was their turn to control the oversized 'toy' it was a completely new experience for them. Also, they hoped this would be the first but not the last opportunity to be on Wolte's deck. (Jin did say that he would be creating ships for them in the near future now that Demon Metropolis is under his control.)

Moloch's task was more or less complete after another hour or so. Still, there was a number of surviving Demon Rats who had scurried off to other far sides of the plains, escaping from the defensive chokepoints and Gold was not going to let them off.

He got the aid of the Dark Templars on standby to ride on Hover Bikes and chase after their prey. After all, most of them knew the plains well enough to chase after the surviving rats. Some of them even

brought the Southern Stars Assassins with them which Gold allowed since they had better surveillance ability than most on the search and kill missions.

All in all, Port Bulwark was safe from the attacks, and it seemed Jin once again had over prepared on a few matters when he clearly had the upper hand. (Or maybe he was getting used to defending.)

As soon as Moloch was free from his responsibility in Port Bulwark, he refocused his efforts on the remaining forces at the crashed fortress site. Even without Peppers' legendary Scan, the System and Jin's minions had also detected an increasing large energy signal emanating from the castle within.

It could not be the laser cannon since Peppers had made sure to destroy it thoroughly without much of an effort. There was no way they prepared the same two laser cannons when Weslie deduced the engine systems would be terribly burdened by one, let alone two of it.

Hence, everyone was deducing it was either some large mechanical rat or a self destruct mechanism which would destroy every single lifeform in the area. However, given the nature of the latter, it should have already blown to pieces by now, and the System also detected that the energy was spread out in a large area compared to a concentrated area.

"No way! It cannot be! They completed it?! That's impossible! How did they find a way to connect the steam engine and the neuro interfaces together?!" Suddenly Weslie realised where this surge of energy was becoming after seeing traces of the spike from System's basic scan.

"Wait, so it really is a large mechanical steampunk rat?" Moloch asked, but Weslie shook her head when she appeared in the Dungeon Maker.

"No...It's the castle itself."

Chapter 863 Mechanical Castle Arm

"How much have you been slaving for the Rats?!" Moloch exclaimed at Weslie after he heard that the castle was able to still move and of all things, assume a humanoid form.

"Ehh heheh. I had tried to resist at first, but they had ways to make me comply. Eventually, I discovered that as long as I had results ready for whenever they came to collect it, they would leave me alone with lots of demands. This one is actually originating from some thought experiments I did to relieve my boredom." Weslie gave a forced out smile.

"You lay the groundworks for it when you were bored?!... This is one freaking mechanical bot if what you say is true! And here I thought we could just reroute the C-130 Artillery Planes and bombard the castle to kingdom come." Moloch felt like hitting Weslie's head for being way too hard-working for the enemy.

"I never meant for it to be used. As I said, it was just some doodling... Since we have already damaged the fortress beforehand, it might not be as dangerous as it should be... probably... I THINK!" Weslie emphasised that the large laser cannon was ruined and the flying fortress had been damaged at multiple areas which should prevent it from making effective use of its humanoid form.

Just like the Scholar of the West had said, the castle suddenly revealed a large mechanical arm with steam venting out at its joints from a portion of the fortress. With an impending slap to the ground, the Demon Rats and Demon Soldiers had started fleeing from the scene.

A number of Wights, particularly the Soldiers of Jade had mass cast wind-related spells on the run to boost their allies soldiers to escape the attack. Others even got on their comrade's horses, hoping to survive while a minority gave up and went into the castle instead. They were too close to the castle and might as well try their luck hiding within the castle grounds. (But if they had to fight with overwhelming rats than so be it.)

Many managed to escape the 'slap' attack, but the live arm was not done as it retracted itself and attempted to pick up the Gauntlet Vepar had left stuck within the castle. "Geh, the enemy is trying to use that Gauntlet as a possible projectile. System, some help would be much appreciated right now." Moloch wanted it removed as soon as possible.

"Request denied. System is currently swarmed with requests for teleportation and unable to process that particular demand. Please wait or have User overwrite System's priority queue. In addition, the owner of the Gauntlet, Duke Vepar is currently out of commission which would hinder the teleportation of the Gauntlet." The System stated.

"Then where is Jin?" Moloch yelled at the invisible entity. He couldn't fathom why the System clearly would want to see the Gauntlet used against them by the large Mechanical Castle Arm.

"User is currently unconscious after the fight in his world." The System replied before adding an extra clause out of nowhere. "Sub System Users cannot override priority queue."

"In short, the minions do not have too much of a say, huh?" Moloch grumbled as he knew that the minions were indeed at the mercy of the System. The only reason the System was saving them via teleportation was because of the cost they incurred would be more than the profit they earn. Other than that, the hierarchy still remained.

The only redeeming factor was that Jin was benevolent enough to treat his minions as near equals instead of reigning over them as a controlling master. The same was true for the Sub System. Moloch didn't even want to imagine how bad his life would be if any of them would act tyrannically... the world didn't need any more King Baals.

"System will review the situation as needed." The System answered, making it sounds like it would compromise for Moloch but he knew all the better it wasn't. However, to Moloch's relief, the Mechanical Castle Arm had difficulty removing the Gauntlet that was etched deep into the ground after Vepar's magnificent glorious impact preventing the laser cannon from firing.

"Well, at the very least, the legends hold some speck of truth about Vepar's family heirloom." Moloch took a breather and started to reroute nine C-130 Artillery Planes back to the Town of Wecha in order to aid the destruction of the large Mechanical Castle Arm.

However, instead of continuously attempting to take the Gauntlet out of the ground, the Mechanical Castle Arm seemed to have had enough and instead shifted to target Wecha's shield barrier by opening its palm and revealing a hidden weapon from within.

"Another freaking laser?" Moloch hoofpalmed his head and looked at Weslie, who tried to look the other way and whistle innocently. (But failed terribly at it.)

"Then I have no other choice. Here I thought we could keep this as a surprise from the Users. Well, at least Jin is knocked unconscious..." Moloch sighed as he picked up the phone in the Dungeon Maker.

"Niu Lang, are you there?"

"Ah! Lord Moloch! How are you? I heard there's some crazy commotion happening in the Farming World." It took a long time for Niu Lang to pick the phone up because he was fixing something. With that amount of time lost, the Mechanical Castle Arm had already fired its first laser beam at Wecha's Shield Barrier.

Thankfully, Ayse's products were top notch, and they were able to withstand the first attack with ease. However, judging by the cracks in the shield, it would not stay that way for long. Thankfully, with it being a part of the Steam Technology, the laser cannon needed some time to cool down and that caused the arm to remain stationary.

