

## **Innkeeper 973**

### Chapter 973 Finally

The system glowed, but not in the previous ways, where it seemed to be thinking. The glow was a lot more intense, yet short.

"If you think I have all quest rewards lying around somewhere, that's not how it works! If you want something like that, you have to get them through quests. Quest rewards that focus on unlocking features of the Inn, I can influence. But if the quest reward has to do with other, external items, then I have no control over that. You should just do more quests. As I recall, you still have five active quests!"

The system sounded embarrassed and angry. Lex had once again, unwittingly, stepped on its toes, as it were.

As for his active quests, they were beyond his current means. His oldest quest, to establish a permanent resident district, could not be done even if he wanted to because its most basic of three requirements was to raise the Inn to 3 stars, and it was still 2.5 stars. Perhaps the new realm might affect that, but that would still leave him without a Winding Road Vine and a Karmic Lily, both incredibly rare treasures. Even the Infinity Emporium did not have them.

Then there was a quest to connect to Dunya, a 5 star world! With all the trouble he was getting into with lower star worlds, he still did not dare to connect to it.

He had no interest in having a Henali assembly at the Inn anytime soon, he had no control over when a Deity would come to the Inn as a guest, and he was already doing his best to speed up the recovery of the system. That left him with a bunch of quests he could not complete, at least for now.

Lex sighed, and said, "can you at least make the soul hearth a permanent part of the Inn? I also need a dungeon where I can keep prisoners and prevent them from escaping. Both of these are important."

Since he could not directly fight off against enemies, he would have to lean into the deterrent factor. Although he could fill the heart and keep it running with MP, it was too expensive to keep it going long term.

"I'll give you a few quests with related rewards," the system said succinctly.

Lex struggled at this point. Should he ask for more features? He had plenty of ideas that would help, but was it worth the potential cost? He had no idea how much just these few additions, which he would have to work for as is, would cost him.

"In case the Inn cannot go without accepting new guests, I have an idea that might resolve the situation. It involves the tavern..."

Lex explained his idea. Although he was not sure why just accepting new guests at the tavern as it was not acceptable for the system, he would make do with what he had. As of right now, the tavern had been shut down since the attack on it. He had brought all his workers and their families to the Inn, and never brought them back.

Even if the tavern stayed shut perpetually, it made no difference to him personally. But if he could use it as a loophole to the system's rules, then he certainly would.

Once he was done explaining, the system did not immediately harp about how it was impossible, which was a good sign. Probably.

Eventually, all the system said was, "I'll try to make it work. We'll see how things turn out. Anything else?"

"Yes, I have many requests, but I'm afraid I might not be able to afford them, so I'll have to stop here."

"Suit yourself. If possible, try to speed up my recovery as much as possible. The more I recover my functionality, the safer you'll be. It's not just absorbing other systems that will help me heal. Certain rare items, if absorbed, can also help me grow. A few such items might be born in the new realm. I'll give you a notification if you come into contact with such an item, but I can't specifically point them out to you, so stay vigilant."

"I'll keep an eye out," said Lex.

Their conversation seemed to end, but the orb did not return to its original spot. Lex waited. After all, even if they had an agreement, he would not totally drop his guard. It wasn't as if he could stop the

system if it really wished to fuse with him during the breakthrough. Rather, it was more of a psychological thing.

The system continued to hum and vibrate for a whole minute, its glow rising and dropping as if it was breathing. Ultimately, the glow stabilized, and the system started to speak once more.

"Before I leave, you should know that the system bias is not for no reason. Beings lower on the Cosmic Spectrum usually perform worse off. Your performance has been an outlier, not a norm. So continue to do a good job, and continue to raise your level. I look forward to working with you."

Like a shy kid, running off stage after giving a speech, the system returned to its old place within Lex's soul, and settled down as it turned its attention away. Outside, the realm continued to change, and the system had to maintain control of it. After all, it was keeping all the guests, workers, and Inn property in a separate realm outside the new Midnight realm so that they would not be affected by the timeline of the new realm.

It was not easy, and required a lot of control.

Lex turned to look at Mary once more. She looked relieved, somehow.

"Did you think that was going to go worse than it did?" Lex asked.

"I did not know how the system would react to your demands, and how you would react to the information it provided. The potential for a catastrophe was high. But, ultimately, I think the system was impressed by your performance so far. After all, it is not so easy to get such a high rating on quests, regardless of one's cultivation level."

"There's still a lot left unsaid," Lex repeated, as if clarifying that he was not perfectly satisfied with the result. "But this is acceptable, for now. I will stop treating the system with such suspicion, unless it does something else that makes me wary."

"Good luck," Mary said, before disappearing.

Lex closed his eyes. It was time to continue his breakthrough. Finally, he was entering the Nascent realm.