

## **Innkeeper 591**

### The Innkeeper

#### Chapter 591: Fishing tournament winner

Jotun immediately left Lex's office after receiving the letter, allowing Lex to exit the Overdrive state. Previously he never felt overburdened while using the state, but currently it was burdensome.

"Mary, have someone gather some information on the Henali portal. I want them to gather as much reliable information they can about oracles and prophecies. Especially about the repercussions of it, and how to deal with it," he said while rubbing this head.

Since as of now this was an ability he could not control, he needed to at least be able to mitigate its adverse effects. He couldn't only wait and hope that the ability was only triggered at times when he had nothing important going on.

After spending a few more moments to recover, he scanned the Inn and looked for Zagan. The former massive sea creature that he had seen in the Crystal realm was now an employee that worked for him. This was both great and worrisome. It was great for now he finally had a valet. It was worrisome because... what if Zagan chose not to obey orders?

This was not a new concern for him, especially since he had long employed people much stronger than himself.

Recently though, with his repeated improvements, he finally found a solution to the problem. Well, he learned about the solution rather than getting it. If he managed to improve the system once more, he would be able to unlock a new feature that made it so that he would be able to limit employees' powers and cultivation while they were inside the Inn.

This wasn't the perfect solution, and it held the potential for extreme harm if used carelessly. Yet it was something at least. In fact, Lex had even thought he would unlock this ability already when he previously took the Desert farming system, but as it turned out, the aid of that system to his own was miniscule. In fact, it had not even been able to satisfy his quest to absorb more systems.

Lex personally felt that it was cheating that he got no reward, but apparently unless the system functionality improved by a total of 5% he would not get the reward. At least, that's what Mary told him. Absorbing the desert farming system had upgraded the functionality by 2%, so if Lex could manage another 3% he would be set.

Until that happened, Lex would have to use other ways to keep Zagan in line. For now, the creature was seated in one of the farthest, most secluded corners of the Inn while it underwent its invisible tribulation. Apparently Zagan could take on a human shape, but as soon as the tribulations started, he returned to his normal shape.

Speaking of massive creatures like Zagan, as well as systems, Ming Jie, the owner of the Reincarnated as a Mountain system, was still inside the Inn. The reason why Lex never paid much attention to him was because... he had fallen asleep. As far as Lex could guess, his sleep cycle had been seriously messed up due to his new status as a mountain. He could only guess when he would wake up. At least he had been kind enough to pay for his stay using various gems and ores which his body was apparently producing. It was an incredibly creepy thought.

But as much trouble as Zagan might bring, Lex was also looking forward to his tribulation completing. Although it was sooner than he wanted, Lex had decided it was time to return to the Crystal realm. He would complete the quest he had gotten so long ago, and exit the Origin realm. That way, he would finally no longer be under pressure from the Henali to pay up, or participate in their war.

Zagan, who had lived in the Crystal realm for so long, would no doubt be extremely useful and could provide him with crucial information. Lex was actually a little sad that Zagan was breaking through so quickly. He considered having him as his bodyguard when he went back to the Crystal realm, but it seemed he would have to survive on his own.

For some reason, he was receiving a lot fewer guests from the Crystal realm than the origin realm. A part of him had been hoping some random Crystal race elder would pop into the Inn, and Lex could question him as the Innkeeper. That would resolve his quest from the comfort of home. It seemed that his luck, while plenty good, wasn't that great.

With that checked on, he decided to look into whatever happened with the fishing event that had Mary so bewildered. She had specifically told him the name of the winner of the event.

It was a snake-like beast from Nibiru which had won the competition, and its name was Garlin.

Apparently, the competition was tough between Garlin, and one of the spirit inhabitants of the Inn. The spirit inhabitant had pulled out the remains of a massive beast which literally no one at the Inn had ever seen before while Garlin pulled out a shining orb which soon disappeared.

Since everyone had to rely on the Midnight Inn to decide, they had to take it on their word that Garlin's treasure was more valuable, but no one had any idea what it was. At least the remains had some tangible value, even if not based on their incredibly sturdy material, then at least academically. Yet the orb, whatever it was, had quickly disappeared.

When Lex scanned the snake which was partying with some other beasts, he saw something he was all too familiar with.

Name: \*&%error%&\*

Age: \*&%error%&\*

Sex: \*&%error%&\*

Cultivation Details: \*&%error%&\*

Species: \*&%error%&\*

Midnight Inn Prestige Level:

Remarks: Perhaps you should consider getting a snakeskin pelt.

"The winner of the tournament is a system user?" he asked, surprised. Even in his weary state could not bar him from expressing his astonishment.

"No," she replied in a grave voice. "The winner of the tournament... pulled out a system from the fishing well."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 592: Manager destroyer

Lex, who was a powerful cultivator and was firmly seated on his chair, tripped and fell to the ground when he heard that. Someone pulled a system out of the well? How was that even possible? Why hadn't he tried to use it yet? Why had he even made the fishing well public? He should have hidden it and kept it for himself.

Unable to take it, Lex scanned the Inn, but discovered an endless line awaiting their turn at the fishing well. Dammit!

Lex had been extremely successful in turning this neglected feature into one that became one of the most sought after services at the Inn. Most people who used the well got extremely common items, such as rocks or seashells. If they were slightly lucky, they would find a gold nugget or an uncut gem. Very, very few actually got anything worthwhile. But with the well being in constant use, there was someone who fished out an extremely valuable prize every day.

For a moment Lex considered using his authority to cheat the system and force himself to have a turn, but decided against it. The chances of another system being fished out were ridiculously low, so there was no rush.

Instead, he asked Mary to add himself as Lex to the queue. Not everyone who was waiting a turn was present personally, and had instead asked their holograms to save their space in line. Like this, they would be notified when their turn was close, preventing them from wasting their time.

With that taken care of, he turned his attention back to the snake. Unlike other contestants who had hidden their identities, Garlin not only did not hide but also publicized his win. Either Garlin was very confident in his strength, had some surety in his own protection, or had received a system which focused on attracting a lot of attention.

Lex personally thought it was the final one, but refrained from making an early judgment. He ordered Mary to keep an eye on Garlin and provide him with a report. He absolutely could not ignore system users. Who knew, maybe he could make a deal with the snake the way he had with Alysha, the wielder of the desert farming system.

By then, an hour had nearly passed, and the effects of the coffee were wearing out. He decided to go get some rest one more time. When he woke up, it would be time to head to the Crystal realm.

Before he went to sleep, however, he went and bought 5000 more acres of land for the Midnight Inn for 50 million MP. There was no development planned for this area, and instead, he just planned on moving any future refugees there. They were already getting cramped, and if more kept arriving, the situation would only get worse.

There had to be a better solution, but he would either leave to the planning division, or think of it once he woke up. For now, he needed rest.

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For a long time now, every guest who entered the Midnight Inn would appear at the Inn's gates. Not only was this place far from any of the Inn's main attractions, this place was covered in various defensive and protection formations. The protection was in case someone decided to invade the Inn.

Lex could, of course, kick any invaders out of the Inn, but he found it more useful to seal all invaders in a place and let his guests watch as they were defeated. It was both a source of entertainment and revenue.

But other than protective formations, this place had also developed a holistic transport system. A large yet beautiful transit station had been built which had terminals not only for the Midnight train and golf carts, but various air and water-based transport systems as well.

It had to be mentioned that the various animals which had grown and lived inside the Inn, which had undergone various stages of growth due to the increase in star ranks, were also available as mounts for anyone who wanted to ride. Peacocks were the most common animals used as rides amongst children, but there was a notable lack of variety of mounts for adults. This was something that had been brought to the attention of the Innkeeper, or at least, one of the many things awaiting his review.