The Wyvern Goblin Knights who had dealt with the steampunk helicopters and planes began trying their luck to damage the arm during this time. At a closer look, they found out that the entire arm was filled with rats hastily trying to fix the internal machinery so it could fire the next round of energy beams at the town once more.

"Yes, we need you to get ready. Is he already operational?" Moloch asked directly without any greetings.

"Ehh, Teacher Rei said that it should be able to work, but the energy battery pack still needs to be revised after all the improvements we made." Niu Lang replied as he took a look at the chalkboard which Rei had left behind for him with all the information scattered.

"Yeah, there's enough juice for fifteen minutes or so but if you want me to be operating him at max performance, I think two to three minutes are more of a conservative estimate." Niu Lang calculated within his head.

"Two to three minutes is all I need. Get it up and running, I will get the System to teleport you soon. And I need you to hit it as hard as possible and make sure it goes down." Moloch said as he quickly gave orders to the C-130 Artillery Planes to attack Mechanical Castle Arm before it had any chance to recover, hoping to weaken it so that his old pal could make his renewed debut.

Mechataur.

Chapter 864 Mechataur Reborn

"All Systems Online, Taurus Interface activated." Niu Lang flipped the switches within his cockpit and placed a replica of Mechataur's head at the side of a placeholder near his shoulder.

The Minotaur head immediately lit up upon receiving electrical power and turned alive. Its first reaction was yawning as if it had awoken from a very long slumber.

"How long have I been - whaddafuck is this?! What happened to me?! Where is the rest of my body?! Why am I in the cockpit?! NIU LANG, what the hell did you do to me?!!" Mechataur started shouting and couldn't accept the reality around him.

"Woah, woah, hold your horns! I just made it easier for you to move about without the large body...well that is if you are connected to an electrical pack..."

"What bullshit are you talking about?! After that fight with the giant Titan Knight and sacrificing myself for that human master, this is what I have become?!" Mechataur continued yapping yet Niu Lang believed it was best to let actions speak for themselves. He flipped another switch and turned the switch knob which caused the robotic bull head to power down.

The bull head was actually a soul containment unit and what Niu Lang did was transfer the soul back to his large body which he actually continued to complain about.

"Now I am stuck I'm this- woah wait a minute. This is... this is... woahhhhhhhh!!" Mechataur started to survey his new body and realised there were so many changes to it. He no longer had a bulging metallic abdomen and instead, a proper body chassis.

After which, he started to move his hands and legs to test the joints. "I feel lighter and more flexible! Can I do a somersault with this body?"

"If you want to continue to stay in that metal head for another three more months, sure go ahead and try that." Niu Lang rolled his eyes.

"Aww man, thanks buddy!" Mechataur tried to stand up but realised there were a ton of tubes being stuck on him. "Pfft all these annoying wires!" Mechataur started tearing and plucking each and every one of them.

"Urgh be gentle! Each of them cost thousands of dungeon dollars!" Niu Lang exclaimed as he had no choice but to turn the knob back and Mechataur returned back to his head.

"Hey! What is the meaning of this! Get me back to my body! You have no rights to stop me and contain me! I have my constitutional right to my own body!" Mechataur said

"Where did you even learn that phrase..." Niu Lang sighed as he clicked a few buttons and those tubes and wires automatically released themselves.

"Hey! Why are you ignoring me?! Respond back!"

"I have no choice but to transfer your soul to this containment unit else fixing you previously might kill you off permanently since I have to dissect and replace each and every part there is while maintaining and improving the core body." Niu Lang believed everything was in order and told Moloch that they were ready to sortie.

"Erm..yeah I appreciate your efforts, but that doesn't mean you can keep me to this small robotic head!"

"Would you prefer being inside the previous iteration? That one was a jar which Kraft gave me, without any outlet to speak out your will freely?" Niu Lang questioned, and Mechataur kept quiet for a moment.

"Good. Now, I know you are a little frustrated about this situation. So in return, we are going into battle. I give you full reign while I provide support within the cockpit." Niu Lang said as he could hear the portal opening above them. He quickly closed the cockpit doors and wore his helmet.

"Mechataur, Pilot Niu Lang. Departing!" Niu Lang announced and immediately they found themselves performing a free fall at a few hundred metres above the supposed target. Niu Lang knew that they would be free-falling and already had a jet booster attached.

"Unit's control has been transferred to you." Niu Lang said as he turned the switch knob again and Mechataur could literally feel the winds against his entire body.

Even without any commands, the metal bull robot had already activated his jet boosters to counter the descend. With a bit of fiddling, a rifle appeared from the jet booster as well, giving Mechataur the means to shoot at their target.

Naturally, Niu Lang was inside the cockpit doing all the aiming assist as it had been a long time since Mechataur got to hold a rifle. In addition, the knockback and recoil from the rifle were tremendous because of the large calibre rounds it was using so Niu Lang's aiming assist was useful, especially when he purposely went for the joints.

As for the Mechanical Castle Arm, the rats operating it were able to withstand the attacks done by the Wyvern Goblin Knights, and there was some damage from the artillery attacks, but those were not as deadly as rifle rounds from Mechataur.

One shot was all it took to damage a portion of the joint and hit a steam pipe that supplied energy to the arm's laser cannon. That one shot alone had managed to disable the Mechanical Castle Arm and caused it to topple a little.

Emergency repairs were on its way, but the next few rounds targeted the very same place too, causing the mechanical joint to dislodge. The entire arm fell without the support, but Mechataur was not done with it.

It now started to shoot randomly at the castle, ignoring Niu Lang's complaints about wasting ammunition (well, those bullets were really quite expensive) and subsequently began opening his chest plates to shoot the missiles... only to realise there were none in there.

"Where did all my missiles go?!" Mechataur asked Niu Lang with a streak of panic going through his circuits.

"Moloch asked for an emergency sortie...that is why I did not pack those stuff in. I figured we had enough firepower in the jet boosters. There's an enlarged RPG launcher in it which should finish the job."

"What do ya mean we have enough firepower?! There's no such thing as enough firepower. Firepower is a never-ending pursuit for greatness! I hold you responsible for not getting the job done this time around!" Mechataur complained.

"And that is why I invented the switch knob. Ayse's researchers say that there might be a drastic application of your current personality because you had been detached in a soul containment unit for too long. You need to chill and rationalise."

"I ain't doing that kind of shit! All I need to do is to kill the enemy right in front of me, and I lack the means to do so!" Mechataur unequipped his jet boosters and fell straight into the castle, crashing into it while taking out the RPG launcher.

