

It had been nearly a month since John had been reborn, and not much had changed since then. His days were spent mostly in his cradle, which drove him mad with boredom, the novelty of being reborn had long passed. Hospital personnel would feed him, bathe and change his diaper, the latter of which was humiliating for a grown old man. Still, he enjoyed this feeling of youth. The feeling of inhaling massive amounts of air, invigorating every single cell in his body was truly addictive.

He felt as if he was overflowing with limitless energy that he urged to expend, his mind felt fresh, and his body felt comfortable. He would often spend his days trying to move around as much as he could within his cradle, but his body was far too weak to do much at this stage. He would often spend time contemplating his future and gathering as much information about anything he could.

He'd even learnt his own name in the process, the nurse always addressed him with 'Rui'. A strange name, but one he was beginning to get used to. As for his surroundings, he'd already noted several oddities about this place. For starters, the race of the humans he'd come across was unclear, there was no skin color that seemed to be the norm, both men and women ranged from light skinned to dark. But this wasn't the strange part, the strange part was their hair.

('Are they coloring it? Does this country have a fad or something?')

He had seen hair of almost every primary and even secondary color. Red, blue, yellow, green, purple, blonde, silver, pink etc. This was a rather shocking sight to a man from a world of mostly black, blonde and little red hair. In fact, he had come across only one person with black hair, himself, he was

accustomed to this since he had black hair in his previous life as well, yet it seems black hair was not only not the norm, but also exceedingly rare. Of all the countless people that had walked past the corridor in the past month, he hadn't seen a single person with black hair.

The second equally strange thing he had noticed were the eyes. People's eyes' color was all over the place. Just like with hair, he found a spectrum of every single color except, yet again, his own eye color: black. Both his eyes, and hair were pitch black, something that was strange too, as if they sucked the light out of the world. He suspected that these traits were rare, perhaps even ominous based on the fearful, perhaps even disdainful glances that some people would throw at him.

('I hope that isn't the case.') He sighed.

('In any case, this world definitely isn't Earth, there were no races with such hair and eyes.')

Just then, the door opened and he glanced at the nurse who was assigned to him. She was accompanied by a blonde-haired woman who looked to be in her late thirties wearing something that resembled a fusion between a gown and a traditional yukata. The nurse lifted and passed him to her as they conversed, though he wasn't sure he understood what they were conversing about. The blonde-haired woman played with and smiled at him while occasionally asking the nurse questions. Ten minutes later, after she seemed to sign some paperwork, she left the hospital with him.

('Figured this day would come, one month in a hospital is way too much.') He mused to himself, but he welcomed the change. Finally, he could learn more about this world. He glanced around and took in the environment. The first thing he noticed was that technology was most strange, it was primitive compared to the twenty-first century on Earth, but it was esoteric and didn't seem to match the historical technological progression of humanity on Earth.

Their lighting sources were still a mystery to him, their medicine was also strange, they used strange concoctions, and apparatuses while tending to him. He had no frame of reference for them because he couldn't recall any such equivalent in Earth's history.

('There's something very different about this world, that's for sure.')

A minority of people carried belongings in makeshift bags made from cloth, it seemed only a larger majority used handbags, or other carrying articles. The sense of fashion was strange, it was a mix of middle age western and eastern clothing, it seemed both men and women wore clothing that generally enveloped their entire body. This was generally a trend that existed prior to the Industrial Revolution that allowed for the production of clothing articles with a more sophisticated and difficult production process.

This would suggest that their technology was low, but the architecture of buildings was rather pristine considering most of them were residences or small-time shops, not something he would expect from medieval Earth. These oddities threw him off, he wasn't sure what how to evaluate their technological prowess.

The weather was beautiful, the sun shone bright, yet the presence of adequate number of clouds shielded the surface from much of its wrath.

Cool winds blew, rustling the leaves and cherry blossoms of trees and grass that populated the sidewalks, it was truly a picturesque sight to Rui, a sight that could seldom be found on modern Earth.

The stone roads were populated with bustling citizens buzzing between what seemed to be a flea market of domestic goods and services set up in small stalls or shops.

Just as he was admiring and absorbing his surroundings, the blonde-haired woman waved her hand and called out to a man pulling a rickshaw. She

quickly got on with Rui after exchanging a few words with the rickshaw puller, before he started pulling them away at a brisk walking pace.

('Hm, an economical occupation with a low barrier of entry.') He noted, there were plenty of travelling rickshaws he spotted as they crisscrossed through the town. They travelled further and further away from the bustling populated markets, before soon, they reached a house with a huge fence, before they got off. Rui noticed that the blonde-haired woman paid him off with what looked to be a bronze coin.

('The coins are remarkably intricate; how can their most common and universal currency be so sophisticated without electricity? maybe I really have underestimated this place.')

The house was a little worn down. The paint had significantly worn off and the building was chipped and cracked at multiple areas, albeit small enough to not be dangerous. Still, the garden was surrounding the house seemed well maintained and all in all it painted a homely image. The blonde-haired woman carried Rui to the entrance before knocking.

"Yes?" A young red-haired woman opened the door slightly, only to beam in joy, as her eyes fell on the woman holding him.

"Mother Lashara!"

('Lashara is her name?') Rui wondered.

"Alice." Lashara smiled back.

"Welcome back." Alice replied before turning to Rui with a curious expression.

"So this is him? The black-haired, black-eyed baby that no orphanage accepted for a whole month?"magic

"Yes, the poor child has been alone during the most tender moments of his life, I couldn't help myself after seeing how cute he was."

Alice cooed and cuddled at him before taking him in and showing him off to the others.

('So this is where I'll be living from now on eh?') Rui pondered.

('This... I can get used to this.')