

Innkeeper 431

The Innkeeper

Chapter 431: Welcome to the family

Lex did a bunch of mental math. Honestly, he was sick of going to other planets and dealing with matters unrelated to the Inn. Exploring the universe was fun, albeit Lex had to admit the only reason he even went was to increase the number of connected planets. But the matter of fact was, he had decided to only focus on the Inn for the upcoming period. Still... it wasn't like he could ignore Earth completely. Since that was the case, he would use others to handle matters there instead of doing things himself.

"The second matter has to do with Earth. Some time ago Velma passed information of a few people manipulating all major events from behind the scenes to cause war and chaos in general. I passed the information to the so-called steward of Earth, Fernanda. In fact, it has been quite a while since that happened. Your job is to follow up and see if she really did take care of things and handled those trouble makers, or if nothing has changed. If there is no change... I want you to spread the information to all those who have been impacted by the manipulation. Moreover, I want to see if you can get specific information on the people responsible for this. We will see what we can do once we know more."

Since the original information had come from Velma, Lex did not think they would need him and was about to excuse himself, when Luthor stopped him.

"Wait, since you handle some things for the Innkeeper, there's a matter that I need to consult you on," Luthor said quickly when he saw Lex's intentions.

Lex raised an eyebrow out of curiosity. He understood why Luthor was consulting him. As the Innkeeper, he had not been entertaining many briefings and meetings lately due to his limited time, though he did his best to address all emergencies. Soon he'd recover and he'd be able to take care of nonemergencies as well. Lex was so short on time, he still hadn't gone through the notifications and rewards he'd received during his butter knife incident.

But that also meant that the workers had to make decisions on their own for matters they couldn't consult the Innkeeper, and while Luthor seemed to be much better at this than his other workers, Lex noticed that they seemed to be particularly bad at this.

By offering advice instead of solutions using his Leo persona, Lex could nurture this trait in them slowly.

"Go ahead."

"I don't know if you've heard yet, but there's been a recurring issue at the Inn lately. One of the guests named Jill has constantly been under attack. Even if we banned the attacker, his accomplices kept coming. The Security room has a system to detect if anyone who comes to the Inn is related to a past offender, but for whatever reason, these new guests weren't getting detected. Furthermore, they'd be completely normal guests, until they encountered Jill. Then, as if a switch went off, they'd start attacking her.

"Some time ago, we captured some of the offenders and I personally oversaw the interrogation. Yet I wasn't able to extract any useful information. This is a conundrum no one can think of a solution to, and even the guest is becoming paranoid. She barely leaves her room regardless of how much security we offer her."

Lex was quickly reminded of this issue. This was a troublesome matter, but what was worse was that Luthor was making a mistake in identifying the direction he should be working in. Lex did not know what was the reasoning behind why this was happening, and maybe it all really did begin because of the Lady Cosmos competition, but he honestly felt otherwise.

Regardless, the matter of fact was that a guest's personal life or affairs were affecting the Inn. He did not doubt that they would have countless more guests in the future who would have enemies who would chase them to the Inn.

The part they should be focusing on was not solving the guests personal issues, but ensuring that the Inn would always be safe.

The Security room being unable to detect people who might cause problems, or had the intentions to cause trouble was the greatest problem in this scenario, as far as Lex was concerned.

"This is something I can't casually comment on. Compile all the information you have regarding the incident and I'll grab it from you next time. All I'll say for now is, your focus should be on keeping the Inn safe rather than anything else. The Security room being unable to detect potential offenders is the greatest issue here. You should study the offenders thoroughly and try to investigate what was different about them that allowed them to escape the Security rooms detection."

Before Luthor could say anything else, Leo disappeared. It wasn't that he didn't want to help out, but that he was really running out of time and he had one more issue to take care of before he fell asleep.

The Innkeeper reappeared near the front of the Inn and sat down on a patch of empty grass. There was an ostentation of peacocks nearby, as well as a few rabbits. A soft wind was blowing across the plains, rustling the grass and tree leaves nearby. It looked like a scene out of a children's book.

The Inn really was incredibly peaceful, when one took the time to enjoy it. Unfortunately, Lex was not here to enjoy.

He took in a deep, refreshing breath before he turned and looked down at the grass.

"You can't hide from me, you know," he said teasingly as he scanned the grass.

Name: -

Age: 0

Cultivation Details: Earth Immortal

Species: Common Earthen Monocotyledon

Condition: Malnourished

Remarks: When the righteous fury of the Butter Knife eliminated the unnamed miscreants causing trouble, this patch of grass was exposed to the profound aura of the attack and gained sentience as well as cultivation. But its body remains as fragile as common grass, and only its spirit has reached the immortal realm.

The last time Lex sat on his chair, he became aware of the fact that there was a patch of grass that had gained sentience. Moreover, because it was born in and from the Inn, it automatically became a worker

for the Inn. Unfortunately, being born and gaining cultivation did not mean it gained intelligence. The grass behaved mostly out of instinct, which meant it photosynthesized and absorbed nutrients from the soil. Unfortunately, it was so effective that it was making the surrounding soil infertile, and drastically increasing the oxygen concentration in the entire Inn. Moreover, it was becoming weaker.

Like a newborn baby, it needed to be taken care of. Yet unlike a newborn baby, this patch of grass was in the immortal realm, and Lex needed to have a talk with it before someone could take care of it, lest there be an accident. Even the turtle had not taken the risk yet.

The patch of grass coiled together and formed a humanoid shape. The head turned to look up at the Innkeeper, and it felt a deep feeling of trust when it looked at his face.

"Hey there little fella. What have you been doing out here alone?"

The patch of grass knocked its head, as if confused by the question.

"Little fella, I'm going to send someone to take you away from here, okay? They'll take you to a better place, this area isn't suited for you."

The patch of grass vehemently shook its head, and sat down on the ground as if it was throwing a tantrum. Its roots were here, how could it just get up and leave?

"Don't be like that, trust me, you'll enjoy it. You'll have a weird big brother called Young McDonald and a weird uncle that's a turtle. They'll give you fresh water, and the best soil and maybe sometimes they'll even spoil you with some fertilizer."

The humanoid patch of grass scratched its head, as if it was thinking it through. Truth be told, it had been feeling lethargic lately. Unfortunately, it did not know anything, so it could not identify what that lethargy meant.

But Lex knew. The grass had gained an impressive cultivation, but its body was still so fragile it could rip by being stepped on. Moreover, it could not absorb the necessary nutrients to strengthen its body here, which was actually causing the grass to starve.

"Alright buddy, if nothing else, at least go somewhere safe. After all, you know this place is full of rabbit monsters that eat grass!"

The patch of grass nearly unfurled in terror as it heard the Innkeepers statement, and quickly started to nod its head. It didn't want to face the dreaded rabbit monster! Though it didn't know what that was, it also did not want to find out.

"Excellent. I'm sure you'll like your new home. By the way, welcome to the Midnight family."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 432: Easy

Once the patch of grass agreed to move Lex informed Mary to summon the turtle. Other than the grasses' surprising cultivation level, another reason why the turtle never attempted to communicate with the patch itself was due to the fact that the grass had the perfect disguise. Its aura was completely untraceable and,albeit slowly, it could move wherever it wanted within the lawn.

There was just one final thing left to do, which was give it a name. After all, Lex couldn't go around calling it the patch of grass. A single, unnamed turtle was already annoying enough for Lex.

After a moment's consideration, he named the sentient grass Zen. There was no particular reason behind it, and Lex definitely did not consider giving the grass the last name Garden either.

With that done, Lex finally returned to the Recovery Pod and lay down just moments before losing consciousness. If all went according to plan, this would be the second last time this happened to him.

