

## Last System 245

Chapter 245 - Barhana Kingdom

"I don't know, can't you just lie your way out of it?" Andrea asked, sending Ackhart a surprised look.

'Huh?' Mia shrugged, surprised both by the sudden change of the topic and the clerk's laidback attitude towards it.

"Do you really think they will accept some kind of half-baked lie?" Ackhart asked, sending a cold stare from his seat towards the woman. "Do you really believe in that?" he asked again, emphasizing the point he was making.

"I don't know; you are the one who works with them," Andrea shook her shoulders, indicating how little she cared about the inner workings of the man's job. "If you don't want to come up with something stupid, then come up with a fully-fledged story," she stated.

Then, her eyes turned beyond cold, vicious.

"Unless you want Anastasia to learn about how inept you are..." Andrea muttered, raising her hand to her eyes and inspecting the state of her fingers.

"You promised not to play this card," Ackhart replied, his face darkening. The whites of his bones showed through the skin of his knuckles when he tightened his fingers over the armrest of his chair.

"See?" Andrea smiled in response to Ackhart's clearly unhappy reaction. "I'm a good liar. You should learn from my example," she added, boastfully pushing her chest forward as she stared down at the man along the line of her own nose.

"Now then," Andrea muttered, turning her face back to Mia. "I believe we owe you some explanation," she added before releasing a deep sigh and plummeting right down into the pillows of a nearby sofa.

"First off, let's explain the basics," Andrea whispered, covering her eyes with her hand as if a sudden headache had taken over her thoughts. "Right now, we are in the westernmost outpost of the Tuxi hinterlands. While there are some lands that the sect controls on the other bank of the Varand river, they are not considered to be their direct domain but a frontier instead," she said.

'Huh?' Mia only shrugged, trying not to scowl when instead of learning something new, she was only fed some names and words that she had never heard before in her life.

"Can't you give her a map?" Ackhart shouted over from his seat.

'That's right!' Mia thought, reveling in the fact that someone could understand her plight. Yet, she was still too scared of who those people were to ask for it herself.

"I don't think I have any, though," Andrea countered, only to release yet another sigh.

'Her lungs sure are impressive,' Mia thought as she listened to the long tone created by the air released by the woman.

"Okay then, listen," Andrea grumpily muttered, raising from her sofa and leaning over a low coffee table that stood right beside her spot. She then painted a wide half-circle with her finger directly on the wood of the furniture, leaving an ugly scar on the clearly expensive item.

"This line is Varand river. It's one of the main logistical arteries of the Kingdom, and it flows right through the middle of it," she explained, only to follow up on her words by drawing a set of different lines.

"To the extreme west, we have the borderlands," Andrea stated, pointing her finger at the line more or less perpendicular to the river she drew before. "That's why everything to the west and on the western bank on the river is considered a frontier," she explained, circling her finger above the area she mentioned.

"You keep saying west, extreme west, the western bank of the river..." Mia muttered, puzzled by a single aspect of the map that all those things implicated. "Can you outline how big the entire kingdom is, then?" she asked.

'It's hard to make any sense of the map if I can't look at the entire thing,' Mia thought, tightening her teeth as she noticed just what she did.

She just demanded an answer from someone clearly capable of turning her life into hell!

'Was I too arrogant?' Mia thought, her soul freezing when the terror of possible consequences dawned upon her.

"Ugh," Andrea grunted before lowering her finger on the table... And driving its way outside of the table's borders.

"The kingdom stretches from the Impassable Mountains to the north, all the way to the central heights of the continent," she informed, painting roughly a rectangle shape on the table and beyond.

Then, she stopped for a moment, falling deep into her own thoughts.

And then, she stood up and approached the other end of the table, only to drag her finger through the air, leaving a faint trace of magic hanging in the air and extending the shape of her rectangle far to the south.

"We also control a massive chunk of the central wildlands, but it's hard to talk about owning a place like that," she commented before moving her eyes back to the table.

"In general, there are five areas to the Kingdom that you should know about. First, we have the lands of the Tuxi sect," Andrea said, circling her finger in yet another rectangle, all hidden in the southern bank of the Varand river.

"To the north from the Tuxi domain, we have free cities. They are dominated by the Tuxi influence but remain free from their rule," Andrea explained, moving her finger up the drawing. "But if you go even further north, the lands of the Oloan sect come into view," she added, marking a massive area stretching all the way from the northernmost part of her makeshift map all the way to the lands of the Tuxi sect.

"That's quite a lot of... land," Mia commented, unsure how else she was supposed to react.

With a proper map, she could tell how many cities did the other sect controlled. From the pictures marking those cities, she could guess just how populated and rich they were.

But with a map consisting of just a few lines and points?

With such a low-grade tool, Mia could judge the power of different political entities only by the amount of land they held to their name.

"Right at the eastern border, there are lands of the Urbi sect," Andrea stated, placing her hand directly on the table to indicate the land controlled by them. "They don't have much land, but as they control the trade with the Konarian empire to the east, they are richest in the entire kingdom, royals included," she stated.

'Konarian empire?' Mia wailed in her thoughts, stopping her instinctive move to grab her head with her hands. 'Can you like... Stop making things even more confusing for me?' she internally cried out while doing her utmost to keep her face from showing her thoughts.

"Then, to the south, we have more of the free cities, all the way to the capital in the southwest corner of the country," Andrea added before releasing another sigh and plummeting back to her sofa. "And that's the gist of it."

Mia stared down at the loose drawing for a moment, not sure whether she was supposed to laugh or cry.

In Andrea's head, those chaotic lines and points likely made some sense... But for Mia, they were no different from some child randomly poking his hand around in a sandbox!