

Last System 168

Chapter 168 - Anomaly

'Should I actually go back?' I thought to myself as I deserted the clearing.

It was true that I got four times more stones than was absolutely necessary for the day... But the half that I could use, I already have plans for.

In other words, if I wanted to cultivate a little bit more, I had no other choice but to get back to hunting, despite telling Lucius I would not.

"I only need a few more stones," I muttered to myself as I returned to my hunting grounds.

I even went as far as to hide the entire pouch of stones into my storage ring. Worst case scenario, if I were to encounter Lucius while still hunting, I could claim I safe kept it in my balls, worried about the bag breaking.

Soon, I had my eyes on the first target. This time, it was one of those fast-moving, rapidly-dodging rabbit-like monsters.

Exactly as the one of those whose nest we destroyed before our visit to the sect.

'Did they make another nest?' I thought before looking closer at the monster.

So far, I was too high for it to notice me, allowing me a moment to take stock of the situation.

There were no signs of other monsters anywhere near. This one was additionally far fatter and bigger than the kinds I already fought with.

'Is it some kind of warrior?' I thought, stopping my head from shaking. This was one of my habits that I had to fight with all my will against while on the hunt. Even something as little as shaking one's head could alert the prey about my presence, after all! 'Or maybe it's a scout?' I thought, only to realize my own stupidity.

'No, if it's really one of the same kind as those, then they wouldn't see the fat and big one to scout the area!'

With that said, I readied my spear.

I could only tickle it with my bow, nothing more. It was sufficient for the small targets, but not anything medium-grade or above. And this one just clutched its way with its mass to what I considered a middle grade.

'I need to make it swift,' I thought, fixing my hold over my weapon.

Then, I allowed my body to get out of balance, falling forward from the tree's branch I was hiding at. Then, with my knees still bent, my feet slipped, making my entire body angle towards the ground.

Right when my head aimed just slightly above the monster, I pushed my legs out.

It wasn't a jump. What I did felt more like what one does when swimming and wanting to boost themselves up forward after completing the entire length of the pool.

I dropped down at the monster before it could even turn its cute head towards me. My spear penetrated it right below its nape, pinning it to the ground.

I crashed into the forest's undergrowth. Despite my cultivation, my entire body screamed out in pain.

A drop like this couldn't injure me, but it could cause a whole lot of pain.

But it didn't matter.

I kept the spear inside the monster, using it as a nail that kept it in place. Even with the piece of sharpened and mana-reinforced bone piercing right through its flesh, the monster continued to struggle, trying hard to escape from my clutches.

'What a vitality,' I thought, amazed by my findings. But instead of marveling over the unexpected profit, I quickly pulled out the knife and slashed at the monster.

It looked too similar to the cute rabbits I knew from the earth for me to handle seeing it wriggle in pain any longer.

I allowed the monster to bleed out for a little for its strength to leave it. Then, once its movements turned into just small twitches, I drove the knife right into its neck, severing its spinal cord.

As much as it pained me, I wasn't going to risk it. If it was only pretending and still had some strength in itself, I would have to deal with a pretty nasty injury. Just like on earth, its teeth appeared to be quite damn dangerous.

Once I made sure the monster was dead, I quickly dismembered it with my knife. Extracting the core posed no problems as usual, outside of the core itself being on the bigger side just like the rest of the monster.

'Let's hope it will be worth more too,' I thought to myself as I started to cut through the tendons that held the bones of the monster together.

As it was a part of the body of an organism used to circulate mana through itself, they were insanely valuable for any attempts at creating arcane weapons or even formation stones.

Yet, partway through my work, I started to notice a foreign presence.

I didn't take any longer than usual, but the monsters were already there, watching me from their hiding spots.

'This isn't good,' I thought, raising my head and scanning the area.

So far, at least three monsters have been observing me. Any second now, that number would double.

'I need to ditch right now,' I thought, pulling both my knife and spear out and backing out a few steps.

Seeing that no monster decided to get a jump on me, I turned around and simply left the area.

'Even though I'm stronger than any and all of them,' I thought, twisting my lips in a dissatisfied grin, 'I have no intention of partaking in this kind of battle royale,' I added, my vigilance raising through the roof.

Before I lost the area of the corpse from my eyes, the number of monsters in the proximity had already tripled.

'It's all happening way too fast,' I noticed, slowing down my steps. Bit by bit, I moved towards the thinner parts of the forest, hoping to get away to safety.

I only hunted in this forest for roughly two weeks. It was still way too early for me to claim that I knew it by heart.

'All I need is to get back,' I thought, releasing the limiter on my speed as I picked up the speed and rushed back to the camp.

With what I obtained during the hunt and after I officially ended it, I would be set for quite a lot of growth. Right now, I had enough both to try raising the level of my jobs experiment with the formation, and even then, some would be left for me to cultivate with.

But there was another thought that occupied my head. A thought that forced me to choose between hiding the fact that I returned to the forest and potentially risking a disaster.

'Should I tell him?' I asked myself as I finally reached the clearing where our camp was set. 'Should I tell Lucius about this anomaly?'

What was more important. To keep my attempts at acting autonomously to myself so that Lucius wouldn't try to limit my freedom, the one thing that I valued almost the most in this new life of mine?

Or should I tell him and potentially prevent a potential disaster if this anomaly was a sign of something greater and far worse coming?

'Safety first.... I would say back on earth,' I thought, grasping the last stone I got from the forest in my glover hand. 'But in this world, who doesn't risk it, doesn't get the biscuit!'