Without thinking, Mechataur threw the rifle and fired every single rocket within the launcher towards the Mechanical Castle Arm...only to find another arm suddenly appear behind him. However, this arm was not as complete as the initial one and Mechataur's crashing actually released the arm from its deadlock of debris.

"Holy shit!" Mechataur exclaimed as it stopped the right broken arm with its own and faced it while shooting AP rounds from his robotic cheeks. It did not stop there as it tried to charge its horns and fire a blast of electrical energy towards it.

"Holy shit, indeed!" Niu Lang agreed as he saw Mechataur's energy level had dropped so significantly in less than a minute!

Chapter 865 A Risky Paradox

"I am sorry, my Friend. Although I know you want to rampage after hibernating for so long, you are not well equipped to do so right now." Niu Lang sighed as he turned the switch knob again, causing Mechataur to return to his soul containment unit.

The Robotic Bull Head was metaphorically jumping up and down, throwing tantrums from Niu Lang's mistreatment, yet the mecha pilot finally regained full control over his robot body.

"It's my body! How can you just kick me out of my own body?!" Mechataur raged, but Niu Lang ignored him for the moment since there were other pressing things to take care of. He quickly moved out of the castle by moving backwards and used his leg thrusters to get out of the pinch.

Unfortunately, that took another five percent of energy from the battery pack, and Niu Lang wasn't left with much. However, thanks to Mechataur's reckless use of his weapons, one of the Mechanical Castle Arms appeared to be permanently out of commission. Even the rats had stopped trying to repair it and focused on the one with the intact cannon arm, which was currently aiming at the duo.

Suddenly, explosions were seen on the castle arm, and Niu Lang recognised that the cause was artillery fire rather than internal explosions. "Orc Artillery Beta Company Leader to Mechataur Pilot. We thought that you might need some assistance since you backed off with no visible weapons at hand."

"Thank you for the assist. You came in at the right moment. I really have no more weapons because of the emergency sortie." Niu Lang decided to keep Mechataur's wasteful actions quiet. (Surprisingly, the Robotic Bull Head did not make a noise when Niu Lang was communicating back.)

"We can fire off another round, but it would not provide you sufficient precision because of distance." Beta Company Leader reported back.

"Say, are the artillery guns detachable?" Niu Lang asked as he raised Mecahtaur's arms and activated a pair of spiked gauntlets. It was an inbuilt feature in case there was a need for some close-quarter combat.

"Yes, Chief Engineer Rei had made some adjustments so we can attach the guns for emergency deployment via paradrops." The Orc Leader replied.

"Then can you send two down along with your men?" Niu Lang requested as it punched the arm and it likewise did the same thing.

"You want what?"

"Parachute them down. I will align them to the back of my shoulders. I have attachment platforms ready to lock the artillery guns down."

"That's insane! Predicting projectile shots can be achieved with the System, but I do not think it can predict where it would land to the centimetre! Especially when your Mechataur platform is moving! Also, my orcs have to land in there! That is impossible!"

"Trust in my partner!" Mechataur suddenly shouted out even when Niu Lang started to think that his unorthodox idea was way too challenging to perform. "If he can refix me into what I am now, I am sure his idea has some merit!"

"Still..- " Before Beta Company Orc Leader could say anything more, the System interjected.

"The System believes such a manoeuvre can be achieved if the predictive analysis pattern were to be implemented on both sides."

"Then hurry up. My battery pack will be dead if we do not take down this mechanical arm." Niu Lang encouraged them. The Beta Company Orc Leader had no reason to argue against it after the System had already given its assurance. Besides, the artillery gun was also the System's property. If the landing failed, that would be its responsibility and not the Orc Leader's.

"Fine. Beta Squad 4 \u0026 5, reload those guns and unlock them. We are throwing them with a pair of personnel! Choose who wants to be the first daredevil to do an artillery gun landing on a freaking bull robot!" the leader shouted, and the Orcs quickly volunteered themselves for the action.

"Eh thank you Mechataur. I thought you would make the situation worse." Niu Lang said as the Mechataur was grappling with the Mechanical Castle Arm.

"Just don't forget you owe me more upgrades for this." Mechataur laughed loudly and oddly enough, Niu Lang did not care about the bull's disruption as he focused on the screens as well as the System's solutions. In the meantime, the Beta Company's C-130 Artillery Plane had its back opened and was cruising at a slower speed than usual.

"Go Go Go!" The Artillery Company Leader spurred them on, and the Orcs around the guns assisted the push out of the planes. Unlike usual paradrops, only the weapons had the parachutes, and the pair of Orc personnel merely hitched onto the ride.

"It's coming!" Mechataur said as it saw on the top screen of the cockpit two artillery guns coming down.

However, the unexpected happened once more as the Mechanical Castle Arm had decided to turn on its laser cannon. "Fuck! It is trying to kill us at point-blank!" Niu Lang shouted. He grappled and stood his ground because it was the best position for the paradrop to land with the highest chance of success. But if he did not move in time, he could be fried into molten metal. And if he did, then it would be the artillery guns and the orcs who would be burnt instead.

Seeing how Niu Lang was struggling, Mechataur could not bear to watch this further. "Leave this to me!" The Robotic Bull Head said as he jumped (by using his chin!) and aimed for the switch knob. Even though the Robotic Head was connected with a few charging wires, the distance away from the switch knob might cause the wire to be plugged out. Still, Mechataur took the risk and did it as he knew Niu Lang cannot leave his hands away from the controls.

"You cannot do this without me!" The Mechataur's soul managed to be retransferred back before the last connecting wire was unplugged forcibly because of the distance and gravity. Rendered speechless by its actions, Niu Lang watched Mechataur use up even more battery to push the palm downwards while moving into position to receive the artillery guns based on the System's data.

"ZAAMMMMMMM" The laser cannon was activated at the very last minute when the guns were about to touch down. The Mechanical Castle Arm burned Mechataur's feet as it tried to hold on to the palm. The artillery guns managed to touch down despite the intense rocking and heat emanated from the downwards laser cannon.

"ARRGGGHHH!" Mechataur shouted as he continued to pin down the palm while the orc personnel quickly locked the artillery guns' leg spikes into the Mechataur's shoulder. Immediately upon locking, the artillery guns fired their first shot after landing which managed to disrupt the laser cannon. And without any further instructions, the personnel already started to unload the used shell and placed a new one in.

"FIRE FIRE FIRE!" Niu Lang shouted in his cockpit as he continued to cheer for Mechataur and the artillery gunners. The Demon War had made the gunners an expert in reloading with a minimum amount of people operating them.

