

## **Few Wives 531**

Chapter 531: Lonely Althea...

As Muku and his girls were having a heated conversation telepathically. Althea was observing them from a distance.

There was no way she wouldn't do such a thing right? They had just met so she didn't trust them at all. Even if they were no threat to her.

After all, their background and strength were too mysterious. Sure they answered what she asked and she sensed no lies. But she still felt like she was missing something.

So she hoped to spot what she was missing by spying on them.

Unfortunately, she got nothing.

But that just made her even more suspicious of them. After all, it was clear that they were communicating somehow. She just didn't know how nor felt anything. Which should have been impossible considering their power difference.

"Interesting. There really is more to them than just luck huh? Even if I don't meet that variable, maybe they will be enough. How to get them to trust me though..." Althea spoke to herself.

That's right, she was being truthful when she said she meant them no harm. After all, Monarchs weren't inherently evil or twisted. They all had different personalities. It was just that most let their power get to their heads.

Though there are total scum like Ares who were rotten from the start.

Anyway, Althea tried to figure out how to make them trust her more and maybe bring her into their secret communication method.

She thought of showering them with gifts, but that seemed way too sus and obvious even to her. Only people with terrible intentions do that. At least most of the time. Especially when there's no justifying relationship between the two parties.

Anyway, that route was ditched on the spot. It definitely wouldn't work. She needed something else... She couldn't think of anything else.

"Eh. I'm not much of a conspirator. I'll just show them my sincerity and hope it gets through to them. After all, I have all the time in the world..." Althea spoke to herself again as she gave up on doing anything out of the norm.

After that, she stopped spying and focused on herself more.

What she didn't notice was the glint of desire that had appeared in her eyes when she looked at the group.

It wasn't that she wanted a romantic relationship with Muku... Or any of the girls.

She just wanted to have comrades as they did.

Ever since she was young, the only close one she has had was her father/master. Her mother supposedly left soon after giving birth because baby Althea was weak and frail which made her feel ashamed as well as hate the baby.

She was a warrior who worshipped strength, so it was somewhat understandable. Not to mention that most beasts didn't care about familiar ties in the first place.

Anyway, every other beast either wanted to use her in some way, feared her, or hated her. This included all her subordinates. They were all scared of the larger-than-life strongest Monarch. Which was understandable really.

But it left her feeling extremely lonely. Even the other Monarchs had cliques. She had no one.

It was one of the reasons why she focused on cultivation more than anything else. There was simply nothing else to do.

At some point, she forgot that she was lonely. But that didn't mean she wasn't. She just couldn't feel it anymore.

That's why she missed it this time and didn't find her actions weird.

Oh, and they were definitely weird. How can a Beast Monarch desire to have weak humans of unknown origins as her friends?

Well, it was Althea's problem to figure out... As soon as she realises she has the problem.

But hey, it was a good thing for Muku's group otherwise they might have long gotten killed...

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A few weeks later...

Althea mostly kept her distance not wanting to disturb their cultivation which they furiously undertook after their weird silent talk.

She'd only appear when Muku stopped cultivating for breaks and chat with him a bit. She you quite liked those times.

What she didn't know was that at first Muku only did it to see what she was up to. After all, they were still in a weird place completely at her mercy so...

Anyway, after seeing how eager she was to talk, he made sure to come out once a week for an hour or two.

He had noticed what Althea hadn't. And that was her loneliness. As a lover of women, he couldn't just sit by right?

It definitely had nothing to do with Althea being as hot as Audrey. He was just a good person okay?

He felt quite bad for her after learning more about her since she was always ready to overshare when asked.

So he decided to leave her a phone and show her how to surf the internet this time. Yup, it even worked in the secret dimension. That's how Op his mother was. He wouldn't be surprised if it works in the void too... Which unbeknownst to him, it actually did. After all, that's where she calls him from.

Of course, he wouldn't leave her his phone... His search history was on that. A man never risks revealing that for anything!...

They were currently speaking about a random topic on the beast world when he suddenly pulled out his phone.

"What's that?" Althea asked while eyeing it curiously.

"It's a mobile phone. In my world, this is used to..." Muku went on to explain what it was to her.

And as an extremely intelligent being like any high-ranked being really, she understood everything he said easily.

"Okay, so why do you pull it out. Do you want to call someone?" Althea asked confusedly.

"This is a gift from me to you. It's a small way to thank you for everything you've done and are still doing for us. While you say it's an equal exchange, I still feel like we're taking advantage of you. So I'd be honoured if you would acce..." Muku was busy being a gentleman when she snatched the phone and started playing with it with a grin on her face.

She was trying to implement what he had just told her. And seeing it working made her so happy that she couldn't stop herself from smiling with her eyes glowing with happiness.

At that point, Muku stopped speaking. She was clearly not listening to him anymore. Hell, she had probably forgotten that he was there.

As for how she could read it. That was another thing his mother did, anyone could read anything on the phone from the moment they looked at it even if they weren't familiar with the language.

Hell, it even taught the language in less than a second. So Althea was just as good at Muku's language as any human who knew it. Probably better than most even.

[I think it's safe to say you like it right?😊] Muku asked her through text.

[Yes. Very much! Thank you!👉😊😊👉] Althea replied instantly.

Looking at the emojis made Muku's mouth twitch. She was already behaving like a typical crazed phone girl from day one. Who knows what she will be like in a day or two?

Maybe she will be using slang he can't understand like the other girls.

[Well, enjoy your phone. I gotta go back to my cultivation] Muku bid her goodbye then got up and left.

[Later!👉👉😊😊😊] Althea replied with more emojis than made Muku's lip twitch.

She didn't even look up to say it in person despite him still being right there.

He promised himself never to text her unless it was necessary because he didn't know how much of her weird use of emojis he could take.

He also hoped that the phone wouldn't consume her like it had consumed many before her... Pfft, she was already consumed. He could only pray for her soul now..

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A few days later...

Althea finally managed to unglue herself from the phone's screen.

On day one she explored the functions and looked into some random stuff. On day two she discovered K-dramas. And she wasn't able to escape them until now.

"Wow. This thing is amazing. If only I were a human. I would have long had this thing and wouldn't have been so bored all these years. Then again, if I were a human, I might have long died because of one reason or another. So I guess this is fine. But it shouldn't be able to work here from what I know. Let me see what it's made of..." Althea spoke to herself.

Her eyes began glowing a dark purple as she looked at the phone. She was trying to look into it. Which should have happened easily. But it didn't. Her [all-seeing eyes] actually failed her.

Something that has only ever happened when looking at ancient relics. Even the other Monarchs could be seen through. Yet this thing couldn't.

She refused to believe it and focused more. Yet nothing changed.

This made her mad and she decided to prob into it instead of just looking. Which would be her biggest mistake that day...

The moment her divine sense tried to enter the phone and look around, an invisible force repelled it and she was hit by a headache so bad she wished she were dead.

Before she knew it, she fell to the ground and fainted from the pain.

Blood flowed out of her nose and mouth...

Chapter 532 Focusing on cultivation

A few hours later...

Althea finally woke up from her unconscious state. Something she had never gone through in all her life.

Her head ached a little. But overall she was fine. She was confused for a moment until she remembered what had happened.

Without a second thought, she threw away the phone in fear.

She then looked at it cautiously from a distance for a few seconds.

Then got a stick and started poking it.

That went on for a minute until she completely calmed down.

At that point, she had realised that the device wasn't inherently bad. It was only bad when one tried to poke into it.

She hatefully cursed Muku for not warning her. But then again, he probably didn't know. And even if he did, he wouldn't have expected her to try it or face such a heavy backlash from it so it wasn't his fault. He was just trying to be nice.

But one question remained...

"Where did he get this thing?" Althea spoke to herself.

Her gaze then wandered to where he and the others were cultivating. At that point, they were still far away from MR7, but making steady progress.

Despite taking breaks, Muku was still keeping up with the rest. That was definitely a result of his talent.

Only Raya was ahead of them all. Muku might have been able to keep up with her had he not taken breaks but not now. She had pulled ahead.

Anyway, it didn't look like he was going to take a break anytime soon. Likely because he had given her a phone so it wasn't necessary anymore.

For that reason, Althea was left to study her phone, which she both loved and feared at the same time.

After a while, she had completely forgotten about everything that had happened as she started watching old human reels on some popular app from before the apocalypse since no new stuff was getting posted for obvious reasons.

She even forgot to clean the purple blood that had stained her face and clothes until she noticed her reflection on the phone. It was only then that she cleaned up and continued.

The matter with the phone had been put aside for now. That's how carefree she was. She had figured out that as long as she kept her boundaries then everything was okay.

There was no point thinking about it on her own after all...

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Around a whole month later...

Muku finally came out for a break...

None of them had reached MR7 even after all that cultivation but they were getting closer.