Unfortunately, this was one instance where Lex had not gotten to an issue in time. Or really, not even an issue, but a simple oversight. But, what did that matter?

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE A LARGER PEACOCK FOR ME?" hollered a woman at the staff of the transit station. She was a mature woman, though she did not seem like she was burdened by the disabilities brought about by age. Her blonde hair with thin brown streaks was styled in a bob cut, framing her scowling face perfectly to magnify her arrogance.

Her fair skin was pristine, and untouched by a single speck of dirt, let alone sweat, which formed a large contrast to her entourage. They wore clothes marred not only by dirt and grime, but also blood. Their hair was disheveled and their eyes barely had any light left in them. Their bodies had suffered innumerable tortures, but their souls were what had been crushed.

A little farther away from her, a young girl of age 4, dressed in a princess gown, was sitting on a peacock, doing her best to pull out its hair.

"Ma'am, although the peacocks have strengthened, they cannot support the weight of an adult. We have..."

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN THEY CAN'T SUPPORT MY WEIGHT? ARE YOU CALLING ME FAT?" she roared once more, spit flying out as she yelled.

"DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? DO YOU KNOW WHO MY HUSBAND IS? I WON'T STAND FOR THIS INSULT! CALL YOUR MANAGER, I DEMAND TO SPEAK WITH HIM!"

A small crowd had begun to gather as they heard the screaming woman, and the security team had been alerted in case the situation escalated.

Eventually, upon the woman's insistence, a manager was eventually called over.

"My name is Karen..." the woman said in her most delicate voice as she looked at the rather handsome manager who had stepped out. But while the manager was confused, and began to listen to the complaint, her followers trembled when they heard her soft voice.

The destroyer had arrived at the Inn.

## The Innkeeper

### Chapter 593: Succubus

The young Sol bird had recovered a lot during its brief stay in the Fire temple. It was not just the fiery aura that helped it recover, but the divine energy entering its body. An open secret in the Crystal realm was that the birds were treated as deities. Many tribes of different races worshiped the birds that kept away the darkness and illuminated their lands, providing them with safety and warmth. As such, while the birds were not deities themselves, they shared many aspects with them.

Weakly, it opened its eyes to look around. But before it could get a sense for its surroundings, its eyes focused on a single, massive leg. It raised its neck to get a better look and saw that the leg was attached to a massive turtle with a single horn poking out of its forehead.

"Oh dear," the turtle said warmly. "You look like you need some help."

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Belle, despite her instincts, controlled herself from reaping havoc so as to not attract any extra attention. She moved as fast as possible while maintaining stealth, and in only a few hours, reached her old home in London. It was abandoned, but it did not matter for she was there to check on a few hidden spirit tech within the building.

She entered into a tiny, hidden compartment under the building that could only be safely opened by entering the correct password. Any attempt at forced entry would destroy everything inside.

The compartment was barely large enough to hold a single person and contained a couple of devices that were continuously operating. Addressing the major security flaw these devices presented was one of the major reasons she was willing to come back to Earth. This was something she needed to handle personally, and could not even delegate to her clone that had previously existed here.

She opened up the device that looked like a massive copier/printer used in corporate offices, and dismantled it until she reached its core, where four drops of blood were held, each in its own container.

These were drops of blood collected from her and her siblings at birth, and could be used for various purposes. With her and her siblings, they served as spiritual anchors for their clones. When she and her

siblings were taken off this planet, they obviously had no cultivation to speak of. Since they could not create clones themselves, her mother had used some very advanced techniques to produce the clones herself, and used these drops of blood to connect the clones to them.

They had other uses as well, for example, the one Belle was about to use.

She took the drop of blood that represented Lex and used a spiritual technique to look for him. But there was no response. Now that she had personally confirmed that her stupid brother was no longer on the planet, she could only wish him the best, and hoped that he led a safe life.

When Belle took over the William family, they could safely look for him and arrange his return. Until then, it was best he stayed away.

Then Belle looked at the drop of blood that represented Moon, her youngest sibling. There was untold fury in her eyes when she looked at that drop of blood, but she let none of that fury leak out.

One day, she would make everyone who wronged them pay.

She took all the drops of blood and stored them, then destroyed all devices. Once she extracted the hidden prisoners on earth, it was unlikely she would return to this planet ever again. Unlike Lex, she had no sentimentality towards any specific planet. When the Origin realm was so vast, and there was so much to do and explore, why should she constrain herself to a single planet?

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Moore was one of the many workers that Lex had arranged for the Inn during its many expansions. He had unlocked the Regalia Bloom bloodline early, which affected his appearance, making him more handsome. But his personality didn't suit cultivation. He was an extrovert and liked spending time with people, going out and doing things. Sitting silently in the meditation room and cultivating was just too boring for him.

So, while his cultivation had suffered, due to his increasing good looks and social personality, his excellent rapport with guests was quickly noticed, and he was promoted. He performed a series of jobs,

from stall vendor to hospitality supervisor, to a few more random jobs until he finally became ground manager of the transit station.

But while he had plenty of experience with guests, and had faced both polite guests and those with a bone to pick, his current situation was completely... completely unprecedented.

They were back in his office, with Karen's entourage standing outside his office doors like guards. Inside, it was just him, Karen and Karen's daughter, who refused to get off her peacock mount no matter where she went.

As if that was not enough, Karen's appearance had changed drastically. Like an anime character revealing their next form, her outfit had magically changed while they walked back to his office, and now she was in an uncomfortably tight shirt and a miniskirt. When and how that happened was still a mystery to Moore.

"This is female harassment," Karen said softly as she continuously adjusted her crossed legs. "All I want is something to mount. You are supposed to be giving your guests the best services, but you want me to walk so much. You can't expect a lady to bear such a thing. I'm sure a handsome man such as yourself can do something to help me out. It would be a shame if I had to go to your superior."

Moore nervously pulled his collar and maintained unwavering eye contact with Karen. He could look nowhere else because the unnecessarily tight T-shirt she was wearing suddenly had buttons, and the top two buttons had opened on their own.

"Ma'am I assure you, your complaint has been noted and we will remedy the situation as soon as possible. In the meantime, I suggest that you try out our other forms of transport that are equally, if not even more comfortable and convenient. As compensation for any inconvenience, we can make your next ride free."

"You don't understand," she said, in an almost pleading voice as she leaned forward. "I... I need that mount! Can't you just give me a peacock? I'm not that heavy. I'm sure it'll be fine."

Tears welled up in the corner of her eyes and she looked at Moore, and almost whimpered. Karen's daughter was watching silently from the side, as if she had experienced such a scene a million times.

For some reason, Moore was finding it harder and harder to focus. His mouth went dry and his pulse started rising.

He opened his mouth to reply... but then something unexpected happened.

Chad, the deputy head of the security, teleported into the room. Unlike Moore, who had a slim and modest physique, Chad was nearing 7 feet tall (2.13 meters) and was packing muscles like an overstuffed luggage bulging with clothes. The man always had a gifted physique, but once he discovered the gym culture and body cultivation, he entered a whole new world.

He was so ridiculously large that he almost reached half of what Marlo looked like at his peak physique.

"We meet again, Karen," said Chad, glaring at the woman.

The woman clicked her teeth when she saw Chad, and her mood dropped immensely. As if she had perfect control over them, her clothes transformed from her rather seductive attire to battle gear!

"I have done nothing wrong, Chad! This is harassment! Don't make me go to your boss!"

"I can smell your malicious intent from the other corner of the Inn," Chad scoffed, unwavering. "Besides, using your abilities on guests and Inn staff is strictly prohibited, unless you've received express permission!"