This particular performance of continuous shooting was nonetheless showing off their incredible skill as the other C-130 Artillery Planes were also joining in to bring the Mechanical Castle Arm down from afar.

Chapter 866 The Final Blow

Despite the barrage of artillery fire from C130 Artillery Planes and Mechataur's shoulders, the final blow that brought the Mechanical Castle Arm down did not come from them. Perhaps not unexpectedly the killing blow actually came from the almighty Stalingrad.

Moloch had long noticed that his old pal Mechataur was having a difficult time to finish the last Mechanical Arm. He did ask for their immediate deployment, and it was no surprise the current situation was more than they could handle. The all out attacks by Mechataur had somehow managed to uncover the existence of the second Mechanical Castle Arm, and after it appeared, it only spelt further trouble.

As much as he wished to believe that Mechataur was able to destroy the last Mechanical Castle Arm, he was in charge of this operation and was not willing to leave it to luck.

The victory he obtained from the Demon War might have been attributed to some sort of lucky fluke, but it was also because he and Qiu Yue made it happen. The number of preparations he slogged through many nights to get it done was countless and that had allowed them to win that meaningless war. (Well, not so meaningless for the System since it got an unexpected reward from Baal's crown.)

Moloch had commanded the Stalingrad to sail further south and requested the System to prepare a shot analysis that would disable the Mechanical Castle Arm instantly.

"Amazing. I never knew that you could shoot that far." Captain Focalor praised Wolte as he saw the shot imbued with some magic for visualisation being flown far into the endless skies.

"The System said we are taking into account the gravity and the world's curvature into account. Not sure what that means but it's science stuff like this modern cannon. If not for the imagery designs, I too would not have been able to create this ship." Wolte admitted that his ship was not his intellectual copyrighted property though he did make some changes to it to suit his uses. (and tastes!)

The armour-piercing shell was also used instead of the explosive shell to avoid Mechataur becoming a part of the collateral damage due to its proximity. When it came close enough, Niu Lang took over the Mechataur body to hold the Mechanical Castle Arm high enough to shield himself from the hit.

"Whew~! The battery pack lasted just long enough. I thought I was a goner if not for that surprise shot from Stalingrad." Niu Lang breathed out a sigh of relief as he saw the cockpit's light turn red and change into emergency battery mode.

The backup battery could power the Mechataur for another five minutes but if Niu Lang did that, he would not be able to open the cockpit at all and lose 24 hours of power on the oxygen converter. That would be dangerous for space though considering they had the System's ability to teleport, Niu Lang sometimes thought that was a little overkill.

All he could see from the monitor was that the Mechanical Castle Arm had been broken and now had a massive gaping hole in the middle of it. The remainders of the AP shell were right behind the Mechataur, grinding into the ground creating smoke by-products until it stopped moving.

"That was a close shave. Where did that thing even come from?" Mechataur asked in his robotic head form again.

"Moloch orchestrated it from Wolte. You've missed it, but he is currently a ship. Or to be more precise, he now has a ship form on top of just being a slug." Niu Lang let down the arm and requested for teleportation. Meanwhile, he could see that the Demon Soldiers from Dungeon World started to advance towards the castle again.

"Moloch, I guess you do not want to leave any rats to be left alive? Haha. I will be returning now and repairing Mechataur. Sorry that I can't be more of assistance." Niu Lang reported as he started to turn and walked forward into a large portal prepared for him.

"No worries about it, you already did more than expected. Besides, we are just trying to capture the rats like Jin asked us to. But more importantly, I want the castle!" Moloch answered which nearly made Niu Lang slip his controls.

"You WHAT?!" Niu Lang and Weslie who was right beside Moloch exclaimed.

"Hmm? Why are you so surprised? Isn't it normal for the winner to collect some spoils of war? This might be a broken mess right now, but with enough resources, we can repair it, enhance it and use it against them down the line. An eye for an eye. Well, a castle attack for another castle attack. Same thing."

"Hmmm... You are right. I can't wait to see what nonsense they had replaced to make it move." Weslie quickly changed her tone and even sounded excited.

"If you are bringing it in, I would like to take a look at what those bastards North and South had done to the place. Hope you did not trash the place too much." Gold interjected in the System Channel.

"Oh, my dear. I fear you might be disappointed if you have that kind of mindset." Weslie replied with a chuckle.

"Don't worry. With my Empire Building Sub System, there is no castle I cannot refurbish. Besides, who doesn't want a floating fortress? That sounds like a great dungeon instance idea for Jin too." Qiu Yue joined their conversation amidst huffing and puffing after killing the last few rats who were putting up a resistance.

The rest of the Demon Rats were already attempting to run away but had forgotten that there were militias carrying rifles that could target far and wide. Granted, they might not be able to hit with every shot, but at least they suppressed the rats, which made it easy for the Savants who went from defending mode to hunting mode.

Once an adventurer, always an adventurer.

These Savants had their instincts awaken when the System posted a special little reward for those who were able to kill the last few Demon Rats. The Warlock Savant alone had already created some floating balls of sentience with tentacles that were able to track the Demon Rats while the Archer Savant sniped each and every one of those who were in his sights.

"Speaking of Jin, where is he? How come I can't connect with him? Kraft? Yun?" Lynn concerningly asked for Jin via the main System Channel.

"Ah. We cleared the counter-attack operation already. Boy, there's lots to share, but right now, Jin overworked himself and fainted. Once you are done on your end, feel free to check in on him. I have Pei looking after him." Kraft said through the System Channel.

"What? No? You never said anything to me." Pei entered the System Channel upon her name being pinged by the System as it replayed the last line of the conversation to her.

"What do you mean? You just heard it from me, didn't you?" Kraft grinned, and Pei rolled her eyes. She stopped typing her notes on the Demon Metropolis's Health System and saved it.

"Jin, I told you not to work so hard when I am not there!" Pei grumbled, but the System had teleported to the Luxury Recovery instance to pick up some necessary supplies to aid in Jin's recovery.

Chapter 867 No Sign of Improvement

"Why is there still no sign of improvement?" Pei thought to herself as she continued to monitor Jin's vitals and inside the Luxury Recovery Instance for a proper investigation.

"Call in Milk, please. Perhaps she has some idea of what is happening." Pei requested the System after she brought him into the intensive care unit of the instance and started to shout for the nurses to give Jin some hydration. The senior Panda nurses who were more advanced in their AI and were partially controlled by the System immediately brought in the intravenous fluid bags which Pei injected via Jin's arm.

