

MONARCH OF TIME

Chapter 1 - 1 A Life like death

The sun slowly rose in the Guangdong province of China.

In a complex of abandoned apartments scheduled for demolition an alarm was ringing at 6:00 am in the morning.

The sound was coming from an almost broken down apartment, a door you couldn't close properly no matter how hard you pushed, with a chair behind it in a 45 degree angle acting as a lock for the door.

The apartment was medium sized, around 80 s.m. yet it was almost empty inside. A bed mattress was in the middle of the living room along with a small sized table with an alarm clock on it. On the side of the room were 10 big water bottles along with some packs of instant noodles.

A body could be seen moving under the blanket that was covering the mattress, reaching for the alarm clock on the table.

"Ugh" that person groaned after he tapped the alarm clock once.

A malnourished body revealed itself from underneath the blanket as it slowly rose from the bed.

A young man seemingly around 16-17 years old rose from the mattress as he walked towards the bathroom. The water was cut off since the apartment was abandoned so the young man couldn't even take a shower in the morning. He grabbed a half empty bottle of water from the table with the alarm clock on it, and used it along with his toothbrush to wash his teeth and when he finished, he then gulped down the rest of the water from the bottle. Then he grabbed his work clothes from the table and put them on as he left the apartment.

It was around a 20 minute walk from the apartment complex until he reached a huge construction site with a lot of warning signs of: "Danger" and "Work in progress".

As soon as he walked towards an 8 story half-finished building, the young man heard a voice from behind him shouting "ay Rock". The voice belonged to a 45 year old man.

"Good morning uncle" said Rock.

Of course Rock wasn't his real name, but a nickname given to him by the people working in the construction site with him as he didn't like to talk that much. Rock didn't have a real name from his parents, he was an orphan, and he grew up in a house complex owned by the government for orphaned children. The government send food to those houses once a week but it wasn't enough for the kids there to feed themselves. The orphanages were all full and that's why the government created these houses and sent food to the children but a lot of them still died due to hunger or illnesses as there was no one to take care of them even when they were ill. Rock stayed there until he was 12. He could fight the other children for the food, but even then it was not enough to feed himself so he decided to leave.

He attended junior high-school in a public school not far away from the house he lives. It was school in the morning and construction work in the afternoon.

Usually people in the construction sites didn't allow kids at work, considering it was illegal but due to the low wages, few people went to work at those construction sites, and since lower manpower equaled slow production, the construction manager accepted even a kid like Rock with skinny arms and legs, and allowed him to work there, for a pitiful amount of money as his wage of course. Rock wasn't dissatisfied, as he would finally have enough money every month to feed himself at least.

This situation occurred until Rock graduated from high-school but he never stopped working at the construction sites as that was his only way of income.

It would be a lie to say that he didn't feel aggrieved. Even working for his food in construction sites without proper security measures was considered normal to him nowadays but he still hoped deep inside that his luck would change one day and his life would take a turn for the better.

For the past half a year that Rock has been working on this construction site, this "uncle" has taken care of him plenty of times, either by sharing with him food or drinks, or taking care of helping him during work when needed.

Needless to say that rock felt extremely thankful to this man and he also helped him during work whenever possible as well.

"Haa kid.. i knew you wouldn't bring breakfast with you again. My wife gave me extra again today so let's share it together." as soon as he finished his sentence he grabbed a plastic bag and took out 2 big water bottles along with 2 sandwiches and 4 rice balls. He split them at 2 portions and gave one to Rock.

The man knew Rock wasn't one to accept charity so easily so he said "Hey kid we have to eat up to start working, you still need to take care of me as this job is really dangerous so eat up."

Rock still didn't respond, until the man spoke again and said: "You will treat me to drink again when you get your wage okay kid? Let's eat!" then without even looking at Rock again, the man started eating the food.

Rock didn't say anything but he also started eating, keeping this gesture of this man deep inside his heart. This middle aged man was the only one who had ever shown any form of care for him, in the 20 years of his life and Rock would never forget this kindness.

After they finished their food, they started their daily work but little did they know that this would be the last day of Rock's life.