For Lex, the matter was as simple as falling asleep and letting the Lotus do the work. The Lotus, instead, was actually under a lot of strain now. Improving Lex's body itself was not a difficult task, but Lex's mind and memories were plagued by aftereffects of coming into contact with the physical manifestation of a few laws. The memories, in turn, were putting an immense burden on Lex's body.

Therefore, what the Lotus actually had to do was make Lex's Foundation able to interact with,and support laws. This was incredibly difficult, and the Lotus was actually running out items to use to improve Lex's body in such a way. Divine Essence was one of the greatest shortcuts one could use to interact with laws, but it had used up the entire available supply at the Inn last time.

This time, it was forced to use the last remaining item available at the Inn that could do such a thing, and it was beyond precious. It was the final seed out of 3 rare seeds that Lex got.

The seed, if it had been allowed to grow, would have produced a plant much like itself. Well, though the second seed had been planted near the Fire Temple, and it was absorbing the heat and the divine energy in the area, it had not properly taken form, and so did not gain sentience.

Of course, there was the possibility that it would not gain sentience at all, and would just be an incredible and rare plant. Regardless, it would not change the fact that whatever the plant was, it had the potential to interact with laws.

The Lotus waited patiently for the turtle to bring it the third seed. Once the seed arrived, it would be a long process absorbing it into Lex's body. It would take at least 10 days.

A few days later, Luthor was standing with Gerard near the Midnight Manor, waiting patiently. Through one of the soldiers that the general had stationed at the Inn permanently, Luthor reached out to the general through Gerard and requested a meeting. To avoid any misunderstandings, he also clarified that it was not the Innkeeper who was requesting the meeting, but the workers themselves in their private capacity.

The reason he had Gerard reach out to the general instead of doing it himself was that he felt a familiar face would get better results. Moreover, it was important to clarify that they were the ones requesting the meeting instead of the Innkeeper as they did not want to use the Inn's influence to coerce the general. Such tactics would build a bad impression of them.

Of course, since it was them requesting the meeting, they were prepared to hear that it had been rejected, or that the General sent his assistant instead.

Fortunately, as it happened, the general had to meet the person who was completing the tasks he'd put up in the Guild room so he had to come to the Inn anyway.

Of course, Luthor did not know that. He was under immense pressure thinking that the General was coming due to their request. He also had to make a ridiculously difficult request, with nothing to actually bargain with. At most, he could deliver a promise to pay him back in the future with a favor.

Despite his desperation, Luthor let nothing show on his face. His expression was patient and stoic, and even when a golf cart appeared on the horizon heading in their direction, he did not betray his thoughts.

The general looked like a young man, younger than Luthor even, yet no one who saw him would mistake him for someone inexperienced. Even with the soft smile that he bore, there was a commanding aura about him that made it impossible for anyone to underestimate him.

"General, it is good to see you," said Gerard as he climbed down the steps to greet him. "Thank you for agreeing to our request for a meeting, I know you are a busy man."

"It is good to see you as well, young man. I see you are beginning to regain some of your youthful appearance. That's good, there's no point in getting old so early in life. I look forward to seeing your progress, so there's no need to be shy about calling me over. Between old friends, such things need not be mentioned. Besides, you know how I'm always just looking for an excuse to come to the Inn."

Despite his usual steadiness, Gerard could not help but blush a little when Ragnar commented about him looking young. It was common knowledge that the general himself was over 3000 years in age. But, it could not be denied that the general was considered young for someone in his position and rank.

"Allow me to introduce you to Luthor. He has only recently joined the Inn, but as the Innkeepers assistant, he has been doing his best to get thoroughly acquainted with the Inn and all its guests."

"It's a pleasure," said Ragnar, but a hidden light flashed in his eyes. The last time he came to the Inn he had seen the Hearth, but he did not know exactly what the Innkeeper had done. Even after he came, and heard rumors of what had happened, he only treated it as the Innkeeper getting rid of miscreants. It was only later, when rumors of what had happened in so many galaxies, and the visage that they saw, began to spread on the Henali portal that Ragnar began to suspect the Innkeeper was behind it.

The stories of the guests from the Inn corroborated the stories in the portal, but he still did not dare to jump to conclusions about the Innkeepers actions or powers. As someone near the upper echelon of the Jotun Empire, he was extremely familiar with what the highest level cultivators could do. As such he

knew that even if people thought they saw something, the truth could have been something else entirely.

It was best not to jump to too many conclusions, but the only thing that was certain was that people only saw what the Innkeeper wanted them to see. As for the truth behind the matter, it was not up to them to ponder over it.

Luthor, as the assistant to the Innkeeper, could not be a simple character either.

The three exchanged some pleasantries as they made their way to a private room. They spent a small amount of time chatting, mainly about the new changes at the Inn, before Ragnar moved the conversation to the matter at hand.

"As splendid and refreshing as it always is to come to the Inn, I have a few obligations waiting for me that I must get to - please excuse my haste. I was informed that you had a matter to discuss. How can I help you, gentlemen?"

"No, please excuse us for taking up your time," Luthor said. "It is extremely rude of us to try and solicit our guests, but there is a time sensitive matter that needs to be taken care of urgently. I am in need of some Entis Core, a minimum of 1 gram to be exact. Were we not in such a rush, I would have pursued other avenues. But since it is an urgent matter, I was hoping to use the Empire's resources to get it."

Luthor did not yet broach the topic of payment, for he wanted to gauge the general's ability, or willingness to take up this matter. He did not, however, expect the general's reaction at all.

"1 gram of Entis Core? It is not an easy request, but fortunately for you, we keep an emergency stash on the Command Carrier. I'll have it sent over right away. And please, in the future, do not hesitate if there's something else you need help in. You do not even need to set up a meeting, just send your requests directly."

Ragnar laughed as he got up, as if he had done the simplest thing in the world.

Luthor, flabbergasted, was not able to respond smoothly, and when he brought up the matter of payment the general would not hear of it at all.

In the end, they were left with the task completed, but feeling like they had missed something important. Leo made the task sound hard, so why was it so easy?

Luthor inexperience was showing once again, for the value of Entis Core was not as simple as the general claimed it to be, yet he had given it freely. There was definitely more to the matter than it seemed.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 433: ChatGBaby!

Many small but interesting things that happened while Lex slept. Showing miraculous speed, Dillion Jormander, the creature that wanted to do Ragnar's task, submitted several tasks at once. Not only did that release a number of payments, which gained Lex some much needed MP from, but also allowed Ragnar and Dillion to finally meet.

The content of their discussions remained between only them, but Ragnar seemed incredibly happy when he left. In fact, only an hour later, Ragnar returned to the Inn himself to deliver the Entire Core, and actually gave 3 grams of it!

No one at the Inn knew the true worth or rarity of that metal, and even Lex could only guess vaguely. The fact that it surpassed both the seed that Lex absorbed to strengthen his Foundation, as well as the Divine Essence he absorbed, should have been more than enough to hint at its value. After all, the Lotus needed something stronger than the items already used to finish its task.

Still, Luthor took down the matter of the general providing the ore for free in his heart. Whether the general was just that generous or he had ulterior motives did not matter at all to Luthor, just that he had helped when help was required.

But with that task done, they turned their attention to Earth. The matters there took time to investigate, since Velma had to gather information. But, for that to happen, the relevant guests would have to visit the Inn first.

Still, a preliminary investigation made it seem like no drastic measures had been taken so far.

Unbeknownst to them, Fernanda had been trying to contact Serene Williams since she received the news about how to proceed. In fact, it was one of the reasons she did not go back to the binder, and therefore had missed Lex's business card.

