

Last System 269

Chapter 269 Calm

"Judging by my gut alone, it should start tomo... No, today," I whispered to myself, raising my eyes to the sky in a futile attempt to penetrate through the thick treetops with my vision.

It was already too late into the night to speak about tomorrow. Mia's tournament would start in just a few hours tops.

'In other words, I have time before the dawn,' I thought, recalling how long I kept on running before I reached my current spot.

Even if the tournament didn't start the first thing in the morning, I still had to run a considerable distance back to return to the city!

'Getting past the gates will be easy. The real question is, can I handle watching her?' I asked myself, clearly aware of my current limitations.

As an Ascender, I could simply waltz through the gates without a care in the world. After learning a whole lot about this world from Mia's letters, I could tell that no one would be dumb enough to utter as much as a single moan of protest.

'The might makes right, huh?' I thought when a small smile formed on my lips.

This kind of a rule... I hated it with all my guts. But when I switched places and became the one strong enough to oppress the others, I didn't mind such reality all that much anymore.

But the other question remained.

Could I handle as little as just watching Mia perform from afar?

Given how she was the spark of my trauma, I had my doubts about my mental capability.

'It would be naive to take my problem lightly,' I thought, more aware of that fact than anyone else.

I overcame enough bullying in my world to understand just how fragile the human mind was. And what I was going through right now, I could perfectly recognize as the obvious giveaways of a powerful mental disorder.

'I need to fix this about myself first,' I told myself, dropping my mage's tower and sitting down by a tree. 'Otherwise, I will be unworthy to even watch her,' I thought, closing my eyes and focusing.

In order to deal with my trauma, I had to acknowledge it first. And it was a step that I refrained from taking all this time.

But it all ended now.

'Let's fucking do it,' I encouraged myself before intentionally recalling the events of my past. The events that I hoped to bury. And the events that I had no other choice but to relieve right now.

In an instant, my vision clouded. My surroundings contracted, trapping me in a small area within the entire open space of the forest.

The trees turned into metal bars, stopping my potential escape. The green treetops turned into a concrete roof. And the thick air all around me took the shape of the monstrosity that violated me.

Its lips, as huge as my arm on their own, curled into a devious smile.

My body started to shiver.

Even though I was aware, this was all but a mirage, knowing something and accepting it were two different topics altogether.

Every twist of the wind reminded me of all the feelings that I bottled up. Every noise coming from the forest made me relive the disgusting, sweat-filled memory of having that fat monster jump up and down on me.

"Fuccgrghr," I uttered half of a curse before dropping forward on my knees and dirtying the forest floor with my stomach's content.

'Enough!' I shouted to myself, cutting away the experience.

My body was covered in a cold sweat, shivering under the cold winds of the forest.

I curled my knees up to my chin before embracing them and closing myself in the embryonical position.

'I need to do it again,' I thought, biting down on my lips as I pushed away all the exhaustion and residual pain from my attempt. 'Pushing it back will only make it fester more,' I forced myself to believe before closing my eyes and returning to the past once again.

The oppressive aura returned, coating me with a powerful layer of anxiety.

I forced my eyes open, dropping all the ideas of fighting my trauma right now.

'How could I forget!' I thought, standing up and leaping for the nearest branch only to start climbing my way up the tree. 'This isn't the right moment to let myself be distracted!'

The aura that I could still feel wasn't an effect of my trauma. It was the influence of that meteor!

Yet, the second I reached the top of the tree, a question dawned upon me as I was about to look out to check the situation.

'Wait, why do I even bother?'

It was the simplest question possible. Yet one that several months worth of fun that I had playing Souls-like games taught me one thing.

There were things that you didn't need to bother with. There were opponents that you could just avoid. There were events that you didn't need to participate in.

Why I was then so keen on keeping an eye on this meteorite? Wasn't this just a waste of time?

After all, no matter how long I observed it, I could hardly predict where it would fall. And the chances of it falling right on my head were...

'It's because I'm nearing the pinnacle of this world,' I thought, reinforcing my hope that the Royal rank was the absolute limit of how far one could grow.

'The answer to that question is relatively simple,' I thought, shaking my head over my own naivete.

'If I won't take care of this, who will?'

I shook my head again, ready to raise my Mage's Tower again. In the end, I still have yet to practice the evolutions of my new skills!

Yet, just as I raised my wardens again, a small flash caught my attention.

I looked up, only to notice a small bit of violet splitting off from the main dot.

And then, it started to enlarge itself with every second, soon proving false all my hopes of it falling elsewhere.

The oppressive aura intensified... but far below its expected growth.

The meteorite loomed over my head for a little longer... and then it flew right above my head, only to crash into the forest several miles up ahead.

BOOM!

The sonic wave of the crash shook the entire forest, forcing me to cover my ears in fear of my eardrums giving up.

It wasn't the shaking that I was scared of. It was the pressure that could easily rupture my inner organs without even damaging my skin!

The wave of condensed air came... and went.

In the heat of a moment, I managed to raise my Mage's Tower just in time for my wardens to protect me from the collateral attack.

'What the hell was that,' I thought, shocked beyond any measure.

This was a force of nature. A true might that made even mage like me cover in fear while trembling on the ground.

But right now, I somehow managed to ward off its attack.

'Well, I guess the one thing I need to do right now is pretty obvious,' I thought, pulling out my spear and looking in the direction the meteor crashed.

'It's time to investigate!'