

Innkeeper 621

The Innkeeper

Chapter 621: Hassle

Emperor Jotun reappeared at the Inn, to once again deliver a message to the Innkeeper. For some reason, he had become the dedicated messenger between the Henali and the Innkeeper, at least as far as current matters went.

He was hoping that this matter would conclude soon, after all, not only did he have his own matters to tend to, but he also did not enjoy constantly antagonizing a Daolord. He understood well that even if the Innkeeper was disgruntled, he could absolutely decimate his empire, but would at most get a slap on the wrist, symbolic punishment at most. That is what it meant to be a Daolord.

Let alone something as insignificant as the extinction of a minor empire, even in all out war between Overlord civilization, the actual death of a Daolord was rare.

Just as he was about to head off towards the Innkeeper's office, he noticed something strange. He did not need to use his spirit sense to be in tune with his environment. Due to his cultivation realm, the universe around him itself spoke to him. As such, he immediately noticed an extremely hostile emotion circulating between the Inn's workers, concentrating somewhere in the distance.

He only needed to look in the direction to see hundreds of Inn workers surrounding three rhinocentaurs, with Luthor alone taking all three of them on. He did not know the context, and quite frankly he did not care. His attention, instead, was on Luthor's bloodline. A single glimpse was enough for him to understand its complexities, and the laws working behind the scenes.

Although he had not seen it in action before, he had read about it in the Sephore family records. Anachronistic Ignition...

Suddenly, he felt a hint of anticipation. He longed to see the Inn's performance on the battlefield. He had a feeling, a premonition, that it would be worth witnessing.

A notification from the Inn suddenly distracted him. In a few days, there will be an auction...

Lex looked over the list of items he was accepting from the emporium in return for a couple drops of elixir. As it happened, he unwittingly discovered some items that would help him immensely.

Such as a cultivation technique that was available only to the emporium VIPs. It was called God's Eye, and it was to be used in conjunction with the Fancy contact lenses. Once the two were paired together, the effects... Well, it was sufficient to say Lex was impatient to witness it for himself.

He also discovered some items which would help in the upgrade of the Butter Knife, not to mention he found some incredibly valuable ores which he planned on keeping for his own personal use to make weapons to use outside the Inn.

He found some treasures he thought would be useful for himself and some for his workers and Inn. Besides those, he collected 5 items which could minutely influence certain laws.

However, besides all these, the thing that Lex took the most was information. He took the highest levels of knowledge on the civilizations inside the Origin realm, the top races, the history of the realm itself, valuable treasures, items and phenomenon.

Out of all of that, the thing that Lex was looking most forward to was the complete cultivation realm guide for all races inside the Origin realm. It wasn't quite complete, but it had all the pertinent information on all the important races inside the realm.

He could help but peak at the break up of the cultivation realms inside the Origin realm, at least as per human standards.

According to what Lex knew, humans who did not cultivate were considered to be in the mortal realm. That was apparently a misconception. They were merely referred to as baseline humans. It was instead, the entire first few realms which fell under the category of mortals.

The sequence was:

Mortals or base humans

Body tempering

Qi training

Foundation realm

Golden Core

Nascent

All of these were the mortal realms of cultivation for humans. These were followed by the immortal realms, which were Earth Immortal and Heaven Immortal. The realm after that, which was the peak natural realm in the Origin realm, was actually based off of, and inspired by a certain humanoid species that existed. As such, the realm's name coincided with the name of the race: the Celestial realm!

Just reading the name gave Lex goosebumps, and filled his heart with a dreadful pressure. It felt like he had encountered something he was not qualified to know. It felt like an entire race of unimaginably powerful beings was suddenly aware of him. It felt like...

Lex snorted, and channeled his spirit energy, causing the feeling to dissipate. Lex had even looked Daolords in the eye, he was not afraid of simply gaining some knowledge.

In fact, at this point, even Regal Embrace gave him a warning. Sometimes foreknowledge was not good for his cultivation. The snort was a reply to that prompt.

Besides all of that, Lex also accumulated 1 million emporium credits to use in the future. Truthfully, if he had time, Lex could get himself a better deal, but time was exactly what he was short of. It was better to take a small loss and hurry up than quibble over small gains.

With the meeting done, Lex promptly collected several small bottles which would be able to contain the elixir and exited the emporium. Even Powell noticed his rush towards the end, but didn't comment on it.

Lex teleported to the Inn and quickly scanned it. John was still in his deathmatch, and Lex could do nothing to interfere with that even if he wanted. But the other three were still at the Inn, and were in fact being beaten up by Luthor.

The Innkeeper's trusty assistant still looked like he was in perfect condition, mostly because he kept using his bloodline to send all his injuries and fatigue into the future.

Lex nodded, but then donned his Leo persona and teleported over. He did not talk, discuss or deliberate. He straight up kicked one of the rhinocentaurs into the ground, forming a massive crater!

His sudden appearance had taken everyone by surprise, but he didn't have the time to wave at the audience. Seeing that a single hit with his immense strength was not enough to incapacitate them, Lex immediately entered his Berserk state!

He ran forward, the push of his legs forming small craters in the ground where he stepped, and smacked the other rhinocentaurs down to the ground. In his heightened emotional state, Lex performed a move he had done once before and quite enjoyed. He grabbed one of the rhinocentaurs, and used its body to begin smashing the other two!

At this point even Luthor was startled by the absolute barbarism, but then grinned and joined in.

The rhinocentaurs were tough foes, and could take on dozens of enemies in the same realm at the same time. They could not, however, take on an impatient Lex and an incensed Luthor.

In less than a minute, the foes were defeated. Pulverized would be a more apt description, but the details weren't so important.

"I will be interrogating these three myself," Lex told Luthor. "The Innkeeper already knows their motives, so you don't have to be concerned. I'm just going through the motions."

Luthor was a little upset that he wouldn't get to question the three himself, but it was alright. More importantly, he couldn't go against the Innkeeper's wishes.

As for Lex, of course he would not let anyone else question them. The secret about systems was too great. Maybe one day it would be common knowledge at the Inn, but for now he wanted to keep things quiet. More importantly, one of them even had a system of his own which Lex was looking forward to absorbing.

Ah, it was so tough to decide. Should he upgrade his system first, or absorb more elixir? Just kidding, the elixir was a time sensitive matter. It took priority, for now.

Just as Lex sent the three rhinocentaurs away, he received a notification. It was not the system penalizing him for assaulting his guests who had not broken the rules - he'd already gotten that one.

Instead, he was informed that Alexander was looking for Lex urgently. The emperor of Jotun had also arrived, and was once again requesting a meeting. Also, one of the children in the kids area of the Inn had proposed to another child there, and they had taken an oath of a ten year engagement, which had incensed the kids parents who demanded to speak with upper management of the Inn.

Lex could not help but sigh. Whichever identity he took, he was always in such demand. Being important was such a hassle.

Lex teleported away, leaving the encirclement to break up. Gerard approached Luthor and the two fell into a discussion, the contents of which were unknown.

Inside the Innkeepers office, a projection of the Innkeeper appeared. Elsewhere in the Inn, Lex appeared just out of sight of Alexander and walked forward.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 622: Much too convenient

Lex cleared his mind as he walked up to Alexander. Various random thoughts were floating in his mind, from the system he had to take from the invader, to the wedding preparations, to the probable deployment of the Inn's staff to battlefields. There was a lot of stuff he needed to get done, but stressing over them would be more wasteful than helpful. He had to take things in his stride.