Yet, oddly enough, no one was able to contact Lex's mother, nor did anyone know where she was. This was troubling news, as it was common knowledge that she had a soft spot for Earth. In fact, her insistence was the real reason cultivation had been hidden on Earth for so long, as she did not want the chaos to spread to the mortal world. Perhaps her attachment to the planet made her vision flawed, or perhaps she had other motives in mind. No one knew the truth, but what mattered was that this was an incredibly delicate situation that Fernanda could not handle on her own.

However, because Fernanda was so focused on contacting Serene, she missed out on very crucial information that she definitely would have known how to handle were she to learn of it.

It was not the fact that Luthor and Velma were planning on taking action. No, it was a much more serious and dangerous matter.

Earth's technology had grown rapidly in the past year, aided not only by the new perpetually open Minor realm but also due to the trade between more advanced civilizations. Better computers, faster processors, operating systems and more that humans had not even begun to conceive flooded the research industries.

This was reflected in the technology made available to the public as well in the form of environmentally friendly vehicles, ozone and climate management technologies and more. But the one aspect of trade that all companies, as well as countries and families that traded through the Inn greatly wondered about, but never got a decent answer for. It was that, with such advanced technology, why had no one indicated the presence of any advanced A.I.?

It was so much so that even their spaceships lacked the autopilot functions. Instead, they had just made piloting the ships manually much simpler.

Regardless, they decided to use the advanced technology to design their own A.I., which ultimately led to the creation of the latest sensation that swept the world, ChatGBaby! It was revolutionizing the world at a faster pace than ever precedented in the history of Earth, yet it was also the cause of some problems.

Only a few of the prisoners trapped on Earth were in the know, and they were freaking out trying to contact Fernanda, but she wasn't responding. Moreover, the spirit clones left on the planet by Lex's family had been dispersed some time ago, around the same time that Serene disappeared. As such, this small yet critically important information somehow remained hidden from the few people who could do something about it.

Another interesting thing that happened was in the Crystal realm. Aegis and Zagan finally made contact, and besides being besieged by countless enemies, the exchange went simpler than expected.

Zagan had an unusual temperament for a monster, which was that it was patient, smart, but also lazy. It easily accepted the deal to use the platinum key in exchange for the Blue Crystal Essence, and so was currently actively undergoing a test to work at the Inn.

Roland had also passed his test, and directly became an employee under Velma at the news agency. His role was to expand the reach of the newspaper, as well as the news agency's customer base as a company that sold news.

The Krab-man, J. F. K., had spent all his time at the Inn since he didn't want to go back to being hunted. As an ardent fan of the lazy river, he spent much of his time there, until he was once again teleported to the oasis, and finally met the girl Alysha, who had been farming alone in the desert.

He repeated the process until they were finally able to talk, and he threw her a key to invite her to the Inn. She had no cultivation of her own, so was trapped in the desert. She had no money to pay the Inn for its services, but as it turned out, the crops that she grew in the desert could be used to pay the Inn!

It brought tears to her eyes, for she had truly spent way too long stuck in a desert. Naturally, she also became fast friends with J. F. K. as not only was he very charismatic, he was also the one who brought her here.

Quite a few other things happened as well, but they were of lesser significance. Like this, when 10 days passed, Lex finally woke up.

This time, he immediately felt the difference, as not only was the influence of the hallucinations almost gone, Lex felt like he could stay awake for a few hours.

But, instead of appearing as the Innkeeper first, he decided this time to only use his Leo persona. After all, the appearance of Leo and the Innkeeper can't coincide too much. It would raise suspicions.

Still, a few hours was far from enough to take care of everything, so he began immediately. First, he met with Luthor, who passed him the Entis Core and updated him on how the Earth task was going. He also handed him the folder related to all the Jill incidents, as well as their suspicions for why the Security room had been failing.

Their strongest theory was the use of hypnotization and memory suppression. After all, if the miscreants were hypnotized to act a certain way when they encounter certain triggers before they entered the Inn, they would not exhibit any malicious intentions. It was the same with memory suppression. If their memories were suppressed or locked, only to be unlocked when encountering a certain trigger, it would prevent them from having any dubious thoughts or intentions the entire time.

The theory was honestly quite good, and Lex would need to think of a way around these loopholes.

Once he was done with that, Lex returned to the Gamer's Den and made sure to be seen by as many people as possible. It was important to keep his persona as Leo believable, so not only did he have to build and maintain his social relations, he had to act in accordance to Leo's interests.

The Gamer's Den was almost always packed, so it seemed like it was time to expand. For that, not only did he plan to expand the building itself, but he also planned on opening new locations.

Of course, in keeping with Leo's character, he dumped all the work on Z.

"There's my favorite employee!" he yelled as he walked into the busy building, looking directly at Z. He was an assistant manager now so he did not need to man the desks, but he could almost always be found near a computer, watching some anime.

At the moment, he was watching a relatively new one called Spy X Finland with great excitement. Yet the moment he heard Leo's voice he froze. For some reason, he had a very bad feeling...

"By the way, I think it's time we expand. I want to finalize on three new locations before I meet with the Innkeeper next time so we can start immediately. But I've been away from the Inn for too long, you

know. So why don't go pick some nice locations for me and let me know. I'm going next door to Battle Ax to meet up with John. It's been a while since I met the guy."

With that short visit, Leo had exited the shop already. To be clear, this was not Lex's attitude. He was just faithfully playing the role of Leo, that's it.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 434: Notifications

Lex's meeting with John was not all too special. Leo and John did not have a particularly deep bond, and the fact that Leo had been absent for so long didn't help either. But John treated Leo with professional courtesy.

He had amassed a good amount of MP, and had even become free from his restraints. That meant he had regained a lot of freedom, but that left him with the decision of what to do in the future.

He could go back to assassination and continue to raise his cultivation using the system. In fact, it was all but guaranteed that he would do that. But he could not make himself leave the Inn until Harry recovered either. He also recalled that a long time back, the Innkeeper offered him a job as well.

He did not know if he wanted that, either. Currently, the most coherent plan he was able to muster was to resume his assassinations gig and use the Henali portal as the only way to assign him tasks. He could perform assassinations and use the Inn as his permanent home or hideout. His identity at the Inn had existed long enough to keep it from having any association with his real identity, so the plan was almost perfect.

Still, while the plan made sense, John couldn't make up his mind. The fact that the Innkeeper knew about his system was practically assured by now, and he didn't know if he should ask the Innkeeper more about it.

After all, the system had extreme significance in his life, but he now also knew that it could be influenced externally, as his last quest was way too coincidental. The Innkeeper had still been kind about it, but what if he ran into someone who would manipulate his system in ways John did not appreciate? He would be a prisoner.

The difficult decision had been eating at his mind for a while now, so the only thing he could do was throw himself into work to keep himself busy.

His conversation with Leo also gave him new ways to keep his mind occupied. He expected that Leo would ask him for a new technique, since he literally created techniques for people, but instead Leo asked about a good way to train the workers of the Inn.

These things could not be forced, and would take time and resources, but with John's unique insight and exposure, he could possibly think of things Lex hadn't.

This was actually a matter that had plagued Lex for a while. He had a panel to take care of his employees and give them perks. He could even directly award them techniques and give them access to the meditation rooms. Yet that was about the extent of what he could do.

The only possibility he could think of was to somehow run into someone with an army training, or teacher system or something along those lines, and absorb that system as well. The Murder system had given him upgrades to his own system, but they weren't too relevant to his needs.

The Murderer upgrade, which would allow him to learn the techniques or skills of someone stronger than him if he killed them outside of the Inn, was not really something Lex saw improving his situation any time soon. In fact, the upgrade had not even been triggered when he used the butter knife to slay countless people in and out of the Inn, for he himself had been inside the Inn at the time. The upgrade required him to kill those stronger than him while being outside the Inn for it to work.