It was a lot harder to advance when one didn't rely on killing alone.

And honestly, unless they get Mrs C's help which she was obviously not willing to give, they couldn't cultivate any faster.

"Hello, Ms Althea" Muku greeted Althea.

No he wasn't being disrespectful. She was the one who told him to address her like that instead of Monarch Althea. She had wanted to just be called Althea but the girls refused.

They felt that if they let her and Muku become too familiar then they might fall for each other..

Yes, they really thought that Muku could pull a Monarch if he was given the chance. Especially one as innocent as Althea in matters of the heart and with so much curiosity in it.

Yeah, as fellow girls they could tell that about Althea from the moment they understood her a little.

"Yo!" Althea replied in a way that caught Muku off guard.

It seemed the phone was already changing her. Then again, it was a phone that didn't die, didn't get bad service, or have any issues, so Althea had been using it nonstop since she got it.

"...Ah, sup. So how is the phone treating you?" Muku asked in a slightly awkward tone.

"It's great. Just one minor issue..." Althea replied without looking up. She seemed to be playing some game or something.

"Really? What's that?" Muku asked curiously.

After all, he knew the phone quite well and knew that there were no issues with it at all. It was even indestructible.

"Oh, it's nothing major. It just attacked me and made me faint for the first time ever in my life when I tried to poke into it with my divine sense. It made me wonder... Where did you get these phones? I know for a fact they aren't a product of your world. At least not before the war" Althea replied.

She finally looked up at Muku with a questioning gaze.

"Ah. That. Yes, you're right. These were a gift from the operator of the restricted zone after passing the trials we were given" Muku replied immediately.

He expected this question at some point so he had already prepared the answer.

"What? Restricted Zone? How? How did you even gain access?" Althea asked in shock.

"It went like this..." Muku went on to tell Althea about the trial ground. How he found himself after that fight with the resurrected Monarch and whatnot.

Of course, some details were skipped. From how he said it, one would assume that Mrs C was just some spirit who managed the trial ground and not the strongest being he knew.

Which honestly he thought she was when he first saw her.

A lot of details were mixed and twisted but nothing was objectively a lie, so it was okay.

"To think that that's what's in those zones. Y'all just made history. I wish I could have been there. It sucks how the greatest mystery in this world is for humans. How is that fair? Well whatever, if it's from that mysterious place, I guess it makes sense. But to think the rewards are so personalised. How wondrous" Althea completely ate up Muku's bullshit.

"Yeah. I was happy to receive it too. It makes communication way easier. And I'm sorry that such a thing happened to you. I didn't know it was possible" Muku replied and apologised.

He and the girls never looked into how it was made since they never had the reason to. So he didn't know that such a thing would happen. Though he doubted that anything would have happened to them anyway.

It was probably Mrs C protecting her creation from outsiders. She tended to disregard beings that had nothing to do with her after all.

It's something he had noticed when she visited that time and completely ignored all the people in the embryo including Sarah's child despite always demanding a grandchild from Muku.

"No it's fine. It's my fault for being too curious. As they say in your world. Curiosity killed the cat right?" Althea waved off the apology.

Even if she was a bit angry initially. She likes the phone way too much to be angry after such a long time.

"Okay. Thank you for understanding. Is there any news from outside?" Muku asked about the outside world.

It was something he asked about every time he came for a break. They had to keep up with current events after all.

"Nothing yet. The Monarchs are plotting something as usual, but the plans don't have anything to do with your world since it's going to be a while since an R7 appears. I do feel that something might happen here soon though" Althea replied.

She had unpaused her game after getting her answer. So she wasn't looking at Muku anymore.

"Okay. That's good I guess. I won't bother you anymore" Muku spoke then turned to leave.

Since his world was okay, then he was okay. It wasn't that he cared about it. But some of his girls had family there, so he had to know what was going on at all times.

"Peace" Althea replied without looking up.

Muku's lip twitched but he said nothing...

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Around 7 months later...

Muku came out for his monthly breaks that only lasted a few minutes.

At that point, they had all reached MR7 and were working towards the peak which wasn't too far away.

Taking so long to advance was honestly draining when they were used to advancing quickly. But it was safe, so it wasn't all that bad.

"Is there anything yet?" Muku asked Althea without even greeting her.

At that point, they were quite familiar so it wasn't necessary at all.

And he had long lost all awe for Althea after coming out one time and seeing her wearing hip-hop themed clothes he had no idea where she got them from.

It got worse every time he came as she had a different set of weird clothes each time.

Right now she had a medieval-themed noble dress. Yeah, she didn't care about the time period. As long as she liked it, she wore it.

"There is some news this time actually. I heard that an R7 finally appeared in your world. Interestingly enough it wasn't a human or beast. But some failed experiment made by some Monarch remnant no one knows the identity of. After that, another two appeared a few hours later. And one of them was mine, isn't that just amazing?" Althea replied trying to speak like a noble woman and failing terribly.

"What?!" Muku was shocked and it was obvious in his reply.

Chapter 533 Trust

"What? Did you think things would stay the same because your group was away? I mean, I have to give it to you. It actually took so long for them to appear after you left which shows that your group is special but still, you aren't the only people on that planet. So you should have expected this right?" Althea replied to Muku seriously.

She even paused what she was doing to speak to him properly.

"Yeah, I know. I just didn't think it would happen so soon you know" Muku replied in a slightly defeated tone.

He thought they'd have at least reached R8 by the time anyone reaches R7 back home. But things didn't go according to plan, which was quite apparent.

"Well, such is life. So what's your next move?" Althea asked curiously.

"Well, we can only go back as we are now I guess. After all, we're closing in on the peak, so we should be able to make a diff..." Muku was telling Althea his plan when she interrupted him.

"Pfft hahaha. You think you can make a difference against R8s and R9s? Hahaha. That's the funniest thing I've heard all day. And mind you, I was watching comedic reels. Anyway, did you forget that not only will the truly strong beasts from here go there but your slumbering experts will also wake up? The planet is not as defenceless as you think. If anything, they have a better chance now than they did before. After all, the people who actually know what they are doing are finally getting involved. And honestly, your presence, all of you together won't make a difference with your current strength" Althea spoke the hard truth Muku needed to hear.

"What do you propose we do then?" Muku asked, feeling slightly lost.

"Stay and continue your cultivation. Maybe double down and stop taking breaks. You need to completely lock in. Push harder if possible. That's if you want to gain the strength to make a difference of course. If not, then you're free to continue your current pace. I don't mind having you here. And we can go together when the Monarchs are finally free to go there. I can protect you all even if you're still weak when the time comes. And with that variable there, I'm sure they will be fine. Speaking of which, I'm starting to think that the failed experiment that broke free is the variable. The thing could escape a Monarch's control, so who knows what else it can do... That would suck though, I heard it's a complete mess made up of who knows how many lifeforms. I don't want to be associated with such a thing"

Althea gave Muku his options then strayed until she was speaking about herself.

"I don't think it's that thing. There's no way it would fight for the world like that. And thank you for the second offer, but we'll take the first one. Even if you can protect us, we still want our own strength"

Muku replied.

"Ah. That makes sense. Such a thing can't be heroic. It's probably pure evil at best. As for the option you chose, I'm not surprised. It's what I expected you to choose. To that, I want to offer you an option to get stronger quickly. I can help you infuse mana into your body. However, it's so painful you'll likely wish you were dead. Are you up for it?" Althea replied and then presented a previously unstated method to him.

"Huh? Why didn't you say so sooner?" Muku asked.

"Well, it's no secret that you didn't trust me and I didn't trust you back then. So suggesting such a thing would have sounded sus at best, don't you think?" Althea replied plainly.

"Yeah, you're right there's no way I would have accepted such a thing" Muku replied plainly as well.

The two of them had gotten very familiar with each other over the months and realised that as long as you don't cross the other, then they weren't bad at all.

"See? Anyway, are you up for it?" Althea replied.

"Of course I am. How long will it take?" Muku accepted and began asking for details.

"Hmm. To get to the peak of R7, I'd say a month from where you are right now" Althea replied.

"A month of nonstop pain, sounds fun... Okay, let's do it" Muku agreed.

He calculated that if he did it on his own, it would take three to four months more, so this was a good deal. He was long used to pain, so that wasn't an issue either.

"Great! We can start whenever you want" Althea replied excitedly.

It's a method her master had used on her in the past and she had always wanted to use it on someone else and make them embarrass themselves as she did from the pain.

"Let's start now" Muku replied while walking closer to Althea.

"Stop right there!" A voice was heard from the distance.

Althea and Muku looked over and saw Jade and the other girls approaching.

"What? Why have you all stopped cultivating?" Muku asked confusedly.

"Shut up. Who said you could not only make such a serious decision on your own, but also go first as well? I'm the one going first, move out of the way!... I'll do it first" Jade replied as she pushed Muku out of the way and walked up to Althea with a brave face on.