When Lex approached Alexander, he found the teenager grimacing as he looked into the distance. He also looked a little worn out. It was clear that Lex had not had any time to rest lately, and whatever tasks he was busy with were quite strenuous.

"You don't look so good," Lex said frankly as he walked up to him.

Alexander turned to look at Lex and inspected his appearance. Lex was dressed quite casually, but due to his extremely fit body he still looked good. That wasn't what Alexander was looking at, however. Instead, he was paying attention to the fact that Lex looked quite relaxed.

"You look pretty good for someone whose planet is at war," he said passive aggressively.

Lex did not take his tone to heart. The fact that Alexander looked weary at all meant that he had likely been through some harrowing experiences. If only Lex knew that Alexander had been taking orders from Belle, he would truly sympathize with how tough his life as of late had been.

"The whole universe is at war," Lex said casually as he took a seat opposite to Alexander. "Besides, it's not like I alone can stop the war. Or change things for that matter. Not to mention, I've long left earth behind. I've heard you've done the same."

Though Lex said that, the Inn had probably paid the greatest role in altering the course of the war than anyone else. The deities would never have arrived on the planet, and the robots invasion would not have subdued without the deterrence of the Innkeeper, and there would be no refugees. Objectively, Lex had helped a lot already. But personally, he had contributed only very little.

Alexander sighed, but controlled himself. He realized that he was venting unnecessarily on Lex. He enveloped himself and Lex in an isolation bubble so that they could have a conversation in private.

"The situation on earth is more complicated than it seems. Who knew I would leave earth to join the Jotun empire, only to be sent back to earth?"

Lex raised an eyebrow, but did not speak. He was truly curious about what secrets the situation on earth could have that he didn't already know. He was also curious about why Alexander was even telling him.

"How could it be more complicated than alien robots invading the entire planet with the intention of enslaving everyone?"

"The war... the war has already transcended what it started out as. While that's good for earthlings, because at least for now they can survive, I fear that soon we will forever lose the solar system to greater forces."

"Even mars?" Lex asked in surprise?

"Several forces have already approached my family with propositions to either sell the planet or enter into a partnership. All of them have some degree of interest in the war. Although for now my family has not accepted the sale, it is only a matter of time before they accept a deal."

Lex frowned for a moment, but recovered quickly. No matter what, the solar system was a part of the empire, so they would not completely ignore it, right?

Before Lex could think further on the topic, Alexander continued.

"No, it's not the war alone that is the cause of complications. Do you know why the robots invaded?"

"Why?" Lex asked without trying to show off his knowledge. He was still interested in why Alexander was freely sharing information with him, so he wanted to see what he had to tell.

"A terrorist..." Alexander said, allowing an exhausted sigh to escape.

"It's common knowledge that I've joined the army, but even among them, due to my excellent performance, I've been assigned to a special operations unit called Valkyrie unit. We've been looking into why earth was suddenly invaded, and we've discovered that this was a plot of an intergalactic terrorist called Jeffery.

"You may think that inciting a full on war on earth was bad, but the scale of his activities has escalated greatly since leaving the planet. It appears... it appears as though he is a part of a massive terrorist organization which is utilizing various alien influences to spread chaos amongst human influences.

"The use of the A.I. nation against a planet is a major incident, but not easily replicable. Yet the number of demon invasions, plagues, civil wars, and worse since he escaped earth is off the charts."

"Considering the size of the empire, I would be surprised if they don't have a team qualified enough to hunt this Jeffery down. I don't see why you're concerned about it."

"Like I said, the matter is far from simple. As far as the whole organization is concerned, someone else will take care of it. But the team I'm a part of will be specifically hunting down Jeffery."

"What do I have to do with all this?" Lex asked. In truth, he did not mind patiently waiting till Alexander revealed it on his own, but he could tell that the other was waiting for Lex to ask specifically this.

"Well, other than the fact that I thought you might be interested in hunting down the guy who single handedly put earth to destruction? Due to the special nature of the team that I'm in, I have the right to recruit anyone I deem helpful temporarily, or even permanently, as a soldier of the empire. Moreover, I'm going on an infiltration mission soon, and I think that I might need your help."

"You're showing an awful lot of trust, telling me all this. We aren't even in the chamber of secrets. Aren't you worried I won't accept your offer, and then spread the news."

"Not really," Alexander said, showing an incomparably confident expression. "Take it as a gut feeling. I don't think you'll betray me, and I definitely think you'll be interested in this mission."

"Don't you think you're evaluating me a little too high if you want me to take on a terrorist organization willy nilly?"

"You don't understand. I'm not asking you to take on a terrorist organization. This is not about acting out of the goodness of your heart. I'm asking you to help me out."

Lex raised an eyebrow.

Since Luthor was currently busy, Lex had to summon Jotun to his office himself, though that was no real issue. The emperor entered the room, silently grateful that he didn't need to wait for weeks on end for the Innkeeper to receive him.

Although their last meeting had been incredibly tense, for Jotun at least, true to his word the Innkeeper maintained full civility - towards him at least. He was not exactly completely privy to what the Innkeeper had written in his epistle previously, but it had caused an enormous reaction between their ranks.

Even as merely one of their agents, Jotun was able to sense the reverberations amongst their ranks. Although Jotun tried not to speculate, he could not help but come to the conclusion that the Innkeeper had an extremely massive and influential background to affect the Henali like that.

How was he supposed to know that, in truth, Lex's attempts to avoid the 'payment' he was due had caused massive misunderstandings amongst them? He had asked them to prove that he had entered the Origin realm from the outside, which they were unable to do. His obvious power level, yet mysterious background and origin, alongside the inability to trace his entry into the Origin realm created an unsolvable mystery.

Perhaps if he hadn't almost destroyed a deity with a single move earlier, some might have doubted that he was a Daolord. Now that he had proved his identity, his bold claims led to only one single possible conclusion: the Origin realm hid a massive secret that surpassed even the Henali's understanding.

For the first time in a long, long time, the mysterious race was getting ready to deploy themselves across the realm to search out its secrets.

It was with all this happening in the background that the Innkeeper took from Jotun one more missive, secretly hoping for a favorable message. If the Henali insisted he pay...

Fortunately, no such thing happened. The message only contained two things. One was a self-deployable teleportation formation, the other item was a small letter, listing out the details of the deployment of the Inn's workers.

Since most of the Innkeeper's workers were low levelled, they were assigned an appropriate battlefield in the galaxy Suerra. There were a few conditions for their deployment listed out, but the Innkeeper had paused reading. His eyes were fixed on the name of the galaxy.

Wasn't that where a huge secret lay waiting for him to discover? This was much too convenient.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 623: Bitterness

"How exactly would I help you out?" Lex asked, leaning forward. To be honest, he did not mind improving his relationship with Alexander. It was one of the few things that his intuition hinted at, which he was already planning on doing.

Although, as the Innkeeper, he came across numerous powerhouses, he did not have a close connection to any of them. Sure, Ragnar had helped him out when he needed it, and the emporium treated him well enough, but there was still a difference between personal and business relationships.

These things were not really certain, but he felt like he should maintain a strong relationship with his few contacts from earth. Whether it was the charismatic Larry, the overwhelming Marlo, the bold Alexander, all had potential for growth in the long run. Moreover, he had to take the long view of things from now on.