Similarly, the Murder ground was not helpful either, as it just provided a place for two people or groups to kill each other.

But Lex had no way of finding system wielders, as he had not met a single one besides the Murderer back in Crystal realm. While John was on the list of suspects due to his status showing 'error', it could not be concluded yet.

Lex shook his head and quickly concluded the meeting. John had actually given a few good suggestions that Lex kept in mind, but he didn't want to press too hard.

After the meeting, he spent some more time as Leo, walking around and making sure people saw him. He even encountered a unique new guest from a race called Krab-man.

Once he did the rounds, he teleported away and gathered whatever Divine Essence the Inn had in a special container then went to the Infinity Emporium.

As expected, after the amount of pressure that Lex put on him, Powell had managed to procure some Entis Core, though he merely had 1.2 grams. Lex paid him using the Divine Essence.

Technically speaking, the core was more valuable, but the essence was rarer and harder to procure which is why it was quite valuable.

Lex did not spend a lot of time there and simply took all the medicine that was meant for Harry and returned to the Inn. After sending all the medicine to nurse Jubilation and having Mary inform her that it was for Harry, Lex oddly found himself with some free time.

He had too little time left to start a bigger project, but too much time to just sit around. He sighed and decided it was time to do the one thing he had been putting off, which was check all his notifications.

He made himself cozy in his Recovery pod and finally began to peruse the list.

The first notification was actually a quest completion notification!

Quest Complete! (Have the Midnight Inn be officially recognized by the Henali assembly)

Quest Reward: Guest Registry

Remarks: The host should attract guests for the Inn, not enemies!

The next few notifications were actually pleasant.

New Notification: The Inns reputation has increased!

Reward: 0.5 Star increase token!

New Notification: The Inn has attracted the attention of several Gods!

New Quest: Host a God at the Inn

Quest reward: Holy Shoot!

The next dozen or so notifications were about the increasing chaos at the Inn. Since the Security room was unable to stop the infractions, each time the Inn would give him a notification warning that punishment would be meted out if it continued.

Then came the notifications of the actual punishments. It began with a deduction of 1000 MP, followed by 10,000 MP, and then increasingly so. But, after the punishments crossed 10 billion MP, the punishment changed, and was no longer about MP. It threatened Lex's authority!

At this point, the notifications became varied, and were no longer about warnings. He got quests to protect his guests and to calm down the situation within a given time. It need not be said that he failed many of them.

Although many of the notifications were the same, Lex read all of them, not only to remind himself that he could not afford such a failure once again, but also in case there was some valuable information in them.

Unfortunately, they were naught but a testament to the chaos the Inn witnessed. About the first time one of his buildings was attacked he lost his first authority point, and the quests started ramping up.

The first time one of his employees died, he lost another authority point. He started receiving fewer notifications about the chaos.

Then, suddenly, the kinds of notifications changed. It was evident that this was when he used the Butter Knife.

These Lex read slowly, for they were actually different instead of repeats of the same things.

New Notification: Massive surge in aura detected, Minor realm is destabilizing!

New Notification: A tear in Minor realm detected, the Inn is losing prestige!

Quest Complete! (Stop the Invasion of the Inn)The Host's rewards are being calculated:

-Reward reduced for multiple guests injured

-Reward reduced for multiple buildings destroyed

-Reward reduced for multiple workers injured

-Reward reduced for multiple workers killed

-Reward reduced for completing quest in over 1 hour

-Reward increased for increasing Inn's prestige (putting on powerful display)

-Reward increased for increased for killing all invaders

-Reward increased for tracing invader's outside of the Inn's grounds

-Reward increased for punishing invaders (punishing their souls)

-Reward increased for increasing the Inn's reputation in the Origin realm

Reward Rank: A-

Reward: 1 Inn Service upgrade token, 1 Inn lockdown token

Remarks: ...get angry more often...

New Notification: Foreign energy is connecting Inn to Origin realm (attack from Butter Knife)

New Notification: Multiple Minor realms detected near the Midnight Inn's realm tear!

New Notification: Multiple Minor realms merging with the Midnight Inn (Progress 91%)

New Notification: The Innkeeper's demonstration has spread the Inn's reputation across the Inn!

New Notification: The Innkeeper has eliminated a religion in the origin realm, and started a new one as the Butter Knife God. The system will automatically absorb all divinity targeted towards the Innkeeper!

Reward: 1 Wish (0.005% divinity obtained)

New Notification: The tear in the Minor realm has been repaired!

Before Lex could read more, he fell back into his coma.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 435: Mountain-man

The moment Lex fell into a coma, the Lotus began working on his body. Since he had managed to gain much more than the minimum amount of Entis Core required, his recovery would take slightly longer than usual, but not by much. In total, it would take 20 days.

Fortunately for Lex, this period was spent in relative calm. No major incidents took place. Or rather, no negative incidents took place.

While Lex was asleep, the one year mark from when he got the Inn passed. As it happened, the day that Lex got the Inn was just a day before Lex's birthday, so he also turned 24. Last year, it was because of his depression on his own birthday that he ended up sitting in the park late into the night, wondering what he could do to improve his life.

Harry started to recover surprisingly quickly, but it made sense when one considered that his soul wasn't very strong to begin with, so restoring it was easy.

Luthor was incredibly busy during this time, for he was either training or looking into matters related to Earth.

The other workers were also working very hard, and even the ones who weren't too focused on cultivating began to do so. After all, it was not so easy to get over the trauma of having your home invaded.

But while the days were passing very peacefully at the Inn, the Origin was much more eventful. Just because Lex's attack had ended did not mean its repercussions were over. In fact, they were only just beginning. Hundreds of new galactic empires were formed in the region closest to where the tear in the Midnight minor realm had opened up, and multiple new races gained extremely strong cultivators.

The concentration of spirit energy had boomed in these regions, which was not only resulting in faster cultivation, but the birth of treasures that would normally take hundreds of thousands of years to form.

At a glance, the birth of so many empires should have had no effect on the Origin realm, for regardless of how powerful an empire became, traveling from galaxy to galaxy was a task that took countless years. But more important than the birth of so many empires was the trend that had begun. Lex's attack had happened too short a time ago to spontaneously catalyze the birth of so many empires, unless the necessary requirements already existed, and only required something to push them over the edge.

It was evident that as more time went by, this trend would continue. As if that was not enough, while the boom in spirit energy was relatively focused in a certain region of space, like a wave, that boom

seemed to be spreading across the realm. A time of prosperity was coming, but that prosperity would also nurture endless competition.

The assembly held by the Henali for all the existing empires in the realm took note of this trend, and warned all their existing members. Such prosperity, unfortunately, would also prompt fiercer attacks by the Fuegan.

But, seeing how this was an event that would likely affect the entire realm, the Henali decided to be proactive in how they handled the situation. A realm wide competition was announced to compete for most Fuegan's killed according to one's cultivation level. The winners would be appropriately rewarded.

The Emperor of the Jotun Empire felt nothing but anticipation when he heard the news. It seemed he would have to make a few preparations himself before the Henali tournament started. After all, a good performance by his empire might just get him what he needed

But none of that had anything to do with the Midnight Inn. Instead, it was an unusual event on Nibiru that was taking place that had the possibility to affect the Inn.

A battle was taking place between two groups of avian beasts, high in the sky near the tallest mountain range on the planet. Most of the beasts were in the golden core realm but a few were in the nascent realm as well.

The explosive sounds of their clashes had already caused countless avalanches, till the top of the mountain was almost bare. Gray rocks could be seen jutting from the remaining snow, while a few were painted red with the blood of the fallen beasts.