She subsequently imbued the fluid bags with some of her chi, hoping that some of her chi transferred into him might lead to some improvement. Milk came in at a short notice, dressed skimpily looking like she was about to go for a long sleep after that counter offence operation against the Banned Emperor Assassins.

"What's the matter? Why do you look so panicked? It's rare for you to call me in the first place." Milk asked until she saw that the person Pei was treating was none other than Jin. She quickly changed from lazy mode to serious priest mode. She conjured a long jacket to cover herself and used a spell to check Jin's vitals.

"He has fainted hard a few times before, but this is the first time his Maqi output is close to zero. If Kraft had informed me any later, Jin might have died from chi exhaustion." Pei informed her. She was in fact quite angry that Kraft did not notice the seriousness of his condition any sooner. Yet, at the same time, she could not bring herself to fully blame Kraft for not recognising his condition.

Extreme Chi Exhaustion was fairly common to cultivators who wished to push themselves to the limit. Unfortunately what Jin was experiencing right now was a more severe form of Extreme Chi Exhaustion.

It was Chi Death Syndrome.

The chi circuits of a person were similar to muscles in a sense. Both could be willingly strained, and they would both heal over time and get stronger as a result. However, no matter if it was muscles or chi circuits once either was completely torn apart, there was no way for the body to repair it by itself. (Well unless with magic or chi.)

That was why Pei had called Milk over because in Jin's case, not only did his chi circuits rupture but his mana circuits too. It was odd that his body was still fully intact and his blood circulation system was still working, and the physician believed that it was the System's workings.

If the System had not been controlling the flow of Maqi, both of his circuits could have been overwhelmed, and Jin would have gone into shock immediately rather than the current delayed reaction. "His Dantian Core is still alive and working, but his twelve primary meridians are showing severe weakening."

"I saw. His mana circuits are in a similar state. The Cloud Gate in his lungs and Moon Gate in his stomach are severely broken. Even if I can repair them with my magic, this transfusion will take days. How the

hell did he manage to practically cripple himself with just one Banishment Circle?" Milk remarked while tapping her fingers on Jin's body to check on mana circuit's reaction.

"A what?! Banishment Circle?!" Pei, who had not followed the chain of events, was surprised when she heard that.

"Yeah, Jin got into System Rider Dark Templar Form to banish the big bad boss back to the nether realm." Milk recounted what had happened as she started to ask the Panda Nurses to bring blood transfusion kits over.

IV hydration might be the standard in transferring chi quickly into the circuits but to cure the mana circuits, blood was a far better medium. It also had the practical benefit that they could infuse chi and mana at the same time into Jin.

"Any normal cultivator, would be dead by now." Pei did not waste time by putting a tourniquet on her arm and wiped it with an alcohol swab to clean the area. She was preparing for the blood transfusion since her chi was already in the process of repairing the circuits via the IV hydration fluids. Besides repairing one circuit at a time was simpler than doing two at once, so it would be easier to use her imbued chi blood rather than Milk's for now.

"Thank the System for his cultivation. When he is asleep, he will always be generating chi.... I honestly envy him sometimes for such a convenient way to cultivate. If he did not have this cultivation, he would definitely be dead by now." Milk shook her head as she started the checklist for the blood transfusion.

And even after inserting the needle through Jin and Pei, Milk was still frantic. She was contacting Ayse for Peppers' mana crystals which she had collected over time from all the experiments and fights when she had her jacket on. Because it was clear that there was no way she could hold out that long giving mana to Jin.

With the Mana Crystals, Milk could at least repair the major circuit intersections by putting them close to proximity. However, she also had to take note not to interfere with Jin's Chi circuit.

When contacted, it honestly did not dawn to Ayse that they could be used for such a medical situation and she began rummaging for all the mana crystals she had secretly kept in case of an emergency.

"Pfft. You should be thankful that my blood is suitable to yours." Pei grumbled as she lightly flicked Jin's head for being this reckless. After which, she called on the Panda Nurses to request from the System to obtain more blood packs as Pei initiated the first round.

At the same time, the System's only licensed doctor was also wondering why the Legendary Inscription Charm had not been activated with their chi and mana combined. "Is it because it's too attuned to Jin's Maqi so it won't activate from our chi and mana combined?" Pei questioned herself.

Yet, the whole situation turned even more tense when Kraft came into the room surprised by the entire scene, and it is solely because Pei was staring at him with much anticipated angst.

"How could you allow this to happen to him? You should be the one protecting him and not making him suffer until this kind of state! How are the others going to react when they learn that he is suffering from Chi Death Syndrome?!"

"Then, don't tell them. Restrict the place and limit access only to the bellators or something. Maybe just leave it at us three and the panda nurses." Kraft shrugged his shoulders. "I was busy protecting him from the riff raff and allowing 'Hero Jin to save the day', while the System was with him the entire time controlling the flow of Maqi."

"System was overwhelmed with multiple things happening at the same time." The System retorted, not wanting to apologise but instead choosing to explain its rationale. "During the drawing of the Banishment Circle the chances of the User suffering from Chi Death Syndrome were less than 1%, and the risk of perishing from it was at 0.03% especially when taking into account his highly regenerative Dantian Core."

"Well, if he is still generating some chi it means he is cultivating even while unconscious. That's a beast move itself. Maybe he can experience a breakthrough in cultivation and automatically bring himself to the next grade? That would very likely fix all our concerns in one go." Kraft replied though the rest felt that was being overly optimistic.

Chapter 868 Odd Conversation - Part 1

"Is this like some save point?" Jin wondered to himself as he saw the familiar blue clear sky and felt that chilly wind blowing through his clothes. The wood that creaked whenever he leaned back on the bench and that slightly rusted screw knob which he had secretly fiddled with whenever Grandpa Ming was talking to him.

The mountainous scene was still a sight to behold even though he knew that underneath awaited a challenge he had already postponed a number of times.

"I had a short glimpse of what happened before you passed out. You've really outdone yourself." Ming's voice appeared next to Jin who was admiring the scenery.

"I was holding on really hard, like REALLLLLLY hard at that last moment. I can still feel my entire body clinching each and every muscle to get it done." Jin recalled the last few minutes before he went unconscious. Although they were inside his subconscious, he still was able to feel the physical pain when he thought about it.

"I was actually referring to those Banned Emperor Assassins. When they tried to assassinate the Tiger Head in your shop, I honestly hoped that encounter with them would be a one-time thing. But now this? I am starting to think that even if you become a normal working person, your fate would still end up intertwined with theirs." Ming sighed as he slowly sat down and the wood creaked just a little more under the weight of two men.