He was a cultivator now, and it was normal for cultivators to have a very long life. As a golden core cultivator, his natural life span was a minimum of 250 years. This was the minimum, because there was nothing ordinary about his cultivation at all. He would not be surprised if his lifespan was even double of that.

But his lifespan did not really matter to him, for now at least. He had barely begun to cultivate, and he expected that he would soon overcome the obstacles in his path and continue to raise his cultivation realm long before he neared the end of his lifespan.

So, as someone who would likely live for thousands of years or more, he had to start thinking about his future. Sure, the Innkeeper identity would stay as a powerful and enigmatic being, but such a lofty identity would also keep him from forming close connections.

It was instead his normal identity as Lex that would serve as extremely useful in this regard.

"I am not really worried about my safety. Being able to retreat to the Inn at any time I want ensures that I can avoid fatal danger. Instead, I am concerned about being unable to catch up to my target in time because I'm held back by his fellow operatives.

"Although I am part of a team, each member has been given a specific task that they have to complete on their own within a certain time frame. Fortunately, I am allowed to recruit help to complete my mission."

"If that's the case, why try to recruit me instead of someone from the army?"

"I can't explain it," Alexander said, shaking his head. "Call it instinct, but I have a feeling I'll work better with you than anyone else. The kind of synergy we had back at the pagoda is not something that can be achieved so easily with just anyone. Besides, and I don't say this lightly, you can really take a hit. When fighting against crazy, suicidal terrorist maniacs, that is a very important quality."

Lex found it interesting that Alexander too was beginning to rely on his instincts. Although Lex didn't believe his peers' instincts would be as powerful as his own, it was a good reminder that he wasn't the only one in the universe with such potent senses. One day, his enemies with a stronger instinct could use it against him. He would have to be mentally prepared to counter such abilities.

"Alright, I'll help. But there's one thing that's important for me to know before I do anything. When do you need my help, and how long do you think it will take? I have quite a few important things to keep an eye on, and I can't leave them for a long time."

Alexander looked hesitant.

"Will it be possible for you to use the Inn's Prestige level 3 ability? If you haven't reached that level I can provide you with the funds for it, but the thing is that you'll be stuck unable to use it again for 10 years. That means you might not be able to return to your original location so easily."

"Where do you want me to go?" Lex asked, instead of answering directly.

"Vegus Minima. I can take care of the details so that as soon as you appear on the planet a transportation formation will be ready for you to take you to another planet so it won't take long. The operation is likely there, and I won't need your help anytime soon. But chances are I'll need your help at a moment's notice, so it would be for the best if you are already on that planet."

Lex nodded and said, "I'll head on over soon. That won't be an issue, but I can't stay on the planet infinitely. Once I reach whatever planet you need, I'll be teleporting back to the Inn to focus on some other tasks I have going on. Whenever you need me, you can reach me through the Inn and I'll teleport back there."

The two soon reached an agreement and shook hands.

Back in his office, with not much else to talk about, Lex concluded his meeting with Jotun, much to the emperor's relief. It seemed that his role in delivering messages to the Inn was concluded, for now.

The emperor narrowed his eyes as he thought of the tasks that lay before him. Upon their return, his brothers informed him that, as Jotun had been suspecting, the seeds of rebellion had been planted across his empire, and were beginning to bloom. It seemed he had appeared far too benevolent in protecting the humans against the foreign races. It was time to correct that, and remind them all why it was that they needed him so.

In his office, Lex was focused on other things entirely. He was glad that in this latest correspondence, there was no mention of his debt. But while that in itself was a relief, the battle requirements for the Inn were extremely harsh - at least in his eyes.

In truth, the Henali were asking the bare minimum from him, so that he could symbolically perform his duties. But how would they know that Lex was not really a Daolord, and the Inn's forces were in fact quite pathetic.

Depending on how it was looked at, 1000 Foundation realm cultivators were requested to be sent on the battlefield. Moreover, they only needed to participate for 5 years. That would complete the Innkeepers requirements for the next century.

To the overlords of this realm, such requirements were basically letting the Innkeeper off scot free. Even this was only done after Jotun reported that he suspected that the Innkeepers origins had something to do with the Devils, or at least that they had a deep history.

To Lex, though, this was an extremely difficult requirement to fulfill. It would take away all of his oldest and most trusted employees and send them to a battlefield from which they might not return. Realistically speaking, since they were being sent to war, it was likely most of them would not return.

As if that was not enough, he had only a week to send them.

For the first time in a long time, helplessness and bitterness filled Lex's heart. He knew that he was already doing his best, but sometimes in the face of reality, one's best was not enough.

But the feeling... did not last. Not only had Lex toughened up, a part of evolving into a being of a higher level of existence meant that his mindset also evolved. For example, if a normal human had to live for 10,000 years, it was most likely he would kill himself out of depression long before the time even arrived, such were the vicissitudes of a long life. But cultivators obviously had no problem, because their mindsets and emotions also evolved.

Moreover, Lex had the system to depend on. As much as he did not like relying on it all the time, it was also true that it was his biggest ace card.

The first thing that he did... was look at his MP. Recently, he had gained 500 billion MP as a result of Ragnar's quests in the Guild room. Besides that, he had been earning a whole lot due to the festivities, but he was still a distance away from reaching 1 trillion.

He had an idea, and began planning things out in his mind.

"Mary, spread the word. The auction for the Cosmic Erosion Elixir will take place in 3 days. Before then, other guests who wish to auction items can also submit them to the Inn, but only accept them if their minimum value crosses 1 billion MP. Have the planning division plan out the auction then let me know the details, I don't have the time to focus on it.

"Also, I've been planning a special Inn employee banquet for quite a while. Let everyone know it will happen in 6 days."

Without waiting for a response from her, Lex teleported away back to his room. It was time for him to take another sip of the elixir. At the same time, he teleported the rhinocentaur with a system over as well.

It was best to use time as efficiently as possible. If he wanted to clear this hurdle, the system would need an upgrade as well.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 624: Evolving mindset

The Midnight Inn was always busy, and the multitude of guests were all enjoying various experiences. Some were extremely significant, such as the agreement between Alexander and Lex. It was not easy for Alexander to trust someone, especially a person he knew for such a short time, but he had chosen to do so nonetheless. They shook hands.

Other experiences were mundane and ordinary, such as what Jill, the fox who participated in Lady Cosmos, was having. Since she had decided to live at the Inn in perpetuity, she had decided to take a nap under one of the purple crystal trees that filled the Inn. Due to the winter theme that the Inn was currently following, a thin blanket of snow covered the Inn's many hills, allowing her to nap comfortably. It was a good nap.

Some experiences were key moments in the guests lives, and would not only form their core memories but also shape their futures. Jimmy stood silently, his tiny fists clenched, as he watched Layla being taken away by her grandmother. She was a princess, and he was a nobody. She had been trained and nurtured since birth to be a leader, while he could not even speak to others due to shyness, until quite recently. Her disposition was perfect to cultivate, while he could not have been more average. Even if

their 'engagement' had originally just been a joke during one of their games, the strong reaction it had elicited was enough to put him in his place. Unfortunately, Jimmy did not like the place he was being put.

Besides Jimmy, his mother Hera also looked ahead as she firmly held her son's hand with her right hand. She had been rising quickly on earth and their futures looked bright, right up until earth was invaded. She had played a significant role in allowing Will Bentham's Rose Society to expand, but now it was all worthless. Well, not quite.

