

Last System 251

Chapter 251 - Guarantees

"I'm sorry, elder, but I don't think my answer will satisfy you."

Mia's answer managed to take everyone by surprise, sponsored disciples to her left, her own team to the right, and the Elder to the front included.

"And what if I insist?" the Elder asked after taking a moment to process the girl's reply.

Yet, contrary to the snickers that Kathia and Dirk instantly uttered, he didn't look at Mia with anger, pity or annoyance.

Rather than that, the Elder's eyes were filled with curiosity.

Mia didn't answer his question, though.

'Should I tell him?' she asked herself, not sure how she was supposed to react right now.

In theory, this was the perfect opportunity that Andrea and Ackhart would kill her for not using. Yet, on the other hand, making use of this chance was insanely risky.

'Is he with Sangakarts? Or is he just curious?' Mia attempted to figure out the solution to this seemingly simple dilemma.

Before she could come to any conclusion, though, the Elder leaned his lips over Mia's ear.

"Don't worry, little one," he whispered lightly. "You won't be punished for having personal reasons for joining. But if you don't want the other elders to hear your reasons, you can just whisper them to me," he added, clearly set on making Mia talk.

The Elder then retracted his lips only to near his ear towards Mia's mouth.

'Should I do it?' Mia asked herself once again, unable to stop her hesitation. She then swallowed a gulp of her own saliva before shaking her head to push aside all the useless thoughts.

'Fuck it, worst-case scenario, I will need to ask the Royals to protect me,' she thought, raising her eyes and taking a step back to put some distance between her lips and the Elder's ear.

"It's fine," she stated, confidence returning to her voice. "I will explain," she added, sending the man a meaningful look.

"Fine," the Elder smiled and returned to his normal position only to take two steps back. "The stage is yours," he then added, pointing right at the place where Mia used to stand a moment earlier.

"I'm sorry for being honest, Elder," Mia nodded her head in an apology before finally picking up the topic proper. "There are exactly three reasons behind my wish to join," she stated.

"Huh?" Veila couldn't stop a small moan of surprise when Mia's version changed from what she heard her confess just a few moments prior.

"First, I have some personal matters that I was forced to leave aside before joining this sect," Mia stated. "This tournament is my only chance to punish someone who wronged me a lot in the past," she revealed the personal reason for her wish.

"Huh?" the Elder shrugged in surprise. "I do not mean to disrespect your wish here..." he said only to hesitate for a moment. He then shook his head and looked Mia in the eyes. "But why do you need to use the tournament for that?" he asked.

To Mia's left, Dirk shrugged, clearly uncomfortable with where the topic was heading.

"Because the person I wish to punish hails from another sect," Mia revealed, not paying her former sponsored rival any mind.

For a moment, the Elder stood in silence, seemingly trying to figure out how he was supposed to reply to Mia's words. Then, an uneasy smile appeared on his lips.

"Just like I said before, I do not mean to disrespect your wish..." he hesitated again, "but what makes you think that person will participate in the tournament as well?"

Mia froze in her spot. Her words ended up stuck in her throat as her mind went into a frenzy.

'Huh?' she moaned inwardly with surprise, shocked that such an obvious problem escaped her scrutiny before.

'Ever since I moved out of the Skyladder sect, I lived with the idea that he will for sure participate... but why?' she asked herself, refusing to believe that she was stuck in such a massive mistake for so long for seemingly no reason at all.

'No, I know the answer to this...' she thought after analyzing her own memories. 'It's all because of the words of the elder that guided us through the borderlands!'

Ever since she last met Jenne when she was about to depart for the Tuxi sect, she lived with the idea of meeting him again during the intersect tournament. It was the one thing that she never bothered to question, sure that such an event would come to pass.

But now that the Elder pointed this inconsistency out, Mia couldn't really answer his question.

As such, Mia couldn't do anything but lower her eyes in an attempt to hide her embarrassment from the Elder.

"That's..." she tried to respond, only for her words to fail to come out. She then took a deep breath and forced herself to raise her head. "Your question is something I didn't think about if I were, to be honest," Mia admitted once she finally managed to regain her confidence.

Then, she shook her head. This time, not to clear her thoughts, but to indicate that the Elder didn't change her mind either.

"Still, I can't pass on this opportunity," she stated. "It's not up to me to decide whether or not he will join, that's true," she admitted only for the look in her eyes to sharpen, "but it's up to me to grab this chance if he does!"

Upon hearing Mia's response... the Elder smiled.

Even though he caught Mia on such a stupid mistake, he couldn't help but be in awe of her dedication and quick thinking.

"Then, what's your second motive?" he asked, giving Mia a way out of the topic that she was clearly not comfortable with.

"It's to improve the standing of my group by an extinguished service to the sect!" Mia answered, this time without even a hint of hesitation.

This question, she was already prepared for.

The Elder nodded his head with satisfaction, showing a greater reaction to this single reply of hers than he did to the answers of all those he asked before.

"Then, the third?" the Elder asked. To the side, Veila and Sander sharpened their ears and even leaned a bit closer, clearly curious about the bomb that Mia was obviously about to drop on this place.

Because, if that wasn't the case, why would she hide her third reason from them just a few moments before?

"I'm sorry, elder, but I'm not sure if it's safe for me to say it out loud," Mia pretended to hesitate.

At this point, she has long made up her mind. All that she needed to do right now was to ensure her own position before going all in.

"Then," the man replied, only to turn silent for a moment. "What if I guarantee your safety within this sect?"

"That offer would certainly be interesting if only I knew who you are, Elder," Mia replied, nodding her head to soften the emotional damage of her words.

'Well, it's your own fault that you never made yourself known to the disciples, so don't try to blame me on that,' she thought, staring down the man's eyes.

"Fine," the Elder smiled. "In my name of the Third Supreme Elder of this outpost and Seventy-third Supreme Elder of the whole sect, I guarantee that no harm will come to you as a result of your words."

The man announced in a mighty voice, only to turn his head around and send a meaningful stare to the elders behind him.

"I second the guarantee," the first of the Elder's companions stepped forward. "Fifth local Supreme and Hundred-fourth in the whole sect!" he announced.

Soon, one by one, all the Elders that came to this place followed suit, giving their verbal guarantees to Mia.

"Now, are you satisfied?" the highest-ranking of the present elders turned his head back and looked at Mia.

"Not really, but that will do," Mia replied cheekily, not bothered with how disrespectful her words were. "Worst case scenario, I already secured the guarantees of people that even you, respectable elders, would dare to cross," she stated arrogantly before taking a step forward.

"The third reason why I want to join the tournament is to put an end to the corruption that eats away at this sect's principles!" Mia shouted out loud.