Muku looked at her and the others and immediately understood what was going on. They were afraid that the method might be unsafe or have some hidden mechanics, so they were going to use their bodies to test first.

Jade had probably just stepped up before the others could.

It made Muku feel loved, yet he wanted to beat them all up for being reckless at the same time. Since when was it the women who took risks for the men? Wasn't it supposed to be the other way around?

In fact, he had the same worries, which is why he wanted to go ahead without working them up to avoid this kind of situation.

Unfortunately, it wasn't his lucky day and Jade managed to hear him.

In fact, she knew about everything he and Althea spoke about over the months as she would always eavesdrop when they spoke.

And since it was just her senses being great, even Althea didn't notice anything as there wasn't any form of energy getting used. And it was different from being looked at where one can actually feel it.

"No I came her..." Muku wanted to refuse but...

"Shut up! She's already said she'll go first. Just quietly wait for your turn... Behind all of us" Surprisingly it was the ever respectful Audrey who spoke like that.

It seemed she and the others really didn't play around in protecting their man. Even the confused Elsa supported Muku going last.

"But wait, doesn't this mean the first five who go first will advance first then be the ones to get those favours from me? How is that fair?" Muku asked trying to sow discord among them.

"We'll use rock-paper-scissors of course. Jade discovered your treachery so she can go first, the rest of us will work it out that way..." Audrey replied calmly.

Easily putting an end to Muku's plot.

"Sigh. Fine" Muku finally relented. There was no beating them after all.

"Ms Althea, I'm ready whenever you are" Jade spoke to Althea.

"Sure, sure. Let's go to the cultivation spot" Althea replied in an unbothered tone. She didn't care who started. She just wanted to be done with it so she could continue playing with her phone.

There were way too many things to do she hadn't done yet. She was even learning various human languages personally even though the phone could just implant them into her mind just for the fun of it. Hell, she didn't even need to learn them as she could understand everything and anyone could understand what she was saying due to the special nature of her native language.

"Why don't we do this in the embryo?" Muku suddenly spoke up.

"Are you sure?" Audrey asked in a hesitant voice. They hadn't exposed it to Althea yet after all. It was their backup plan to get away if things went south.

So exposing it was a bit risky.

"Yes, I'm sure. She's trustworthy. And with all these benefits, this is the least we can do. Besides, do you think we could have used it successfully in the first place?" Muku replied seriously.

"I guess you're right. Go ahead then" Audrey relented as Muku was making a lot of sense.

"Embryo? Tell me more..." Althea asked with a curious look on her face.

"Oh, that, it's..." Muku explained to her what the embryo was.

"What?! You have a mini world?! That's something only Monarchs should have! And yours even grows? And you absorbed an ancient Monarch's soul? Are you crazy? What if it had consumed you instead?!" Althea exclaimed in shock not sure what to be most shocked about.

As for Muku's group having more secrets, especially one that could help them escape her, she completely understood. She would have done the same in their situation.

She was surprised they were bringing it up honestly. And it made her feel warm inside. So much so a smile appeared on her face.

Tears almost came out of her eyes before she purged them on the spot with her beast aura before anyone noticed them.

She couldn't seem weak after all...

Chapter 534 Yandere friend?

"Well thank you for trusting me with this. I promise on the heavens never to tell it to anyone without your permission" Althea seriously swore on the spot.

And as expected, even in her secret dimension, the heavens responded and she was bound to that promise.

Muku and the girls froze for a moment. They honestly didn't expect her to react like that. They knew she was trustworthy, but they didn't expect her to go to such great lengths to prove it to them.

Now even if they had a fallout, she can't say anything.

It honestly made them feel want inside and the last resistance towards her some of them had disappeared.

"Well... That was unexpected" Muku commented, not sure what to say.

"Yeah, well, meant it. What about this, I swear to the heavens to never harm any of you directly or indirectly as long as I'm aware of what is going on" Althea said something even more surprising.

This time, the whole group almost had a heart attack. What the heck was going on with her that day? Was it that time of the mon... No, there was no way. The girls no longer needed to do it, let alone as a beast Monarch.

"Are you crazy? Now we can literally walk sideways here and you can't do anything about it" Muku exclaimed.

"You could but I don't think you will. I might have little contact with others, but I believe I'm a good judge of character. And no matter what you say, I've already said it, so it's done. If I made a mistake, I can only live with it at this point. After all, it's what I decided" Althea replied calmly.

"You're a weird one Ms" Muku commented and the girls nodded in agreement.

Even Raya looked at Althea like she was an alien. After all. She would have never done such a thing if she were in Althea's place.

Hell, even now she wouldn't do it despite being completely safe with them. Though that was mostly because she won't be able to place certain harmful pranks on Muku that could be deemed harmful, but that's besides the point. What mattered was that she would never do it.

"Besides, if you do too much, I don't mind us all dying together. I have no reason to live at this point after all. So if the first people I chose to trust betray me, then we might as well all die. I'm sure I can kill you all before the heavens kill me so..." Althea then casually said something which sent a chill down everyone's spine.

It seemed they just got themselves a friend with yandere tendencies.

And in her words, they realised just how sad her life was. No wonder she latched onto them the first chance she got. After all. Unlike the beasts she knew couldn't be trusted, they at least had the possibility.

And her gamble actually paid off. No wonder she made such serious swears.

Even if they weren't being completely truthful with her in some matters, they meant her no harm and didn't mind being around her without fear despite their power difference which seems crazy to her, but hey, it worked. And that's all she cared about.

"So now what?" Muku asked.

"Hmm. We can continue with the advancement process or maybe you can now tell me all the secrets you kept from me before. After seeing so much human content over the last few months has made me realise that your species is quite insidious. We're lucky that we're the ones who stayed here and you were taken to the other side or who knows if we would still be alive right now" Althea replied.

"Cough. Let's get the cultivation thing out of the way first. After that we can talk" Muku didn't know how to dispute her claims since he thought the same thing, so he paused the matter for the time being.

One can try to argue that humans became like that because they didn't have the straightforward magic that beasts had, but the fact of the matter is, humans are never satisfied. They are always looking for new ways to tackle everything and they refuse to have any equals in any way.

So even with magic, they would have likely still turned out just as dark.

Sure some beasts like Ares were just as greedy, but they were also too simple in their thinking to be innovative.

Anyway, that's a philosophical situation that didn't matter for the time being...

"Cool. Open up this embryo if yours and let me see" Althea didn't disagree.

Being a long-lived monarch, she was quite patient.

"Great... Oh wait. There's no divine mana in it though..." Muku remembered something.

"Oh. That's easy to take care of. I'll just bring some with me" Althea replied.

"Okay. Let's go then" Muku accepted her crazy claim with no questions asked.

She was a Monarch so she probably had a way to manipulate mana that didn't belong to her element. Not to mention all the crazy things he had witnessed from Mrs C. So this was nothing special really.

"Yeah. And besides, this one has violent Beast Aura like me. So I'll just use mine" Althea added.

"Really? Isn't that bad for you?" Muku asked.

"Pfft. I won't even notice a difference unless I focus really hard. And that would be after doing it for years" Althea replied jokingly.

Though she was definitely telling the truth. The difference between them and her was just that huge. It was so huge they couldn't even comprehend it.

"Makes sense" Muku accepted the claim again.

After that, he quietly opened the passage into the embryo. They hadn't been in there for a few months for obvious reasons.

Fortunately, he could communicate with the people inside without going in. He could also go into his soul state.

So while he had been physically unable to enter. His soul had entered many times to overlook everything so that no one panics.

After all, the residents now viewed him as their god. So if he were to be away for too long without a word, they would definitely panic.

Anyway, the girls entered on their own as "admins".

He then pulled Althea in. She didn't resist. And they all disappeared from the secret realm.

Althea's disappearance was actually felt by the other Monarchs. But none of them dared come investigate.

She had done something like this in the past. An unlucky Monarch went to check and then became her first victim.

It has all been bait to make someone walk into their death.

She was so ruthless that she consumed their soul. Fortunately, she spared the authority and someone else picked it up.

Anyway, the moment she disappeared is the moment all the Monarchs rushed into their secret realms and buffed their defenses even though they knew she couldn't break in while shaking in their boots with fear.

That's how scary the ever-casual Althea was to all of them.

Hell, only Ares dared talk harshly to her since they were already enemies and that was because he was using a clone as well.

She was secretly called the tyrant Monarch by the others. Which was perfect for her.

Anyway, while they shivered, she was smilingly touring Muku's embryo.

It wasn't big, it didn't have as much greenery as her secret realm, but it seemed to be more alive in some way.

Maybe it was because of the people who were active all over.

It made her wonder if she should take in a few beasts. But she quickly ditched the plan. Her peaceful dimension would definitely turn into a noisy hunting ground the moment she turned her gaze away from them.