She had gained significant experience through it, and that experience had been noticed and appreciated. In her left hand, she held a platinum key. Apparently, she had been noticed by the Inn's planning division, and they had recommended her for recruitment to the Inn. The Innkeeper had accepted, and she had just been delivered a key. She was a warrior in her own way, and she would fight to give her son a better life.

Other experiences still were intense and stressful, but were destined to be blurred in with the rest of the tough moments one had in their lives, such as with emperor Jotun, who was planning his future. It would be bloody.

Life was strange, in how one moment, experienced by different people in the same place, could hold so many different emotions and feelings. But every single one of those experiences was disturbed when a strange change occurred at the Inn.

Whether it was the two geniuses of earth who were shaking hands, whether it was the child lost in emotions he could not understand, whether it was the emperor deciding the fate of entire galaxies, whether it was the fox that asleep, or anyone of the countless other guests at the Inn, they all looked up at the sky.

The rather calm and serene sky of the Inn changed, momentarily, to a starry night sky. But unlike the normal night sky, which was a beautiful tapestry of all that the universe had to offer, from moons to planets to stars and galaxies far off, this visage was that of its endless depth.

It evoked a feeling that all they saw was unfathomably less than all the universe truly held, and was a reminder that they were only looking at the very surface of the well of infinity.

They did not understand what was happening, but had the feeling that something significant was taking place.

In truth, the Inn was once again reacting to Lex's emotions. Usually, when the Inn reacted to Lex's emotions, it was because he was angry. It was because it would take significant enough emotions for Lex to subconsciously influence the Inn.

But currently, Lex was experiencing a subtle evolution in his mindset. It was unknown if it was because Lex had pretended to be the Innkeeper so long, or for other reasons, but more and more frequently Lex found himself unwilling to bend or give up. He was unwilling to be deterred, even by an entity so much stronger than himself, and he was unwilling to cower before the design of fate.

He was not stupid or arrogant, thinking he could resist the great powers of the universe simply because he decided not to. No, the difference between confidence and arrogance was ability. If he truly had the ability to resist, his desire to remain unyielding would become a result of his confidence, not mindless arrogance. He was fortunate enough to be given the tools to resist fate, he understood that. But using those tools effectively was also up to him.

He had been resisting the system for very long because he did not understand its purpose and what he stood to lose if it turned against him. While he still did not know the answer to that, he at least knew the answer to what he would lose if he didn't use the system to the best of his abilities.

If he had to send his workers outside the Inn, for whatever reason, he would make sure they upheld the dignity of the Inn, even on a battlefield. This was also a good reminder, not only for him but all the employees of the Inn. There wouldn't always be a convenient solution to problems, such as the Butter knife. Sometimes, they would have to get their own hands dirty.

With these subtle changes going through his head, Lex reached forward and put his hand on the rhinocentaur, reaching into its soul with his own soul sense.

He found a familiar shining golden speck and pulled it out.

System notification: New system detected! Analyzing the secondary system. Overnight Celebrity system grade D- detected. Begin assimilation? Y/N.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 625: Aduous cultivation

System notification: New system detected! Analyzing the secondary system. Overnight Celebrity system grade D- detected. Begin assimilation? Y/N.

System notification: Overnight Celebrity system detected. The Dao of fame touches upon all that exists. Whether alive or dead, everything that exists can have fame, and thus become a celebrity. Whether it's your clothes, your looks, your aura or your talents, each can turn you into a celebrity. With millions, billions, or even trillions of eyes only on you, your each and every move will shake the hearts of entire empires! Become an overnight celebrity, and rule all the hearts of the universe! Or, enjoy the power to turn others into celebrities overnight, and know that you control all their fame on your fingertips!

Once he absorbed this new system, Lex would lose the ability to control the system for a while. But he had already made some preparations. With all his instructions already in place, he took out the small containers which would hold the elixir and filled five of them with varying numbers of drops. Three of the containers held one drop, one held two and one held three.

This would be enough for him to auction off, and he had already relayed the details of how to accept payments for the auction to Mary. Hopefully he would regain control of the system by then, but in case he didn't this was merely a precaution.

Ideally, he would have wanted to conduct the trade with the emporium now as well before absorbing the system, but it would take the emporium a few days to arrange everything, so all he could do was hope the upgrade was completed in time.

Just in case, however, he went and delivered the couple of drops to the emporium for which he had already accepted the payments for. In the worst case scenario, he would lose the opportunity to trade with the others who had items containing laws. But even so Lex did not think about delaying the system upgrade. Time was too short, he could not end up delaying anything.

"Mary, is there any way I can spend some MP to speed up the system upgrade process? Or do something else that will result in the same?"

"Not really. Systems are incredibly complex and thus the process of upgrading, or in your case repairing, it will naturally take a lot of time. The system already performs at its maximum speed for each repair."

He only nodded. He suspected as much.

Once all the necessary tasks were done, Lex immediately chose to absorb the Overnight Celebrity system. Once again, the system interface disappeared and a familiar 'updating' appeared in its place.

With that done, Lex turned his attention back to the puddle of elixir. Originally, Lex had created a nice bowl shaped indent in the ground for it, but the elixir had absorbed the ground around it, and was beginning to grow. But, Lex realized that while the quantity of the elixir seemed to be increasing, the allure it held was decreasing.

Perhaps the more it grew, the less concentrated its potency became. Unable to decide if he was happy about that or upset, Lex took another sip and bolted to the nearest bathroom. To date, this was his most arduous cultivating experience yet. But it would all be worth it, he kept telling himself. In the end, it would all be worth it.

The greenhouse was doing exceptionally well under the care of the Galactic Sovereign turtle, especially after the turtle grew in its cultivation realm. It was also quite fortunate that the spirit energy inside the Inn was quite abundant, for the turtle relied heavily on it to sustain itself. While its body grew in size and adapted to the extent of its new powers, only extremely pure spirit energy could prevent it from entering a hibernation state.

Moreover, the turtle was slowly accumulating helpers. Although Young McDonald had been recruited by Lex to defend the Inn, most of the time all it did was help the turtle in the garden. Now, it also had the help of Zen, the immortal level sentient grass which had finally stopped being malnourished. Its body was now no longer as weak as common grass, and was now slightly more resilient than common weeds on earth.

Everyday it was watered from the Well of invigoration, and it received the best fertilizer the Inn had to offer. Unfortunately, due to the fact that its spirit was already immortal, its body was under a lot of strain and would take a lot of time to grow. Still, at least it could now uproot itself when it took a humanoid form and move around.

The latest addition to their group was the young Sol bird who was still unnamed. The light given off by the bird was especially helpful to plants, making it perfect to help them grow.

Currently, all three of them were working on taking care of a tree that a guest had deposited at the greenhouse.

The tree had been brought to the Inn from earth. Specifically, it was Sophia, Marlos wife, who had the tree brought here. Her family had used the tree for generations, taking advantage of its especially potent medicinal properties.

But since it had come to the Inn, the tree had begun to grow more and more vibrant. By now, the tree had reached 40 feet (12 meters) in height, which wasn't remarkable, but it also had a staggering diameter of 18 feet (5.4 meters). Moreover the tree was radiating an extremely noble aura, which caused all who saw it to want to kneel before it. Well, all but the turtle.

While the three were doing their normal duty of taking care of it, the turtle suddenly appeared with a batch of the most powerful fertilizer the Inn had ever seen. The previous batch had been fed to the vine near the Fire temple, whereas this one would go to this tree.