"Don't give me that crap! I've never met anyone who was unsatisfied with me. The whole charm of being with a succubus is in not knowing about it!"

"I've told you many times already, Karen, this is not acceptable. The only reason you haven't been banned from the Inn yet is that no one is willing to file a complaint. The day we find someone, you're out."

"This is ridiculous! Of course they wouldn't complain! Everyone loves me! You know what, I've had enough of this! I demand to speak to the Innkeeper. I'm doing your Inn a service by coming here. You should be thanking me. This is my right!"

"You can exercise your rights outside of the Inn," Chad replied, indifferent to her powers. She had tried to use them on him many times. Despite being stronger than him, her abilities did not work. How could he ever be attracted to someone who doesn't lift?

"This is not over. I want to schedule a meeting with the Innkeeper. I'll be expecting it next time I come."

Karen snorted, then disappeared from within the Inn. When she reappeared, she found herself in a room full of other devils.

"Were you able to avoid detection?" asked one of the devils impatiently.

"No, they were able to detect me as soon as I used my ability," stated Karen. The others in the room started noting down what she said and started updating their database. They were coming up with possible ways to fool the Inn.

"Do not be concerned. We will get to them eventually," said another devil with an air of confidence. Karen only nodded at him and said nothing, despite her frustration at being used so blatantly. He was the strongest of them, and so they could not really argue. After all, no matter what anyone outside believed, Rocketfellow was not an easy fellow to cross.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 594: Back to the tavern

This time, when Lex woke up, he was feeling much better. He was still not back to his best state, but sleeping for another two days in the Recovery pod had done his headache wonders.

Though he still felt physically weak, at least his mental state was back to normal. It was not the best condition for his return to the Crystal realm, but he couldn't afford to delay any longer. He didn't know when and how the Henali would respond to his letter. The best case scenario would be for him to already have his own realm before his deployment orders even came. That way, he wouldn't have to go to war at all. Probably.

The way for him to get his own realm was to complete the quest he got in the Crystal realm, which required him to discover the anomaly in the realm. There were no hints as to what the anomaly was, but Lex had long suspected that the Kraven had something to do with it.

Actually, it had all but been confirmed that the Kraven played some sort of role in the anomaly. But considering the fact that the anomaly, whatever it was, caused Lex to be pulled from the Origin realm to the Crystal one, he did not see clearly what the Kraven could have to do with it.

Additionally, he had learnt that the various nations were in fact, not putting all their strength in defending against the Kraven invasion. In fact, Lex had reason to believe that they were actively allowing the lands to fall to them. This was a conclusion he came to after talking with Aegis, the crown prince of the Hum nation.

Unfortunately, Aegis, due to his own unusual life, had little to no knowledge of the inner workings and plans behind whatever was happening.

But that was fine. All he had to do was learn more secrets, and then make his way to a city called Valesco, where an old member of the Crystal race was waiting for him. For every secret Lex had managed to discover, he would share another one. Of course, he also had another route, which was the Noel family back in Babylon, the town where he had built the Midnight tavern,

Considering that Babylon was in their territory, and that Lex had managed to build a good relationship, Lex expected he could make some use of them. If nothing else, he could go around the realm and search for old ruins or Minor realms which contain secrets of what actually happened. The old man from the crystal race already told him that all such information had been wiped clean, and he would need to find some old ruins with as of yet untouched records to learn the truth.

With his new and improved intuition, he firmly believed it would be much easier for him to find them. He did not need to rely on luck to bump into them.

But before he did that, Lex needed to make some preparations. His gear was, naturally, already taken care of. But he had requested some additional supplies at the Infinity Emporium which might be helpful.

Lex originally wanted to get his hands on teleportation talismans and items which would allow him to traverse large areas quickly. Unfortunately, while such items were available, teleportation talismans

weren't really accurate or easy to direct. The longest range teleportation talisman he got his hands on could teleport him 100,000 miles (161,000 km) in a straight line. But which direction that straight line was, was something he could not control.

He also got his hands on some extremely potent medication which would boost the body's recovery. He got his hands on massive and powerful illumination devices, which could be used if he ever encountered a situation where the Sol birds went away.

He had already received the Fancy contact lenses, so he didn't need to procure those. Instead, he got a lot of gear for Fenrir.

He planned on using the pup as a mount while he traversed that land, and keep the dog as company. Not only would it be good to have someone with him, the pup would continue to gain experience, not to mention the fact that it had some useful abilities.

Its stealth capabilities were beyond what Lex could achieve, and over long distances, the pup could move faster than Lex. It only made sense to take him along.

As unusual as it might seem to see a pup wearing armor running around, the Crystal realm was a dangerous place and Lex didn't want the pup left unprotected. It had a few augmentation features as well, that could heighten Fenrir's senses when activated. There was also a backpack for it which would stick close to its body and not bounce around regardless of how it moved. Lex left that mostly empty, but put a few talismans inside.

Although such preparation might seem lackluster, as Lex barely addressed other needs, such as travel equipment or emergency food supplies, it was enough. Mostly because this time, his connection to the Inn hadn't been compromised. He could travel to and from the realm to the Inn at any time, so if he ever needed anything he could come back and get it then.

With his preparations done, Lex mentally went over the situation at the Midnight tavern. The workers and residents there never felt Lex's absence, for he had been using his remote presence for a few hours every day to check in.

Big Ben was as popular as ever with the locals, which served more to deter trouble than actually using any intimidation. After all, a Sol bird had recently returned to Babylon and the darkness had

disappeared. The Pvarti family was busy rebuilding the town. It was too important strategically to abandon the location, so there was no other choice.

As a result, while the tavern was no longer as crowded as it used to be, it continuously saw business. Rick, his handyman at the tavern, was always busy with repairs or miscellaneous work and Roan, the bartender, had slowly developed a network amongst the locals.

While the stories of the achievements of the tavern during the darkness still permeated the town, things had been quiet for too long so people stopped thinking about it as much.

Hopefully, things would continue to stay that way even after Lex returned.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 595: The Ex

One last thing Lex did before returning to the Crystal realm was add the Patisserie. Since it had been brought to his attention by his prophecy, he would not ignore it. Like the Recovery room, meditation room and such, the Patisserie was a standard Inn service, so not only could it be repeatedly be put across the Inn. As soon as he redeemed the building, he first upgraded it to the fourth level, which was in tandem with his authority level.

Some buildings, such as the Recovery room, had been upgraded beyond his authority level using various cheats, but in general that was not a good thing as it put additional pressure on the system. Lex wasn't exactly sure why something as simple as a service building would affect the system's functionality, but then again, each of the services was quite magical.

It had been a long time since he himself had visited the Training room, but it was quite popular at the Inn amongst many cultivators, so it must be good.

The Patisserie, the first store for which was opened on Main street, immediately attracted the guests attention. The Main street was the street that had the most exclusive stores, such as the Barber shop, which had recently reopened, and the Battle Ax. The street had become the elite district of the Inn, and represented the best it had to offer.

The small red brick building had a few flower pots hanging out front, and a massive window which showed the quaint little shop. There was one counter running across the length of the shop, with several rows of pastries shown through the glass windows in the counter.

The Patisserie naturally needed patissiers, and Lex decided to hire two for the first one. One was called Gordan, and the second was called Ramses.

Lex did not need to doubt their capabilities, for the system was excellent at feeding the workers he bought with all the relevant information their designation would require. For now, he did not try out the various pastries, pies, cakes and various breads that the shop was lining up as it could wait.

He was content with the knowledge that each item in the shop had a special effect, akin to the Saturn cake that was available at the Gift shop. He would look into it later. For now, he was off to the Crystal realm.

