

## Last System 196

Chapter 196 - Lets Turn Him In

Lucius sat in the Inn for hours.

It was as if he was frozen in time, not perceiving its passage at all.

If not for his occasional move of the arm to take a sip, one could easily mistake him for some kind of modern sculpture.

He sat and did nothing but slowly sip on his drink for hours. He saw Arthur sneaking to the staircase with the corner of his eyes...

But he sat and waited, patiently wetting his lips with the booze.

Only when the sun hid for the night, long after Arthur returned and likely went to sleep, Lucius finally made his move.

He gently placed the cup on the table. Despite acting grumpy all day, he didn't exhibit even the slightest hint of anger or annoyance.

Once the bill was taken care of, Lucius left the Inn, heading for the inner ring of the sect.

The streets were empty so late in the night, allowing for a smooth trip. Before long, Lucius pushed the doors open and arrived at his destination.

"Took you a while," Zigfrid raised his eyes at the guest. His face was tired, still overwhelmed after the recent encounter.

"How did it go?" Lucius asked, taking off his hoodie.

"You tell me," Zigfrid said, staring blankly at his guest.

'Huh?' Lucius shook in surprise. 'Something happened?' he thought before shaking his head.

"You know that I don't talk with him anymore," he said, rolling his eyes over this annoyance. "Did he submit the quotas?" Lucius asked.

"That's the problem," Zigfrid replied before releasing a deep sigh. He covered his face with the palm of his hand. "Yes, he did," the logistic center's Clerk answered, only to shake his head. "And no, he did not," he added.

"Can you start making some sense?" Lucius asked, weirded out by the strange mood of his supervisor.

"I think we just lost the guy," Zigfrid said, his shoulders plummeting down. "I managed to get him to submit his quota twice," he said before shaking his head. "The second time, he came with the damned boss of the auction hall," he said, his eyes opening wide at the mere memory of what happened.

"The hell?!" Lucius freaked out a little. It took him a good while to calm his senses.

"That bitch was really eager to go all in," Zigfrid added, his body slumping down as he relaxed on the chair.

"Damn," Lucius whistled, taking a deep breath to calm his nerves. "How deep we are in this shit?"

"Deep," Zigfrid replied before shaking his head again. "No, wait. It was pretty weird," he then added in a chaotic voice. "It's like... he made some small concessions and expect us to just stop," he explained after a moment of thought.

"Wait, what the hell?" Lucius couldn't gather his thoughts.

He sat down and hid his face in his hands.

'If he knows...?' Arthur's overseer took a moment to think. Then, his face lit up.

"How about we turn him?" he proposed.

Zigfrid only shook his head.

"You didn't see him, not like that," the Clerk stressed out. "It was a call for peace...? But I'm pretty damn sure he was infuriated to his wits," he explained, shrugging at the memory.

"Let's turn him," Lucius repeated himself. "You don't understand. This kid is a genius," he said, shaking his head. "I bet he could easily break to the eight-stage in the manner of days," Lucius added with a weird grin on his face.

"How is that any good?" Zigfrid asked, rolling his eyes over the idea.

"We won't be able to exploit him, so let's promote him instead," Lucius suddenly proposed.

'If you want to power so much, you would rile in that auction hall boss,' Lucius smiled to his own thoughts. 'Then this will be an offer you won't be able to refuse,' he decided.

Instead of exploiting him for the customary period of three months, they would help Arthur advance and become an Overseer himself.

'Once he gets to exploit others, he surely won't mind this small squabble,' Lucius thought, certain of his judgment.

Between dropping out and losing the perks of being associated with the sect and entering a lofty position where his needs are answered to?

Some people refused to take part in this tradition. But most of them would break and accept the immense benefits. Only by establishing a net of people that would provide for their overseers one could hope to break through the immense gap between the stages.

'I wonder how it was before it all changed,' Lucius thought, challenging himself to imagine a different world. A world where contractors were honored members of the sect. A world the resources were bountiful and the world relatively safe.

Lucius shook his head.

'Thoughts like that are of no use,' he decided, setting his eyes ahead.

"Can we still get something out of him?" Lucius asked, turning his eyes to his compatriot. "I mean, how about you turn over what he submitted to my report?" he suggested.

"Are you for real?" Zigfrid asked, his eyes opening wide. "Do you really want to cross his bottom line?" he asked, jumping out from his seat.

"As if it matters," Lucius rolled his eyes. "Whatever we are sending is stolen on its way to the sect," he pointed out.

"Man, that would mean effectively expelling him from the sect!" Zigfrid said before his face froze for a second. "Man, his beneficiary, who is he?" he asked.

'If I recall, he asked to send that storage ring to the other party,' Zigfrid thought, trying to sort his memories out.

"Some kind of girl he knew back in the sect," Lucius shook his arms. "Whatever, man, never really bothered to ask," he added.

"Anyway," Zigfrid rolled his eyes, "let's not push too hard. Didn't you want to invite him in?" he asked.

"It's fine," Lucius shook his hand. "Once he gets the benefits of being an Overseer, whatever we take from him now won't matter," he explained, clearly done with the topic.

"I'm not doing that," Zigfrid stated with determination. "That guy organized a massive support in a manner of days," he brought up the fact. "I'm not going to mess around with someone like that. The risk is too big," he added as he stood up.

"Either way, how do we split the booty?" Lucius waved his hand again, dismissing the topic.

"I wish I could be as calm as you are," Zigfrid muttered before bringing out a pouch and passing it over to Lucius. "And remember, man," Zigfrid whispered before turning completely silent.

For a moment, he was frozen in a single frame. He then breathed out lowered his eyes on his hands.

"Back then, when it all happened," Zigfrid said, his eyes turning misty. "I was scared shitless," he revealed, his voice slightly shaken. "If he is the kind of genius you say he is, then if it fails..."

Zigfrid didn't finish his words. He simply stared at the window and the landscape hidden behind it.

'This is the way,' he thought.

The tradition would continue.. The contractors would claw their way to the top in the most efficient manner. Scorned by everyone, they would reach the heights others could only dream of!