The battle had been going on for hours and seemed like it would go on for hours more. They were so focused on the fight they did not notice the changes in the environment happening around them. The gathering clouds meant nothing to them, for they could just fly above them. The clap of thunder may as well have been the rustling wind for all they cared, and the bolts of lightning that crashed into the ground could not be farther from relevant to them.

They did not notice as countless earthquakes shook the land, and caused cracks to form on the mountain. They were beasts of the sky, so why would the ground matter to them?

But even their arrogance was forced to divert their attention when they heard a boom so loud it physically hurt them! In fact, the sound spread across the entire continent.

Countless beasts temporarily lost control of their bodies due to disorientation and began falling from the sky. It was not dangerous, they were high enough that they would regain control of their bodies long before they reached the ground.

But their haphazard descent allowed them to actually see what had caused that earlier noise. Large visible cracks were spreading across the mountain range, each one causing reverberations across the lands.

Fear suddenly filled the hearts of the beasts for they knew full well what was happening. Another Mountain-man was awakening!

In the recent months, due to the evolution their world was going under, many mountains had transformed, turning into sentient mountain men. Well, the sentient part was debatable, but that was far besides the point.

What mattered was that these Mountain-men were incredibly, ridiculously strong and had spread havoc throughout the world. In fact, the sloth, Golden Hair, had been forced out of its retreat to combat these beasts lest they kill everything on the planet.

Unfortunately, the sloth itself had only recently entered the Immortal realm, and could not control its strength at all. After all, it never had the time to learn. Previously the planet Nibiru was only a 1 star planet, which meant that the unrestrained might of an immortal could easily crack space and shatter the continents. It was only now that the planet's star was in the process of elevating that it had the opportunity to try and learn about its strength instead of simply slumbering.

All of this did not mean that the sloth had been unable to defeat the sentient Mountains. No, what it really meant was that their clashes had caused untold destruction, and had resulted in the death of countless beasts that were in the vicinity.

Now, if a mountain of this caliber were to birth Mountain-men, at least a dozen of them would be born. Such a force... it was impossible to guess how long it would take the sloth to settle the matter.

The moments the falling beasts regained control over their bodies, they began escaping. In the face of certain death, territorial disputes were nothing - especially when the terrain itself was coming to life.

Countless stampedes occurred, until they eventually reached a size large enough to be called a 'beast flood', all escaping the mountain range. As a result, a few hours later, not a single soul was around to see when the mountain gained life.

But, instead of giving birth to multiple mountain-men, only one, massive Mountain-man was born. Moving its rocky body, the creature broke its hand free from the depths of the continent, and slowly pushed up its humanoid body.

Strangely enough, this particular Mountain-man looked more humanlike than any of its predecessors, with distinct facial features instead of randomly spawning eyes and a mouth somewhere on the rock.

"Ugh," the creature groaned as it picked itself up to its knees, causing its head to reach some of the highest layers of the atmosphere.

"Why does my head feel so heavy?" the mountain murmured, its voice thundering across the land.

"Wait, how am I alive?" it asked, as visible confusion filled the creature's eyes.

"Last I remembered... I was fighting off Lu Bu... we were losing the war... the princess had to escape... then a sword pierced through my back... was I betrayed?"

The mountain did not get a chance to think much longer before it heard a strange 'ting' noise in its head, and letters appeared in its vision.

New Notification: 'Reincarnated as a Mountain' system is online!

"What?" the mountain asked, shock and confusion filling its mind. "Reincarnation? Mountain? What's going on?"

The mountain creature tried to get up, but it did not notice at all that a relatively tiny golden door had appeared in the air behind it. When it tried to move, a part of its body hit the golden door, and the massive creature disappeared.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 436: Hoverboard

All was peaceful at the Midnight Inn, which was the norm. Anakin Indiana McClane found it hard to relax completely after the chaos that the Inn had encountered last time. But, in his humble opinion, the Innkeeper was very clear about his displeasure by ripping the universe itself to attack every bad guy and their mother, not to mention damning the souls of the attackers to endless soul torture.

Now, Anakin wasn't a man who condones violence, no sir. But it made him feel somewhat special that the hotel owner would go as far as creating a mini-hell in the form of a hearth to dissuade anyone from attacking again. Honestly, Anakin even considered asking the man for an autograph.

Unfortunately, Anakin had been much too busy to waste time lately. The strange grandpa who visits him in his dreams had been very unhappy that Anakin hadn't been cultivating his special darkness affinity, so to appease the old man, he had been dutifully cultivating in the Meditation rooms.

As if that wasn't enough, his new scam- eh, his new business of taking advantage of Noman's ability to detect lies, had made him very popular. It wasn't anything official, but many women secretly brought their boyfriends to him without letting on what they were doing to test if the boys truly loved them. At first, Noman felt hesitant to use his ability like this, but all it took was the attention of one heartbroken girl to change Noman's mind. Teenagers really were easy to get along with.

Of course, he had found bigger clients too. Currently, opposite to Anakin sat his latest client, Souta. Their discussion had been conducted in the Chamber of Secrets, so he did not remember Souta's secret, but he knew for a fact that Souta needed someone to die. To be specific, a Mr. Suzuki had to die.

Now such a horrible, nefarious and insidious task was completely outside of Anakin's domain, for he had never killed a pet goldfish let alone a human, which is why opposite to him also sat Larry. They were just having a conversation about how Suzuki had been hired to kill Larry. What Larry did with that information was completely and totally up to him, as Anakin had in no way exaggerated Suzuki's motivations and dedication to completing the task.

Yes, it was a perfectly normal, calm and peaceful day within which Anakin was just having a normal conversation, with no otherwise strange occurrences at all. The wind was blowing, the birds were singing, the sun was shining- eh?

One moment, the group of Earthlings had been sitting out in the garden, sipping some piña coladas, the next, a massive shadow had appeared all around them. The change was too sudden for it to be a cloud, and the size of the shadow covered not only them, but a massive area!

The trio looked up to see... a massive spaceship! The metallic structure extended for hundreds of miles, yet it floated effortlessly in the air. In fact, the flying city above the village almost bumped into the massive ship, but quickly adjusted its path to dodge it.

Up in the air, the entity known as Abroar which had been relying on the spaceship to keep its body alive had finally arrived at the Inn. It needed to complete some final tasks before it made the transition to existing as a spirit.

Though Abroar was stuck inside the ship, it had access to all of the ship's sensors, and so could sense the entirety of the Inn. In fact, even the formation surrounding the greenhouse could not deter its vision, revealing everything to it.

At a glance, Abroar felt quite disappointed. The Inn was too small, and it detected few, if any, beings of considerable strength. But then, it began to notice a few minor details. Due to the realm it used to have, as well as the extremely advanced technology that made up its ship, its knowledge was far beyond ordinary cultivators. It immediately noticed multiple sources of divine energy, as well as the numerous signatures of extremely potent bloodlines, not to mention the destiny shield.

Abroar let out a mental sigh. To be honest, it did not matter whether this place was impressive or not, it was the only choice it had left. It had long noticed the small hologram of its original species that appeared in the ship's bridge, ready to provide information once Abroar was ready to interact.

The being strengthened its resolve and was about to ask the hologram about completing a few final requests before it took advantage of the Beyond the Grave function of the Inn, when its sensors detected a new being which had teleported near it.

Compared to the ship, the new being was small. That did not change the fact that the Mountain-man was over 20 miles tall. While the ship was technically longer than the Mountain-man, it was horizontal, and its length was parallel to the ground. The Mountain-man, instead, was standing vertically, and so its head went far beyond anything else in the Inn.

As if that sight was not enough, the Mountain-man had teleported while moving. It was already not used to its massive body, and the ground moving from right under its feet caused the creature to trip terribly, ultimately landing on the ship!