Even the turtle was curious what would happen if it continued to feed it.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 626:

Several hours later, Lex's cultivation finally ended. He had originally imagined that after one round of cultivation, the second would be easier and so on successively. But that was far from the case. His second round was not only longer, but severely more draining as well. Lex practically fell to his knees once he was done, but he was able to steady himself at the last moment.

If one saw Lex now, they would be able to tell at a glance that he looked somewhat weaker and skinnier. His muscles thinned out, if only a bit, and his bones began to stick out. In hindsight, it only made sense. He was literally replacing parts of his body which contained laws that were hampering his growth. The first round would be the easiest, while each subsequent round would be harder as deeper and more important parts of his body were replaced.

'Why were things never easy?' wondered the man who literally had a cultivation technique which could adapt on its own according to his circumstances.

It would take him a short while before he completely recovered, but he did not plan on wasting even this time. Anticipating his depleted energy, at least, Lex had already prepared a lavish meal for himself, as well as accumulated an entire list of documents that had been prepared for him to peruse.

They mostly had to do with Pvarti's wedding. He had to ensure the wedding was grand while also being limited to the resources and people of the Crystal realm.

Weary and beaten, Lex dragged himself to his office and began reading while he casually munched on some french fries. Progress was slow, because in his exhausted state it was hard to focus on such boring documents.

Unable to suppress a sigh, Lex leaned back and allowed himself to relax for a moment. Perhaps a small respite really was in order. Just as he was considering taking a break, his eye caught on the cover of a book.

Lex recalled something, and suddenly reached forward to grab it. He did not even remember how long it had been since he last touched this proverbial goldmine of ideas and inspiration. Though there was no dust on the book, he still wiped it - a symbolic gesture of picking back up from where he left so long ago.

He could not help but open it, and read from where he left off. On the cover, the title read, 'Ultimate King Emperor: All the Gods call me Daddy'. It was the completely realistic and not all blown out of proportion light novel Lex was reading, oh so long ago.

Where Lex had left off, the MC had just established himself as a hegemon of a small number of realms. His cultivation level was called God King Father Supreme Overlord, and was the cultivation realm through which his previous enemy had ruled these few realms for trillions of years without interruption.

Of course, only three hours after the MC defeated the antagonist, and established himself, a new series of enemies showed up who were so ridiculously powerful that they could defeat the MC at his new cultivation realm with a single flap of their eyelashes. How unfortunate for the MC, for instead of working so hard to defeat the villain, if he had only waited 3 hours these new enemies who had not at all appeared for trillions of years would have come and targeted him instead of the MC.

Naturally, a fight ensued. But just as these new enemies were about to decimate the MC, alongside the few realms he controlled, effectively ending an incalculable number of lives, after which they would trap all their souls and burn them for eternity, their young mistress told them to spare the MC. After all, there was no real conflict. They had only looked at the MC's face, became jealous of his handsome looks and decided to eradicate all life in this sector of the universe to vent their anger.

It was not revealed why the mistress had spared the MC, but they obeyed nonetheless and all left. Like lightning, they came, wrought destruction, and left.

The MC was left with but a single breath left in his body, and a new vendetta that burned hotter than the flames of hell.

Then a mysterious traveling hermit, who happened to have the exact same appearance as the MC's adopted sister from childhood, who he was secretly in love with, appeared and found the MC in his devastating condition.

Unable to leave him be, she slowly nursed him back to health in her hut. The healing process took 13,000 years, during which the MC and hermit naturally fell in love. With his strength recovered, the MC declared that he would marry the hermit and took her back to his realms to have a grand wedding, only to discover that the realms were in chaos.

Some corrupt ministers who had helped him rule took advantage of his long absence and started a civil war to wrest control of the realms. They wanted the power, the prestige, and everything else that came alongside the title of ruler. But, most importantly, they wanted the MC's harem, because apparently he had a monopoly on the most beautiful women in the entire universe so much so that no other woman would ever be as beautiful as his wives.

It was the best wedding ever, with phoenixes flying around the altar instead of doves, spirit diamonds, the highest form of spirit stones, adorned the bride's wedding dress. The heavens themselves sung praises for the MC's dashing good looks.

The entire realm was happy and joyous. Of course, how could life ever be so simple?

Just as he was about to consummate the wedding, his new hermit wife was killed!

The Innkeeper

Chapter 627: Auction

Despite the extreme difficulty in cultivating with the Cosmic Erosion Elixir, Lex persisted and soon three days passed. The system had not completed its evolution yet, likely because the Celebrity Overnight system was a higher grade than the farming one he had received.

During this time, despite his desire to waste away time reading novels, he focused on work and got as much done as possible.

Of course, his attention was forever on his cultivation. Alongside whatever changes the elixir was bringing inside his body, it had also managed to slightly elevate his cultivation realm. This was a genuine surprise, for at his normal rate it would take him a few months more before he made a difference.

Unfortunately, while his cultivation had been raised, his physique seemed to have suffered. He was not weaker, no. If anything, he was a little stronger. But he had inevitably become a little more frail than he was three days ago. If someone saw him now, it would appear as though he was on the path to become malnourished.

After his latest round of cultivation, Lex decided to take a little nap. Sleeping would speed up his recovery, and he had become mentally tired as well after three days of continuous torture. The only shame was that he would miss out on the auction, but that was fine. He had passed down the instructions on how it was to be handled, as well as the minimum payments.

He was depending on this auction to cross one trillion MP. Although his plan involved a few different steps, having at least 1 MT was paramount. But he was not worried. The staff at the Inn was very reliable.

Lex closed his eyes and immediately fell asleep. His body had to get used to its new situation.

In the village there were numerous venues, all very large and extravagant, designed to hold as many people as physically possible. Yet today the one which held the most anticipated event of the day, the

auction, was being conducted in the smallest such venue available. This was because most people weren't even eligible to know about this auction.

There were nearly one hundred guests, and the one with the lowest cultivation level was at the earth immortal realm. Even the strongest guard from the security the Inn hired was also present. Since it was his job to ensure safety, he had a representative for him available who would perform any bidding.

General Ragnar, the Emperor Jotun, various prominent devils and even some extremely powerful beasts were present. As it happened, even Aegis from the crystal realm was attending. Since he was here, the Noel family also no doubt learned of the auction, and since they had heard about it, the Phillips family.

But none from the Phillips family had privilege level 4, so they could not attend the meeting. Instead, they were exploring the Inn. Upon discovering it, they did not think of shifting the wedding to this venue. They were extremely satisfied with the tavern. Instead, they were thinking of how long they could hide the existence of such a place from the rest in their realm. If no one else knew, they stood the most to benefit.

Each of the numerous guests at the auction was sitting in a private booth. It was not difficult to arrange, since the entire purpose of this specific auction house was exclusivity. They focused on providing services to a few distinguished guests rather than catering to the masses.

On the small stage, a lady wearing a red dress walked to the podium. The lady walked with elegance and grace, and her curly blonde hair and sharp blue eyes only served to attract every guest's attention. She was beautiful, no doubt, but it was the charismatic twinkle in her eyes and confident smile that served to elevate her beauty to another level. Perhaps if she had a more sober personality, one would admire her as beautiful if she caught one's attention, but she would not stand out in a crowd. But the way she was, even if she were lost in a crowd of other blondes, wearing the same red dress, she would still be the one all eyes would lock on to.