"Oh those. I don't know. Maybe third time's the charm?" Jin tried to lighten the mood since he felt that it would be a heavy topic.

"Heh, I had my share clashing against them when I was in the army," Ming revealed as he breathed in the cold dry air and exhaled slowly. "As much as I'd like you to do some monster hunting, especially that turtle down below, given their reemergence, I think we should go up a notch."

"You want me to go up a notch? Are you serious? I haven't even managed to make a dent on that monstrous turtle, and you want me to go even higher? Hang on a moment, before I forget, there is

something serious I need to ask you. Do you know who Ryuli is? Mr Know-It-All? Have you come into contact with them before?" Jin didn't really want to fight.

The fight against King Baal not too long ago has already been above what he was comfortable with, not to mention the huge abomination before he passed out. It was just way too ridiculous even for his inner state of mind.

Whatever happened to those simple times when his opponents used to be something manageable like Goblins or Minotaurs...

"Can't say that I know them. Although that nickname Mr Know-It-All does ring a bell." Ming shook his head while trying to remember where he had heard that name before.

"Maybe you know them under their Codename? State Agent L and State Agent K from the Ministry of State Security? They were the ones in the last battle." Jin questioned and suddenly Ming laughed out loudly.

"Hahahahah! Oh, you mean those two notorious agents of chaos?!" Ming could not stop laughing, and the mountains started to echo along with it.

"Notorious?" Jin suddenly felt it was a bad choice to mix with them.

"Well, erm... To the army that is. They are actually very loyal to the state. Loyal to a fault I'd even say." Ming seemingly decided to entertain Jin a little seeing that his grandson was in an really exhausted state.

"While the Joint Military Intelligence department - meaning Air, Sea and Ground combined - is always held by the Royal Snakes, the Royal Dragons are actually the ones who should be feared the most. If you become intermingled with those proud sky lizards you should quickly learn about the fact that they are the ones who control the Ministry of State Security and rumours have it that Agent K's grandfather is the head of that ministry." Ming explained.

"Yet another layer of Zodiac politics that I would rather not have to know" Jin sighed and Ming beat his head, something that he doesn't usually do unless it's quite a severe mistake.

"Be grateful for the information. Not everyone knows about this and I am giving it to you for free. In any case, 'incompetent' Royal Dragons, by their standard that is, get transferred to the Royal Dragon Battalion. As for the best of the best... those will automatically serve in the State Security in a heartbeat."

"So it's worse than a nest of snakes. It's a lair of dragons in there." Jin commented.

"Technically, not all of them. The Royal Zodiac Dragon Clan tried to be diverse in their selection by recruiting the best of every other Royal Zodiac Clan and a few outsiders to be their so-called counter check. But we all know that's bullshit. Oh, by outsiders I mean anyone inside the country without any direct relation to the Royal Zodiacs. There is even a special institution where those outsiders are groomed, and from a very young age, I hear." Grandpa Ming said as if he had some grudges with that particular system.

"Meh, I can pretty much guess that type of exclusivity. You don't have to tell me about it." Jin had experienced it himself during his high school days. Some students from the Royal Zodiac clans had received preferential treatment from their teachers, despite being the so-called lowest scum in their own social circle. Sometimes, the other students felt it was just so unfair that they received all the privileges despite their school's pledges for 'equality' to all.

"Haha yeah. Anyways, the bulk of them should still be the Dragons, and because it's basically a family clan, they have continued to pass and maintain top classified secrets about China's internal and external dealings. Honestly, I would not be too surprised if they had some sort of records about the System and decided to keep quiet about it." Ming shrugged his shoulders when he discussed it openly.

"Why did you say that?" Jin started to have suspicions that Mr Know-It-All might have known a bit of the System after he purposely implied he knew about it. Whether it was only a bluff, it remained to be seen.

"Because I had a friend in there, and he said that there were State Agents that were looking around for some super metaphysical entity as if someone 'requested' for it. They were aware that there was something unexplainable backing me and wanted me to pass it on to them for you know, research purposes." Ming laid his bitter history out.

"Entity, huh?" Jin nodded his head slowly.

"Yea, the System, what else? They were unaware that at the time the Original System entered a sort of hibernation to recuperate. If not for my awesome skills in erasing information, they could have gotten every detail about it, or worse, I would have most likely spilt out everything to them." Ming recalled as he leaned forward with his head heavy.

"How did they even find out about it?" Jin started to think it might be a bad idea to have shown himself and his powers to Agent K, but at the same time, he felt there was a need to purposely rephrase his question a little to Ming.

"Apparently, there was a family member of theirs who remembered every single detail despite the time reversal because she was a unique cultivator with the power to control time. In my stint of being a General for the China Armed Forces, the people had nicknamed her as the Grand Dragon Archivist or the Royal Dragon Historian. She might not be active anymore, but I doubt she's kicked the bucket like me."

"So if you had not messed your brain up, you might have accidentally revealed the System to them and also allowed them to use it?"

"Possible. That is why I'd advise you to tread carefully with this Agent K. If the rumours that he is to be the next director for the Ministry of State Security are true, there is a good chance he might want to use you." Ming said as he heaved a heavy sigh out of his mouth.

"On the other hand, if you were to use the System to control him before he controls you, it might be the reversal you need to actually change this country."

"Because I will be holding onto one of the few powerful men under the mercy of the System?" Jin queried.

"No, because you get to control one of the upcoming most powerful heirs in this country and change the world for the better!" Ming answered with hopeful grandiose.

Chapter 869 Odd Conversation - Part 2

"Control the most powerful heir in the country?! Hahahaha! Last I remember, the System wasn't going to capture any cultivators because the hassle wasn't worth it. It would be oddly funny if they were, though. Instead of customers, they would be like 'employees' who were sending tributes to me." Jin replied as he laughed hysterically and shook his head at that possibility.

"Are you sure that isn't already happening?" Ming asked in a quiet, tame voice. He went forward towards Jin and his body language indicated that there was something deeper, something more sinister at work.

"No, no... that can't be." Jin would lie if he pretended he had never considered the possibility. It would be quite convenient to have Xiong Da and the others at his beck and call similar to Claire as their latest addition.

"The System told me it's part of its law to not enslave people from our world..."

However, the more Jin said it out loud, the more doubts started to flow in Ming's words. Was the 'hassle' really the only thing limiting it? Was there actually a 'law' that prevented the System from using the capture system on the cultivators of his world? These thoughts that were once locked away because he believed that the law of the System was absolute started to crumble.

