

## Last System 155

### Chapter 155 - True Cost

"I'm terribly sorry for what happened here," Madam said, suddenly changing her attitude.

The shock on her face turned into fear.

"I didn't know you were a token holder," she said, lowering her head as low as she could without actually falling to her knees.

"So this stone is actually important?" I muttered to myself, playing with the token. "I guess I should send the letter to the Madam that I helped back then," I added, a smile growing up on my lips.

"You really don't know what it is...?" Madam whispered as she glanced up at my face, still not daring to raise her head.

"I will have all the debt of your friend canceled. He will receive proper remuneration for helping one of my girls breakthrough," Madam uttered through her teeth, clearly unhappy about her own words.

I didn't bother to react to her words in any way or form. I simply stood in place, staring down at her lowered head while playing with the black token in my hand.

"You two might come in and use my girls as you see fit," Madam uttered, her voice bearing hints of hidden fury. "Free of charge, that is," she added.

I could feel the changes to the people's faces all around. Yet, the most significant one happened right behind my back.

When I first claimed how much money I made, Lucius was shocked beyond words. But now, his shock turned into elation when the reality dawned upon him.

The reality was that I was going to tear away from him right away.

"No," I said in a calm voice. "That won't be necessary. If my friend wants to have fun, he, like everyone else, has to pay for it," I said, instantly feeling the furious stare drilling holes in my back.

"As for me..." I allowed my voice to linger a little before shaking my head sideways. "I'm not interested in any of your girls," I said.

In the end, I didn't come to this place to gain favors and discounts on whores. I came here to do business. And my experience from back at the Zero Zone allowed me to ignore the insane amount of exposure that filled every last inch of this place.

"If you swing that way..." Madam finally raised her head with a gentle smile, "I have some cute boys too," she suggested.

For a moment, I stared her down.

'In some places, that suggestion would warrant you a death,' I thought, tightening my fists.

"No, thanks, I have a girlfriend. That's all there is to it," I explained.

Once again, I didn't know the take of this world on homosexuality. Maybe it was accepted? Maybe it was tolerated? Or maybe it was the greatest possible crime, and Madam just attempted to dupe me in?

I had no idea. As such, it was better to just steer clear of the topic.

"Fine, I won't try to convince you, then," Madam muttered, tightening her teeth. "Still... you were talking something about doing business..." she added, an uneasy expression appearing on her face.

'Is this the power of this token?' I thought. 'She was so against even having me inside her building, and now she wants to beg for my involvement?'

I shook my head.

'No, I can't get emotional over it,' I realized. 'Rather than rising up with my pride, I need to press my advantage.' My thoughts turned cold. 'I no longer can afford to do business with people I like. I need to get rich and get rich quick,' I thought.

As a contractor, I was heavily disliked by the members of the sect. What's more, the encounter in this place proved that people were keen to exploit this as an advantage.

And it was all just the beginning. The only way for me to ward off any potential trouble was by being strong enough to just shrug them all away.

It didn't matter whether my strength came from how powerful I was personally, from how strong my friends and backers were, or from how rich I was.

No matter what kind, I had to obtain some sort of advantage over the others!

And by the looks of things, I just found someone who would find it hard to refuse my requests!

"As you likely are aware, after such a warm welcome..." I said before letting my words hang in the air for a little, "my rates will be way higher," I said.

"As long as your ideas are profitable, I'm willing to swallow a high interest," Madam said. "I will swallow it all the way down to its balls... Just like my girls would if you were to show any interest," Madam said, once again trying to force me into a honeytrap.

"Stop it," I replied coldly, my expression turning dark. "Rather than your girls, I need your obedient and loyal cooperation," I said, slowly letting my words out one by one. "But you see... I'm an adventurous man," I suddenly announced.

"Huh?" Madam's body shook in surprise. "What do you mean by that?"

"I'm not interested in replicating the ideas I already used. For now, you just need to sit tight and wait for me to come up with new ones," I announced.

For a moment, Madam simply stared me down, analyzing the situation in her head. She then released a deep sigh and nodded her head.