Barely a few moments after Lex left, the first customer took a bite out of the Mauve Crystal cupcake. As it happened, right behind him, another customer tried the Astral Dust pie.

The two customers, a young human adult who was weary from the difficulties of life, and a freshly graduated devil on her first outing from Garvitz, the realm of the devils, locked eyes.

A million emotions were communicated through the look, and they both fell in love.

To be specific, they fell in love with the deserts they were eating, but found each other modestly attractive.

"Can I try that?" the man asked, looking at her pie.

"Only if you give me a bite of yours," the devil replied, her eyes locked on the man's cupcake.

A new bond was formed. The bond of gluttony.

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Lex took in a deep breath once he reappeared, and the smell of wood filled his lungs. He looked around and found himself in the hidden basement under the main hall counter. It had been a long time since he had been back here, while at the same time it seemed too soon.

After spending a year trapped here, he was in no rush to come back, yet fate worked out in different ways.

But there was no need to fret. He had come back much stronger, not to mention that this time he was not cut off from the system. In fact, now that he thought about it, he was actually quite excited to be back here.

With his new and improved intuition, Lex suddenly felt an urge to go treasure hunting. He had found some incredibly valuable prizes here, such as the Blue Crystal Essence which pushed Lex to the peak of the Foundation realm while also recharging his system, and the Divine Essence stone.

Now that his senses were much keener, he couldn't wait to see what he would find. In fact, his intuition was already acting up, letting him know that countless valuable treasures were hidden in his vicinity. Unfortunately, they were all the property of the Noel family.

He would need to travel outside their territory before he could start digging up treasures. Fenrir's stealth would play an integral role in his treasure hunting schemes.

Lex climbed the ladder to exit the hidden basement, and was welcome to the scene of a bustling tavern room.

There was a flutist on the small stage, accompanied by an enthusiastic dancer, both putting on a performance. Over two dozen men and women were eating and drinking, while Naki, Nami and Nani the triplets took rounds between the kitchen and the guests, constantly making sure everyone was catered to.

Big Ben stood by the door, an intimidating grimace on his face. Unfortunately, the grimace did not work as he was friends with almost everyone in the tavern, so they knew him well.

Betty, Big Ben's now wife, was sitting in the tavern as well, a small bump developing in her belly. The couple was already expecting a child.

A familiar face, Pvarti, was loudly sharing a story with some people sitting across from him. Lex could not help but smile.

The smile was not for the jubilant atmosphere that the tavern had. Although it was much smaller than the Inn, it had nurtured a unique environment of its own which was quite enjoyable.

No, he smiled because his luck never failed to keep his life interesting, all after a single wish for some more excitement.

"5, 4, 3, 2..." he counted down as he looked at the front door, which slammed open the moment he counted to 0. His intuition had warned him this was coming.

"Pvarti you need to get out of here!" exclaimed Bertram, Pvarti's older brother. "Your ex's family has arrived at Babylon!"

The Innkeeper

Chapter 596: Poor Pvarti

Lex was honestly not even bothered. It only made sense that peace would arrive as soon as he left the tavern, but chaos returned as soon as he returned. All was right with the world.

His smile did not reduce even as he looked at Bertram. The man was Pvarti's brother, and was an earth immortal.

Pvarti's father was also an earth immortal. The fact that a family which ruled an entire region, and had two earth immortals, was so afraid of the family that had arrived could only mean that they were much stronger.

Pvarti, however, did not react the way his brother expected. He was still completely relaxed. In fact, he was now taking even longer with his food, as if to make sure he would stay long enough to run into them.

"What are you doing?" Bertram asked, with a tinge of defeat in his voice.

"What does it look like I'm doing?" Pvarti asked with a grin. "I'm eating."

There was a moment of silence where the two simply exchanged stares until Pvarti finally admitted defeat.

"Okay fine, I'm relaxing at the Midnight tavern. What can they do to me here? And if things really get out of hand, I'll head to the Midnight Inn. I'm completely safe."

"It's not about that and you know it," Bertram couldn't help but say, but then promptly realized how publicly they were speaking. He shifted the conversation to his spirit sense.

Lex didn't say much, and only silently decided to wait for a while to ensure no problems occurred. He was not really afraid even of Earth Immortals inside the Midnight tavern.

When he had established this place, he had access to a much higher authority than he actually had with the system. As a result, a number of incredibly powerful formations protected it.

For example, there was the formation which let him control the space inside the Inn. He could closely control the space around his guests' bodies and trap them where they stood. This power was useful against even earth immortals - probably.

This would have been a moment where having Zagan as a bodyguard would have been useful, but he was not completely defenseless without it.

"Barkeep, a round of drinks for everyone, one me!" Pvarti exclaimed, eliciting cheers from the various onlookers. The flutist picked up the tempo and the dance became faster. Bertram felt completely defeated, and found himself a spot on the bar as Roan started to pour out drinks.

"Why the long face?" Lex couldn't help but ask as he poured himself a drink too. Since Pvarti was paying, there was no reason he couldn't treat himself.

"To be honest, I was not in favor of Pvarti being kicked out of the family," Bertram said as he chugged a drink of his own. "But even with him kicked out of the family, he's still bringing us problems."

"I mean, the way I see it, you should have just not forced him into a forced engagement."

Bertram wanted to say something, but he just didn't have the energy.

"Cheer up, it's not the end of the world," said Lex as he patted Bertram. The man, however, was in no mood to talk.

Instead of focusing on him, Lex made his way to the roof to get a good view of Babylon. The old town had been all but destroyed, yet in only a few months one would not be able to tell. Other than the fact that all the buildings in sight looked brand new, it looked as if Babylon was an old port town that had existed for a long time.

The layout had changed, sure. The port was much larger now than it was previously, and the walls around the town looked much more impressive. There were many more guards than before, and patrols were more common.

There was a massive tower in the center of town with a glowing light in the middle, like a lighthouse, meant for land instead of the sea. Though there was a flock of Sol birds in the sky, illuminating the land, so the lighthouse was useless, but it was kept lit nonetheless.

In the distance, at the very opposite end of town, Lex could see a newly built mansion. He guessed that was the local residence for the Noel family, whenever they stayed in town.

His sharp senses picked up an unusually thick crowd, moving slowly from the docks towards the mansion. He guessed that Pvarti's so called ex-in-laws were in that crowd.

While their presence presented a huge problem for the Noel family, for Lex it was an opportunity. As much as he wanted to roam around the Crystal realm in search of treasure and opportunity, he was in a time crunch. He needed to learn whatever secrets were being held about the Kraven as soon as possible.

He planned on using the Noel family's understanding of the Inn to leverage a trade, where he would provide them with some help or resources, and in exchange they would tell him whatever they knew about the Kraven.

He seriously doubted that simply learning the secret about the Kraven would complete his quest. A realm seed was a remarkable treasure, and it should not be so easy to get. Most likely, learning about the Kraven would only point him in the right direction to begin his real search.

Initially he expected to encounter some trouble convincing the Noel family to divulge their secrets, but if they were encountering some kind of pressure, or trouble, it would be a lot easier to get what he wanted.

To be sure, he closed his eyes and focused on his intuition. It was a lot harder to channel when compared to his spirit sense and soul sense, but he could somewhat point it in the direction he wanted sometimes. Probably. Maybe.

Currently, all he wanted to know was if his planned sequence of actions would cause him any problems. Surprisingly, this was within the range of capabilities of his intuition.

His intuition worked in the form of vague feelings, either positive or negative. It was not a strict language, but for reasons he didn't know, he could almost always understand it perfectly. He wondered if it was because of his universal language translator.