Completely different from the peaceful humans here.

One might ask why not take grazers and browsers? Well, maybe because Tracy was probably the only beast that ate plants only.

The rest liked meat more than anything. Hell, even normal cows eat meat when pushed far enough, let alone beasts that are all designed to eat it no matter what animal they might resemble.

"Wow. This is a great place you have here. And it really is constantly growing. I'm so jealous. My secret dimension has already reached the limits of its growth. And it can't even contain my true Monarch form. This is so unfair" Althea went from complimenting to complaining.

Of course, it wasn't to Muku but the situation in general.

"Well, I can give you a personal planet in the future when it becomes a universe if you want" Muku offered.

"That would be great. But why not a solar system at least? Aren't you being a bit stingy?" Althea called Muku out.

"What do you need a solar system for? Aren't you being a bit greedy?" Muku retorted.

"Kid my true form is bigger than your planet by a lot. That secret realm can only hold the shrunk-down version at most. So of course I want a solar system. That way I'd have some leg room" Althea defended.

"What? You're huge! Fine. I'll give it to you. Can we get to cultivating now?" Muku stirred the conversation back to what mattered.

"Yey! Thanks. Yes, let's get this over with" Althea happily agreed.

They then went into the mansion. She and Jade then went to Jade's room while the others went to deal with other matters.

They couldn't stay and watch after all. That would be weird...

Chapter 535 Alike?

Inside Jade's room...

"So this is what a bed looks like in real life? I wish I had one" Althea spoke while looking around Jade's room.

"You can ask Muku for one if you want" Jade replied.

"You know what, I think I will. Thanks. Now let's sit in a meditative position. We must face each other while doing this. Oh. And remove your top. You can keep your bra on though" Althea directed.

"Okay," Jade did what she was told without asking anything.

Something Althea appreciated a lot after interacting with Muku who was always asking things left and right.

After that, the two sat on Jade's bed. Althea took a moment to appreciate the softness before focusing on the task at hand.

She pointed forward then touched Jade's lower abdomen with her finger. Which was where the Mana Core/Beast Aura Core was.

"Now relax and get ready to absorb the energy I'll feed you. Use it to refine yours while absorbing it at the same time. It's somewhat similar to what you did when you were advancing to R4. So it shouldn't be a problem. Oh, and brace for pain because it definitely will be painful. But don't lose control or you might cripple yourself" Althea gave the instructions.

"Umm. These are all things I would have liked to learn before you put your finger on my stomach and we're about to start. But okay..." Jade couldn't help but comment.

"Cough. Well, I believe in you so. Anyway, are you ready?" Althea replied awkwardly.

"Yes. Let's do it before I change my mind" Jade replied.

Althea pushed her finger forward slightly to signal to Jade that she was about to start.

Jade closed her eyes and prepared for the pain.

In that moment she felt a violent yet tame energy invade her body and go straight into her core. She expected a world of pain like anyone would expect when a foreign energy invades their body.

But nothing came.

She didn't immediately react thinking that maybe it had a delayed effect. She then focused harder and did exactly what Althea told her to do.

She could already feel herself getting stronger. Yet there was no pain at all. Confusion hit her instantly, however, that didn't make her lose focus. She was professional like that.

"Huh?" Althea made a confused sound after noticing that Jade was clearly not in pain like she had been back then.

"What's going on?" Jade couldn't help it anymore so she asked.

"You're asking me but whom should I ask?" Althea used a classic human line.

"I feel no pain at all. In fact, it kinda tickles a little" Jade added.

"I noticed... I was expecting grimaces but I'm getting grins... Let me think for a moment" Althea replied as she stopped the whole process. They needed to understand what the heck was happening before they could continue otherwise who knew if it was good or bad.

"Should I call the others over? It might be easier to figure out as a group" Jade asked.

"Hmm. Let me think for a moment. I think I was told about this a long time ago. The memory is so obscure I have to think about it a bit" Althea replied then retreated into her mindscape... Of course, she had one, she was a Monarch after all.

Anyway, Jade just sat there thinking about the pleasant feeling while waiting.

A minute or two later, Althea opened her eyes.

"I've got it. My master told me about this. It seems our Beast Auras are the same in nature. Like identical, not somewhat alike... Something almost impossible. Like two humans having the same fingerprints. Anyway, from what I was told, because of that, our Beast Auras sync. For that reason, when I inject it into your core, it recognises it as your own. Just a much stronger version. Though I had to weaken it a lot to match your rank..." Althea explained.

"Ah... So that's how it is. That's great news for me then. The others are going to be so jealous" Jade celebrated.

Althea smiled wryly. At the same time, she couldn't help but be reminded of her younger days when she looked at Jade. So carefree.

Sure she was still carefree, but she had seen and experienced so much that she was nowhere near as pure as Jade in just living in the moment.

"Yeah... Can we continue now?" Althea replied.

"Sure. But can we speed it up a bit and still take as long as we would have taken initially? I mean, the pain was the limiter right?" Jade asked expectantly.

"Sure. We can speed it up. But we can't last as long since it will be faster. The pain was a limiter, but not the only one. I can help you get to the peak, but after that, it's up to you. So we'll have to stop there no matter what" Althea explained.

"Oh... What a shame. But I guess that means sense. It would suck to completely rely on someone else to advance anyway," Jade replied understandingly.

After that, the two continued. Althea increased the amount and purity to the highest level Jade can take without her body breaking down.

Red and purple hues appeared and danced around the two as they focused deeply with their eyes closed and unmoving...

.....

Downstairs...

"So what do we do while waiting?" Chloe asked.

"Hmm. We can have a tourn..." Muku was about to pitch that one thing he is always pitching when he was interrupted.

"No. We can't do that without Jade" Audrey spoke over Muku.

She loved him but she had to stop him sometimes before he got too excited.

"Sigh. Fine. I was just suggesting something since someone asked" Muku replied in a fake wronged expression that made the girls roll their eyes.

"Any other ideas?" Audrey asked the others completely ignoring the drama king.

"Why not go farming?" Freya suggested.

While they ran a mini world that supported normal human life, they never tried it themselves. And they just happened to have the time now, so why not try right?

"Great idea! Speaking of which, I just remembered something. Sarah was never told the name of her son. The poor child is really growing without a name" Audrey spoke.

"No, don't worry. I told her months ago when I can in my soul state" Muku corrected her.

"Oh really? That's good. Which one did you decide on again?" Audrey asked.

"Jason. I took inspiration from your Jackson. It's almost as simple but not too direct like yours" Muku replied.

"Yeah, that does sound better. I'm sure your friend Jack would have liked it too. What about Sarah?" Audrey commented.

"Hopefully... She loved it. At least that's what I think from how she cried. In fact, there she comes now, you can ask her" Muku answered.

"Greetings Master and Mistresses" Sarah greeted everyone respectfully.

Fortunately, they could now control whether to be seen or not thanks to Althea's training or Sarah would have looked weird bowing to empty chairs from her perspective.

"Oh hello, Sarah. I told you already. You don't have to call us that. Just call us by our names. We're all equals here" Audrey replied in a friendly tone as she got up and walked over to Sarah then brought her over for a seat.

Sarah wanted to refuse but it was hard to refuse a gentle person like Audrey especially when one could feel her genuineness.

"O..okay. Mistr... Ms Audrey" Sarah replied as she sat down beside Audrey while looking down.

Honestly, it wasn't this bad initially. Back then she could speak to them without feeling nervous.

But that all changed when they became divine beings. Even when they were completely suppressing themselves in front of her. Their natural states alone were enough to make Sarah feel like kow-towing herself in front of them.

Like how a human will always seem larger than life to an ant no matter how nice and gentle they are...

"Better. We were just talking about you. Muku told me that you liked the name he gave to little Jason. But I wanted to hear it from you in case he exaggerated. Did you really like it? We can change it if you want" Audrey continued in her gentle voice.

"No, no. There's no need. It's a perfect name. He didn't exaggerate. I really loved it. And I am grateful. I'm sure Jack would have loved it too" Sarah defended Muku.

"Oh, that's great then. How is he doing now? Where is he?" Audrey accepted and moved on.

"He's doing great. He's sleeping" Sarah replied.

"Okay. Let him sleep and grow big and strong like his uncle here" Audrey commented.

"I'd want nothing more for him" Sarah replied with a small smile on her face.

If her son turned out like Muku then she would be the happiest mother in the world. Out of all the men she knew, none even came close to Muku's greatness and looks. At least that's how she saw it.

"Now, we would like to help in the fields. Is there anything we can do?" Audrey asked.

"Umm. People should be picking apples right now. But I don't think you should bother yourself with such small tasks" Sarah replied.

"Nonsense. Why can't we do it when they can? In fact, go tell them to rest for the day, we'll pick clean the whole orchard!" Audrey declared something that made everyone's eyes almost pop out.