"Hello everyone, my name is Marilyn and I will be your auctioneer this evening," she said, her melodic voice almost captivating the audience. She let out a small laugh of excitement, and even winked at all the guests playfully. It was clear for all to see that she was quite excited. As strange as it was, suddenly all the guests became excited as well. She was one of the many workers at the Inn who had recently been promoted from her previous position as a waitress.

The crazy thing was, she was not cultivating anything that would enhance her appearance or captivate anyone. With just her inherent charm, she seemed to be doing so. Well, that and a little help from her stylist - Harry Midnight!

Amongst the various guests, Rockefeller narrowed his eyes as he saw Marilyn. More than anything else the Inn had to offer, he was enamored by its staff. They would make the most splendid demons if he got his hands on them, he was sure. He just had to figure out a way.

"You all should have already heard the rules for this auction, but I'll reiterate them nonetheless. For the main items in today's auction, the bidding will be twofold. A minimum bid of 100 billion MP is required per drop of elixir, but other than that, guests must bid using the barter system. That means, they have to bid using items with sufficient value. There is a small list of items which will be given preference during the bartering, in case anyone bids with them, but otherwise all items will be judged based on their MP value if converted."

Since Lex had already perused the list provided by the emporium of some of the most valuable items available in the origin realm, he did not hesitate to list them in the auction. His plan was to accumulate both material and MP wealth. MP could give him many benefits that he could get from nowhere else, but at the same time, it was restricted in how it could help him.

Thus, he would accumulate both.

"Of course, as you know, other than the main items prepared by the Inn, there are some items that have been submitted by various guests to be auctioned. They will be bid according to the requirements of the guest providing the item."

The Innkeeper

Chapter 628: Step Up

Perhaps if Lex hadn't begun the system's upgrade in a rush, he would have watched the auction go through. Since the auction itself was not a part of the core services provided, it was carried out like one of Lex's self made services.

Still, for the items auctioned before the elixir, Lex asked for a 1% as commission for having the item auctioned. He was only keeping in with the rate set by the guild room, but he did not anticipate the value of the items being auctioned.

Although the people sitting there couldn't be considered the top 1% of their respective realms, they were exceptionally strong nonetheless - especially Jotun and Rocketfellow. Of course, these two showed no interest in any of the prior items, and were solely focussed on the elixir.

A total of 13 items were auctioned before the main items, and through his 1% Lex ended up earning a total of 314 billion MP! The items auctioned were mainly unusual treasure that had no mundane version with which they could be explained. There was, for example, a vial made not of glass but flowing lava. The lava flowed within a set pattern, forming a vial. God only knew what it could be used for, but it was hotly contested for.

Another example was a ball of light, but it could be physically touched. But if a mundane person tried to touch it they would die, and the ball would erupt into an explosion that could rival several nuclear bombs.

That one, oddly enough, went without a single offer, mostly because the person auctioning it had very strict requirements for the payment they wanted.

The item which had, up until that point, received the highest bid was a sword. After a very heated auction, the bid was finally won by a human named Lovis. Lovis was a leader of the paladins, who had long since started using the Midnight Inn as one of their secret bases. Only a very few members of the paladins even knew of the Inn at all. Of the ones that knew about it, most assumed that the Small village they had rented was the entirety of their presence at the Inn. Perhaps only a handful knew that, in fact, the Inn was being used to store and hide some incredibly important artifacts for a very special purpose. After all, since the paladins came from a galaxy perpetually at war, the need to keep secrets was obvious.

But once the preliminary auction was over, it was finally time for the elixir. For a majority of those who were present, their time to participate was over, and now it was time to watch. It wasn't that they didn't want the items, but that they couldn't afford them.

The Inn naturally assured every participant's identity was a secret, so no one would be hunting them down later if they managed to get their hands on the elixir. But getting their hands on it in the first place was the real issue.

They were rich but items containing laws... just being rich was not enough to afford them.

With childlike excitement and a grin as wide as her face, Marilyn clapped her hands as the first round came to a close.

"Now, it is finally time for what you have all been waiting for, the Cosmic Erosion Elixir."

Gerard, looking ever handsome, walked in from behind a hidden curtain, a single vial of black glass placed on a velvet pillow.

Dozens of spirit senses immediately scanned the glass vial, but they were not able to sense its contents regardless of who it was. Naturally it was not so simple to peek, considering the vial was provided by the actual owner of the emporium.

But Marilyn knew how to satisfy the guests. Though she was technically not supposed to, for a brief moment she opened the cap, allowing the elixir's aura to leak.

The auditorium remained silent, for everyone was in their private rooms, but almost every guest gasped as they sensed the aura. A connoisseur such as Rocketfellow was immediately able to tell the elixir wasn't fresh, but it was still vibrant enough.

"As before, the auction price for these will be a minimum of 100 billion MP per drop, accompanied by a barter item. A list of items which will have preferential treatment has been provided to each of you, but in general any item containing laws can be used to auction. We will now begin the auction..."

What happened next surprised everyone. All the drops of elixir were won by the same person, and because identities were kept secret, no one knew who it was. But both Jotun and Rocketfellow were left bewildered, as each and every time they were left unable to contest. It wasn't about wealth, rather, the person was bidding using exactly the items which were given preferential treatment.

In the end, everyone was bewildered by the outcome, though most of the participants enjoyed the process. No one knew that the Inn itself was the one auctioning the elixir, and everyone assumed that the elixir had been a special commission by someone else so no one even tried to request more elixir, though even if they did they wouldn't get any.

In the private room, the ultimate winner of the auction sat without any expression on his face. His name was Gaborone, and he was a noble lord of the Fiery Mammoth clan. His subordinate, a sloth named Golden Hair, had long requested the presence of the clan so that they may investigate the place known as Midnight Inn. It was only recently that Gaborone got around to reaching Nibiru.

Upon coming to the Inn, Gaborone was extremely intrigued. But when he discovered the presence of the Jotun empire, he was filled with a righteous fury! Merely a thousand years ago, a human from a noble family of the Jotun empire eloped with his daughter!

The scandal had brought great shame to him personally, but he had endured. The humans had reacted just as strongly as he had yet Gaborone was not satisfied. He demanded retribution.

Unlike the humans, who required the support of a single powerhouse to maintain their race's prestige, the Fiery Mammoth had many experts. As such, the young couple should have eloped to the strong and fierce Fiery Mammoths, not the weak and puny humans! What kind of weak, third-galaxy state would his grandchildren grow up in? He could not accept it.

With this elixir as a gift, he would finally have enough sway to unite all the mammoths against the humans. Conflict was on the horizon!

While the rhinocentaur with the system was taken away and never returned, the other two were locked up together. It did not matter even if they were together, for they were kept weak and restrained. A special kind of vine was used to tie their hands and legs, constantly absorbing spirit energy from within their bodies to ensure they would never recover.

This was the same method that had been used inside the Inn for a long time to hold their prisoners.

But there was an oversight that the security team made, though it could not be blamed on them. After all, not only had they never been trained on how to counter someone with a chatroom, the concept was completely alien to them. All it could be said was that the universe was extremely vast, and contained a multitude of things one could never imagine.

Both the rhinocentaurs kept their eyes closed, but they were secretly communicating in a private channel in the chat room.

"Do you think there's a chance we'll survive?" one asked.

"Not a chance," replied the other. "But if there were ever a way, it would be through the chatroom."

"It's too dangerous, no one will challenge the Inn for two measly systems."