"So be it," she said. "Once again, I'm sorry for all the trouble that you met here," she added before looking away. "I'm also looking forward to our cooperation," she muttered through her teeth, clearly putting her interests above her own emotions.

'That was a good choice,' I thought to myself. 'As long as she values money more than her feelings, I will be able to control her easily,' I thought.

The extent of the control I imagined wasn't great. I simply wanted someone who wouldn't try to go back on their words and cheat me out of my money.

But for that to happen, I had to visit a few other brothels and fully inquire about the value and meaning of the token that I found in my storage!

"I will come here once I'm ready to introduce new products," I said before turning around on my heel and leaving the place.

As the matter was now settled, Lucius was smart enough to follow me outside. Or rather, he was simply looking forward to the opportunity of lashing at me instead.

"Why the fuck did you refuse her offer?!" he exclaimed. "I was so close to having a free botty whenever I wanted! Do you even realize how much fucking money it costs to visit this place?!"

I allowed all of Lucius' words to enter my head through one ear and then fly away through the other one.

"You wanted me to help you because they scammed you," I said, not even bothering to look at Lucius' face. Even though he wasn't at fault in this particular situation, he was in trouble only because he blasted all his money on gambling and wine before everything went downhill! "I helped you. You are not only free of the unfair debt but will also be paid for what you did. What are you angry with me about?" I asked, feeling my soul riling up.

This was the one thing I hated about humans. Give them the finger, and they will demand a fucking hand. This kind of mentality brought most of the social disasters to the face of the earth and was behind the wipe of my country and the tragedy of my nation.

"I could have all those girls for free!" Lucius scowled, still unable to get over the thing that he assumed he had lost.

What he didn't realize, though, was that it was never something he had in the first place.

"First off, agreeing to that would paint a massive target on your back," I explained. "With that, I could live off. But a way bigger target would appear on my face, and that I can't allow," I added in a cold voice.

"Secondly, those girls wouldn't be free at all. The cost would be massive," I muttered, unwilling to go for the bother of explaining this fact. "So massive, in fact, you would never be able to pay it back," I added.

The reason why Madam offered this kind of opportunity was simple. She wanted to use her girls as the bargaining chip that would wash off the guilt of her position and bring her back to the neutral standing on the negotiating table.

In other words, if I agreed to that, then the entire matter would be fully settled, allowing her to open up the business negotiations on a clear footing.

This opportunity happened only because Lucius got in trouble, that's certain... But after I risked my face and safety for his sake, he no longer had the right to claim the spoils that I obtained!

"Seeing how much you made and how you opted to risk the war instead of just paying a few coins for me..." Lucius muttered, "you really are stingy, aren't you?" he barked, still unhappy with my decision.

Yet, while unhappy, he finally started to calm himself down. A sign that he at least attempted to understand what I tried explaining to him.

"Wait," I stopped in my steps when Lucius' words brought a certain memory to my mind. "Do you really believe that I made that much?" I asked, pretending to be shocked beyond any reason.

"Huh?" Lucius stopped as well, surprised by my sudden question.

I smiled.

"You said it yourself; never reveal your true fortune!" I claimed, paraphrasing advice he gave me when we first entered the city. "What I said back then was a bluff," I lied. "A good one, seeing how you fell for it as well," I added to reinforce my words.

Lucius squinted his eyes as he looked sternly at my face.

"Where did that token come from, then?" he asked, still unsure what to think about the entire situation.

"No idea," I shrugged my arms. This part I could at least be honest about. "It was just there along with the five hundred coins I actually made!"

I was honest, but I lied at the same time. If I were to be a bit more ambiguous, I could even call it a flat lie...

But right now, I had to give Lucius a concrete number. If I kept the amount hidden, his imagination would give it away instead. And I couldn't risk having him think that I was some kind of a nouveau riche.

Not after his display today. Not after learning that he would waste his money on gambling.

"That's why I still need to go to other brothels," I sighed. "Not to have some fun, but to ask around about what this token really is!"