And the reason why was pretty simple...

Chapter 536 Casually dropping a bomb

A while later...

"Okay, which bastard decided that a person's Evolver powers are completely sealed here?" Muku cursed as he sweated in the orchard.

"You did sir. Well, it was the people's wish, as they wanted to live a life as normal as possible. But you agreed so..." Sarah explained while trying hard not to laugh.

A distance away, Audrey was also regretting her bold claims from before. The couple looked at each other, saw the suffering in the other's eyes then looked away and continued working.

There was no way they could quit now, so they could only push through.

"Well, fine. And I stand by the decision. Watch us work twice as hard as they did. Hmph!" Muku refused to admit defeat.

The girls agreed even though they all wanted to back out. The whole group's pride was off the charts being the so-called best in the world.

From time to time they'd all give Freya a hateful gaze for mentioning such torture. Completely forgetting that it was just a suggestion they could have easily rejected.

In fact, they had been even more enthusiastic than she. But so what? It wasn't they who started everything so it wasn't their fault...

....

Around two weeks later...

Jade's controlled aura suddenly filled the whole embryo.

Everyone suddenly turned to her room from the couches they were on... Yeah, they never went back to the fields after that one day.

"She's already reached the peak?!" Muku exclaimed.

"So quick!" Chloe added.

The others were just as shocked. After all, they were expecting way more time than that.

"Hahaha. I am effectively the strongest in the group right now. Who dares disagree? Let's go outside and fight it out! I'll take on all of you at once even. Hahaha," Jade came back with her pride off the charts as they all expected.

So no one reacted. Apart from the expected eye roll of course.

"Congrats. How did you come out so quickly?" Muku was the first to speak.

"Tsk. Thanks I guess. Talent of course. Did you think that any of you were in my league? I'm a Monarch's descendant after all" Jade replied arrogantly.

She was a bit disappointed that no one said anything against her so she could start a fight. So she decided to provoke them.

"True. Your background is probably the best out of everyone here. Anyway, Good afternoon Ms Althea. Can you tell us how this one advanced so quickly if you don't mind?" Muku replied simply before shifting his attention to Althea.

"Oh, that. It's nothing much. It just turned out that she and I have the highest level of affinity between two individuals possible... Do I have to say more?" Althea replied.

"Ah... So that's how it is. I guess that makes sense. Thank you for your hard work" Muku accepted the answer without asking for an explanation.

He had long figured out that Althea didn't like being asked too many things. It was better to ask one thing and let her say the rest.

That might be his fault but he refused to admit it even if he was beaten to death.

"Yeah. Let me take a break for a day then the next one will be up..." Althea added.

"Sure. Take as long as you want. There's no rush" Muku replied.

Of course, there was a rush, but they couldn't rush Althea when she was already doing so much for them. Hell, they might have long died had it not been for her.

So letting her move at her own pace was the least they could do. She wasn't even dragging it out after all.

"Cool," Althea replied, took out her phone, then went to the guest room prepared for her...

"So who's going next?" Muku asked.

It was already established that he would be last even though it was now safe but whatever. He will be the bigger man and let them go first. Hell, he was the only man so...

"We've long decided. Next it will be Hope, then Emily, Lisa, me, and so on...." Audrey replied excitedly.

She barely made the cut for the first five who will get something from Muku so she was really happy.

The ones who didn't get anything were sad standing on the side but they didn't disagree.

It was what it was. And maybe they'll have their turn later on.

"Okay. Get ready then..." Muku replied...

....

The next day...

Althea came out of her room looking rejuvenated after a much missed dose of the internet. Like the junkie she had become.

After that, she and Hope went to Hope's room. They got into the same position as she did with Jade.

But the result was much different. There were no giggles in the room.

Instead, there were pained groans that didn't do justice to the pain Hope felt.

It was so much that they had to pause after 24 hours or so.

During those times they would talk about random stuff to get her mind off things.

Then one day Althea asked something that shocked Hope.

"So when are you going to tell the others that you are his lover and not his sister?" She asked in a casual voice.

"Whah, what do you mean? I think you have misunderstood something" Hope replied in a panicked voice.

"Oh please. Don't try to cover it up. I knew it from the very first moment I saw you. I can literally smell him on you and all the other girls he has claimed. Trust me, it's not something I wanted to know, but what can I do? In fact, Jade probably knows too. That girl's senses are quite sharp after all. And Audrey definitely knows. I'm certain of that" Althea replied.

"No... What? Really?" Hope wanted to continue denying but it was pointless at that point.

And she was too shocked to continue the lie. How did so many people know already?!

"Yes. Oh, and I guess I might as well tell you this. You're pregnant. Congratulations!" Althea then casually dropped a bomb on Hope that almost made her faint.

"WHAT?!" Hope shouted in shock.

"Don't worry. You still have a few years before anything shows due to your strength. So you can still keep your secret. And before you ask, it won't affect you negatively at all. Oh, and there's no risk of a miscarriage unless maybe you get stabbed in the stomach or something" Althea continued.

"But. Huh? So long?! Is it even considered pregnant at that point?" Hope asked completely confused.

"Well. A baby is growing inside you. So I'd think yes. It just grows way slower than what you humans are used to. After all, this isn't a gacha product like your normal human babies. What's getting created as in your words, an absolute peak being. Everything will be the best... Well, that is if we relate to the two of you. Only your best qualities will be taken. There's even a chance of the child being much more talented than you both. At least that's how it works for beasts. I mean, I know for a fact that the baby isn't coming for a long time but the rest I'm basing it off my race" Althea explained.

"... I see. At least I still have a few years to prepare. I hope we have settled down by then" Hope replied in a slightly defeated tone.

She didn't know whether to be happy or not. After all, she wanted a child with Muku for sure, but the time was way off.

"You can slow it down further if you want. Isn't it great to have power? While you can't speed up the process, you can slow it down. So if it's not a good time, then you can extend the time until the birth. But I hope you don't do that. I want to see the first human baby born from divine beings since ancient times" Althea added.

"Ah. That's good. But wait, how do you know it didn't happen when we were still R6 or something?" Hope asked trying to calm her mind.

"Girl there's nothing in here my senses don't catch. I just choose to ignore most stuff. But if the two of you make noise with such thin walls separating us, how could I not notice? And I'd like to say, you were quite passionate back then. No wonder a baby was made. And that man of yours really is a beast. Changing girls daily like that! I wouldn't be surprised if the others are pregnant too" Althea started exposing things she had no business exposing.

"No, no! Stop! Please stop! I don't want to hear it! I get it! We're sorry. We didn't know!" Hope begged with her face hidden behind her hands as she blushed red.

"Fine. Fine. But I was just complimenting you though" Althea added shamelessly.

She knew exactly what she was doing.

"Thank you. But please stop" Hope replied defeatedly.

"Okay fine. Can we continue now?" Althea asked.

"Umm. Can you give me a little time to calm down and maybe speak to Muku a bit?" Hope requested.

"Sure. Go ahead. I'll be here... Definitely not eavesdropping" Althea agreed.

"..." Hope looked at her and almost rolled her eyes before walking out.

This has to be the most shameless Monarch out there.

Chapter 537 Nihilism

"What?! Is that true?! Congratulations!" Muku spoke excitedly.

"What do you mean congratulations?! It's our baby. We did it together" Hope replied with an eye roll.

She was pleased by his happiness though. It would have sucked if the father wasn't happy about it. While she felt they were a bit too early in having children, such was life. They did what leads to pregnancy, so they could only accept the consequences.

Not to mention Althea said they still had a few years before the baby came, so they had some time.

"Ah. You're right. Sorry, I got overexcited. How are you feeling now? Do you need anything? Maybe you should lie down. Should we go tell the others?" Muku started saying whatever came to his mind.

"I'm fine. It's not that far gone yet. Plus I doubt there'll be any of those problems considering my strength. As for telling the others. I'm not ready yet. Let's wait until you've settled all of them" Hope replied in an amused tone.

It was cute to see Muku already panicking with care like this.

"As you wish my lady. What do you mean settle them all?... Oh. Do you know how long that will take? It's not something that can be casually done after all" Muku replied animatedly.

"Yeah. I know. But we have years, and I doubt you'll last that long. So we're okay," Hope replied in a semi-hateful tone.

While she was okay with sharing, like the other girls, she was a little hateful at the same time. Couldn't he just choose one back then? Specifically them?

Of course, for Hope, this might be the best-case scenario since she wasn't in the equation at all back then. So she couldn't complain too much.

"Years? Isn't it nine months? Less than that since it will start to show sooner. So what do you mean?" Muku asked confusedly.

"Oh, about that. Let me tell you what Althea told me. She's the one who found out I was pregnant. Anyway, she said..." Hope went on to tell Muku what Althea told her.