"No, there is a chance. If we can get in contact with one of the main members of the chatroom, one of the members who has accumulated dozens of systems, they might be able to save us."

"That way we won't be able to make any money from selling information."

"The money doesn't matter. We need to be alive to enjoy it in the first place,"

"The last issue is... how will we get them to find a golden key?"

"If I had all the answers, I wouldn't be here!" said the rhinocentaur in exasperation. In the end, they had no choice but to sell the information online and hope they'd live long enough to get rescued.

Far away in the Origin realm, on a planet ruled by reptilian beasts sat a king. While perusing the chatroom today, he encountered an interesting request and could not help but accept it.

Moments later, he heard a very familiar notification sound in his mind. The king checked, but was not too surprised by what he saw. After all, it was a quest, and he only ever got the same kind of quests.

Step Up: Dance off system quest: Have a dance off with the Innkeeper for the fate of your allies.

Just as he thought, another dance battle.

The Innkeeper

Chapter 629: Sweatshop

Once the auction ended, Lex received an additional 500 billion MP, bringing his new total to 1.384 trillion PM. That would be enough to buy a single MT while still leaving him with some MP for his regular expenses. Moreover, he also received a bunch of items with laws inside of them.

Hopefully, he would have accumulated enough items with laws to progress without needing to achieve a SSS+ reward, but his gut said otherwise. After all, if it was so simple, then the mysterious man would have directly told him to get items with laws instead of succeeding in the quest like that.

Of course, all of those were considerations for later. When Lex woke up from his nap, he was disappointed to learn that the system still had not upgraded. That was fine. He mustered up some courage, ate a lot of food to replenish his... his body, for energy was no longer the problem at this point.

After mentally preparing himself, this time he took a massive gulp of the elixir instead of a sip. It was not that he had become resistant to the elixir, but that its potency was quickly disappearing.

He immediately ran to the restroom and readied himself for the usual barrage, but it did not come. Instead, a soft yet cool sensation filled his body, reinvigorating him instead of exhausting him. To his great surprise, he developed a nosebleed.

But he quickly discovered that the blood would quickly coagulate after leaving his body, and turn dark. Strange and unusual occurrences kept happening for a short time, before the elixir lost its effect much quicker than ever before.

Still not tired, Lex took another gulp and the process restarted. This time, instead of a nosebleed, he began sweating all over his body. But the sweat would quickly evaporate, leaving small black granules on his skin. The third time, his hair started falling out and new hair began to quickly grow in its place.

Since then Lex discovered that the effect of the elixir was greatly reduced, but not completely eliminated. This was both a result of the diminished potency of the elixir as well as his body having gained the most it could from the elixir.

In the end, he could continue to drink it endlessly, but chose not to do that. Even if selling more of it would reduce the price overall, he would rather sell more of it to the emporium and gather more supplies.

So then came the waiting game. Fortunately, it did not last long, as on the fourth day, he heard a very familiar sound.

New notification:

System upgrade complete! System status updated:

System: Midnight Inn

System Grade: Divine (broken ~ SSS - B+)

System Owner: Lex Williams

System functionality: 18%

System self repair time: 31,760 billion years

New feature unlocked:

Midnight tailor

New notification:

Quest partial completion: Accelerate the system's recovery by absorbing more systems!

Quest reward: 1 Maximum grade level reward (not applicable)

Partial completion reward: 1 free feature upgrade token

A smile adorned Lex's face when he finally received the notification. It wasn't that he was so addicted to the system that even a few days without it were a trial. Instead, it was that he was on a time limit. He immediately scanned the Inn, as well as the tavern, to ensure nothing required his attention. He was pleasantly surprised to discover his new MP balance, as well as the host of items he had received in the auction. He teleported them to his room, still packed in their containers, and then turned his attention elsewhere.

The employee banquet would be in two days, and he needed to prepare for that. He also had to sell the remaining elixir as quickly as possible.

But first, he checked out the upgrades he got on his system.

At first glance, it did not appear that much had changed. Even the upgrade to the Inn only included 1 new service. But it was only after he looked into the Midnight tailor that he discovered why it was that all the upgrades from an entire system were compressed into one shop.

Unlike other times, where Lex himself established a restriction on usage of some services by prestige, this shop on its own had a restriction. Only guests with level 2 prestige could access it. Moreover, each item sold by the shop was custom made, and would require some time to deliver. As such each item also had a different price.

Next, his attention went to his quest. Naturally, the quest itself would only be complete when the system was fully recovered, and that would be when Lex would be eligible for the reward, which would be of maximum grade. This meant that it would be similar to the fully powered Butter Knife that he used.

Unfortunately, he was only eligible for the partial reward, which is what he would receive every time the system recovered by 5%.

But the free feature upgrade was quite useful. In fact, it fit Lex's plan perfectly. Unlike the token from the Token shop, which could only upgrade a service, this could directly upgrade any feature offered by the system.

It was no secret that Lex had long wanted to start an armory at the Inn. He had thought about it multiple times. But he was waiting because there was no real rush for him to build one, and he wanted to recruit someone for that job rather than just purchase another worker. In the end, he decided he would build one anyway, upgrade it to the maximum, and then use a token to upgrade it, then supply his workers with excellent armor.

Now... Lex could buy a service upgrade token, and already had a feature upgrade token.

For his new plan, he first had to set up the Midnight tailor shop. The shop came with special requirements, and it had to be established alone. Not only could it not be placed near other shops, it could not be near any other buildings. Besides the requirement on seclusion, the building would be relatively massive, as if it were a mansion. Lastly, there would only be one tailor shop per 100 million square miles (260 million square kilometers). Suffice to say, there would only be one shop at the Inn for a long time.

Since Lex could not continue his tradition of setting up the first store on Main street, Lex pulled out a road from main street that led to the tailor shop, which Lex had more or less designed as a smaller version of Midnight manor.

Another unique thing about the shop was that it came with its own worker, and that Lex did not need to assign the duty to anyone. The worker was a relatively young, light skinned man called Geeves.

With the tailor shop established, Lex immediately changed 1 trillion MP into 1 MT, leaving himself with a meager 384 billion MP. He opened up the token shop and looked at his options.

The only tokens for sale were:

Feature upgrade token

Lockdown token

Service upgrade token

Star increase token

Of those, only the service upgrade token cost 1 MT. The feature upgrade token cost 4 MT, the lockdown token cost 6 MT, and the 0.5 star rank increase cost a considerable 10 MT! Moreover, the star rank increase token had an asterisk on it, leading to a small note which mentioned that the price of each star rank increase token would increase depending on the star rank of the Inn.

Not bothering to look at the shop for much longer, Lex once again checked the details of the tailor to make sure he hadn't made a mistake in understanding it. Once he was sure, he immediately used the newly acquired token on it.

Unlike the Mystery trial which took some time to upgrade, the tailor shop upgraded almost immediately. The requirements of the shop were also upgraded, where only prestige level 3 guests and above could use its services. Lex put on his Host Attire and assumed his Innkeeper identity, before teleporting over.

Despite its appearance as a massive mansion, the shop was actually quite cramped. The entrance was a lobby which led to several private measuring rooms as well as private fitting rooms. At the back of the mansion was the actual several story large sweatshop, where the work was done. The rest of the shop was filled with rolls of fabric, leather, metals and other materials which had been put on display for the client to peruse.

"Geeves," the Innkeeper said, as soon as he teleported over. "I have a rather large order for you, and only a few days to fulfill the order."

