

Last System 285

Chapter 285 Ideas On Corruption

"Damn, that was tiring," I muttered when I finally managed to squeeze myself out of the hole that I carved myself.

Escaping to the tunnels below the arena proved to be quite a good idea. Even though it took me a long time to somehow orient myself in this underground labyrinth before finally finding an exit, there wasn't a single party looking for me there during all that time.

'Still, if possible, I would like to avoid ever going underground again,' I thought grimly, shaking off the fear that accompanied me during the escape.

People say that one learns their entire life. But in my case, I had to live through two lives in order to figure out that I was actually pretty claustrophobic!

'Still, digging around might prove useful in the future,' I thought, forcing myself to return right into the hole that I just crawled out from.

Escaping by myself was one thing, but I still had to bring that unconscious girl out as well!

Soon I learned that despite the girl being pretty light, actually dragging her through this narrow tunnel that I dug turned out to be a pretty challenging task.

'I hope what she has to say will be worth the effort,' I thought when I finally slumped down to the ground, right by the side of the still unconscious girl.

Yet, after taking a short rest, I had no other choice but to throw the girl's body on my back before hurrying out.

No matter how improbable it was for the others to find me so quickly, I couldn't afford to rest anywhere near the outpost.

Not after barely surviving the fight with that damned monster. Not when I could barely force myself to move.

Thankfully, even while I was running with several tens of kilos of baggage on my back, I was actually resting rather than tiring myself out. A benefit of cultivating all the way to the human limits of this world that I never really thought about.

"This place should be far enough," I muttered to myself when I found a small clearing in the forest that I escaped into.

I then unceremoniously threw the girl's body to the ground, not caring about hurting her in the slightest.

Right now, her only value laid in how she could potentially explain just what the fuck was going on. Whether or not her face was free of bruises wasn't my concern.

Freed from my burden, I then quickly gathered some wood from the forest surrounding me before setting up a small camp with it.

I used some of the wood to construct a simple, primitive shack while leaving the rest to be used as fuel for the fireplace once the girl would come to her senses.

As to whether the fire would be used to let the girl get herself warm or if I would use it to compel her to speak depended solely on her own damned attitude!

Setting up the camp took me only a few moments. But when it came to securing it, I didn't waste a single second of my time.

Right now, I had no resources to set up a formation powerful to stop anyone with any real power. As such, rather than wasting my energy on such a pointless endeavor, I was keener to use it to give myself some rest.

"Taking your sweet time to wake up, aren't you?" I muttered to the sleeping girl once I was done with all of my preparations.

I then approached the girl and shook her shoulder, hoping to force her awake. Yet, I didn't linger on this attempt for long.

'If she managed to sleep through all the shaking and pulling I did during our escape, trying to wake her up seems to be futile,' I realized before stepping aside and lighting up the fireplace I prepared.

Since the girl was still sleeping, rather than wasting my time watching her sleepy face, I actually directed my attention to the changes in my system.

Chaos[4.91]: The tiny part of the host's system is missing. The host is to expect certain bugs and errors. The system is slowly corroding away due to corruption.

Corruption(1.91): Degradation of the system due to the exposure of unfiltered energy.

Capacity Corruption(39.3): Substatus of the corruption limits the output of the host's powers by its percentage.

'My corruption raised pretty high,' I thought upon noticing the number. Yet, while the corruption itself was pretty ambiguous, the capacity corruption was the element that worried me the most.

"Does this mean I already killed nearly half of my future potential?" I muttered under my nose, holding myself back from throwing the girl nearby a hateful look.

'She seems to be a victim of the entire thing just like everyone else... Or maybe, she had it even harder than us,' I thought, biting down on my lips before turning my eyes back towards the mesmerizing dance of the fire.

Yet, no matter how much I wanted to just forget about everything and let my thoughts wander all over the place, I couldn't help but think back to the recent fight.

And the more I thought about it, the more apparent one thing became to me.

"No matter how much I want to deny it," I muttered silently, hesitation filling my voice. "It seems like this capacity corruption actually saved my life."

According to that status description, this kind of corruption limited how big of a percentage of the power flowing through me I actually had any access to. Or, in other words, the bigger this kind of corruption grew, the larger the amount of energy would just flow through my body... without actually interacting with it.

'Judging from the cost of releasing that massive amount of mana, if not for the corruption, I would very well fry myself while doing so,' I thought, clenching my hands.

Yet, as I continued to think about it, a new possibility dawned upon me.

'What if this corruption isn't how my body degraded... but how it defended itself from actually overdosing the mana?'

This was a pretty interesting suggestion. It was a pity that I had no means of safely verifying it.

"Ugh..." A sudden voice to the side forced me to abandon my analysis of the recent events, focusing on the situation at hand.

Because this voice... meant that the girl was starting to wake up!