"Ah. So that's how it is? What an interesting turn of events. But we can't be certain since she has no human experience of such things. Besides, the incubation period is generally different in all species so we can't trust her to take even if it might be true. So I say we should tell the others now before it's too late and too awkward..." Muku reasoned.

"I guess you're right. But let's do it after everyone has advanced so no one is too affected by it. Especially the pregnancy. After all, everyone wanted to be the first to have a child so..." Hope accepted his reasoning, though with a little compromise.

She still didn't want to do it. But it had to be done. It was going to be the most awkward talk they had ever had by far. She wished she didn't have to be there when Muku told the others. But she knew it was unavoidable.

"As the lady desires. Now don't you think there's something important we need to do?" Muku asked Hope seriously.

"What's that? Going back to the others?" Hope asked confusedly.

"Reinforcing the baby of course" Muku replied then pulled Hope closer before throwing her to the bed and jumping on top of her...

...

Around an hour later...

"That's not a real thing. You just wanted to take advantage of me you pervert" Hope replied while lying next to Muku naked and breathing heavily.

It was great as always and she loved it, but she didn't want to seem easy.

"Of course there is. How else will the baby grow big and strong? But I'm sorry. If you don't want to do it again, then fine. We won't" Muku replied apologetically.

"What? No. I didn't say we shouldn't do it again. I was just... You jerk. Hmph!" Hope tried to explain in a panicked voice when she noticed Muku's knowing smile.

She stopped, cursed him, and looked away.

"I'm sorry my love. You're just so cute I can't help but tease you. Anyway, we can't stay here too long even if I slowed down the time in here. We should clean up and go back" Muku apologised.

"Okay. But let's stay like this a bit longer... Nit for me, but for the baby" Hope shamelessly hid behind the baby that was still not fully formed yet.

Muku could sense a lot of crazy demands coming in the future with the baby as the excuse. He felt his head hurt a bit since the others would also be like this, but he didn't mind. It was the life he chose and he quite liked it.

He was kinda looking forward to it honestly.

"Sure. Love" Muku replied as he pulled her close for a tight hug...

....

In Hope's room...

"Aww. So cute. To think they could be so lustful and loving at the same time... Wait, does watching them make me a pervert? No, of course not. From what I've found out. Watching other species having sex isn't perverted behaviour at all. It's completely normal. At least that's what human logic dictates"

Althea spoke to herself while peeking at Muku and Hope, as she said she won't.

To be fair, Hope knew that this was going to happen. She might have forgotten about it when Muku pulled her closer but she knew initially. And that's all Althea needed for permission to watch...

....

A while later...

Muku and Hope left the room completely clean and unsuspecting. Except for Hope's suspiciously glowing face of course.

Anyway, she returned to Althea and Muku went to join the others.

....

Hope and Althea continued the excruciating cultivation for two months after that until Hope reached the peak like Jade.

After her, the others went and had similarly painful experiences as Hope.

Sadly for Althea, none of the others were pregnant yet. Which meant less drama for her.

Anyways, after more than a year later, it was finally Muku's turn to advance right after Raya.

Currently, he and Althea were facing each other as Althea had done with the girls.

But she didn't immediately go into business like before. She was currently touching Muku's shirtless upper body all over the place.

"Interesting. So this is what a human male upper body looks like up close. I mean, this one is so perfect it might as well be unreal, but I guess it's still from the same origin" Althea spoke with a serious look on her face.

"Umm. When are we going to start?" Muku asked after ten minutes of being poked, squeezed, and patted.

Was she some kind of pervert or something? Because this was definitely sexual harassment.

"Shh. Don't interrupt me. Can't you see I'm admiring this art? You can leave if you don't want to be here" Althea admonished.

"But it's my body. How can I leave it behind?!" Muku replied in a wronged tone.

"Ah. Oh, forgot about that. Sorry. Let's get this over with. Your body isn't that amazing anyway" Althea replied in a displeased manner.

"Sure" Muku chose peace.

Althea held out her hand and placed her finger where Muku's core was like she did with the girls.

Then she pushed a stream of pure mana from the reservoir she had into it.

Unexpectedly, Muku, like Jade didn't feel any pain.

But it wasn't that he and Althea had affinity. It was that the mana was instantly changed to match his own as soon as it entered his core by some unknown source. Something that should have been impossible.

But that's what was happening.

Before Althea could say anything, she felt a weird force rise from inside Muku and flow into her.

She instantly wanted to break free but she was immobilized and couldn't do anything but defensively feel her body getting invaded.

She couldn't even say anything to Muku who was currently in a meditative state and appeared not to notice anything.

Soon her whole body was completely covered by the force.

She then felt it press on her trying to make her submit.

At first, it was weak and she thought she would soon break free

But it didn't go like that. It kept getting stronger and stronger until she felt despair as she could hardly breathe at that point.

She would have died had she needed air regularly like unranked beings.

She tried to resist a while longer but eventually she submitted to the force.

She didn't want to submit to anyone with anything as a proud Monarch, but she felt that whatever this force was. It was something that went beyond her.

And so, the moment she completely stopped resisting, she could move again.

However, she felt an imprint in her mind. She tries poking around it with her divine senses. And it was the biggest mistake she had made that day it ever really.

She was immediately pulled into an illusion where she was completely covered by grey and there was nothing else.

She felt so insignificant that even a germ was way bigger than her.

Then a single word appeared in her mind.

{Nihilicity}

{Impossible!} Another thought appeared immediately after...

Chapter 538 Althea's mixed emotions

Nihilicity... Or chaos energy. Or the energy of creation.

The very thing all Monarchs are instantly made aware of by their authority the moment they take up the post along with many other things.

But definitely the most significant thing. They all feared and desired it from that day.

But at the same time, they felt that it was only a pipe dream to hope to come across it one day.

But out of nowhere on that random day. Althea came across it... From the body of a human too. Wasn't that just the craziest thing? How was it possible?

She instantly thought about "The Variable" from before.

The one that destroyed a portal and resisted an R7 when they shouldn't have had the day anywhere close to the power to do the latter let alone the former.

It all instantly clicked in her head. How could one not do all those things with chaos energy in them?

But wait, did that mean that if she had tried something with Muku and the girls, she would have died?

After all, she wouldn't have expected anything like that and would have been completely caught off guard. Hell, she didn't even know how it worked.

What if he only had to order her to die and she would drop dead?

Is that why they were mostly calm from the start?. Was that little caution also an act?

Chills went down her spine as she thought of this.

Fortunately, nothing like that happened and she didn't try anything.

And it seemed like the energy didn't do anything to her. It must have just been a warning...

{Look at him. So majestic. I want to protect him forever. I'd easily die for him and do whatever he wants. Even warm his bed... What the hell?!} Althea suddenly had random thoughts out of nowhere the moment she refocused on Muku who still seemed not to notice anything while completely focused on cultivation.

Her face paled as she realised that it wasn't just a warning she got. She has likely been turned into a servant.

Before, even if she had no actual intent, she could easily think about killing Muku and the others. But now, just thinking about it felt like blasphemy. She couldn't do it.

And the more she looked at Muku, the more she felt like submitting herself. She tried to resist with her willpower but it didn't work.

She wanted to get up and get away from him but she couldn't bring herself to disrupt his cultivation.

Despair filled her eyes as she sat there continuing to support Muku with the mana he needed.

She could only close her eyes to reduce the intense urge to submit.

Fortunately, it worked somewhat. She still felt heavily drawn to him, but now it was a bit resistible...

On the opposite side, my was greedily absorbing the mana she fed him in bigger gulps than even Jade and steadily advancing. Completely unaware of what he has unknowingly done to Althea.

Then again, it was passive that awakened whenever anyone tried to poke into his body. It was the same with Audrey back then.

The only reason why it didn't happen to Nightmare was that the Monarch soul went after his soul. Something that wasn't too heavily involved with his bloodline.

Sure, it was made stronger than average like any other part of him. But there was no strict protection like with his body...

....

Around a week later...

Muku finally opened his eyes. At that point, he had already reached the peak. That's right. His cultivation was even faster than Jade's.

"Master. You're finally awake. I hope you had a great cultivation experience" Althea's extremely unwilling voice was heard immediately after. She was also wearing a forced smile.

Seeing it almost gave Muku a heart attack. She looked quite creepy honestly.

But as an experienced veteran who had gone through something like this with Audrey before. He instantly understood what was going on.

His bloodline had done something to her.

"Release..." Muku commanded and Lathea felt the force that was forcing her to submit instantly disappear.

That's right, unlike the time with Audrey when they had to let time slowly weaken the control as Muku expressed his unwillingness to be Audrey's literal master... Yeah, he still liked being called master in bed. Everyone has their own kinks okay?

Anyway, unlike back then, he had more control of his bloodline. He couldn't completely control it yet. Hell, he probably hadn't improved much over the years. But he could do this at least.