Lex felt like there was opportunity waiting for him, but to avail it, he needed the help of a trusted companion.

After a few moments focusing on his intuition, he finally opened his eyes. He got everything he wanted, but discovered that there was actually something very important to him in the vicinity, but instead of on land, it was under water.

He summoned Fenrir, his trusted companion, and pointed towards the unusual crowd that was moving from the docks to the mansion.

"There should be a lady in there, go attract her attention. Don't cause any trouble, but bring her back to the tavern. Got it?"

The pup, who was excited to be back in the Crystal realm, and away from the terrible influence of the big turtle, howled and directly hopped off the building. Lex wasn't too worried that Fenrir would do something he shouldn't. After spending enough time around guests at the Inn, he knew what he should and shouldn't do.

With that done, Lex quickly made his way down to the main tavern hall, and found Pvarti still sitting there. Bertram had already departed.

Lex made his way over, bringing a spare chair, and sat down opposite to the troublemaker.

"How have you been, Pvarti?" Lex asked with a devious smile.

"I'm great!" he answered enthusiastically, but then suddenly hesitated. The timing of Lex's arrival, and the look on his face told Pvarti that something was up. "Wait, should I not be great? Is something up? Don't tell me the tavern will kick me out because of trouble? I haven't done anything!"

"Haha I know you haven't caused any trouble," Lex said, leaning back into his chair. In the Crystal realm, he had not bothered hiding his identity, so although he was burdened with the noble title of tavernkeeper, he could also just be himself. After all that pretending to be other people, he sometimes wondered if he hadn't just become like that normally either. But, he discovered, that as of late, he liked being mischievous when he was just himself. Maybe the search for excitement had seeped deep into his bones.

"But I just have a vague feeling that trouble is about to find you, and not the kind you're expecting. If you don't mind me asking, why did you break up your engagement?"

Some other kind of trouble? Pvarti was slightly disturbed at the thought. He was depending on the tavern and Inn to keep him safe. He hoped not to face anything they wouldn't be able to handle.

Hesitantly, he answered.

"Normally, I wouldn't share this, but seeing as it's you... I'll trust it's alright. Our families arranged our engagement, for business reasons, and I was okay with that. But when I met the girl, I asked her if she was willing to go through with it. If she was being forced, or had someone else in mind, I would break off the engagement myself and take the burden onto myself. That way, she would be free to pursue what she wanted, and I wouldn't live a life knowing that I was the tool used to rip a young woman from her freedom."

Lex smirked. Poor Pvarti. He hoped the man would be able to deal with what was about to happen.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 597: Fenrir's adventure

Over 700 Minor realms had been discovered at the Inn, but a majority of the guests entering were mostly focused on a few dozen Minor realms which were incredibly valuable. For example, there was one Minor realm that was just a massive ocean.

Yet for aquatic beasts and other alien races, the realm was an absolute paradise for it had seemingly existed for millions of years, accumulating countless spiritual treasures, all unused because the realm was devoid of any living being. Naturally the fact that the ocean was one of sulfuric acid instead of water was the primary reason nothing lived in that realm, but for higher level cultivators that was only a minor detail.

There was also another Minor realm that had given birth to a very unique environment which resulted in treasures that were almost impossible to procure normally. Countless immortals had already flocked to that realm.

Essentially it was just a normal sized Minor realm, but at some point its space started to collapse. However, due to the presence of an extremely rare ore with extreme spatial affinity the realm had stabilized, but with its center becoming a region of chaotic space. The chaotic regions gave birth to many treasures the likes of which would normally cause wars among nations. It was only the absolute oppressive image of the Inn that kept everyone in line.

A few unaware folk had naturally tried to cause issues. Suffice to say, the security Lex had hired took care of it. The turtle was especially happy with this development because such high quality fertilizer was hard to come by.

But while there were such attractive Minor realms, there were quite a few which were not so attractive. Luthor was standing in one such Minor realm. According to preliminary reports, this was a massive Minor realm of approximately 700,000 km square. It consisted of three large lakes, a small mountain range and dense forests.

The minor realm also had its own fauna and flora, with the animals being quite strong, mostly being at the Foundation realm on average.

While the realm was not bare of resources, nothing valuable enough to attract cultivators had been discovered in the realm. All in all, it was good enough for the refugees. Or at least, it was the best one he had seen so far.

With his review done, he returned to the Midnight Inn. He would turn in his report to the Innkeeper, and if all went as predicted, this would soon belong to the refugees, and become the second exclusive Minor realm at the Inn.

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Little Fenrir hid itself perfectly on top of a roof of a building near the road where the target would cross. Big brother Innkeeper had told him to attract the attention of 'a lady' without specifying who she was or how he should identify her.

To an observer that might seem like an overlap, but what no one knew was that Fenrir had a connection with big brother. That connection made it so that no words were even needed to communicate as they could understand one another's thoughts perfectly. By speaking, they were merely fulfilling a formality.

So, although he had only been told to attract the attention of 'a lady', he in fact knew well enough that he was looking for a relatively young and important human lady, who should be the center of attention.

Soon enough, he saw a line of carriages being pulled by massive feathered lizards. There were guards completely surrounding the carriage, though ironically the guards were weaker than the very guests they were supposed to be protecting.

Fenrir did not have a firm grasp of cultivation levels, and instead only knew things such as which foes smelled dangerous and which did not.

Strictly speaking, Fenrir's sense of smell was not the same as what Lex knew. He was not just smelling the various particles in the air, but the energy frequencies in the atmosphere. Of course the pup had no idea about the intricacies of what he was doing, but not only could he smell power levels, he could smell intentions, opportunities, traps, colors, spirits and much, much more. Moreover, while its brain processed the images which he saw with its eyes, it would add shades to reflect the various elements its nose picked up.

So, very much like in a video game, he could see colored footsteps in the ground if he wanted to follow someone, or saw enemies colored in a tinge of red while friendly forces were green.

Currently, it could see a particular carriage tinged with a blue shade, reflecting that the carriage was the one it was looking for. Not bothering to wonder how or why it knew what it did, the pup shrunk its size down and leaped off the building.

With its body shrunk down to the size of an adult's palm, Fenrir had no trouble avoiding being sighted. A tiny interference field around its body ensured that no spirit sense was able to detect it either.

The only trouble it encountered was that... with tiny legs, it had to run a lot more to reach its destination. After all, it could not make rapid movements lest it was spotted.

With crowds of people lining the streets to view the passing carriages, Fenrir's pilgrimage to the destination was fraught with obstacles yet it eventually made it.

It climbed the carriage as discretely as possible, which is to say many in the crowd saw a tiny pup hanging from the carriage door, but were just too caught up in how cute the sight was to react.

There was no window, so the pup gnawed a small hole through which it crawled through.

Within the carriage were seated two women, one tinged with blue indicating she was the target, and another in orange indicating danger.

Although Fenrir had avoided detection so far, the moment it entered the carriage the two women locked onto the pup. It froze for a moment where it sensed danger, but the feeling quickly passed. The ladies had clearly determined that the pup wasn't a danger.

"Hello little fella, what are you doing here?" Asked the lady with the blue tinge.

Fenrir stuck out its tongue and used one of its bloodline abilities to make it look more appealing and less threatening.

At the same time, Fenrir gave the woman in the orange glow a wary look. He would remember that she had threatened him. Big brother Innkeeper had recently taught it the importance of revenge, and he would be sure to mark down this important foe.

"How interesting," said the woman with the orange glow. "Instead of cowering due to my aura, it is feeling antagonized. It must have a very prominent origin."

