

## Last System 275

### Chapter 275 It's Time To Go Back

I sat in the middle of the devastated area, thinking about what I should do next.

The morning sun slowly climbed up the skies, sending its warm rays to heat my back.

'What a beautiful morning for such a sorry scene,' I thought, irony filling my soul.

The area all around me used to be a forest just a few hours prior. But now, this had to be the first industrial-scale deforestation that this world experienced.

The trees, the animals, undergrowth, and swamps... It all disappeared, replaced by a land of uniformity, where ashes, mixed with sawdust and bloody chunks of meat.

'Honestly, what should I do now?' I thought before releasing a deep sigh.

I was tired. Tired to the limits of human endurance.

Ever since the Tuxi sect came knocking in my life, I was constantly in a rush. Do this, do that, go there and break through this bottleneck.

I was in a constant rush to achieve objectives that would simply change to others once completed.

And now, after this completely random and improbable fight, I simply wanted to just enjoy the sun's warm rays on my back.

'But I guess I can't,' I moaned from exhaustion as I brought myself up.

There was no use in whining about my situation. No amount of complaints would change my life. If I wanted to change something about the world, I had to do it myself.

And right now, I had to change the simplest of things.

The rest of the violet meteor still hung somewhere in the sky. Yet, even after I raised my eyes to where I recalled it was, I couldn't pinpoint its location anymore.

'I guess it has to be nighttime,' I concluded, tightening my jaws in frustration. Now that the sun's light blocked the view of the source of my current trouble, I couldn't even see it coming!

"Now, I need to be ready to ward it off even without a moment's notice," I muttered to myself, dropping down from a pile of wooden rubble towards the ground.

And there was only one way to achieve that kind of readiness.

I struggled a little to deal with this monster because I didn't know its *modus operandi*.

I didn't know what kind of energy it was using. I didn't know how my magic would work against that being's energy. I didn't know shit.

"Save the others, huh?" I whispered, raising my head to the skies.

What kind of secrets did this blue sky hold? What kind of mysteries it was throwing right at my head?

The memory of the man that emerged from the monster attacked my brain yet again.

This was the first kill in this new life of mine... That I couldn't justify.

I wasn't sane when I acted up in the Skyladder sect. I didn't control my actions then. But now, every attack I executed resulted from my own free will.

'I couldn't know,' I thought, seeking to justify my crime.

There was no way for me to know about a man being sheathed in this armor of strange, condensed force. It didn't appear that he was in control over this violet ball either.

'Save the others...' I repeated in my mind.

The message behind those words was obvious. Or rather, that's how it appeared to be.

'Is this some kind of trick?' I asked myself.

I could recall the times when the forces of an aggressive invader claimed innocence and lack of knowledge whenever caught. Yet, as the entire world learned later, most of them simply used those words to hide their crimes.

'Are they actually an invading force?' I thought, once again taking a look towards the sky.

Now gone from my eyes, the violet meteorite could be throwing scores of monsters of the same kind at me. There was no way to tell. And even if there was a chance that the situation was completely different, I couldn't risk it.

"It won't matter how the events develop if I'm strong enough to bend them to my will," I whispered to myself. Determination rocked my soul.

I then bent my knee and lowered my eyes over a violet ball of energy, roughly fist-sized, that floated slightly above the ground.

"Now then, what secrets do you hold?" I asked, trying to reach out for the ball of the strange energy.

When I dealt the last hit, all the energy still connected to the body disappeared. Yet, there were a lot of bits that I cut off back when I was blocking the movement of this being.

And those bits remained littered all over the place, proving that my recent battle was not a dream nor an illusion.

I pulled my hand out to poke this violet ball... Only for it to suddenly float away, as if it was a magnet floating on the surface of the lake.

'Huh?' I shrugged, shocked by the development.

In theory, I already experienced this effect back when fighting with the former owner of this power. Yet, it was different to observe it with relative peace of mind than it was to experience it firsthand during the heat of the battle.

I approached the ball again, once again hoping to catch it...

And then it struck me.

Now that this energy was so small, I could feel the same distant call of terror that I had already experienced in my life.

The one time when I actually had a proper mentor in this new life of mine.

And along with the face of Pathfinder that appeared in my mind, I recalled the feeling I had back when traveling through the borderlands.

The lands between the zones, between the two areas of the world. Separated to the point when even the most powerful sects in the entire kingdom could hardly afford to cross it.

'So this isn't some new form of energy at all...' I thought, desperately trying to connect the dots.

My forehead was covered with cold sweat as my brain underwent an unhealthy amount of stress.

'Did a meteor like the one from before already crash into this world?'

My first possible explanation came from a direct copy of the earth's history. Like back in my original home, where parts of earth history were formed by extraterrestrial objects, this world could be home to powers and materials from beyond its original borders.

But this kind of explanation... Did more harm than good, as it only led to more questions.

And there was one fact that made it invalid right off the bat.

'The borderlands stretch in a circle around the entire world,' I thought, recalling the bits and pieces of information that I collected while traveling to the Tuxi Outerpost.

There was no way for such a regular and continuous formation to be created from a single or a set of meteorites.

'Now that I think about it...' I hesitated for a second. 'Wasn't there something about people from the first zone having trouble staying in the zero zone?'

Out of nowhere, this long-forgotten piece of news reappeared in my mind.

The principle of this problem was easy to understand. With their bodies holding massive amounts of energy and used to be in a world full of it, they could go in a state of shock when deprived of it.

