

Last System 141

Chapter 141 - The Truth That I Ignored

"That sucks," Lucius said the second we returned to the camp. "I know how important it is for you to submit the quota... But I'm sorry," he said, looking down at his side. "There is no way I will be able to go this time," he said.

Considering that he had an entire chunk of meat ripped out of his side and that I only managed to save him by some miracle, it was only natural.

Still, that didn't mean I was willing to just give up.

"For now, you need to rest," I said, avoiding the topic.

There were still two days before our time of submitting the spoils. In other words, we could still take a single day of rest before taking another day to reach the sect grounds.

'There is no way he will heal that wound up in a day,' I thought, looking at Lucius' bloody side.

Was I supposed to give up on the first quota fulfillment day?

In theory, it wouldn't mean much. According to Lucius, the first submission period could be missed, as a lot of people required a bit more training before getting into the rhythm of their new lives as contractors. It was a dangerous job, after all.

But that still meant that Mia wouldn't receive a single bit of resources to cultivate with!

'I know that she could manage without them... But I don't want her to become an outcast,' I thought, clenching my jaws as I helped Lucius into the bed inside the tent.

"How about I go alone?" I asked, ignoring my earlier decision to let the man rest a little first. "I might not be super strong, but in the open area of the highway, I should be able to ward off most of the monsters that could come after me," I said.

It was a complete bollocks. I had no idea how what level of strength the monsters living near the road had. But I just had to take this gamble.

If this road was called a highway, then it was extensively used. Otherwise, it wouldn't be made so wide, and no one would use so many quality materials to build it. And that alone meant that to a degree, it had to be safe.

"You can't," Lucius muttered, struggling to speak normally. He kept his hand over at his wound, indicating that even though it stopped bleeding, it still hurt him like hell. "They will eat you alive. Everyone hates contractors over there."

That didn't make any sense. Why would people hate someone that basically provided for them?

'Well, scarcely anything in social order makes any sense,' I quickly realized, my thoughts moving back to the history of my own people.

During the time while we still had a country to call ours, we saved our neighbors from all sorts of menaces. Invasion from the south? The winged hussars would roll down the hill to save the imperial capital in distress. A red horde from the east, with orders to stop only at the ocean's shore? They

ended upheld at the last line of my people's defense, saving the rest of the old continent from the revolution that ravaged the eastern part of our country.

Yet, for some reason, all those people whom we saved ended up hating us and causing our downfall.

Those that we saved from the invasion from the south ended up participating in the total annihilation of our country a measly century later. The countries that we saved from the revolution either invaded us directly or, despite being our nominal allies, did nothing to help in the war and later threw us aside like a piece of filth.

'One's contribution doesn't have anything to do with how they are treated. No. It's more like those who contribute the most are doomed to fail because they are the mirror in which the devious ones can see the filth they are in reality,' I thought, tightening my hands.

My initial denial of Lucius' statement vanished from my mind in an instant.

If that's how humanity worked back in my original world, how could I expect it to work differently in this one?

"I need a moment to myself," I said, shaking my head and moving towards the exit of the tent. "You just take your time and rest," I added.

"Where are you going?" Lucius asked in a distressed voice. I could tell that he noticed that there was something wrong with my mental state.

"I just need to calm down a little," I said, moving out of the tent without any further attempts at prolonging our discussion.

Right now, I really needed some time to myself.

Thinking about the past made me realize that no matter how much I wanted to escape from the reality of my past world, it was deeply ingrained in my soul.

The grievances that I had, the philosophy that I created to cope with it, the distress that said situation caused...

They were never going to just disappear because I somehow reincarnated into another world. Even if my body was different now, my mind was the same as it was back on earth.

I grabbed my spear and moved towards the forest. It was risky and stupid to enter it all alone, without Lucius backing, but I really needed to vent right now.

Yet, just as I reached the line of the trees, I hesitated.

The kind of drive that pushed me forward right now was the very thing that I had to avoid.

My people lost our country for the third and the last time because we got emotional too. We allowed our grievances and hate to cloud our judgment, leading to subpar decisions being taken.

Instead of going forward with the future in our mind and as our priority, we ended up stuck with our past, unable to move on.

And this was the main reason why we never managed to catch up with our neighbors despite many opportunities. Why we never managed to become a power big enough to have its own voice on the global scale.

That's why we ended up being just a scapegoat for all the wrongs of the old continent, burdened with the crimes that we never committed.

'At some point, we were even forced to burden the responsibility for the atrocities that were committed... but against us!' I thought, tightening my fist around the handle of my spear.

For a moment, I allowed all of those grievances against the past to run freely in my head. And then, just like that, I cut them all off.

"I'm not going to make the same mistakes that my ancestors did," I muttered to myself, turning around and moving towards the amplification array.

Instead of getting heated up and allowing my past to drive my actions, I had to turn my eyes and ambitions towards the future.

'Only by becoming strong enough I can stop others from stomping on me,' I told myself.

There was no point in trying to ignore how the world I was in worked. Despite all the facades of high civilization, it was still strong eating the weak kind of world.

'I can't bring those stones to the sect,' I thought, looking down at the pouch still attached to my belt. Even if I dared to face the dangers of taking such a road... I didn't even know the damned directions!

"Fine then," I muttered, tearing the sack with the stones open.

Even without the hall of the day, we had more than enough to fulfill our full quotas. With the discount for the first billing, we had twice as much as we actually needed.

'If I get stronger, I can get more stones down the line,' I thought, putting aside half of the stones for Lucius' part and placing them outside of the array.

Then, without a second of hesitation, I scattered all the stones across the array. I then grabbed my spear and got into stance.

I ignored the pain of the many bruises and small wounds I sustained during the hunt and started training.

The second the spiritual stones started to dissolve, a tsunami of mana hit me, making me feel like a small, meaningless pebble thrown to the middle of an ocean.

'Get stronger!' I urged myself, driving my mana to its limits as I pushed my spear forward.

'Don't stop!' I thought, swinging my spear as if a horde of monsters had just appeared before me.

Soon, the ticking of the system started, only to turn into a constant noise as more and more mana continued to merge into my flow.

And for the first time, I actually felt my very own cultivation.

It was a strange feeling. As if a force that, although obedient, was still outside to my body, started to furiously merge into my flesh, mind, and soul.

My thrusts became more powerful. My mind cleared out. My sense of mana itself grew more tangible.

In this mad rush of energy combining with all aspects of my being, I continued to swing my spear, practicing my precision strike over and over again.

If I didn't want anyone to stomp on me, training hard was the only thing I could do. If I didn't want to make the same mistakes that my ancestors did on earth, then I had to become strong enough to crush all the opposition.

'It's all the same,' a thought suddenly appeared in my mind. It didn't matter if it was this world or the earth. They were both all about the strong eating the weak. The only difference lay in the fact that the earth civilizations didn't openly endorse this idea.

But they did it all when the push came to shove.

And since every civilization that was successful would become successful by trampling on others...

My lips turned into a wicked smile.

Who I was to decide that being a good person was the proper way to be?

If cultivation taught me anything at all, then it was that going against one's own nature was the shortest way to go berserk and lose it all!