The young chap, who looked like he had just returned from galavanting across the English countryside, suddenly stood at attention and listened in as the Innkeeper spoke.

"I have one thousand orders, each with a budget of 100 million MP. I need them in four days."

Geeves, who had come into existence mere moments ago, suddenly started to sweat. This... wasn't this a little too much?

The Innkeeper

Chapter 630: The beauty

Geeves was stuck looking at the Innkeeper, too shocked to even drop his jaw. The budget for this project was phenomenal. Each order, with a budget of 100 million meant that he could freely use whatever material or technique he felt suited the task. Moreover, the Innkeeper gave the task by submitting the number of orders and the budget for each order, but gave no other specification. This meant that he could do as his heart desires, and it was as he saw best.

Such a situation should have been a tailor's dream. It had to be known that even after the upgrade to the Midnight tailor, its prestige requirement was level 3 and each order would at minimum cost 50,000 MP. That was not a small amount, so whoever placed the order would no doubt have endless requests, that Geeves could only obey.

Yet a massive budget of 100 million, amounting to a total of 100 billion MP, was given for him to do with as he pleased. Naturally, he had to take his clients measurements and design according to that, but that was the most basic prerequisite. It did not block Geeves' creativity in any way. But the way things were at the moment, the matter was no longer just about creativity. How was he supposed to produce one thousand orders in just four days?

Naturally Lex understood Geeves' dilemma. But there wasn't anything that could be done about it.

"I'll send Luthor over with a list of all one thousand workers who will be receiving this first order. You can start work immediately. Moreover, you can request as many helpers as you want to help you out to complete the orders."

The Innkeeper raised his hand and patted Geeves on the back.

"Their lives are in your hands. Do a good job."

Geeves got goosebumps all over his body as he heard the sincerity and sobriety in the Innkeeper's words. A determined look filled his eyes as he suddenly began running through the halls, searching for the most optimal fabrics. A single moment wasted was a hundred times more than he could afford to lose.

The Innkeeper, meanwhile, teleported to his office and summoned Luthor. It was time to let everyone know about what was happening, but it had to be done appropriately. Lex found it hard to suppress his guilt, since he was literally asking others to go and risk their lives for him. But it was a necessity. It had to be done.

Luthor himself was quite busy, supervising a plan for holding the rhinocentaurs and how they were to be treated. But a summons from the Innkeeper took precedence over all, and he quickly made his way over to the office.

Initially, he was full of energy as he usually is whenever the Innkeeper summoned him. Yet the moment he entered, he could sense that the mood was not right. The Innkeeper was uncharacteristically serious. Normally, he is always nonchalant, so this behavior clearly meant something very serious happened.

"How can I help, Innkeeper?" Luthor asked as soon as he entered the office. It was his duty to ease the burdens of the Innkeeper, so if the Innkeeper was upset, he was not doing his duty properly.

"There is a very serious matter that I need to inform you about. The Midnight Inn... as of right now, is established inside the Origin realm. As such, our... hosts have made some perfunctory requests of us. Although I can dismiss those requests, it is ultimately true that we are guests in their realm and they are our hosts.

"To fulfill our hosts requests, I need to send 1000 foundation level cultivators to a battlefield for sometime. While we will not stay in the Origin realm for long, we have to accept the request for the duration we are still here."

Luthor was stunned at first, but then quickly gathered his wits. According to his impression, the Innkeeper was unimaginably powerful, and could control the universe itself with a single hand. Who exactly was qualified to host him, and even ask for demands in return?

"Since this is a request outside of the Inn, I do not want to make any demands. Everyone who joined the Inn did so to work normally, and not to fight in wars. Therefore, I want you to ask for volunteers. Only those who choose to go themselves, and meet the requirements, can go. If the numbers aren't sufficient and not enough volunteer, let me know. I will figure something out."

Luthor understood his assignment, but hesitation filled him. There was a question that haunted him, but he did not know if he could ask it. Lex, who was a master at reading people, naturally saw through his assistant with a single glance.

"Speak your mind," Lex said, the calm demeanor of the Innkeeper returning.

"Who... who exactly can force you to participate in matters unrelated to the Inn?" he asked, hiding his bitterness deep inside himself. He knew clearly this matter wasn't simple. The Midnight Inn boasted neutrality, but the moment they made their presence known on a battlefield, it would forever become incredibly difficult for them to claim to be neutral ever again. Although he did not know a lot about the forces in the universe, he could at least understand something this basic.

"This is not me being forced," the Innkeeper replied with a chuckle. "Compared to what they can demand from me, this is but a symbolic gesture. The truth of the matter is, I am cooperating in this matter because, in this vast universe, even I, outstanding though I may be, am not without equal. Sometimes, it is better to make friends before you ever need friends."

Of course, that was not the truth of his current situation, but he had to assure Luthor. After all, Luthor would be his mouthpiece in this instance.

"I... I understand."

Instead of being demoralized, Luthor was filled with conviction. In this universe, even the Innkeeper needed help sometimes. To Luthor, that only meant that if he ever became strong enough, he could be of help to the Innkeeper. Until that day came, he would be of service in other ways.

"If you are able to gather 1000 volunteers, take them to the Midnight tailor. They need to submit their measurements. Moreover, find out how many spare hands the tailor, Geeves, needs and send him as much help as he requests. This is an urgent matter."

"I'll take care of it immediately!" he said, his vigor returned, and quickly exited the office. He had no time to waste, and neither did the Innkeeper.

With this... arduous task done, he had to immediately return to the emporium. Once he completed the trade, he had to return to the Crystal realm. There was absolutely no time to waste.

Before he did any of that, though, he took his feature upgrade token and used it on the Inn's teleporting ability.

The Inn's teleporting capability was amazing even as it was. It could access any place in the universe. Moreover, if someone brought him an item from a specific place in a realm he already had access to, he would be able to form a link to that location as well - though he would have to go through the whole process of traveling to that planet first and connecting to it.

But Lex wanted his method to be even more versatile. Originally he planned on using the transportation formation he had been given to the battlefield inside the Minor realm he gave to the workers, and have them all teleport from there. But with the upgrade, he could directly establish the formation inside the Inn. The Inn could now selectively allow teleportation from within its grounds to anywhere.

This way, once Lex had the opportunity, he himself could also go to the battlefield and link it to the Inn. Since the teleportation capabilities had been upgraded, if Lex went to a new place, he would be able to link it to the Inn without the need to use the golden ticket, or any other ticket for that matter.

With that small task done, Lex teleported to his apartment, and began pouring some more elixir into the vials he had received. Once he had enough, he teleported to X-142 and approached the emporium. It was best to conduct this trade as quickly as possible.

Once he entered the building he once again saw Powell, and he could tell that this Powell was not the owner of the emporium, but the salesman he had been meeting originally.

"Lex, my friend, I have been waiting for you!" he said excitedly. "I've already been briefed on the trades you want to conduct. The item you requested, the diamond containing laws, is ready to be traded. For the other trade, however, you will have to go to another planet. But no worries, I've already prepared the appropriate teleportation apparatus for you to use whenever you want.

"But before you do anything, look at this! I know this has nothing to do with your current trades, but as long as you're a man, you'll definitely enjoy this!"

Before Lex could say anything, Powell opened up a magazine and placed it right in front of Lex. The double spread image genuinely stunned Lex, and he could not remove his eyes from the beauty that he saw on the page.