Fenrir ignored the orange lady's comments and instead made its way to the blue lady. With a tiny wagging tail, its miniscule tongue hanging out and its bloodline activated, the lady was unable to resist him and reached out to grab him.

Immediately Fenrir began licking the target, tickling her in the process and making her giggle. At first, Fenrir did nothing else for it could sense that both the girls were wary of it. Yet after a couple of minutes of playing, their concentration wavered for a moment.

Fenrir did not wait, nor did it try to delay the situation to develop its trust. One moment it was playing, the second moment the blue lady's necklace had been removed and was hanging from its mouth.

Faster than the two ladies could anticipate, Fenrir had reappeared inside the small hole it had made in the door. But before leaving Fenrir did not forget to turn around and give the orange lady a gloating look.

Then the pup winked at the blue lady, and jumped out the carriage. It did not bother to check if it was being pursued, and instead immediately grew its size and began running.

In the carriage, the blue lady was sitting shocked by what happened, her mouth hung open.

"Did that pup just steal from me?" She asked with a hint of excitement in her voice.

"Let's follow it. I want to see who would be daring enough to target us."

"No, let's chase it! I want to see if it can get away!"

Immediately her aura erupted, which was quickly followed by thirteen other intimidating auras. Yet Fenrir was not alarmed even as it sensed danger.

Big brother Innkeeper would not have trusted it if it didn't have any abilities.

Immediately the pup turned invisible, and all traces of it were lost.

The two ladies, as well as eleven intimidating looking men appeared where the pups aura had disappeared and began scanning the area. Surprisingly, they could not locate it!

Just as they were beginning to grow shocked that a small pup could evade their search, a small bark was heard from deeper within the town. Fenrir did not forget to taunt the orange tinged lady.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 598: New novel

When the group heard the pups barking they immediately moved to the area they heard it from, yet the pup was nowhere in sight when they appeared. Perhaps if anyone else were taunting them like this, the group would have been more upset, or possibly even completely enraged. But since the perpetrator was Fenrir, they somehow found it quite cute, and even silently wished him some encouragement.

Like this, slowly but steadily, the group began to move closer to the Midnight tavern.

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At the Noel manor, Bertram was preparing all the staff so that everyone knew what to say and what not to say. News of Pvarti being in town absolutely could not be allowed to spread. In fact, any news about Pvarti was best not mentioned at all.

He was ready to host his incoming guests, and promptly escort them away from the town as quickly as possible. He knew that they wouldn't be able to harm Pvarti at the tavern. What he was worried about was them venting their frustrations on the town once they discovered that.

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Pvarti was not one who was easily frightened, yet the way Lex was smiling at him made him feel uncomfortable. That in itself was extremely unusual. Although Pvarti may seem very non-serious, no one could deny his guts. He had broken off his engagement with a very notorious family without regard for how they might feel based on his principals, and had faced his father's wrath directly for going against what he wanted. Even when he was kicked out of the Noel family, he had not shown any disgruntlement.

So how was it that a mere smile from Lex had him on edge?

"You said you think some trouble is coming to find me," said Pvarti as he looked at Lex. "What kind of trouble are you referring to? Is it from my ex? I don't think they should be able to cause the tavern any problems."

"If anyone dares to act inappropriately within the tavern premises, they will not be allowed to do as they please - of that I can assure you. But have you considered the situation where someone can cause you issues without breaking any of the tavern's rules? In that case, there's not much I can do."

This time, Pvarti was genuinely confused. What kind of threat could someone pose if they were not trying to beat him up? Surely they wouldn't kill him over a broken engagement? But even if it were that, the tavern would intervene. So then what was it?

Lex did not say more, and instead gave him a supporting pat on the back, before he began talking to the other guests in the tavern. Although his projection had often appeared at the tavern, he didn't pay much attention to it besides just keeping it running. Now that he was back, for however brief a time, he should look into what the locals thought of the tavern.

After all, it would take Fenrir some time to attract the opportunity- eh, no, he meant, attract the lady towards the tavern.

But Fenrir's return did not take long at all. The pup, which had maintained its small size for stealth purposes, arrived at the tavern only five minutes later, a rather opulent necklace hanging around its tiny neck.

A bob of his head and a wink was all Lex needed to do before Fenrir hopped up onto Pvarti's table, and just lay down on it. The little pup let out a low 'woof' before yawning and falling asleep right on the table.

Pvarti, who was especially sensitive to everything due to Lex's warning, eyed the pup warily. As if its arrival was not suspicious enough, it actually wore a necklace filled with valuable jewels.

"Wait a minute..." he murmured as the necklace suddenly sparked a memory. He had seen it before, around the neck of that woman...

The doors to the tavern slammed open, attracting everyone's attention. Lex did not appreciate the way his property was being treated, but considering that he was the one who attracted these people here, he let it slide. For now.

Over a dozen people walked in, with two ladies leading the way. The lady who had been tinged in blue, at least to Fenrir, suddenly locked eyes with Pvarti, stunning both of them. Although Pvarti already knew they were coming, and might even arrive at the tavern to find him, he was still taken aback at the visage that was gracing him.

So caught up in the moment was he that he did not even notice as Fenrir suddenly shifted from the table, to sleeping on his shoulder. Now, no one would believe Fenrir had no relation to Pvarti.

The room fell silent as everyone focused on the lady and Pvarti staring at one another, an invisible tension filling the air.

It was not the tension of being caught in between a dangerous situation, but rather it was the tension built by the flutist who had immediately read the room. As for the crowd, they were completely enraptured by the possibility of some drama. Not to mention, drama involving the extremely popular Pvarti and an enchanting maiden surrounded by burly guards.

The lady's sight changed subtly from the stunned lad to the pup sleeping on its shoulder.

"So you're the miscreant daring enough to steal from little Jasmine. It seems you're developing a knack for messing with our family," said the lady with the orange tinge.

Pvarti looked at the pup sleeping on his shoulder and immediately understood something, yet he did not even try to deny his involvement. Instead he rubbed Fenrir's back, as if approving of its actions.

"My life's been just too good lately," he said, revealing a charming smile. "I thought I should do something to make it interesting."

"Maybe I can do something about that," said one of the surrounding men aggressively, but the miss 'Jasmine' stopped him.

With a soft smile she slowly approached Pvarti. Just as she reached him, and was about to speak, the sound of a shattering dish attracted everyone's attention.

Nani, one of the triplets, was silently mouthing the word 'sorry'. Too focused and distracted by the excitement, she had walked with a tray full of dishes into the counter.

Undeterred by the interruption, Jasmine sat across Pvarti and said, "I heard you were kicked from your family."

"Tch. I wasn't kicked out, I left out on my own. I can't play by others rules, I want to follow my own path."

"And you thought the darkness was the best time to do that?"

"What does that have to do with anything?" He asked, maintaining is cool.

"And it never occurred to you that without your family's protection, you might get into trouble with mine? You know I have eleven big brothers who are all immortals!"

"Miss Jasmine, I am a free man and who I marry is my own prerogative. One should not be so overbearing."

Eleven auras immediately erupted in the hall, and Jasmine's brother were staring daggers at while emotions started to build up in Jasmine's eyes.

Pvarti hid it well, but he was feeling extremely nervous. If only he could have seen the anticipation in Lex's eyes. He could feel his opportunity coming.

Finally Jasmine couldn't hold it in any longer, and slapped the table.

"SEE MOTHER, I TOLD YOU! HE'S A REAL MAN! HE FORSOOK HIS ENTIRE FAMILY AND RISKED THE THREAT OF PROVOKING POPS JUST TO HONOR MY WISH NOT TO GET MARRIED! I'VE DECIDED! I'M ONLY MARRYING HIM!"

