

Last System 131

Chapter 131 - Cracks

Mia woke up in her bed.

It was a strange notion. To wake up in a bed that she could call her own.

Back in the past, when she was still living with her family, she simply shared the space by the fireplace with her many siblings. Then, as a slave, she shared the dormitory with other masterless slaves. And with Arthur, she didn't have a bed that she could call her own, as she shared it with her beloved.

Yet now, she woke up in her own bed. In her own room. In her own place.

'I still have the old habits,' she thought the second she looked through the massive window taking nearly half of one of the room walls.

The sun was barely up. Its rays were still cold, only announcing the start of the day.

But it was nonetheless.

'I need to get going,' she thought, pushing the sheets out of her body and getting up from the bed.

Following her daily routine, she washed her face, changed to Arthur's-made robes, and snacked on some food that servants brought to the room even before she could wake up.

A sign that there were people awake while she was still asleep. A good sign.

"Let's get going," she muttered to herself before raising both of her hands and lightly slapping her cheeks. The slight pain that her self-slap caused helped the girl to chase away the morning drowsiness.

Soon, she left her room and marched through the corridor of the dormitory. It was a relatively small building, with only ten rooms split between two floors. As she didn't hurry it up yesterday, she ended up living on the second floor in the room furthest away from the common hall.

But this wasn't her destination for now. She had her snack already, after all.

'This place is really nice,' Mia thought, a smile blossoming on her lips as she stared at the vast open space of the training area.

It consisted of training pillars scattered all over the place, each of which was surrounded by a set of several formations.

For a moment, Mia gazed at the place. Her smile slowly died off, replaced by a nostalgic look to the sky.

'I really wish you were here,' she thought, closing her eyes. A single tear slid down her cheek, only to be wiped away a moment later.

'No, I can't let it get to me,' Mia thought, raising her face and calming her heart. 'I need to make the most of what he gave me,' she decided, approaching the nearest of the pillars.

It was all a part of her routine. Wake up, get ready, go train.

'Amazing,' Mia thought the second she stepped into the set of formations. The mana gushed towards her as if she consumed a whole bunch of spirit stones at once... And it continued to do so over and over again!

"I can't waste time," she muttered, standing in position and sending the first punch towards the stone.

The second she did, the mana that infused itself into her body came into order, falling right into the flow that she had already developed. Soon, her fists started to strike the stone one by one, in the exact same fashion that they would back at the Skyladder sect.

The sun continued to climb through the sky. The temperature of the day continued to climb. Mia continued to train.

Those things appeared to be the constants of nature, things that would happen in the exact same fashion day by day.

Soon, the sun climbed all the way to its highest point in the sky. It was also when Mia's colleagues finally started appearing.

"Huh?" Kathia uttered a small shout of surprise. "You are up already?" she asked, leaning her head to the side, genuinely shocked.

"I was just about to take a break," Mia replied, relaxing her stance and grabbing a small towel that she brought along. She wiped her forehead clean of the sweat and smiled at the girl.

"Aren't you... trying a bit too hard?" Kathia twisted her lips in a slightly annoyed expression. "You will make all of us look bad by comparison!" she complained, only to start chuckling a moment later.

Even if her words initially sounded provocative, the clear look in her eyes quickly killed that notion.

"Then stop slacking and pick up the pace," Mia laughed out, not taking Kathia's words to herself.

"Come on, did you really come to this sect just to train hard?" Dirk joined in on the conversation. He approached the girls and rested his arm on Kathia's shoulder, only to be shoved aside a second later. "Didn't you see our rooms? The dining hall?" he asked, a look of elation appearing in his eyes. "You need to get some fun! There will always be time to train more!" he added.

"We never know that," Mia replied, her previously warm gaze slowly cooling off.

There was a limit to how much she could take the ridicule of her efforts. The efforts that were all aimed at honoring Arthur's sacrifice.

"Seriously, you need to take it a bit easier," Usan joined in on the discussion as well. Despite speaking only a few words during their travel as he was focused on his book, he somehow found it fitting to enter the conversation right now. "You are not a normal disciple to work so hard," he added, his voice proving that he seriously considered his words to hold true.

'Not a normal disciple?' Mia thought, looking at Usan. He appeared to be the most sensible of the bunch... yet he was already showing an arrogant attitude towards those that weren't lucky enough to get sponsored?

'Is that really how they see the others?' she thought, biting down on her lips. Then, she shook her head.

"I'm not sponsored by a sect," Mia said, her voice turning even colder. "I'm sponsored by a person I deeply care about," she explained, taking a step back. "As such, I'm going to do everything in my power to make my man's sacrifice worth it," she added, turning around and stepping back into the array.

'I guess I will train while hungry,' she thought. All the appetite she had after training for hours disappeared after this short encounter.

The discussion was over. Mia's stance and return to her training made it pretty clear.

Be it following their own plan or prompted by Mia's diligence, the others soon fell in the line, starting their own training all over the area.

Roughly an hour later, Mia exhaled a deep breath, resting her hands on her knees as she leaned forward to take a short break.

'I really should go eat something,' she thought.

Food was just like mana. A source of energy for a cultivator. While by reaching some mythical level, one could give up on all the mortal activities like eating or sleeping, Mia was still far away from that kind of legendary level.

'Should I...?' she thought, taking a glance at the nearby common hall. According to the information she received yesterday, that's where the sponsored students could dine.

Yet, after shaking her head heavily, Mia turned towards the gate of the area.

After the encounter with her groupmates, she no longer felt like eating at this place.

With her mind made up, Mia took up and left the training area and then the walled-off area for the sponsored disciples.

'I'm going to eat with everyone else,' she thought, walking through the gate and entering the greater whole of the sect grounds.

And in an instant, she could feel the angry stares of the people that walked about their daily lives all around.

'It seems that people really don't like the sponsored disciples...' she thought before clenching her hands into fists and pushing forward.

Just like Arthur, once Mia would set her mind at something, only death could stop her from achieving it.

'I guess I became the very thing that I hated,' she thought as she closed her eyes in an attempt to ignore the angry glances.

Thankfully, before long, everyone that saw her leave the sponsored compound disappeared, replaced by the people that didn't pay her any mind.

'Who would've thought that picking up Arthur's robes for today would be so convenient,' she thought, a smile returning to her lips as she moved towards the sect's common dining hall.