Acting just and moral might be nice for a human, but despite its origins, the System did not behave like one anymore. Unless that method happened to result in the best efficiency the System would not hesitate to resort to more dubious means. It prioritised its own growth and subsequently fulfilled its own desires.

In essence, Jin was just the current generation's User, a person who the System decided to compromise with to have the best manageable outcome in long term benefits rather than straight out efficiency as it had done previously, like the harvesting of souls from the Dungeon World's adventurers.

"So does that mean...most of my customers are in a way part of the System, part of the minions that I could control? They are there because of it and not because they liked my dungeon instances?" Jin suddenly felt like there was an existential crisis ongoing in his life if it's true.

"Hahahaha! That issue woke you up real good, right? You think the System had the best intentions for you? If anything, it is self-serving. Who was behind all of these? None other than the System itself. It took me some time to realise it by myself, so I thought it would be best to save you all the troubles." Ming grinned widely at Jin.

Out of a sudden, a blade was placed at Ming's neck without any hesitation.

"Who are you?" Jin questioned as he started to apply some pressure on Ming's neck, demanding an answer.

"Ah Jin, you disappoint me... Were you not ready for this truth? Are you content staying a puppet of the System? I do not remember raising you to raise a blade against me. Put this bla-" Before Ming could finish his sentence, Jin used his other hand to stab Boo into Ming's stomach, but his 'grandfather' was already holding onto the wakizashi's blade with his bare hands.

Ming kicked him away and put some distance between them before Jin could slash his neck off. Nonetheless, it had grazed Ming, and there was some blood coming out.

"Tsk, and here I thought that I could control you. A magnificent subject like you with the powers of the System is worthy to receive the glory of the Banned Emperor." 'Ming' revealed as he believed it was useless to retain the form he was portraying.

"You killing my precious Loopa Ooofpa was certainly outside our expectations, but for you to have this unique plane of subconsciousness and that power backing you might make it a worthwhile trade." Elder Wang Ba Tan greeted Jin formally by calling his name out. Jin, however, remained on alert and held his weapons tightly.

"How did you even manage to come in here?" Jin asked calmly.

"Well, since we will be sharing much of our time together from now on, I might as well tell you. I would much rather have you as a companion to our cause than our enemy. Think about it. The thing your System wants and what we want is not so different. We both want justice for what those traitorous Zodiacs have done!" Elder Wang explained.

With a snap, suddenly everything within the plane of Jin's subconsciousness started to collapse and subsequently reconstruct itself to a dead quiet inner hall filled with black concrete.

The only light source was plates of oil lit with candles on top of them. They were placed all over the area and their illumination brought out the abyss within the dark corners of the inner hall instead of hope and visibility.

"Since I plan to be honest with you, I hope you can extend the same courtesy to me. How exactly did you discover that my impersonation of your Grandpa was fake?" Elder Wang Ba Tan asked courteously. He was dying to know the reason why this young chap without mental barriers was able to see through his disguise. He also did not expect the lie he made up about the System using the customers could be caught that quickly after looking through Jin's memories.

While waiting for Jin's answer, Wang Ba Tan remembered his last moments when the Loopa Ooofpa was getting banished and managed to have the control of his consciousness returned to him. There was still a small part of him surviving within the colossal manifestation.

It was then he noticed an unconscious body nearby, one that his spirit could enter with ease before the ritual threw him and his manifestation to wherever it came from.

While he had never heard about a Banishment Spell powerful enough to get rid of such a monster, it was a lucky break for him to be able to jump from one body to another. In fact, it was how he had been surviving for a long time and learnt about the forbidden creation of the Unceasing Hunger.

With his Epic Arts, Soul Jump of the Parasitic Worm, he had been through many bodies to learn of their secrets and Jin would merely be his latest victim. Should he choose to cooperate, it would only be a matter of time until he would dominate Jin's spirit and take control over his body.

While it was unfortunate that he had failed in quietly manipulating Jin from behind the scenes, he had learnt a lot about this 'System' and the other worlds by browsing through his host's memories. If

anything, Wang Ba Tan believed he had found the holy grail which could revive the Banned Emperor faction. What's more he could use Jin as the vessel for the rise of their almighty Banned Emperor.

All these memories of Jin having such powerful allies... If he could get this System entity into his hands. The whole world would kneel before him in no time!

Then, his ambitions grew even stronger. Why limit himself to conquering just this one pathetic world when there were others out there? The eternal glory of him serving the Banned Emperor was overwhelming!

His urges to get his hands on this System entity caused Wang Ba Tan to speed through the memories and grab whatever he deemed important to fake Jin's closest relative.

It was a total coincidence that he decided to use Ming since he had seen vague repetitions of the elderly man in this particular plane. And since he could get Jin to talk so easily, he continued to use whatever knowledge he had acquired from his position as a Banned Emperor Elder to coerce Jin into his command.

This was not his usual modus operandi, but the prize of the System was too tempting, and the flashbacks showed that Jin might have allies which could be trouble for him if he did not control Jin from within quick enough. But for the real host to find out that Elder Wang was an invader was truly an unforeseen surprise. Had he been a tad too hasty that he messed up somewhere?

Yet there was no time to worry about it. As long as he could subjugate Jin right here and now, he too could have the whole body to himself. It would only be a little more challenging to control with his subconscious constantly rebelling as Wang Ba Tan took over, but it was nothing new to him.

"I had my doubts from the start. If you think your acting was superb, think again!" Jin did not need to know anything right now. When Wang Ba Tan revealed his true form, Jin had affirmed that this was not just another of Ming's test or anything. It was truly an intruder... no matter how 'friendly' they suddenly pretended to be.

"Of all the times for someone to launch an attack on my mind, it just had to be when Pei is busy with the health policies reformation of the Demon Metropolis!" Jin thought to himself as he tried to exert some Maqi. It was not strong, but he would have to do with it.

At the same time, there were too many questions in his head. While he was aware that this fake had tried to unsettle him, he did manage to conjure some doubts which Jin had buried. And yet the Astral Panda Cultivator would have to ignore them for now as Jin did not doubt that he was facing a formidable foe.

"Perhaps, Gramps was preparing me for this day in case of an intrusion of the mind." Jin thought to himself as the black-robed elder Wang Ba Tan started to laugh hysterically.

Chapter 870 Odd Conversation - Part 3

"So, you don't seem to want to cooperate with us? I cannot totally blame you for not trusting me unconditionally. Still, you should be aware that if I wanted to be your enemy, I could have attacked you outright. Are you sure you wish to point your blades at me instead of talking things out?" Wang Ba Tan

continued I pretending to be amicable, but in fact, he was trying to open Jin up with his chi persuasion tactics.