Just like a human living in the oxygen-rich flatlands would be short for breath high up in the mountains. This problem alone could be easily explained. Yet, it begged another question.

'If that's the case, doesn't this mean that this barrier...' I thought, only for my inner voice to stop.

My soul trembled in terror as an idea dawned on me.

There was only one physical way that I could use to explain this scenario. How could there be two areas of different magic pressure in the world?

The answer was simple.

Those two areas had to be separated either by a solid or a repelling barrier.

Just like one could have two liquids in the same container by placing a cup inside, one could have two different pressures of mana by splitting them apart.

'It all connects,' I thought, looking at the ball of mana a small distance away.

Since my mana and that energy repelled each other, what if I increased the scale? Or what if there was enough of that violet energy to push away all the mana around?

'Wait, isn't that what happened to that guy?' I asked myself, throwing a quick look at the corpse nearby.

I could still remember his monster form falling apart when pressed with pressurized mana of my own.

'Wait, didn't he seem sane once I got rid of all that strange energy?' I asked myself as my eyes opened in shock.

Once again, a realization struck my mind.

"What if he was a cultivator just like any other..." I muttered before gulping down a mouthful of saliva. "But from a world where this violet energy is like the mana in this world?"

This was a brave thought. An idea that would somehow explain the events.

But I knew better than just to go with the first explanation that suited both the situation and my needs.

'Still,' I thought, turning my eyes towards the man's corpse.

'If I'm right about this,' I thought, raising my eyes to the sky, where the violet meteor was hiding somewhere.

"I can't promise I will save the others you mentioned," I muttered silently, closing my eyes. Then, I opened them back again and reached out.

But this time, it wasn't only my hand that pushed ahead, but also my mana.

At my current level, I could easily circulate my energy around, all the more within the Mage's Tower area of influence. As such, creating an arc of pure energy around the back of the violet orb was a breeze.

The orb reacted the second my arch of mana got close enough. Forced by its repulsive reaction towards my mana, it hurried right towards my hand.

'Since my mana and this force repel each other,' I thought, pulling all my mana out of my stretched-out hand.

This was a bet. Something that could very well spell extreme threat but also an extreme opportunity. I had no idea how I would react to this strange energy.

And just like that, the fist-sized orb of the violet energy reached my body... and fell right into the natural pathways created by the flow of my mana.

'Fuck!' I couldn't stop cursing when the immense depth of the power reached my senses.

I was right to think that energy condensed to the point of having a physical appearance was on another level. Yet, when I managed to somehow calm it down and diffuse to a more manageable thickness...

'What?'

I was lost for words. I had no way of describing what I had just experienced.

This violet energy, once diffused... Felt exactly like my very own mana!

I used most of my mental capacity to stop my mana from circulating like usual. And given how the inner movement of my magic was an essential part of my foundation, holding it back wasn't easy.

'But if this is what it takes to control this power...' So I thought, all the hesitation vanishing, replaced by determination.

Then, I slowly extracted some of this new power and my old and trusty mana. I then started to slowly get them closer together, curious how the two would react.

'With this amount, nothing should really happen,' I thought, judging the situation.

I had to learn the limits of this newfound power of mine.

I could easily access this new power with the borderland just across a single river. But more importantly, I had to understand exactly what it is before the threat in the skies would come crashing down!

"Now then, show me your secrets," I whispered to myself, using more and more energy just to push those two energies together.

'It takes a considerable effort,' I thought, focused on the experiment.

And then, I felt it.

The same distant call of lowest, animalistic danger that I felt before the first...

'First what?' I asked myself, jumping up. 'Invasion? Attack? Disaster?'

This was the one question that I had to answer. One basic information that I had to learn.

I thought like that for but a moment. And then, a solemn realization struck me.

It didn't matter what it was.

After what I just saw and fought, I had no doubts only a selected few of this entire world could go toe to toe with the monster like the one before.

And I had no doubt Mia wasn't one of them yet.

'Judging from how it went the last time,' I thought, raising fully at attention.

My exhaustion from before didn't count. My tiredness and just how spent I was after the earlier fight lost their status as variables.

I had no way to say how massive the coming disaster would be. In other words, I had to count all the orders in the world to be gone in a few hours or days.

As such, I had to secure the one person I cared the most about in this world.

Even if this was childish, naive thinking of someone who never got laid in his former life. A desire to have something warm and soft to hug through the night.

But it didn't matter.

All in all, Mia led my life to change for the better. And if I felt the urge to ensure her safety, what other reasons could stop me from doing so?

'This entire world might go to hell,' I thought, attempting to judge the path of the coming disaster.

I bit my lips before turning around, lowering my center of mass... And hesitating. I then loosened my position before jumping high up.

With a single swoop, I converged all the remaining energy of the monster into a single place.

Soon, it turned out to be quite the mistake, as the energy started to act up. Fused together, its strength increased not by its sum but by its multiplication.

"This is going to hurt," I admitted openly to the world, using my voice to let go of a small bit of my stress.

I only ever tasted this new power once and in a limited amount. I didn't know if I was ready to absorb so much of it.

I then recalled two things. Two still images influenced my decision the most.

First, it was the comparison of how little of the original meteorite disappeared when its first shard fell right near me. It was barely a noticeable change.

And then, a single moment of my past, when Mia laid in my arms, happily humming after a good day of training and cuddling.

A weird smile formed on my lips as I lost control over my facial muscles.

'It's time to go back,' I thought, absorbing the foreign, condensed energy in a single breath.