Anakin repeatedly rubbed his eyes and he tried to clear his vision, but no matter what he did, the image did not change.

"Guys, I think I had too much Saturn cake," Anakin said lightly. "I must be hallucinating or something. I swear I can see a giant man made out of rocks on a space- no, a giant rock man on a hoverboard that looks like a spaceship. My compliments to the chef who baked that cake."

"It's not the cake," said Larry, whose eyes were gleaming! He absorbed precious metals to grow stronger, and the 'hoverboard' in the air felt more precious to him than anything he had ever felt in his entire life!

The Innkeeper

Chapter 437: Paternal Instincts

The entire Inn, staff and guests included, came to a standstill as they watched the magnificent sight. Even calling it a scene out of a movie would be inaccurate, for even movies hardly ever depicted something as bizarre as what they were seeing.

But while many were mesmerized, some were silently preparing to escape. They had no idea what this was, and the memory of the recent attack was too fresh.

Regardless, no matter who it was, everyone in the Inn was frozen still as this was a scene they wanted to remember.

Abroar himself was stunned. He did not know what to do or how to respond. Were he in his prime, he would have squatted the Mountain-man on top of him into mountain-paste! But, not only was he at the

Inn, where he didn't know if responding violently would affect his request for the Beyond the Grave service, he honestly barely had any strength.

The ship itself had attack functions as well, but 99% of its energy was diverted towards keeping Abroar alive, and the remaining 1% was focused towards keeping the ship running. There was literally nothing he could do, he was literally helpless.

But the situation did not stay like that for long.

"My apologies," the Mountain-man said awkwardly. It was as if the being was not used to using its mouth, which it was not. In fact, this was literally the first time it was using this body and it had no idea how to move at all. When it tried to move an arm, its leg moved, and when it tried to move its leg, its hips thrust forward.

Eventually, the Mountain-man fell off the ship but, before it could crush anyone, Qawain appeared below it and froze it in the air. The workers were much more vigilant now, so even if the Security room did not spot an issue, they themselves were always on the lookout for a problematic situation.

"Do you need any help?" he asked. He did not detect that the giant rock man was trying to hurt anyone, but that it was completely helpless.

"I... I..." the creature did not know how to respond. Everything was happening too quickly and suddenly. It had not had time to wrap its head around its last memories of being at war, let alone even begin to understand what kind of body it had. As if that wasn't enough, the so-called 'system' kept giving it notifications. It was too much!

"Relax, calm down buddy, it's alright," said Qawain in a soothing voice as he moved the mountain to a portion of the Inn with no people and set him down. In close to 50 years, Qawain and Anita were going to be parents, so they had been nurturing their paternal instincts. Watching the massive, helpless sentient rock kicked Qawain into father mode, and he began to soothe it, not only with his voice, but by using his spirit to alleviate the stress it was suffering from.

"Calm down," he repeated over and over, his voice tinged with a sedative technique, until finally the Mountain-man calmed down.

"You're at the Midnight Inn," Qawain informed, his tiny body floating in front of the massive face. "This is a safe place where no one will hurt you. It's an Inn that caters to guests from all over the universe, so you're welcome here."

The Mountain-man did not entirely understand Qawain's words, for it had no concept of what the universe was. In its previous life, it had lived in a massive country, with no cultivation and civilization equivalent to earth's middle-ages. Everything that was happening was... truly too insane for it to comprehend.

In the sky, Abroar finally calmed down when it understood the situation. Much life itself, the living mountain was a guest. For some odd reason, he found that thought strangely relaxing.

He diverted his attention back to his personal hologram. He didn't have much time, it was best to be as quick as possible.

"I have with me a member of my race. Can I pay for his stay on his behalf?" Abroar asked through a speaker.

"Yes, if the guest is willing, you can pay for his stay," the hologram answered simply.

Abroar had to be very selective with how much he paid, after all, the requirement for Beyond the Grave was to submit to the Inn all his wealth.

"The little one is asleep in a chamber inside the ship. If possible, could I get some help moving him out?"

"It should not be a problem," the hologram answered, and forwarded the request to Mary. Considering the potential danger of the ship, Mary could only ask Anita to go and help move the child, as Qawain was busy.

Abroar was quite relieved when she saw how careful she was being with the sleeping child, and let out a defeated sigh as it prepared to give up all its wealth. Little did it know, this was literally the first babu Anita was handling since she got pregnant. Much like her husband, her paternal instincts had kicked in, and the lich looked at the 40 feet large gray creature with nothing but endearment.

'Does this make me... a mother?' she asked herself, as she carried the creature down, uncaring about the difference in race. After all, she herself had once been human, and had on her own changed into a lich. So then why should she care if her first child was of another race as well?

Up above, in the sky, Abroar closed its weary eyes and whispered, "take it all."

As if understanding his meaning, a storm of spirit energy gathered above him and began rushing into what remained of his broken body.

Immediately he knew his body was disappearing because after an unimaginably long time, he could no longer feel pain. From across the Origin realm, his hidden stashes of wealth began disappearing, slowly turning into MP. But, oddly enough, even after Abroar's body completely disappeared, the spaceship remained, hovering in the sky.

Back in his sleeping pod, the comatose Lex received one more notification.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 438: Doing things properly

Lex did not immediately snap awake like the previous few times he exited the coma, but instead was slow to wake. He opened his eyes to the familiar ceiling of the Recovery pod before letting his heavy eyelids fall again, dozing back off for short intervals. A few hours later, when his initial grogginess passed, he let out a massive yawn and stretched.

The walls of the Recovery pod should have blocked his hands, but he tore open two holes in it before he realized what he had done. Startled by the noise, Lex looked over only for his face to smash a dent into the pod as well.

For a few seconds Lex froze, before he started withdrawing his hands slowly from the holes in the pod. He had been through this before, when he first started cultivating. His body had gotten much stronger, yet again, but his brain had not yet adapted to the change. Unfortunately for Lex, the scale of growth he underwent this time was so massive that he could not correctly comprehend how to act safely. As he pulled his hands back into the pod, carefully, his shoulder blades squeezed a little, as was normal, but this time, they ended up crumpling the part of the pod below him.

He froze once again when he heard the sound of the pod creaking and cracking, before letting out a sigh and directly teleporting to his house within the Inn. He appeared in his study out of habit, before he teleported again to the Meditation room.

Closing his eyes, he tried to get a feel for his body, but that yielded no results. Lex did not feel overwhelming strength coursing through his veins, or as if he had unlocked a new tear of strength. No, he felt completely normal.

He ran Regal Embrace to see if he could notice an anomaly in his cultivation, but had to stop almost immediately! He was on the verge of having a breakthrough to the next realm and had reached his limit. Even the slightest stimulation would begin the breakthrough process and he would be unable to stop it.

That was not to say that Lex wanted to avoid a breakthrough, but that he just woke up and probably had numerous things to take care of. The crazy part was that he had this uncontrollable strength even while wearing the Host Attire, which was supposed to give him perfect control over his body. He could not understand what the issue was.

Unable to come up with a quick solution, he sat down on the floor cross-legged and asked Mary for an update.

"How long was I in a coma for?" he asked.

"20 days," she replied, appearing before her. Mary's hologram was tiny, as usual, but this time she was dressed in a yellow sun dress and was wearing sunglasses.

Lex did not comment, but his raised eyebrow was enough to prompt a reaction from his holographic assistant.

"What? Just because you never change the way your host attire looks doesn't mean that I have to wear the same clothes all the time."

"I didn't say anything."

"You didn't need to say anything. By the way, there's a particular guest who wants to meet with you and I suggest you take the time to meet with him."

"Oh? Did something happen while I was asleep?"

"A few things... I think it's better if you take a look rather than me telling you."

