

Last System 105

Chapter 105 - Resolution

Back at Vaner's mansion, Mia sat anxiously on the bed.

'I know that it was better if I don't expose myself for an attack,' she told herself for the nth time in short succession, her eyes moving towards the window, longing written deeply in them.

'But still, I can't help but get anxious,' she thought, lowering her eyes back on her knees.

It was already a long while since Arthur left for the party. Or rather, it was already a long while since Arthur left for the new kind of battlefield that was, for some mistake, called a party.

'Ever since we met, he was doing his best to shield me from all the dangers, all the trouble,' Mia thought, pulling her knees underneath her chin and wrapping her hands around her legs. 'How can I ever repay him for all that he did for me?' she asked herself the same question that constantly plagued her mind, day after day.

Mia's only solace, the only way of forgetting about this problem, came with training. But right now, without Arthur to train with her or at least watch her train, the two pillars in the garden would only invite more loneliness to her soul if used.

Training on her own would only make her more conscious of the fact that she was alone.

'Maybe I should make some food for when he...' she thought, only for a sudden noise to stop her thoughts.

At first, Mia didn't think much of it. As the party was going on, it was only normal for some things to go wild.

But as the sounds of explosions mixed with distant screams, as the smoke started to rise above the sect along with a red hue of something burning, Mia's calmness died off.

'Arthur went to the party, it already was a while, chaos erupted...' Mia thought, jumping down from the bed and rushing towards the doors. 'I hope I'm wrong about it,' she thought, grabbing her special robe and rushing outside.

'I know you wanted for me to stay cooped inside the mansion, but I can't bear this anxiety,' Mia thought, trying to excuse herself as she ran towards the source of the chaos.

Bit by bit, Mia got closer to the origin of chaos. With every step, her anxiety grew. Seeing how people flew in the same direction as she was running, she could feel her entire body start to tremble.

'Arthur is the only one capable of kicking up such a fuss,' she thought, perfectly aware of just how boundless Arthur's ability was.

There was no such thing as limits for someone who reached the pinnacle of the mana condensation stage in just a month. And Mia was aware that her own slow progress was the only thing stopping Arthur from advancing even faster!

Finally, Mia reached the plaza where the events were taking place. Yet, the second she did it, everything appeared to be calming down.

"What the..." Mia muttered in shock, noticing the burned-out corpses littering the ground. Yet, rather than paying any mind to the dead bodies, she scanned the area with her eyes, anxious to find the one person she was looking for.

There were elders of the sect and the auditors in the sky. There was Vaner on the ground, talking with one of the elders about something. And there was a person, fully covered in flames, ready to fight anyone and anything that would come at it.

'Arthur,' Mia thought, instantly rushing ahead. In this single moment, she didn't care about exposing herself to danger. Her mind was fully occupied with the sorry state that her lover was in.

"In that case, I retain the right to pick his beneficiary," Vaner announced, deeply immersed in the staged negotiations. 'Even though I already know how it will end, I still need to keep up the act,' he thought, glancing over at the elders in the sky. 'They can't get any reason to blame my sect for what happened,' he thought, moving his eyes back at his friend in the sky.

"I believe his beneficiary," the auditor spoke up, glancing over Vaner's shoulder as Mia rushed right past her teacher, "just showed up."

Vaner rapidly turned around, only to see Mia already rushing for where Arthur was covered in flames.

'In his state...' Vaner thought, his eyes opening wide with worry. 'he might not even recognize her,' he realized, dropping the negotiations and rushing after the girl.

But he was too late.

"Arthur!" Mia shouted, speeding towards the flame-covered person.

She cared not for the flames, running right into them. Yet, in opposition to Vaner's expectations, Arthur's fires did her no harm.

"You are sa..." Mia uttered, reaching with her hand out to her beloved.

"DON'T TOUCH ME!" Arthur screamed out, slapping Mia's hand away, making sure not to touch it directly.

I slapped Mia's hand's away. I shouted at her. Either of those two things alone would be enough to crush my heart with guilt.

But right now, I really couldn't allow her to touch me. Not because of the fires that covered me. As they were the product of my mana and my emotions, they could do her no harm.

Right now, I simply wasn't worthy of her touch. Not after being sullied by that fat mountain. Not after becoming dirty with another woman's scent.

'Don't touch me. Don't touch me. Don't touch me.' A chant appeared in my mind, only putting me deeper into the limbo of my negative emotions.

I was aware of how wrong was what I did right now. I was aware that Mia likely wouldn't care a bit about what happened but would rather do her utmost to help me out.

But I was simply too disgusted with myself right now. Oh, how I wished for those flames of mine to consume me. The only reason why I didn't just let others kill me before was because of my defiant wish of denying them this satisfaction.

For the third time, the area turned silent, as people needed to take some time to process what happened.