For some odd reasons, Jasmine's announcement further aggravated her brothers, whose aura became even more fearsome.

Pvarti was thoroughly startled, and finally lost his composure while the flutist immediately transitioned into a celebratory tune.

Looking at the scene Lex couldn't help but recall a novel he read. Its title was 'My father-in-law is a gangster.' In the novel, the main character was forced to get married to the daughter of a gangster who had 9 brothers who were also all gangsters. In the novel, the daughter had fallen in love with the main character due to a misunderstanding.

The entire novel just revolved around the hilarious situations the main character found himself in due to various misunderstandings, until eventually the book ended with the main character becoming the gangster boss.

In Lex's eyes, Pvarti and the main character were beginning to overlap.

"Mi- miss Jasmine, I think you're jumping to conclusions. You cannot just simply rush into things."

"Oh come now, Pvarti. After you told me you'd reject the wedding and take the blame if I said so, I suddenly felt like testing you. I haven't seen many men with the guts to reject my father to his face. I can still recall the moment when you boldly rejected the engagement, suffering all the fallout on your own. I thought you'd buckle under the pressure and reveal I asked you to do so, but who knew you'd keep the secret to the end, even going as far as being removed from your family. Only true love can make a man so bold, I know it! And I feel it too, Pvarti! I love you, I know it! Oh, I can't wait. Our wedding will be so grand."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 599: Marital status

Pvarti's mouth hung open as he was too dumbstruck by what was happening! This woman had overturned his entire life just as a 'test'? It was not easy for him to do the honorable thing, though lowkey he was not so interested in getting married anyway. His lack of interest in marriage was not the important thing here.

Although he acted carefree, he had undertaken a lot of stress during this entire time. There was honestly a short time where he thought his father might actually end up killing him just to appease Jasmine's family. But during all this, he felt a certain self satisfaction knowing that although his life was thoroughly messed up, he had done something admirable. Now though, he was being informed that the admirable thing he had done was nothing more than the whim of a spoiled girl.

Well, he had already lost everything he had to lose. He absolutely could not get married to her.

Pvarti opened his mouth to speak, but a sudden loud clap in the room attracted everyone's attention.

"What lovely news," Lex exclaimed with a broad smile. "The next round is on the house. Such happy news deserves celebration."

The crowd in the room cheered and the triplets immediately began to serve everyone drinks. In the momentary distraction all the activity caused, Lex used his spirit sense to communicate with Pvarti.

"The young lady you are about to reject, for the second time, has brought 11 earth immortal body guards. Although the tavern can protect you, unless you want to spend the rest of your life inside the tavern, you need to play it smart."

Pvarti paused, and immediately recalled that Lex had warned him that he was about to encounter some trouble that the tavern could not help him avoid. Indeed this was a dilemma. If Jasmine or her family reacted poorly, then he would be stuck living here until he ran out of money.

He flashed Lex a grateful look before turning to look at Jasmine. Although he could not understand what was going through her head pulling a stunt like this, he was clear on the fact that her family still did not think positively of him. He could use that to his advantage.

"Miss Jasmine," he began politely, but the jubilant girl immediately interrupted him.

"Call me Jasmine, or Jassie. Prefixes are too formal for the kind of relationship we have."

Pvarti smiled awkwardly and began again.

"Jasmine, the situation before and now are different. Back when we first met, our families had aligned interests. Now, I do not even have a family to speak of. I don't think someone like me is appropriate for someone with a background as prestigious as yours."

"Oh don't be silly. The moment the Noel family hears the news, they'll come hoping to take you back. Even if they don't, you can just become a member of my family. It's not an issue."

"No dear, he's right," replied the lady beside Jasmine. "We should not rush into things, and it would not be appropriate if a man with no name to speak of marries you. Think of how it will reflect on your father. At least, before we do anything we should have a meeting with the Noel family. Just because there was a business deal before does not mean that the same deal will be relevant. We will need compensation for the humiliation we have faced."

"Compensation?" Pvarti repeated, a sudden frown appearing on his face. "You want compensation? I broke off the wedding because your daughter told me she was being forced to marry, and that she did not want to. I shouldered the entire blame to protect her, only to find out that this is nothing more than a game orchestrated at your daughter's whim."

Although Pvarti was not displaying his aura the way Jasmine's brothers were, an aggressive aura was being formed around him. No matter how he behaved, his noble upbringing and training could not be denied.

"Let alone I have no interest in this matter, what does the Noel family have to do with me? I don't know if you've heard, but we have parted ways. So if you want to use-

Jasmine was only getting more and more excited as Pvarti spoke, but her brothers were not the same. His tone was too impolite when addressing their mother, so one of the many brothers made a move.

Unfortunately for him, Lex was also not one to tolerate impropriety. With sufficient warning from his intuition, he activated the formation long before the brother attacked, and at the first indication that he was making a move, Lex froze him by trapping in a 'room' that was exactly his shape.

The sudden dangerous fluctuation, as well as its equally quick disappearance startled Pvarti and stopped him from speaking, but before he could make much sense of what happened, Lex loudly cleared his throat.

"On this occasion of reunion, why don't we all calm down a little, and talk with cool heads."

He took a few slow steps before arriving at the frozen brother and patted him a few times. Considering the fact that he was an immortal, Lex did not hold back his strength. He was not intending to hurt him anyway, more like he was attracting attention to the fact that he was frozen.

"To be honest, I don't even care if you don't talk with cool heads," Lex continued, this time his smile disappearing. He wore a stern look and stared at the mother, as well as all the brothers in the eyes. "But the Midnight tavern is not a place where you can throw your weight around."

Among the many formations that had been established at the tavern, one was called Dragons wake. It emulated the suppressive aura of a dragon, though extremely magnified. The formation served only as a deterrent, as it could do nothing other than display that aura, and that too for a brief period of time.

Lex had used it back then to scare Zagan away, which spoke of how effective it really was. Now, for a brief moment, he used it again and focused it only on Pvarti and the people confronting him.

Poor Pvarti, who had been a victim in this entire situation, was suddenly frozen stiff and his mind went blank. Lex had not weakened the formation since he was targeting an entire group of immortals, but those with a weaker cultivation were unable to handle it.

Pvarti totally blanked out, his mind shutting down completely. Jasmine, who was right next to Pvarti, fell over on to him, tripping the two. The mother had somehow managed to keep her mind from shutting down, but she was clearly affected by it as she suddenly went pale and began sweating.

The brothers handled it the best, and admirably all took up defensive poses, showing no sign of running away. But it was clear that they harbored no hope of contending against the aura, as the look in their eyes was panicked and fearful.

Lex did not speak, and allowed them all to recover naturally. After a few seconds went by, the brothers realized that they weren't actually being attacked, and had only been warned. They looked at Lex with reverence and fear in their eyes, not daring to move closer to him.

The next to recover was the mother, who swept her eyes on Lex again, and began reassessing him. Strangely, there was no fear in her eyes, but a strange sparkle. Finally, the sound of a groan awakened everyone from their stupors, and attracted their attention to the ground.

Pvarti was lying on his back, and right on top of him was Jasmine. Despite the awkward situation, they had managed to avoid anything inappropriate happening. But Pvarti and Jasmine had once again locked eye contact, this time from much closer.

Having not completely recovered, Pvarti could not control himself and mumbled, "you smell nice."

Jasmine blushed and did not respond. Even though she had decided to marry Pvarti, things were moving a bit too fast, right?

Before her thoughts were allowed to wander, her mother grabbed her hand and yanked her up, as Lex reached down to help Pvarti up as well.