"Haah, thank you. I have been like that for a week. And honestly It didn't expect you to let me go. I expect you to turn me into your sex slave and dominate my body whenever you want, not minding my hateful gaze at all... What didn't you do that?" Althea expressed her gratitude, with a few weird things added to the mix.

"What do you mean? What do you think I am? A sexual fiend? Do I look like a degenerate to you?? I'd never do such a thing to a great ally like you" Muku was greatly offended.

What did she take him for?

"Tsk. Like you don't do it to the other girls" Althea spoke in a low voice.

"Huh?" Muku asked.

"I said, I'm glad you have a good heart" Althea replied.

"Then why do I sense disappointment?" Muku replied with an eye roll.

"You're imagining it. Don't overthink. Anyway, enough with that. Care to tell me about what that was Mr Variable?" Althea changed topics.

She absolutely couldn't let Muku find out that she had been spying on him and the girls all this time. And because of that she has developed some curiosity.

Of course, she could go find a random strong beast and try it. But there was a problem. At the beginning, she wanted to be with someone stronger than her, which was true to her beastly nature.

That beast never appeared. Now after being corrupted by human content, she wanted a good beast/person she loved.

The problem was that she couldn't see any beast meeting the gentlemanly qualities she was now searching for. And even humans were problematic.

Then there was Muku, he wasn't perfect with many noticeable flaws, but he was dependable and would likely surpass her eventually. Especially after finding out about his hidden power.

So now, he was the leading man for her partner's role. He was the only one in the race.

So, over the week, she might, or might not have decided to give herself to him should he try something.

With the content she had come across, which the average internet user comes across eventually... Weird fantasies had appeared in her mind and maybe she was now looking forward to it.

Then Muku came in and diffused the situation in a few seconds. What was his problem?

Did he not find her beautiful? Was it because she was a beast? No, that wasn't it. She had noticed his gaze that wandered too far on her body at times.

Which was definitely risky behaviour when looking at a Monarch. But it showed that he definitely saw her in a sexual light to some extent. But if it was like that, why did he not even think about taking the open goal that was presented to him?...

Oh wait, Muku was never someone to do such things. His personality wasn't like that, not to mention he had way too many girls he could do it with to even think about sexually assaulting anyone.

She had to admit that for whatever reason, Audrey and even Raya were just as beautiful as her. And at some point in their evolution, the other would catch up.

When it came to bodies, they were all different but perfect. So she really didn't stand out in anything apart from her strength which she felt she won't always have over them.

With those thoughts, she understood why he didn't even think about it. He had no responsibility to. That stung but it was the truth.

But wait, why did it sting? Was it because her pride got hurt or she developed feelings for him? Pfft, yeah right, like she could develop feelings for such a weakling...

"Ah. Cough cough. I planned to tell you this after we were done cultivating so please don't think you were always going to be kept in the dark. And I hope you understand why we didn't tell you before"  
Muku replied awkwardly.

"Oh, so you were at least planning on telling me eventually. That's good. Because if I swore to the heavens like that and you didn't tell me, then I would be the biggest fool for trusting the wrong people now wouldn't I?" Althea replied expressionlessly.

She tried not to make a big deal about it since she understood why it was done. But for whatever reason, she just couldn't accept it.

"I'm sorry, please don't be mad. I'll do whatever you want for you to forgive me... Wait" Muku spoke before he could properly think.

He had gotten so used to using that on the girls when they got angry that he had forgotten that it was Althea this time and not any of them. She obviously didn't care about anything he could do for her.

"Really?! Anything?!" Althea interrupted with glowing eyes.

{Or maybe it worked on her too} Muku thought seeing the excitement.

Did the phone turn her into a human woman or something? The original her wouldn't have been bothered at all with what he said.

She would have laughed in his face or something...

Chapter 539 Althea is mine

"Yes, anything. But I'm sure that as a Monarch you don't care about anything a little human like me can do. So you don't care. Right?" Muku replied while trying to back down.

"No, no. While you're right that there's nothing you can offer that I'm interested in. But since you offered, it would be rude to refuse right?" Althea spoke with a weird smile on her face.

"No, no. It's not rude at all. I won't be offended at all. So go ahead and do what you want" Muku tried one more time.

He already had five girls to cater to, so he didn't want to add one more if it was avoidable.

"Well, that's great. What I want is for you to do whatever I want. And that's taking me out on a date. I've seen and read a lot about it on my phone. So now I want to experience it personally" Althea stated what she wanted.

Ignoring the obvious hints from Muku that he wanted to backtrack. She even had a hint of blush that Muku didn't notice because he wasn't looking at her as closely as he did the girls.

"That's it? That's easy to do. But where can we go? As you know, whether it be here or my World. It's now a great forest as far as the eye can see" Muku replied.

He was glad that it wasn't something too crazy. He didn't know what it could be, but who knows what a woman is thinking right?

"I know that. That's why we're not doing it now. We'll do it after you've reclaimed it and rebuild. I have time. I can wait" Althea replied calmly.

"Okay... But why do you sound so certain that I will win?" Muku asked.

"If you lose with that bloodline if yours then you're the trashiest trash to ever exist. And I don't think you're trash at all. Do you?" Althea replied provocatively.

"Hey, that's not fair. I can barely use that. If I try to push it too far. I either lose control, start to fall apart, or won't be able to use it at all. So please don't make it seem like it's a walk in the park" Muku defended himself.

He knew that she was right with his bloodline. Even without cultivation, with just complete control of it, he would be able to easily settle all the Monarchs and beasts.

He was that confident in it. But there was one problem. Without cultivation, his body wouldn't be strong enough to contain it, so it was indispensable.

Hell, even now, as a PR7, he only felt slightly stronger in terms of being able to control it. That's how strong it was. He still couldn't even imagine the limits yet.

"Tsk. Whatever. You're a smart man. I'm sure you'll figure something out. But while we wait. Take me for a practice date in the embryo. Just the two of us" Althea replied in an unbothered tone.

To her, how he was going to do it was his problem. She only needed to sit back and enjoy the benefits.

"Hey! That's cheating! Isn't a date a date? Why do I have to take you on multiple?! And you sound like a housewife waiting for her husband to do everything outside and just enjoy after" Muku protested.

"You aren't worthy to be my husband. At least reach a Monarch's level before you even consider claiming me" Althea replied seriously.

Again Muku missed the slight blush and expectance in her eyes. She was actually looking forward to him claiming her eventually.

The same lady who was thinking that she had no emotions for him was now desiring to be claimed. Did she fall that easily or was she just easy when she found someone agreeable?

Well, whatever, it's her life right?

"No, that's not what I meant..I don't plan on claiming you at all. And you're dodging the question!" Muku exclaimed.

"Sissy. You wouldn't do anything even if I were to throw myself at you right now" Althea replied while giving him provocative looks.

"See if I dare or not" Muku who had spoken enough spoke as he made his move.

The two of them were still sitting on the bed when he lunged forward and pushed Althea down. His hands immediately went to places they shouldn't have.

One went to her butt and the other her boobs as he kissed her.

No, he didn't lose control like usual. He was completely in control.

You see, Muku was an experienced man. So he could clearly see that Althea desired him.

He thought that it was because she was inexperienced and he might as well be the first unrelated male she interacted with so she developed a crush.

For that reason, he was going to ignore the signs. Not to mention that she was a Monarch. Who dares make a move on a Monarch? He wasn't that crazy.

That was until she poked him enough times that as a man he had to make a move or risk losing his manly man licence. And that's something he will never give up.

And so, he pushed Althea down... Of course, she let him. Otherwise, he would have died the very moment he thought of trying something.

Anyway, Althea thought he didn't dare do anything because of the respect and fear he had for her. But it seemed she was wrong. He very much dared.

So, she was stunned when he did and the momentum completely went to his side and he started claiming her body while kissing her passionately.

She subconsciously accepted it and before she knew it, she was kissing him back and moaning lightly as he discovered all the curves and softness of her body.

It didn't take long before he got bold and lifted her dress then started going up her legs to a certain place.

He was so experienced that Althea didn't notice what was happening until it was too late and his hand had already reached the destination. Then...

"Arhn... Ahhh you beast! Get off me!" Althea was startled by the sudden rush of pleasure and softly pushed Muku away before fixing herself and running out of the room with a red face.

Muku watched her go with a little smile on her face.

"Hehe. So even as the strongest Monarch girls are just girls at the end of the day. Sigh. I hate to say this and the girls will hate me for this but from this day onwards, Althea is mine. I will claim her along with the rest" Muku spoke today himself in a low voice with his possessiveness radiating everywhere.

If she didn't start anything, he wouldn't have done anything either. But she did, so now he would too.

With what had just happened, he saw that her defenses were quite weak as long as he didn't go too far. And that's how he will be moving from then on. He will make her beg for it.

