

Last System 277

Chapter 277 Turning Point (1.2)

Ten minutes earlier

Ackhart was at a loss for words.

'Just how did the situation devolve to this so quickly?' the man asked himself, burying his face in his hands.

He sat deeply in his seat, refusing to get involved in the ongoing scuffle.

'Ever since this feeling appeared...' Ackhart thought before biting down on his lips.

The world around didn't seem real. The reaction of the highest ranks of the local cultivators disappointed him to no end.

Now that there was some real emergency ongoing, they all split into factions to push the blame.

Not a single soul attempted to find a way to solve their problem.

Ackhart rested his back against the soft cushions of the sofa. He didn't bother to intervene in the ongoing debate for one reason only.

Even if he wanted, he had no means to change anything.

'A powerhouse for the disciples, just another elder among equals,' Ackhart thought with a self-pointed irony.

'Still, just where the hell does this come from?' Ackhart asked himself, hanging his head to the back, over the edge of his seat.

He closed his eyes and recreated everything that had happened over the past few moments.

Ever since the event was about to start, all the higher elders felt it. The call that they all wished for during their normal life.

But a call that was extremely off-putting for them to feel it all at once.

"No way..." one of the elders muttered, his face turning blank.

Just a moment ago, he was eagerly betting the fights. An old type of kind-Granpa who doted on his students. And now, this old man's eyes quivered in terror.

"Here?! How?" someone else screamed lightly, demanding answers.

"We are too far from the borderlands," a beautiful woman heralding the Dastria Sect visitors pointed out, her face surprisingly calm.

Ackhart shrugged.

There was no denying it. The very feeling that everyone felt put them at the tips of their toes for a simple reason.

The ability to sense the entropy was something that people gained not upon reaching the third awakener rank but only upon completing both their enlightenment and their ascendance.

'The fact that you need entropy to advance into royal rank was a public secret too,' Ackhart thought, refusing to participate in the ongoing chaos.

Powerless to stop the pointless argument his colleagues immersed themselves in, Ackhart could only watch how the elders argued.

'We are only wasting time,' Ackhart thought, gnashing his teeth together.

He then looked at the golden ring on his finger.

It was the same kind of seal that Andrea used just a few days prior to summon a royal warrior. Yet, Ackhart's ring was actually an item of a grade higher quality.

It was a seal that allowed the elder to summon a royal directly, only to be used in the direst of cases.

But right now, Ackhart hesitated to use it.

"Call for the fucking royals!" someone in the crowd shouted, clearly feeling the increasing pressure.

It was something that all of the elders felt but were simply powerless to influence.

They could do nothing but argue as the pressure in the air intensified.

'I don't think this is happening only at our place,' Ackhart forced himself to think calmly. 'And if that's the case, they are already too busy dealing with the stuff elsewhere,' Ackhart quickly decided. He then released a deep sigh as he sneakily pulled the ring down and hid it in one of his storage rings.

"They won't come," Ackhart said, finally joining in on the discussion.

"What did you say?!" the man who posed the question turned around, allowing the elder to recognize him.

He was one of the Sangakarts' lackeys. A man bought by so little and so quickly that even the Sangakart officers spoke about him with disgust.

'And yet, he dares to seek royal intervention now that the seat started to burn under his ass,' Ackhart thought with a sneer. He then outright ignored the man and took a step forward past him, gathering the attention of all the elders on himself.

"The royals won't come. And not because no one will call them," Ackhart announced without any mercy. Rather than trying to shift the blame for whatever was about to happen, the elder was more interested in trying to prevent the damage in the first place. "They won't come because this place isn't anything special," Ackhart announced in a calm, cold voice.

For the first time since the event started, the elders-filled platform turned silent as everyone got shocked by Ackhart's honesty.

Or rather, his mannerless mention of what they all silently agreed not to even mention!

"Calling for the royals right now would prove that whoever has that ability is too stupid to realize this simple truth," Ackhart finally brought the topic to what he wanted to point out. "I don't know of anyone who has the right to call the royals. But maybe you guys know," he said, looking around over the faces of his fellow elders.

"Maybe you guys know someone who will give his or her life up just to satisfy your need to shift the blame to someone else!"

Ackhart suddenly shouted, crushing a nearby desk with a single fist of frustration.

Breaking the reality on his colleagues sure was fun... but it didn't change a thing.

Even now, the pressure in the air continued to increase, now openly allowing the elders to confirm their guess.

This strange pressure... It was exactly the same kind of pressure that one would start to recognize upon obtaining enlightenment and ascendance. And up until that strange pressure appeared in the air, one could find it only in the wild borderlands.

'Still,' Ackhart breathed heavily as he retreated from the middle of the platform back to his seat. 'Isn't this a perfect opportunity for a royal to emerge?' he thought offhandedly, trying to make any sense of the situation by taking another approach.

'Thinking about this, isn't this how the original royals came into power?' Ackhart asked himself, trying to recall the stuff he learned about the past to the best of his ability.

Yet, even after several moments of honest efforts, Ackhart failed to either confirm or deny this new thesis of his. Sadly, despite how this idea seemed to fit the reality, Ackhart wasn't going to just assume it was all Sangakarts fault.

And it was for a very simple reason.

Despite being backed by a newborn royal and an entire royal family of the empire to the east...

