

Innkeeper 970

Chapter 970 Begin negotiations

Lex observed Mary for a moment as he considered his options. Considering the extremely high level of the Midnight Inn, even in its damaged state, and the fact that Mary was its previous host, he could conclude that she must have been extremely impressive. That was not even mentioning the fact that she had somehow done something to the system that even the system itself could not identify.

Thinking back, Mary's involvement in his growth had been monumental, and extremely limited at the same time. In the first few days of the Inn, Lex recalled that she had been somewhat frustrated at his decisions. But then, almost as if she went through a personality shift, she stopped expressing her own opinions, but only performed the tasks he asked of her, occasionally giving some advice now and again.

But her advice was always layered, and was presented in a way that allowed Lex to figure things out on his own. For example, the idea to look for loopholes in the system's rules was something she suggested. Lex imagined her like an adult watching a baby trying to solve a puzzle. The obvious mistakes must have been excruciating to watch.

She was also limited in what she could actually tell him due to the many, many restrictions the system put on her.

"Is there any way I can talk to her more freely?" Lex asked the system, rather than Mary herself. "Many things she cannot tell me because of the system's restrictions. But what if I'm only asking for advice?"

"Advice is strictly a gray area," the system answered nonchalantly. "Hosts are encouraged to make their own decisions, but many systems give varying degrees of hints. It's up to the system and the host. If you're asking for ways to reduce the restrictions on her, I cannot give you those. As I have no idea what she's done, I cannot risk giving her more freedom."

"You can start by helping me get my own body," Mary said, with a tone of exhaustion. "To be clear, a body you help me make, and a body provided by the system for me will be very different in effect. It won't reduce the number of restrictions on me, but at least it'll prevent any more from appearing."

"Can you give me advice on certain things the way you are? Or can you reveal information about your past to me?"

Mary shook her head.

"Lex, there are many things I am not restricted from telling you. I can even give you advice, but the reason I stopped was because I thought you should grow on your own. If you become reliant on me, then that will stunt your own progress. If you don't grow, and end up losing the system, then there's no guarantee that I'll survive until the next host is found. As difficult as it is... I am also taking a risk by letting you face danger now, in hopes to help you avoid greater pitfalls later.

"As for the other questions you have, I've told you before as well. You need to at least reach Heavenly immortal realm before you can get those kinds of answers. Even that is only considering that you'll likely be more powerful than average Heavenly immortals, if you maintain the kind of growth you have right now.

"If you want to ask me about the systems, I cannot say much. I can, however, say that I've at least never heard of a rogue system that harmed its host. All systems exist to serve their hosts, so you have nothing to lose by fusing with it, or trusting it. But if you want to avoid fusion, then at least stop being so skeptical about it. You might not like hearing this, but if the system harbored any malicious intent towards you, you would have no way to resist. With the scope of power the Midnight Inn system has, it could even erase your skepticism directly from your mind, and brainwash you, and you'd never realize it. But it won't, and it can't."

This time, it was Lex who let out an exhausted sigh. That was one of his greatest concerns, that the system was so much more powerful than him that he could not resist it at all if it wanted to harm him. A random quest in the early days had threatened him with death. Maybe if that hadn't happened Lex would not be so distrusting of it, but it had, and there was nothing he could do about it.

But he did not have the time to dwell on such things. He could feel that his breakthrough was about to enter its next phase soon, and he'd no longer be able to spare any attention to negotiating with the system, so he had to use his time wisely.

Looking back at the glowing golden ball of light, Lex went over his priorities for the development of the Inn. With his thoughts cleared out, he began listing his demands.

"I plan on using a Lockdown token anyway, but since I don't know how long that can last we'll start with that. I want to limit what areas can access the Inn. It cannot be open to the whole universe anymore. In

fact, even within certain realms I want to start limiting it to a few weak planets or regions. I have to stop the Inn from getting involved in any more universe level threats. It would be best if I can choose what places the Inn is open to or not. That way I can continue sending all the Inn's workers to get trained at the temple.

"Speaking of which, how secure is the Midnight Realm? Can it be easily found by others? Because I've been hearing a lot about realm wars recently, and I absolutely do not want to get involved in something like that any time soon!

"Speaking of security, why are you so adamant on not giving me anything to defend myself with? For all the amazing features you claim to give me, hardly any serve to protect me. If it weren't for the ability to hire security for events, the Inn would have been destroyed multiple times already!"