This was all excellent. So long as all the parties stayed at odds with one another, it would be extremely easy for Lex to get what he wanted. Since his intuition had clearly told him that there was a great opportunity waiting for him with Jasmine and her family, he had done his best to manipulate events, allowing him a chance to build a strong reputation.

"How about we retreat to a private room and have a civilized meeting?" Lex suggested. "All guests are welcome at the tavern as long as they don't try to kill one another - at least inside the tavern."

"Yes, yes, let's go," the mother said with a hint of eagerness. "By the way, child, are you married yourself? Important things like this shouldn't be delayed."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 600: Hidden dangers

Without the Host Attire to help him control himself, it took his entire being to stop himself from tumbling when he heard the lady's question. Was he married? He just used dragon aura to intimidate the hell out of them all, but instead of getting scared, the woman started head hunting a husband for her daughter? Hopefully her daughter.

Regardless of her intentions, Lex only replied with a smile and said nothing. He was not about to fall into this trap. If he engaged in this conversation, he was done for. Whether he accepted or denied it, he would have entered her web. The only way to avoid the whole situation was to just ignore the question, as many times as it came up. For if it had been mentioned once, he had a feeling it would be brought up again.

He led them into the private room and asked the triplets to bring them some food as they all sat down. Lex looked over the various brothers and admired the fact that all of them were earth immortals. Either whatever family they were from were incredibly talented, or had immense discipline and knowledge on cultivation. Regardless of whatever arrogance, or strange marital practices they may have, they deserved respect.

Moreover, coming from a family with such an impressive resume, Jasmine's potential was also probably incredible. Of course, Lex did not really care much for her or anyone else's potential right now. Instead, what he wanted was information on the Kraven.

Everyone took a seat, but said nothing as the triplets set down some snacks as well as several drinks. Although Lex did not hope to be able to intoxicate immortals, he had them bring out some of the better selection they had.

Once they were done and left the room, Lex finally sat down. Pvarti and Jasmine sat next to one another, with Jasmine's focus fixed solely on him. Whether Pvarti was uncomfortable with the situation or not, he did not let it show. Instead, he eagerly began sipping his drink. Regardless of the situation, his love for the Midnight tavern's drinks could not be affected.

Opposite to Lex sat Jasmine's mother, and her gaze was locked onto Lex. Though she was not alone in that regard, as all the brothers were focused on him as well.

"Now," Lex finally began, flashing his most courteous smile. "I believe everyone got off on the wrong foot. Unless remedied, such circumstances can lead to completely deteriorating the situation for everyone involved. I believe it is in everyone's best interests if they get along. If my presence is serving as a barricade, I can leave you all to have your discussion, but I must strongly urge you all to remain civil. My tavern is not like others, which tolerate bar fights and needless scuffles."

"No no, how can your illustrious presence be anything but a blessing? Please stay, I believe your presence will... yes, will help keep everyone calm so that we don't end up falling into further misunderstandings."

The mother was quite insistent that Lex stay, and oddly, the brothers all seemed to nod along. Despite his sixth sense, he was not sure if they were just going along with their mother, or they genuinely believed that.

Pvarti, who was more familiar with the tavern and Lex, did not feel the need to fawn over him. Instead, he had to do his best to fight his own instincts and stop himself from something inappropriate. His thoughts were... unusual at the moment, to say the least. Even he himself could not predict what he might end up doing if he stopped restraining himself.

"What's there to talk about anyway?" He asked, the foam of his drink still bubbling on his upper lip. "I, the magnanimous Pvarti, will gift you this necklace. Consider it your 'compensation'. After that, you can be on your merry way, and we need not ever cross paths again."

He was clear that Jasmine's family still held a grudge against him, so playing on that was his best bet to get out of this situation. Unfortunately, he was the only person in the room without a hidden agenda, so his suggestion, as ridiculous as it was, was never bound to be accepted. Furthermore... it was at that moment everyone realized that the small pup wearing the necklace had disappeared!

When everyone was under the pressure of the dragon's aura, Fenrir ran off to play. He had not been targeted by the aura to begin with, so he had no problem taking advantage of the distraction it presented. Moreover, his stealth capabilities were top notch.

Before an awkward silence could develop, Jasmine spoke up.

"Oh darling, don't be so mean. Although our time apart may have been unpleasant for you, there was no real harm suffered. Besides, you've proved yourself to be a real man. Daddy will surely appreciate you for that. There's no need to sully our relationship with dirty things like business deals."

Lex looked at Jasmine oddly, as did Pvarti. It appeared as though... the young woman was completely oblivious to the actual situation. In her mind, the only reason Pvarti was upset was not because of the tiny little prank she played, but because he was so deeply in love with her that their separation had left him resentful.

"I think that's a wonderful idea," Jasmine's mother said. "In fact, such happy occasions should not be delayed. I have already sent news to your father, and he will hurry here with the rest of your 37 brothers, and 14 sisters. I think this tavern is a wonderful venue, why don't we have the wedding here?"

Before Pvarti could object, Jasmine shrieked in excitement, and leaped at him, knocking the both of them over again. Lex was too stunned at the size of Jasmine's family to object. He noticed that the

mother... failed to mention her husband having other wives. Did that mean she gave birth to all those children!?!

Before he could decide on whether he was impressed or horrified, the 'opportunity' that his intuition had hinted at finally arrived, with the pleasant ting of a system notification. Lex froze. At the moment, he had a particular interest in completing system quests, so the moment he heard the familiar notification sound, he began checking his system.

New Quest: A distinguished family has decided to use a subsidiary establishment of the Inn, the Midnight tavern, as the venue for a family wedding. Host a wedding worthy of the special union about to take place.

Quest Reward: Subject to performance

Remarks: Since the chances of getting married yourself are slim, live vicariously and experience your fantasies

For a brief moment, Lex struggled about which objective to prioritize. Should he try to get the SSS+ quest rating, or should he focus on getting information on the Kraven. The struggle lasted only a second, though. The Kraven were going nowhere, but achieving such a high rating on a quest on purpose would be incredibly difficult. He could not let a single opportunity pass him by.

"Marry, we have an emergency situation! Get everyone who is not doing anything important, and start watching Indian wedding movies! Get me a list of the most extravagant requirements for weddings that exist! Get Velma involved, tell her there's a love story on the line. Get Z to start watching wedding anime if they exist! I want all resources focused on this! This is the Inn's top priority! In fact, start scanning all the guests for potential wedding planners! I can't let a single opportunity pass me by!"

With the order passed, Lex looked at Pvarti sympathetically. Lex hated using him like this but... it was probably for his own good right? With such powerful in-laws, he would probably live a good life. Hopefully. Maybe.

Then he recalled the fact that Jasmine had 62 siblings. Well, if the family had any strange traditions about the number of kids, he might have to suffer a little. But such was life.

"It seems the bride and groom can't even keep their hands off of each other," Lex said with a gracious smile, as one of Jasmine's brothers pulled her off Pvarti again.

"Yes. No, I mean no, I'm not like that," stuttered the bewildered Pvarti. "No wait, I mean, I didn't agree to this."

"Yes, yes, honey-booboo is right. He probably wants to invite his family as well. Surely he's a little bitter about how they treated him before, but blood is thicker than water afterall," said Jasmine, her eyes practically turning into hearts as she looked at Pvarti.

"Yes, yes, a lot of planning is needed," the mother said. "Not to mention, your other sisters are getting along in age as well. We might as well use this opportunity to look for suitable husbands for them too. What do you think, Mr... oh look at that, we were so caught up in all the excitement that I completely forgot to catch your name."

Lex suddenly felt goosebumps all over his body. This quest... would be more dangerous than he anticipated.