The current event wasn't something that any royal or even group of royals could organize!

'This situation doesn't make any sense,' Ackhart thought, biting his lips to the point blood started to ooze out of the small injury he caused. He then glanced over the railing of the platform, right at where the disciples of the kingdom's sects were about to clash.

The first fight was over already. Yet, outside of Ackhart, hardly anyone on the platform even bothered to notice it.

'If anything, this situation showcases just how much do the elders care for their disciples,' Ackhart thought, a bout of anger squeezing his chest.

The second bout was about to begin below them, but Ackhart had nowhere the time needed to observe it. And quite honestly, he wasn't all that interested in it either.

That's why, rather than observing how the disciples did their best to bring honor to their sects, Ackhart closed his eyes to enjoy a single idea.

'I hope we will somehow feather this thing through,' he thought, only for the sky to suddenly go violet all around him.

Then, the pressure that the elders felt for a while already exploded, pressing Ackhart down on the floor with its might.

And then, the elder lost his footing as one of the platform pillars shattered, putting way too much burden on the other three. Then, before Ackhart could even get a second to swallow his saliva, the platform he was standing on started to fall!

"What the...!" Ackhart released a shout of surprise. Then, his body reacted on its own, following the pure instincts of the elder.

Using the little footing he had left, Ackhart jumped out of the platform. Leaving all the calculations at an eyeballing level, he pushed himself off the falling platform and towards a nearby tower erected right in the tribune.

Originally it was a structure aimed to increase the visitor's capacity of the place. It came all the way from the times when the outpost was established with the idea of growing into a trade powerhouse of the Tuxi western flank.

But now, it turned into nothing more but support for Ackhart and two other elders who managed to react just as swiftly.

And it came as no surprise that Ackhart could recognize both of them from his secret meetings with the Sangakart group!

Ackhart's body crashed into the wall of the tower. Initially, the elder was about to just bounce off the wall. Thankfully, he reacted quickly enough, striking his first right through the wall of the building only to hang himself off the tower's side.

Ackhart finally found some time to look down at the source of all his current problems.

And it was a monster among monsters.

Just the pressure alone it released when taking its proper form gave away the truth of just how immense the gap was between said monster and all the elders combined.

Especially now, when Ackhart watched how nearly a half of their group ended up falling to their deaths, unable to react swiftly enough to escape the falling platform.

'This isn't good,' Ackhart thought, tightening his lips together.

And then, the monster started its march.

For every step it took, the rubble would shoot out from underneath its limbs only to crash into the tribunes. The pieces of the devastated arena would then fall right on the spectators of the event, killing scores of people for every wave of falling rubble.

And the worst part about it all was how powerless Ackhart was to stop it.

'Are we doomed?' Ackhart thought a second later, smashing his other first through the wall before changing the hangs he was using to hang off the tower's side.

Right now, Ackhart couldn't see even a single ray of hope.

Some of the elders who somehow survived the fall now started to gather up. Finally, tens of minutes too late, they started to work together in an attempt to defeat the monster.

'It's futile,' Ackhart thought coldly, watching how the barriers set by his colleagues shattered after just a single attack of this weird, violet monster.

'We are doomed,' this time, Ackhart didn't ask himself this but acknowledged the reality instead.

And then, someone else entered the scene.

Despite being a holder of both an enlightenment and ascendance, Ackhart failed to see through the sheer distortion of the space caused by that person's energy.

That alone was enough to showcase that just like the monster from before, whatever this being was, it was more than capable of wiping the floor with every cultivator present in a hundred-mile radius...

All at once.

Just by appearing on the scene, this strange, foreign being influenced the flow of spiritual energy around the place. As such, it was no wonder that the monster's attention instantly turned towards the new threat.

'Who the hell...' Ackhart attempted to ask himself, puzzled beyond his capacity to figure out what the hell was going on.

The being raised its posture before leaning forward. Through the cracks of the magic distortion, Ackhart could somehow tell that the other party was screaming from the bottom of his or her lungs.

The air, already overflowed with energy, now exploded again.

What Ackhart considered a walking disaster level of energy turned out to be nothing more but a droplet in the ocean of power that swirled around this strange being.

The monster's steps stopped as it turned its attention towards the source of this immense power.

'Is it wary of this being?' Ackhart somehow managed to keep himself calm enough to notice it.

The energy swirled...

And then it all started to converge in a single point, right where that weird person stood, hidden by the distortions caused by its very own mana.

It took only a flash for all the raging energy to channel itself into a single place...

And then explode outwards. Yet, this time, instead of just swallowing everything in its wake, just like the monster did before, this new energy somehow retained the shape of the strange foreigner...

Just that, it was several hundred times the size of a normal human, giving the new apparition of this strange being the same size as the monster he was facing with!

This time, neither the monster nor the human-like being bothered to waste any time. The second the spiritual form of the man fully established itself, it already lunged forward, aiming with its fists for the monster's head.

Yet, just as the first hit was about to connect, the spiritual form of the foreign master flashed with a golden light.

'A royal brilliance,' Ackhart thought, his heart tightening on the spot.

It was a phenomenon he had only ever heard about. Yet, despite that, he could still recognize it when he saw it.

'I guess now I know who this guy is!' he then thought, a wave of relief mixed with shock spreading through the elder's body.