After all, words were also part of his repertoire of weapons, just that they were imbued with chi to weaken Jin's mental defences. After scanning through Jin's memories, he believed he would be able to influence the young man. Yet, unexpectedly he had encountered spots of blackness when browsing through with many of them always leading back to a room with a single lightbulb which was seen hanging from the ceiling.

Wang Ba Tan knew that certain spots of blackness within the string of memories could stem from mental trauma like PTSD. That small room indicated that he might have been tortured there at one point in time, yet there were way too many spots in Jin's 'string' that he started to think that perhaps someone had tempered with it externally to make him forget about it.

Still, he found it odd that while there was an intentional removal of memories, he had encountered no mental barriers whatsoever.

Jin did not answer, merely smiled as he listened to those chi imbued words. They were nostalgic music to his ears as he recalled how Kraft had made him listen to his chi imbued words to the point that he nearly went mad.

"Breaking your psyche and rebuilding one's mental defences is important. Never ever rely on barriers! They are about as useful as you sitting at home defenceless with a burglar outside. If that person wants something from you bad enough, they WILL find a way to either bypass your mental lock or simply smash their way through using brute force. In both scenarios, if you don't have a weapon to defend yourself, your fate will be up to the intruder's mercy!" Kraft had said when he attacked Jin out of the blue and started this involuntary training for his master.

And true to his words, this torturing chamber exercise eventually became part of Jin's weekly routine where Kraft would be that 'burglar' always barging in uninvited into Jin's mind at ungodly hours to test his psyche defences. Later on it was also to check if Pei's barriers were still on par to her capabilities and help her reinforce them. And whenever Kraft managed to force his way in, the crafty fox would bring Jin back to that dark room with a single lightbulb and force him to fight. (even though to Jin it felt more like abuse)

"And yet, here I am back in this lousy imitation of that black room." Jin thought to himself as he kept his breathing stable and subsequently went to attack Wang Ba Tan with a straight stab.

"You think you can defeat me in here? Just because you have enough willpower to fight doesn't mean anything. As you can see, you have no control over your 'realm' here. I can do whatever I like!" Wang Ba Tan gave up on his sneaky way of doing things and decided to beat Jin into submission.

He raised a pillar in front of Jin, hitting him from the bottom which caused him to trip and fall. However, being a veteran cultivator also meant that the Dungeon Supplier had the finesse to recover from it quickly and continued his attack.

Subsequently, Wang Ba Tan sent even more pillars up from not just the ground but the sides and the ceilings in an attempt to slow and stop Jin. As Jin proceeded further, those pillars became spikes while some of the spikes branched out and turned into more pillars obstructing Jin's way. To make matters

worse, the room continued to expand as if he was running on a never-ending treadmill which did not allow Jin to catch up.

However, the Astral Panda Cultivator did not stop in his tracks. Without using any extra tricks, he continued to focus on reaching his opponent and kept running straight at him without any distractions. The Maqi he had was concentrated inside his lungs and body movements rather than on his sword, enabling him to dodge rather effortlessly. Though he suffered some superficial cuts, they were non consequential to him.

"What the hell? How is he still unfazed by all this?!" Wang Ba Tan thought to himself as he now started to wield his chi and caused those pillars to turn into multiple infernos being hurled at Jin while the blocks of rock continued to emerge from every corner of the room. Yet all Jin did was to run and even use the blocks and pillars to evade the trailing fire blast.

Only as time went by did Wang Ba Tan have to admit that Jin's defences were nearly impenetrable. Whatever attacks came his way, he would either evade or walk 'em off. There was nothing stopping him from continuously running towards Wang Ba Tan as if the elder's control over this reality meant nothing to him.

And at the same time, Jin also started to realise why his Gramps did not teach him to manipulate this current plane of subconsciousness and even stripped him off most of his powers. Control comes from within and not from external factors. To add on, Kraft's punishing tuition lessons enabled him to withstand most, if not all of the mind persuasion tactics. (He did guarantee that no one could ever break Jin's mind as much as Kraft had.)

"And most mind users do not necessarily have a resilient physique against martial arts? And here I thought that training was all useless. Guess my teachers really did eat more salt than the amount of rice I ate." Jin grinned as he placed his katana on his waist for balance and continued to run forth.

Soon enough, Wang Ba Tan ran out of his own personal chi with the uninterrupted bursts of chi attacks, causing his metaphysical body to weaken in Jin's personal plane. He never expected Jin to be able to withstand his chi persuasion tactics and manipulation of the realm.

"It's fine, I can utilise the surrounding chi even through his realm. That should teach him who is the real boss around here!" Elder Wang thought as he tried to absorb the chi around him, yet discovered was extremely difficult to absorb. It was too dense and felt more like mana rather than chi. In the first place, he could not fathom why there was mana in the plane of a cultivator.

Even though it was a little tiring, Jin did not exert anything other than his stamina. And with his Maqi strengthening his body, he had plenty of strength left to catch up to the Banned Emperor Elder. Obviously, the Astral Panda Cultivator could see that Wang Ba Tan was getting desperate, and he seemed to be gathering the strength to use one last line of defence as Jin got too close for comfort.

That was when Jin felt elated that he could finally use his hidden trump card behind his sleeve. "Now!" Jin shouted as loud as possible, momentarily scaring Wang Ba Tan after minutes of being silent throughout the whole fight.

During that scare, a majestic white tiger popped out from the back of Wang Ba Tan and bit his neck while plunging his claws on the front of his chest.

It gave him an absolute shock which was one that he would not recover from. The weight of the tiger after its pounce caused him to fall to the ground as Jin raced towards him and stabbed his sword through Wang Ba Tan's other side of the neck which inadvertently went to his heart.

"Cough! You think that this will kill me? All you did was remove *cough* my metaphysical form! I will haunt you in your dreams! Next time it won't be so easy for you to recognise me! You will live in fear for eternity, knowing that I will corrupt your mind and take over your body!" Wang Ba Tan cursed until he felt an intense white electric shock throughout his body.

Not only that, he realised the spiritual hold or link which he had latched on to Jin's plane of subconsciousness was not as strong as it should be.

"Got to thank you for showing me where you were hiding." An old harsh tone was heard from the back of the White Tiger.

"Gramps!" Jin's face was delighted when he saw Ming rubbing the White Tiger's head while the repeated new revelations shocked the imposter.

He had no doubts that this was his true grandfather, reigning control over the place.