The relationship between Mia and me was already common knowledge in the sect. Everyone knew that despite how I acted outside, I doted on her to no end.

And right now, I slapped her hand away.

Unable to bear the suspense, I raised my eyes at the girl, hiding them behind the cover of flames.

And there it was.

The face of a hurt animal, unable to understand why was it met with the unreasonable punishment. The face filled with extreme sadness, lack of understanding, confusion.

And as my eyes moved lower, I realized something even worse.

Mia's hand was broken. It wasn't a small injury, as I could see the white of her bone protruding from the wound.

'I did it...' I realized the wave of absolute disgust with myself washing through my soul.

For the first time since I gained control over my flames, they started to direct their force against my own body.

Right now, I couldn't help but consider myself my greatest enemy.

'This is all his fault,' stunned by my own emotions, I couldn't handle them any longer. As such, directing all my hate, all my grief at someone else was the easiest way out.

I looked towards Vaner.

'This is all this fucker's fault!' I screamed out inwardly.

The flames exploded beneath my feet, pushing me ahead. My eyes flashed with madness as I reached with my hand towards that lying elder's throat.

Right now, all I wanted was to see his face turn violet as he would die with my fingers choking the life out of him.

"Arthur!" Mia shouted again, not caring about her injury in the slightest, reaching for my path with her other hand.

"No, you will not!" Vaner barked, stepping forward and slamming his fist down.

My power right now was just a shadow of what it was before it was interrupted by that assassin. It had nowhere near the momentum from before.

My chance to get back at Vaner was long lost, even if I refused to acknowledge it.

Yet, when Vaner's fist reached my head, all my thoughts disappeared from my head, forcing me back into the limbo of unconsciousness.

Arthur's body crashed into the ground. Vaner's attack didn't change his momentum at all, only redirected its path towards the ground. By the time his body touched the dirt, he was no longer conscious.

"On account of the harm and pain I caused you, I forgive you this transgression," Vaner muttered silently, his eyes filling with sadness.

Even in his worst-case scenario plans, Vaner never expected his scheme to end up so devastating for his disciple. He thought that Arthur would be beaten up, maybe kidnapped, maybe even tortured a little.

But he never expected that not only would he be raped, but also this fact would have such a massive influence on him.

'His eyes...' Vaner swallowed a gulp of saliva, 'his eyes were mad,' he thought, recalling the last moment when Arthur was still conscious.

The hate that filled his disciple's eyes at that moment managed to give Vaner quite a scare.

'But there is nothing that I can do for you anymore,' he thought, biting down on his lips.

"Arthur!" Mia shouted, rushing towards the lifeless body of her lover. She fell to her knees, not caring about her broken and bleeding hand in the slightest.

"Arthur! Wake up! Please!" she continued to beg through her tears, unable to understand what happened at all.

'Why did he push me away? Why? Why? WHY?!' her thoughts were in disarray, Arthur's battered state only making it worse.

Seeing him injured and burned all over made it impossible for Mia to calm down. Yet, those questions that Arthur's own actions caused made it impossible for her to focus on trying to tend to Arthur's wounds.

"This girl here has a body of lighting," Vaner said, pointing his hand at Mia, who was bawling her eyes above Arthur's body. "I believe she is more than eligible for the promotion," Vaner said.

This kind of direct recommendation was something that his sect scorned upon. They refused to accept this kind of promotion outside of the special cases.

'If this isn't the special case, then I don't know what could it be!' Vaner thought, tightening his hands into fists.

"That's..." Vaner's friend hesitated for a moment. Then, he released the air from his lungs and nodded his head in agreement. "That's a good idea. As I understand," he added, looking over at the crying girl, "she will be the beneficiary of our new contractor, right?" he asked.

"That's right," Vaner nodded his head. All his power left his body all at once, making him fall down and sit directly on the ground.

"I didn't think they would go that far with you," he muttered silently, watching at the lifeless body of his disciple. "Yet, no matter how sorry I am, you will never forgive me," he added with a depressed sigh.

With the matter finally settled, everyone started to disperse. Even though there were some that were clearly dissatisfied with how things went through, no one dared to oppose the decision of the Auditor of the Tuxi sect.

They rarely involved themselves directly in anything, but their voice was absolute and definite when they did.

"I can only hope that you will make the most of the opportunity I created for..." Vaner's words ended up stuck in his throat. "No, out of the opportunity that you created for yourself," he muttered.

A few meters away, skyladder disciples forced Mia away from Arthur's unconscious body. Her wound was pretty serious and needed to be tended to.

The wind carried her cries out to the skies, making them accompany the setting sun on its daily journey behind the horizon.

The day was finally coming to an end.

And so was a certain part of Arthur's and Mia's lives.

End of the Arc 2: Audition