She was going to be the first girl he actively hunts.

Just the thought of it excited him. A weak human like him hunting the strongest Monarch. That sounded crazy but that's exactly what was happening.

Althea who was now in her room felt a chill go down her spine.

The redness on her face had not decreased at all.

It had gotten worse when she accidentally heard Muku claim her when she was running away.

"What did I just do? Did I awaken a sleeping monster? Did I bring this upon myself? But he wasn't like this before. Why did he change so quickly?? All I did was say a few things and he wanted to claim my purity! Such a beast!" Althea spoke to herself while clutching her body close in her blankets.

She was recalling what had just happened and it made her feel weak, embarrassed, angry, hot, and desire more.

Yeah, her emotions were chaotic.

She felt like a young maiden who was almost tricked out of her purity by a bad man.

Then again, despite being alive for so long, Althea who hadn't experienced a lot of things and variety in her life was still very impressionable.

So her phone likely warped her mind from that of a typical sentient beast to that of a beast that thought like a human. Which was the same as Raya.

Though unlike Raya's phone which was child-protected, hers had everything. So her development has gone way beyond Raya's in certain areas.

"Would he really have done it if I had stayed?" Althea asked herself one question and she honestly didn't know the answer.

Muku wasn't as easy to read as she thought so now she wasn't sure...

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Downstairs...

"Althea left Muku's room. Was there a problem with the cultivation or something?" Jade asked no one in particular.

"Nope. It's because I'm done" Muku replied before anyone could say anything as he walked down the stairs.

"What?! Already? But why did she leave so quickly, like she was running away?" Jade asked.

She and the otters were shocked by how quickly Muku advanced... But then again, it was Muku. So it wasn't too surprising.

They were more interested in how quickly Althea left.

"She said that she was happy to finally focus on her phone without any distractions for a while. So much so she ran" Muku lied without batting an eye.

The group never studied each other to see if anyone was lying, so no one could tell. They might suspect, but they wouldn't be able to tell.

And Muku was a veteran liar by that point so no one even suspected anything...

Chapter 540 War

"Oh, okay. Now what?" Jade asked.

"Simple. We focus on breaking through to the next rank of course" Muku replied.

"What about those favours you promised?" Lisa chimed in.

"Don't worry. I got you. Let's break through first. As you know, the war back home is already waging, so right now we need to lock in even if time is moving a lot faster for us in here" Muku replied.

"Ah, that makes sense. And at this point, we're all at a higher level than you really. After all, we've already started on that path" Lisa replied understandingly then gloated a bit.

"Tsk. Like I'd need too much time to catch up to this little progress. I can just speed up the time around me a bit further. While I currently do it for the whole embryo, I can do it for my room at least" Muku replied with a smug look on his face.

"What? That's not fair!" Lisa exclaimed dejectedly.

"No, wait. Do it. Make the time in your room faster" Jade suddenly chimed in with glowing eyes.

"Huh?" Muku looked at her confusedly. The others did the same.

"Can't you all understand this obvious thing? He can speed up time in that room alone then we'll all go in and cultivate there. He can let the rest of the embryo work like the normal world within his input. Our cultivation speed should be countless times faster than before that way. Even if Althea doesn't feed us the mana but just provides it, if we are moving a thousand times faster than the rest of the world, we will have more than enough time to reach the peak of R9 and join the war since she said that's the minimum requirement we need to be secure for now" Jade explained

"That's.... That's genius! Why didn't I think about that? Were you always so smart?" Muku spoke in surprise and amazement.

It was mostly faked to piss off Jade... And it worked.

"Tsk! I only let you all speak because you're usually on top of things. But at times like this when I catch you lacking, of course I have to step in lest we miss out" Jade replied in an annoyed voice but not too much as she knew she was in the advantaged position.

"Yes, yes. Thank you for your wisdom sage Jade. I'll do just as you said. Now can someone go tell Althea about it while I prepare the room?" Muku didn't argue.

"Why can't you do it? I mean, you're always eager to be the one to speak to her, saying that you don't trust that we can always say the right things and you don't want Audrey to trouble herself" Jade asked with a suspicious look on her face.

"That was in the past when our safety wasn't guaranteed around her okay? Now go and do it since you're feeling chatty today" Muku casually lied again.

"Hmm...fine" Jade gave him one last suspicious gaze before walking off and letting the matter go.

Muku secretly sighed in relief. He was cursing Jade for being so perceptive. She also caught on.

Fortunately, he was a seasoned veteran who would never slip up easily.

"As for the rest of you. Get into proper form for we are not leaving that room until we've all reached PR9!" Muku declared.

The girls nodded. They felt it was a bit too much to do that. But considering the situation they were in, maybe it wasn't too much.

And so, in no time at all, they were all ready. Althea was notified and she promised to give them mana and seal it in the room as well as reinforce it.

That way, they really won't have to leave it even for breakthroughs.

She was also happy that things turned out like this because it meant that she didn't need to be alone with Muku again.

Who knows if he would try something like that again? After she started it, she couldn't admonish him since it was too hypocritical for her.

And she wasn't sure whether she would be able to say no again.

The first time she was surprised, but the second time she would know what to expect, and she kinda wanted it too. So yeah, she couldn't risk it for now.

Wouldn't she seem a bit too loose if she were taken before some of the girls who had been around for years when she had only been around for a few months if the time manipulation was ignored?

As a Monarch, her pride wouldn't let her be so easily conquered. He had to try harder if he wanted her. Maybe only after he catches up to her will she let him do what he wants.

But her beastly instincts were unreliable, if she went into heat because of his touches then it's over, so she had to be careful...

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A day later....

All the furniture in Muku's room was removed. All that was left were eleven mats, where the group would sit when they cultivate.

Of course, it was so saturated with golden mana that they couldn't even see each other with their eyes and had to use their divine sense.

In fact, the mana was so dense it had liquefied.

It was a weird golden liquid that radiated life but when one touched it, it didn't make them wet as a typical liquid would. It more or less had the properties of mercury.

Anyway, everyone seriously took their places on their mats... It didn't need to be said that Jade got her Beast Aura supply too right?...

At that point, they had to get to Peak Psuedo R8 first. And the requirements were simple. They just had to reinforce their various properties again and reforge their mana cores.

It would literally be broken and reforged in their bodies. It was an extremely painful process. But when was gaining power ever easy?

It couldn't be done all at once as that would cripple them. So they would destroy and reform small parts at a time and reform them with outside mana and belief energy.

At that point, the girls who had advanced first were almost halfway.

They might not have been too serious about cultivating but they had grit which allowed them to break off the biggest chunks possible.

Honestly, the process won't last too long if one is willing to tank the pain. Which was something they were obviously willing to do. They had gone through similar painful experiences during Mrs C's trials. Maybe not as painful. But not too far away. And that was a stable foundation for this.

And so, everyone immediately got into it with scrunched faces and all as they broke some and reforged their cores. What made them feel worse was how they were told that it was the same thing they had to do for R8 to R9 as well.

But hey. That's how it was, it couldn't be avoided. And for power, they were more than willing.

They simply refused to be the weak ones in the apocalypse like the first days.

Though honestly, everyone was weak back then.

That is if we only looked at humans that is...

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Back on the blue planet...

As the group was busy suffering through their cultivation. War was already waging back home.

As Althea said, both sides now had their tried vest soldiers in the fight.

Since the planet's spirit didn't allow R6 fights on it, then there was no way R7 and beyond fights would be acceptable.

For that reason, the war was decided on the planet when the beasts came through, and then fought in space.

Space was now so chaotic that random sounds from shockwaves were always being heard on the planet.

As for where the human experts came from. Well, some were actually sealed in statue forms, others in some secret chambers all over the world buried deep in the ground.

Some were actually in skeleton states before being awakened and their flesh grew back like vampires or something.

Most were in secret dimensions in deep sleep and had only awoken when the first R7 appeared and the world went all out and reinforced itself to support R9s.

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Which honestly was debatable whether it was a good move or not as it only allowed stronger foes to come.

But hey, the spirit seemed to be in its infancy stage or it was just fulfilling destiny, whatever the reason was, things happened and war had come. At that point, everyone could only take up arms and fight.

At that point, the current generation of humans was the most pitiful.

After all, out of nowhere, all these experts and expert-level enemies appeared when they were still struggling with the grunts.

Fortunately, the humans from the past took them in and placed them under their control in their Kingdoms.

That's right, Kingdoms had reappeared on the planet.

It seemed, no matter what era they were from, humans always had an urge to lead those they seemed lesser than them.

And as always, the lesser could only fall in line initially since they neither have the solidarity nor the strength to resist.

And honestly, only a few felt like resisting when they were faced with what seemed like the second coming of the apocalypse so it wasn't too bad right?

Wrong...

End of Volume...