

MMORPG: The Almighty Ring

#Chapter 1 - The Mysterious Ring - Read MMORPG: The Almighty Ring Chapter 1 - The Mysterious Ring

Chapter 1: The Mysterious Ring

“Dad! Can you buy me a Gaming Pod, please?” Jiang Fei asked his father, his face feverish with excitement.

Almost instantly, the reply came blaring into his eardrums, as his father’s face, cheerful just a moment ago, turned into a scowl. “In your dreams!”

“Young Fei, you’re already in high school! You can’t just keep playing games!” As if it made things any better, his mother chipped in from the sidelines, barely even looking up.

“Mom! This game is nothing like... Like... Anything! Shengshi Enterprise has spent more than 13 years working on this godly game! It has even been dubbed as the best game in the world! They are calling it the second world! Dawn Break, that’s the name of the game. They even programmed it in a way that alters our perception of time! Time inside this world would be slowed down! Those who play the game would enjoy a longer life!” Jiang Fei explained to his parents with much gusto.

Dawn Break was a technological breakthrough of its time. Not only was it able to emulate real-world physics, it did so to the quark. Through the use of a newly-developed technology, the game even enabled humans to play in their sleep! In the eight hours of sleep, one could be fully functional in the game! Those eight hours would be 24 hours of wholesome gameplay in that hyper-realistic world!

His father spun around and directed a finger at Jiang Fei. It quivered as his voice rose. “Don’t buy into those stupid taglines! That’s just how gaming companies reel in gullible oaths like you. They just want you to pour all your hard-earned money into their honey pot! Oh, but who am I to say anything. Let those idiots believe whatever truth that sounds right to their ears! You! Are my son, Fei! Not one of those gullible idiots! Non-idiots don’t get to play! Your current priority is to finish high school! Once you’re in a reputable university, you can do whatever you want!” Jiang Fei’s father was adamant.

“Dad! You’re too much! Even the government endorses this game! How could they lie to us?! Not only would it guarantee us a solid 8 hours of sleep, it won’t even get in the way of my study time!”

Jiang Fei gave one last push.

His father seemed to swell in size. "I'll only say this one more time. No. Negative. Denied! That's it. If I don't see you in your room doing your homework in 20 seconds, consider your allowance halved!"

"Stupid old fart."

Jiang Fei lowered his head, muttering under his breath. He knew that he would go no further with this. He knew his father did not hold anything against gaming, per se. The old man had only been this close to bursting a blood vessel due to the price tag of the gaming pod. It was just his father being a little old-fashioned; as if gaming would affect anything.

...

The bell rang. As the teacher took his exit, a plump little fellow scurried over to Jiang Fei.

"Brother Fei, how's it going? Dawn Break's launching tonight! Have you prepared your gaming pod yet?"

"Ugh... Don't get me started. I won't be joining you guys this time. Rather, I can't," Jiang Fei said with a bitter smile.

"Woah. What's wrong? I'm not the only one counting on you. We've got a band of brothers here!" the fat boy said anxiously.

He was Zhao Feng, one of the few friends Jiang Fei had. Jiang Fei was in was the ninth class of his year. It was supposed to be the class filled with smart students. Ironically, Jiang Fei's results were only average at best. He never got any better, neither did he get any worse. His physical education wasn't any good either, making him the characteristically insociable shut-in. With all those characteristics, Jiang Fei was the perfect "invisible" man. The kind that would never attract anyone's attention.

"Ugh... It's my dad. He's not buying me the gaming pod. Not like there's anything I could do to change his mind."

Jiang Fei rolled his eyes as he complained. Zhao Feng was the kind of friend that Jiang Fei had not needed to hold back his words.

"How about I get the bros to buy you one?" Zhao Feng said. Both Zhao Feng and Jiang Fei were equally insignificant in the grand scale of society. The big man was also just as inept. That's how these invisible birds of a feather flocked together to vanish.

Jiang Fei grunted.

"Do I look like a beggar?"

He lowered his voice. "Where am I going to put the pod even if you could somehow get me one? That thing is huge! My dad is going to swing a sledgehammer at it when he sees me lugging it home. It'll make it to my room in pieces!"