Curious, Lex scanned the Inn and was immediately startled. There was a giant humanoid rock thing meditating in a corner of the Inn, with a giant spaceship hovering over him providing him shade. It need not be mentioned that near the giant meditating rock thing, the gardener was once again crying about his ruined landscape. Lex actually started to feel bad for the guy.

"I trust there were no issues," Lex said.

"None, but he insisted on meeting you. When he heard that you were busy, he paid the fees with various precious metal ores that were hanging off his body and decided to meditate till you return. He was informed that the Inn has a function that shrinks large beings automatically if they enter a building, so he can stay inside a house or a room if he wants. But he insisted on staying outside."

"Mhmm, and I assume that's his ship," commented Lex. He wasn't really asking, for he had already assumed he was correct. After all, when he met Abroar, his clone had formed inside the ship, so he had not seen it from the outside and did not recognize it.

"No, that was left behind by another guest, though I'm not sure why it hasn't disappeared as well. After all, the guest used the Beyond the Grave function of the Inn, and turned into a Spirit. Or, well, as some of the guests have taken to calling him a ghost."

"Is there anything urgent? Since that guest has been waiting for so many days, he won't mind a little more time right?"

"Well, nothing is urgent per se. Why, you got some plans?"

"Yeah, you could say that," Lex murmured and turned his attention towards his system. He didn't want any more screw-ups, so he had to do things properly. The first thing on his agenda was to go through the remaining notifications and see where he stood.

He had gone through most of the notifications from earlier, so only a few remained.

New Notification: New decoration (Hearth of Souls) has dramatically raised the prestige of the Inn

New Quest: Add 5 more decorative items that build the Inn's reputation

Quest Reward: Subject to Hosts performance.

New Notification: You have been Innkeeper for 1 year

Reward: Commemorative fridge magnet

New Notification: One of your guests has used Beyond the Grave and has become a fixed resident of the Inn for 13,000[abridged] years (all excess MP converted into energy to retain the spirit).

New Notification: A guest has made a net payment of over 1,000,000,000,000 MP(1 trillion MP).
Unlocking token shop!

New Notification: A guest has made a payment with an item worth over 1 trillion MP. The item has been retained instead of converting to MP!

New Notification: A guest has used Beyond the Grave, but part of his payment has been retained. Please pay the retained amount before 13,000 years so that the guest can have their full spirit duration!

New Notification: A guest has become a bigger attraction than the Inn's attractions! Do not lose face!

There was genuinely a lot to unpack from all the notifications Lex got. Naturally, the first thing Lex checked was his MP. It had jumped up a lot. In fact, Lex was back in the billions with 20 billion MP! However, that did not come from the trillions of MP the system was referring to, but came from Lex's 1% of the payments Ragnar made through the Guild room for his tasks being complete. It had to be remembered that when all of Ragnar's tasks were completed, Lex would gain a total of 1 trillion MP, so this was nothing.

When Lex looked into where all the so-called 'trillions' of MP that his guest had paid disappeared to, it turned out that when a guest used Beyond the Grave, once again only 1% of the total payment went to Lex. The remaining MP was changed into energy which was used to keep the new guest alive in spirit form.

The reason why Lex didn't get the 1% in this case was that, apparently, one of the items used by the guest as payment had tremendous value, and triggered a hidden feature of the Inn. When items used for payment exceeded a certain limit, instead of converting them into MP, the system would directly take the item! So now Lex had a spaceship, apparently. At the same time, he owed that guest the MP equivalent of that ship, minus the 1% he would have gotten from the total payment!

Fortunately, Lex had a long time to pay the MP he owed, otherwise he didn't know what he would do.

Normally, Lex would have looked into the situation with the guest and the spaceship, for Lex had a habit of forgetting to check his rewards and notifications to favor things that were happening in the moment. But Lex had formed the resolution to do things properly this time, so he couldn't leave things done halfway.

Although he did not get the trillions of MP that had entered the system, he did unlock a new feature called the Token Shop because of it, so he looked into that.

Apparently, through the Token Shop, Lex could purchase some of the tokens the system gave him out as rewards. The reason only the trillion MP mark unlocked it was simple. The cheapest available tokens were all 1 trillion MP!

Despite himself, Lex let out a sigh. The system made it really hard to feel rich sometimes.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 439: Guest Registry

Lex did not lament for long, and instead looked into the Token shop further. Even if he couldn't afford tokens anytime soon, that did not mean he could not look at them.

As it turned out, probably due to his lacking authority, the only tokens Lex could currently see were the ones he already had: the lockdown token, service upgrade token and the 0.5 star increase token.

Their functions were pretty self explanatory. The lockdown token put the Inn into a temporary lockdown, preventing anyone from entering the Inn using golden keys or doors. The lockdown would last as long as Lex wanted, but during the lockdown he could not make exceptions to allow certain people in or not.

The service upgrade token upgraded and enhanced any service that the Inn offered and was given by the system, regardless of his authority. For example, Lex had already upgraded all his services to the maximum amount his authority would allow. But, using this token, he could upgrade one of them further. But, it was not just an upgrade, it further enhanced the service as well. How exactly it would be enhanced Lex did not know, but it did not sound bad.

The 0.5 Star increase token was the easiest to understand. It raised the star rating of the Inn by 0.5, a process Lex had experienced before. As if the increase in star rating wasn't excellent enough, the process for that increase also often allowed anyone present at the Inn to raise their cultivation or experience breakthroughs. The last couple of times this happened Lex could not schedule it, but now with the token, Lex could decide when to use it.

He could also turn it into an event, to gain more money. Yes, his inner capitalist was smiling greedily, but Lex suppressed the thoughts to focus.

The tokens were great, and gave Lex an idea of the kinds of tokens he could expect in the future. Yet the prices were nothing to scoff at. Furthermore, they indicated a change Lex could expect to see in the future.

To be more specific, while Lex had understood the minimum price of each token as 1 trillion MP, the listed price was actually MT! MT stood for Midnight Token, a new form of currency that the Inn would also use.

Lex could exchange 1 trillion MP for 1 MT, and then use it for services that had prices in MT. Lex could also deduce that in the future, if he unlocked some services that were extremely expensive, their cost would be denoted in MT.

This was a very significant matter, as it hinted at the fact that there could be other potential currencies as well when Lex reached higher levels. In a way, it made sense because the stronger a cultivator was, the greater their wealth and spending power would be. He was sure that once he raised the level of his Inn, his services would be upgraded enough to even be effective for immortals, or stronger cultivators. In that case, it would become extremely tedious to quote the high prices in MP.

There was just one thing he was curious about. Based on what he experienced, once a guest made any payment using any single item worth 1 MT or more, the item would be retained instead of giving Lex the equivalent MP or MT. If that was actually the case, Lex would end up suffering a loss for while he was getting very valuable things, his system needed MP not items. It would get in the way of the system operating properly once too much MT was replaced by items instead.

But he didn't know enough for now to guess. Perhaps once he reached a level where such transactions were common, he would unlock something to aid him with this problem.

Once he was done with the Token shop, Lex looked at the other rewards he got, the first of which was... the Commemorative fridge magnet. Even Mary, who had been hovering around his head while he checked the system leaned in to take a look.

To call the magnet impressive would be to lie. Lex could swear that if he didn't know better, if he turned it around, he would see a 'Made in China' written on it. Not that he checked the back just in case, no he was just inspecting the magnet.

The problem wasn't that the magnet was low quality. No, it was smooth to touch with considerable weight and impressive durability, considering that it remained completely unharmed in his hands even though Lex could not control his strength.

The problem was that... it was a miniature figure of Lex striking a rather... corny pose. As a resident of New York, Lex's mind kept jumping to the image of the Lady Liberty magnets that were sold to tourists all over the city. It was just too... too...

