

Last System 234

Chapter 234 - Would You Like To Speak Up?

The day neared its end.

The sun hid behind a distant set of mountains, showering the entire city in darkness. Only occasional lanterns would light up the streets, guiding the lost travelers towards their homes.

And near the outskirts of the town, where not a single light could be seen, stood an inn.

It was a place like many others, filled with drunkards and people wasting their free time and money on a cup of piss-quality ale.

'It smells like dog's shit,' Natan thought as he stepped inside the building.

He pulled down his deep hood that previously hid his face. Even though it was dark for someone like him to step into a place like that...

The young man wasn't taking any chances. Were a single flash of light to illuminate his face, not only his career could be over, but so could be his life.

"Look who came!" the voices reached towards Natan's group the second the doors closed shut.

'Wait... how?' Natan suddenly asked, shocked by a strange thing.

How, amidst all the noise coming from the insides of the Inn, he could understand the words of the other perfectly?

"Antrall," Natan's companion pulled his hood down while returning the greeting. "It's been some time," he added, nodding his head with respect.

"Anyway," the man called Antrall turned his face back towards the group of people he was conversing with. "I don't think we should hinder the growth of the Double Smiths guild," he said, clearly keeping the topic from before.

'Excuse me?' Natan thought, shocked by what he heard.

Although not vital to the group's inner workings, those were not the things one should discuss so openly!

"Those guys..." wrinkles appeared on Natan's forehead as he tightened his fists. His blood boiled.

He paid so much effort to make sure no one would see him coming to this place and those men...

"They are endangering the whole operation!" Natan realized, fury taking over his mind.

He didn't waste half of his life kissing all sorts of asses, only for everything to fall apart the second he got his promotion.

"Calm down, brother," Natan's companion said, heavily placing his hand down the young man's shoulder. "This entire place is under our control," he said. Then, a small glint appeared in the corner of the middle-aged man's eye. "No one unauthorized would be able to set foot in here," the man added before turning his eyes away.

He then marched forward and took a seat at the table the Antrall guy occupied.

"So?" Antrall asked, taking a hefty sip of beer and then energetically wiping his mouth off with his sleeve. "What do you think about it?" he asked, burped, and then cast a quick glance at Natan's companion. "About the guild," Antrall specified as the look in his eyes focused.

"I think we should eradicate them," the middle-aged man said with a carefree look on his face. "Sure, we could increase our income by a lot by allowing them to develop the streamlined process of production," he nodded his head, only for a devious smile to appear on his lips. "But that would increase the costs of placating the entire sect," he added.

For a moment, the entire area turned silent.

A testimony to that man's earlier mention about their group's control over the Inn.

All the extras that filled the area just to make it look like a normal tavern could feel the pressure at the moment.

"It wouldn't be cost-effective," the man finished, leaning back in his seat. He then looked around the table while putting a confused look on his face.

"Here, here," Antrall laughed out, raising his hand and then slamming it on his knee. "Bring that man some drink!" he shouted, raising his own cup high in the air only to lower it above his face and dunk the rest of the liquid down his throat.

"It's decided, then!" Antrall shouted, slamming down the empty cup on the Inn's table.

The air changed a little. Despite the pretentiously relaxed atmosphere, everyone tensed up a little.

Their mission might be extremely profitable and pleasurable, but it was a mission nonetheless.

"Anyway, now that we are all here, let's begin the meeting," Antrall said when the waitresses approached to fill the men's cups.

'Are they officers as well?' Natan thought, gulping down on his drink to drown his dissatisfaction.

This wasn't what he expected from his job in the middle ranks at all!

"Right, before we begin," Antrall raised his voice to gather everyone's attention. "I know of the topic that's on all your mouth. The two small problems that merged into a single big one," he said, a mysterious smile appearing on his lips.

"But let's put that off for now!" the man suddenly announced, taking his group by surprise.

"It's no use trying to deal with random events if we ignore our normal duties," Antrall pointed out before patting himself on his arm.

He was the only one in their entire dispatch allowed to bear the insignia of their true allegiance. Antrall liked to make it a point to remind everyone of that fact by tapping right against the small plate with the heraldic of their clan.

"In other words," Antrall smiled before turning his eyes to a man sitting to his right.

He had a beard longer than his head and belly greater than the reach of his arms. Yet, the impressive ax resting upon his back created a strange, oppressive aura all around that man.

"Syblas, report," Antrall ordered.

"We are in the green zone, the second phase of our mission," the man replied in a low, nearly animalistic voice. Yet, it was strangely soothing to listen to. "There are no problems with the progress of penetration. We currently control sixty-eight percent of the lower circulation and thirty-seven of the upper circulation," the man announced in a monotone voice.

It clearly wasn't his first time saying all those words.

"In short terms," Antrall smiled, "we are down on our targets," he announced, pulling out the only bad information from the report.

"By the end of the week, I need those two percent of the upper circulation back!" Antrall announced angrily, clearly dissatisfied with the results of the week.

He gritted his teeth before taking another sip from his cup.

"Now, then, let's address the elephant in the room," Antrall said, raising his eyes on Natan's companion's face.

"Ackhart, would you like to speak up?"