Jiang Fei sighed disgruntledly. He knew that there was no way he could play the game, with or without the pod, unless he could persuade his father to allow him to play the game itself. It was never about the gaming pod.

"Oh man... Poor Brother Fei! Without you, our brotherhood will hang limp!" Zhao Feng grunted, shaking his head.

"Enough about it. Give it some time. Perhaps my dad would update the firmware in his skull..." said Jiang Fei, patting Zhao Feng's shoulders.

"Let's hope so."

Zhao Feng nodded.

Jiang Fei had always loved gaming, especially those hyper-realistic titles like Dawn Break. As a man, how would he not like swords and magic? When a man is given the chance to fight, it was an opportunity to place one's footprint in the pages of history. Generally speaking, it was every regular young man's dream. With the advancement of computer technology, warfare would be obsolete. Or at least, it would happen over digital space, where zeroes and ones would be flying across the digital battlefield, instead of missiles and bullets. Perhaps, a war-loving man like Jiang Fei would be left with the only option there is; a fully immersive, hyper-realistic game!

Sadly, that chance was gone. Ever since Jiang Fei entered middle school, Jiang Fei's father had coiled around him like a python. All the gaming consoles in the house had been stashed away! Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs)? That was out of the question.

...

After enduring the "torturing hell" called school, Jiang Fei walked home, crestfallen. It was barely 6 in the evening, but the world already felt cold and dark. Winter was quickly approaching. The sun was working on shorter shifts.

"Hmm... What's that...?"

Jiang Fei strolled along his usual route home. The low-hitting rays of the sun struck something on the ground, down by the roots of a huge tree. It caught Jiang Fei's eye.

"Hohoho! Someone must have dropped this ring! It's my lucky day! What a nice ring!"

Jiang Fei picked up the platinum-colored ring and raised it up to his eye. The design of the ring was plain; simple, minus any engravings or gems. Still, he found beauty in that simplicity.

“Doubt it’s worth much. Might as well...” said Jiang Fei, casually slipping it on.

Over the table at dinner, Jiang Fei tried once again to convince his father. He was shot down in record time. No.

With that word echoing in his mind and the fact that Dawn Break was about to launch that night, Jiang Fei shut himself in his room. By 10, Jiang Fei was done with his homework. With a heavy heart, Jiang Fei collapsed on his bed and stared at the clock ticking away. So close... yet so far...

“Ugh...”

Dawn Break’s official servers were launching at 10 pm that night. From there, gamers would enjoy a solid 8 hours of fun on average, ending their wholesome session at 6 in the morning. That was the suggested duration, at least. It was equivalent to a full 24 hours in the game!

“Damn! It’s almost starting! The game of the century is almost starting, and I am here, doing nothing on my bed! URGH!”

Jiang Fei wrapped a pillow around his face and let out a muffled scream. His fingers incidentally crossed, one of them touching the ring.

“Receiving strong neural impulses...”

“Target connection... Game: Dawn Break.”

“Connecting...”

“Target connection established! Receiving Data...”

“Data received! Setting up Interface...”

“Interface completed! User may now proceed!”

“What the hell?”

Jiang Fei gasped in surprise. He bolted upright and stared at glowing ring.

“Woosh!”

A bright white light burst out, blinding Jiang Fei for a brief second. When his eyes recovered, he was no longer standing in his room!

“Ding! Welcome to the world of Dawn Break! Welcome USER#34784! I am your assistant!”

The sound of a young, cheerful girl rang in his ears.

“Dawn Break? Is this the login screen?”

Jiang Fei could not believe his eyes. The fear and anxiety was immediately replaced with excitement.

“Hmm. This isn’t exactly the login screen. This is the character creation menu!” said the assistant.

“Am... Am I dreaming?”

Still reeling, a part of Jiang Fei’s brain tried to grasp the situation. He did not even have a gaming pod, to begin with. How was he at this menu? This must be a dream! He was probably too exhausted after being slammed by his homework! On top of it, he was still in bed! Rings don’t just glow!

Day was for the cold, harsh truth, and the night was for dreams and fantasies! That was the only way this made sense. His brain had to channel his desires for the game somewhere, somehow or it would blow.