

Last System 456

Chapter 456 Torture Without The Torture

"You spawn of heresy..." the dragon hunter muttered, struggling to put even a single word out due to a set of five, simple reasons.

Namely, mister thumb and his four beauties, currently squeezing down at the man's throat.

I, on the other hand, just couldn't help it. The curiosity that his earlier attempts sparked now started to reach its peak.

'It's not like I'm just curious,' I attempted to persuade myself while I could feel my fingers squeezing the life out of the guy with each passing second. 'There is always some truth in myths, so whatever he believes in might hold a clue to the truths behind this world!'

I remembered all the corpses of the cultivators that I saw while returning to this place. I saw the devastation that this dragon hunter and his people brought upon the city.

And with all of that in mind... I couldn't help but relax my hand and drop the man to the ground.

"AAAAH!"

The instant I released the dragon hunter's throat, he instantly gasped for air, wiggling on the ground while struggling to regain the clarity of his mind.

"What heresy?" I asked nicely while not so nicely putting my foot down on the man's chest and pushing it down just far enough to prolong his breathless struggle.

If he couldn't get a single breath in before due to having his throat squeezed dry, now it was the lack of ability to decompress his lungs that caused nearly the same effect.

"Spare..." the man attempted to get some words out, only to fail miserably at the task.

"You won't be spared," I said coldly, the images of the destruction still way too vivid in my mind for me to let this man go so easily. "The most you will get is an easy death," I announced, caring not for appearances.

I wasn't the one to revel in cruelty. In fact, I was likely the person least suited for it in this entire world due to my memories from the former life that shaped me to be who I was in this new life of mine.

And yet...

I didn't enjoy acting in a cruel way at all. In fact, I despised the very notion of it!

But this world wasn't as simple and forgiving as to let me do only the things that I enjoyed. And in this particular moment, cruelty was the tool that promised the greatest reward for the least effort and with the greatest chances of the result being actually beneficial to my cause.

"You see," I leaned down, getting closer to the man's face. "I don't actually come from this world," I revealed in a whisper so silent that only the man right below me could hear me. "I come from a civilization that was really cultured, going as far as inventing something so silly as the rights of the prisoners," I continued the reveals.

But be it due to the ongoing torture clouding his mind, the pain of being unable to properly catch his breath, or maybe the shock that he summed up with the few words he managed to utter so far, the dragon hunter didn't react to my words all that much.

His face tensed up, for sure, but this could very well be his reaction to being brought to the literal edge between life and suffocation.

"But you see, the thing about all that culture and kindness that was at the core of my civilization," I whispered while putting a wide smile on my face, "it all came from the foundation of my ancestors going apeshit to figure out the precise limits of human endurance."

I raised up.

The parts that were risky for others to know were already out in the other party's brain.

And from the look in his eyes, the very fact that I revealed them to him proved that I really had no intention of letting him live.

It wasn't my threats from earlier that convinced him.

It was the fact that I shared something that he could easily tell I couldn't afford anyone to know.

"My ancestors built their heritage upon the corpses of those who opposed them," I said, using words that could be slightly confusing but didn't directly point at the truth behind my origin. "And despite all the facade they loved to put when the push came to shove, they would employ all sorts of unorthodox ways of causing pain."

I raised my face to the sky and turned silent for a moment.

As I stared at the sky, I juggled through all the memories I had of the time when I wasted my days away scrolling through random groups or videos on the internet.

And just like one could expect from someone interested in anything even remotely curious, it didn't take long for me to recall several simple yet extremely creative ways to torture people in a way that would make them go mad.

"I could put you in some sort of a cave where a single drop of water would fall on precisely the same spot on the top of your head," I whispered with a dreamy look on my face. "I heard, for how easy it sounds to bear with, being unable to scratch that part of your head made people go insane in just a few hours," I added while putting a contemplative look on my face.

After giving the man a moment to digest my words, I finally looked down, looking at his struggle-filled face with genuine curiosity.

"I was always curious to see whether that sort of torture was really as bad as I heard it was," I admitted to my honest feelings. Then, my smile twitched a little.

"Then there is the waterboarding when you put a cloth on someone's face before pouring water on the said cloth," I added. "I heard that it makes one feel like you are about to drown, even if you could easily handle the same amount of time underwater."

The look on the dragon hunter's face changed. And it was a miracle on its own, given how he was already fully preoccupied with trying to survive on the tiny amount of oxygen I allowed him to breathe in.

'It's not the idea of torture itself that will convince him,' I thought, recognizing the signs of absolute terror that slowly rose in the man's eyes.

A terror that went beyond the simple fear of death.

'It's the precise details of those means of torture that will convince him of just how effective it is,' I thought.

"T-the heresy..." the dragon hunter... broke.

I could see it in his eyes. The light of resistance that kept on burning throughout me choking him now vanished, replaced with a completely passive look.

I raised my leg a little, finally allowing the man to take a proper, full breath in.

"Only another dragon could escape the trap of the dragon's heart mana pocket," the man uttered, slowly getting his words out while still struggling to control his breathing. "A dragon..."

The man's eyes escaped to the side.

His entire body trembled.

"A dragon, or one of those who returned, destined to break the god's will and bring this world to an end."