Lex sighed and put it away. The magnet literally had no other utility. It was as if the system were making fun of him!

The next reward was the Guest Registry, a reward for having the Inn get recognized by the Henali. It better be good.

Guest Registry

A book that can be signed by all guests who enter the Inn. The Registry automatically evaluates all the achievements the guests have accomplished in their lives so far and then displays the guests' names ranked according to their most momentous achievements. Actual achievements are not listed.

The top 1000 guests can use the Guest Registry as a spatial anchor. The top 100 guests can use it as a spiritual anchor. The top 10 guests can use it as a destiny anchor. Any guest who can retain the top spot can use the registry as a soul anchor for the same duration that they held the top position.

It took a while for Lex to understand the registry's utility, and even then, he didn't understand it completely. More or less, it was a way to rank the most impressive, or rather impactful, guests who had visited the Inn. Lex could not be sure how the book would rank achievements, but he knew that the term was too vague.

A person scrounging up ingredients and cooking a meal could be considered an achievement based on his wealth or circumstances, while being elected president of a country was also an achievement. Clearly, one of those was more impressive than the other, but the point was evident. 'Achievements' was too vague a term. Heck, even genocidal maniacs could consider their work as 'achievements'.

Moreover, the Inn did not provide any detail or clarity on what the purpose of these 'anchors' were. Lex could venture a few guesses, but there was a more practical way of finding out. Lex summoned the registry and a large, hardback book with beautiful gold illustrations on it appeared in front of Lex. It was thick, predictably, and the pages produced a satisfying and smooth creasing sound as Lex looked through them.

Only taking a brief moment to appreciate the book, Lex quickly turned to the matter at hand and signed his name: Lex Williams.

For a moment, nothing happened. He almost thought that the book wouldn't work on him for some reason, but then the name disappeared, and the book automatically flipped to a new page where Lex's name was written in the most beautiful calligraphy he had ever seen. In front of his name was a bold '1'.

The moment Lex laid his eyes on the name, he felt a strange connection develop with the book, and then another, followed by two more. Since currently he was the top name, he qualified for all four of the anchors the book allowed. Yet even as he felt the anchors form, he did not completely understand what all of them did.

The spatial anchor was evident. Lex developed a strange sense for the location of the book, as if he could find it even with his eyes closed. Based on that, he suspected that whoever had that anchor would always be able to find the book, even if they were not in the realm. Lex knew that the system would not allow for such a blatant security flaw, so he suspected that instead of letting those with the anchors locate the Minor realm where the Inn was hidden, it would allow them to travel directly to the Inn without the use of a golden key.

The spiritual anchor was strange. When Lex closed his eyes, he could envision the book, and that provided him with some sort of comfort. Yet that seemed to be it. He was sure there was more to it, but it would be up to him to figure out the details.

The destiny anchor... forget it. Lex couldn't feel anything. He had long known that matters relating to destiny were far outside his purview for the moment.

The soul anchor, however, was extremely remarkable. So much so that Lex was tempted to never unveil the book at all, and keep its benefits to himself.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 440: Anchors

Lex gulped as he eyed the book with intense greed. This was not the kind of greed that one could shrug off, and Lex had felt it only once before when he encountered the Bangle of Narn - a bangle which had an entire galaxy within, with all of its resources available to any who wore it.

Back then, accepting the bangle would have put Lex at great risk, which caused him to hesitate in accepting it. Yet now, there weren't any risks.

But the feeling did not last long for the system, quite unprompted, provided him with a clear explanation of how the last anchor worked.

Basically, anyone who had a soul anchor in this book could find a way to continue living, even if someone murdered their body!

It was basically the same method that Harry used to survive his attack. Although his body had been destroyed beyond the point where it could allow him to live, causing his soul to scatter, bits of his soul were retained in his equipment. Using those bits, Harry had been allowed to live on, until Lex could provide him with medicine to heal and regrow his soul properly.

The only difference was, with the anchor, even if the body was completely destroyed, it would allow the person to fully retain their consciousness for as long as the anchor lasted. He wasn't sure what could be done in that situation to keep oneself from dying, but it was better than nothing. It could give them time to come up with a plan, or allow them to share their last wishes or information about how they died.

Honestly, no matter how many guests it would attract, Lex saw no reason why he would put this book in public instead of using it for himself. Well, that is until he saw the latest notification.

New Notification: In the event of the Innkeeper's death, the Inn and all its services will cease to work, including the Guest Registry. The Guest Registry will, therefore, be unable to revive the Innkeeper.

A bucket of cold water doused all of Lex's heated emotions, but it was to be expected. From day 1, the system had done its best to make sure it would not help Lex directly as much as possible. While it was less successful now in doing that due to the variety of services the Inn offered, it still tried to do the same.

Lex was so disappointed, in fact, that he directly teleported the book to the Midnight manor and told Mary to have it put out in front. He did not even open up a special place for it, nor did he advertise its effects. He knew he should do that as it would only benefit him, but he was slightly bitter.

Once the depression of having a 'get out of death free' card taken away from him dwindled, Lex would properly do something about the registry. Until then, he had other things to do.

The next reward was the 'Wish'. The system was automatically absorbing all divinity that belonged to the so-called 'Butter Knife God' and using it to power the wish. Once it reached 100%, Lex could literally make a wish and it would come true.

He did not know what limitations the wish had, but that was impressive no matter what. He could already think of a few different things he would want to wish for. Well, more than a few. It was a good thing he had plenty of time to narrow down what to use it for.

Now that he was finally done reading the notifications and rewards, it was time to see if he could use any of them. The guest registry was automatically excluded, and the magnet had been teleported to the fridge in his apartment, despite his wish to bury it somewhere. The lockdown token was of no use to Lex at the moment, so that only left the other two tokens behind.

Lex already knew what he was going to do with the 0.5 star increase token. He was going to do a full event based around it, so that only left the service upgrade token.

He could potentially leave it alone until he encountered a situation where he really needed it, but to do that, he would first have to evaluate whether or not he could massively benefit from it right now.

The token could upgrade any service which had been provided directly by the system, and there were quite a few of them. If Lex were to list them...

The list was long, but it included: Basic and Advanced accommodations(various rooms etc.), Beyond the Grave, Boulder Shrine, Chamber of Secrets, the Fishing well, the Greenhouse, the Guest Registry, the Guild Room, the Hot tub room, the Inheritance lounge, the Meditation room, the Midnight News building, the Murder Ground, the Mystery Trial, the ORR (Organic Reconstruction room), the Pro bono wing, the Recovery pod, the Recovery room, the Rumor room, the Training room and the Wine cellar, among others.

If the Security room counted as a service, Lex would have picked it in a heartbeat, but like many other things it counted only as a feature of the Inn, not a service, so it was not upgradable.

That left him with a few various options. Meditation room was a no-brainer, for it would help in cultivation. One of the recovery services would also be a good upgrade option, as that was always a

popular feature of the Inn. Boulder shrine was a good option for Lex could directly benefit if the divine essence improved.

To be honest, quite a few of the services had great possibilities with an upgrade. But at the same time, there was one specific one which could not receive an upgrade normally: the Mystery trial.

Although Lex himself never got around to trying it out, the Mystery trial was one of the most popular attractions at the Inn. But regardless of how popular it was, Lex could not create multiple, nor could he upgrade it as it came as a reward from the system. Technically, there were a few other services that could not be upgraded through normal means, such as Beyond the Grave, which would benefit from this token immensely.

Yet for some reason, Lex felt greatly attracted to the idea of upgrading the Mystery trial. It was a gamble, but his instincts had not led him astray so far. Without giving himself the opportunity to come to his senses, Lex used the token on the trial.