

Last System 286

Chapter 286 Shattered World

"Who are you?!" the girl shouted in a panic the second she woke up and came to her senses.

Still lying on the ground, she threw me a quick look, only to push herself away with her legs and feet alike.

"Calm down," I ordered, not moving an inch from my seat by the fire. "If I wanted to do you any harm, I would've done so already, don't you think?" I added before turning my attention back to the flames.

Sure, I was eager to interrogate her, but there was no point in doing so when she was in a state of shock. And to be honest, I already learned enough about her to take my time thinking it through.

'She is speaking a language I can understand... Or is this the system's influence?' I asked myself, annoyed by the potential capabilities of my system in this regard for the first time in this second life of mine.

"Who are you?" the girl asked again after taking her time to calm her heart down.

"I'm Arthur," I replied, reaching out to grab some stick before turning the charcoal in the fire to kick its heat up a notch.

Even though I was likely immune to frostbite, I could still feel cold. And with how tired I was, both mentally, spiritually, and physically, I had no wish to let myself be cold.

"You do realize how little does this tell me?" the girl pointed out, still fully on her guard.

"The thing is," I started, finally turning my head to the side and looking at the girl, "right now, I'm the one asking questions," I explained before taking a deep breath and standing up.

"Roughly an hour ago, you descended into a nearby town, coated with a massive amount of energy... that's not of common in this world," I stated.

Judging from the girl's reactions, she had no clue about what happened. As such, I saw no point in bullying her by hiding the past from her.

"Huh?" the girl only shrugged in reaction to my words.

"That alone, I wouldn't care much about," I pointed out before letting the expression on my face darken. "But that energy of yours somehow took a form of a monster," I said before raising my hand and allowing a bit of the energy I stole from the girl's past form to dance atop my palm. "And that monster killed quite a lot of people," I added, not holding back the punches of the truth.

"I..." the girl hesitated, clearly shocked by my words. Then, her expression mellowed down, only to get replaced by sadness. "I see," she finally voiced out her reaction. "What are you going to do to me, now?"

For a moment, I simply stared at the girl, trying to figure out just what was going on in her head.

Her reaction to learning that she killed people... was strange, to say the least. Or rather, it was a strange reaction in the eyes of someone who grew up in a relatively peaceful civilization.

For someone born and educated in this world, having blood on their hands shouldn't be that much of a trouble, though.

"I'm not going to do anything to you," I replied with a deep sigh before lowering my hand and then returning to my seat by the fire. "What I need you to do is start talking, though," I added, focusing my eyes on the fires again.

"Talking?" the girl swallowed her saliva so intensely that I could hear the motions of her throat. "What do you need me to talk about?" she asked, slowly lowering her guard.

"First off, who are you?" I asked, once again playing around with the charcoals within the fireplace. "Where did you come from? What is this violet energy that you were coated in?"

I threw my questions out to the air but didn't press the girl for the answers. Given the situation, she was likely far more confused than I was.

"You really do know nothing, do you?" the girl quickly managed to prove my guess wrong.

I turned my head towards her, curious what the fuck she was talking about. Yet, instead of a look of confusion or guilt, her face was filled with shock and devastation.

"Know nothing about...?" I echoed her words, quickly losing my patience.

If she knew something, then what the hell did she want to achieve by staying silent?

"Judging by how we are sitting on a solid ground, this isn't the continent I was born at," the girl explained, only for her words to introduce far more questions than they did answers. "I mean," she added, raising her eyes and slowly inching closer to the flame, clearly starved for its heat, "I can't summon even a silver of the energy that naturally occurs in my world," she said, only to sit down by the fire and hang her head low.

"And that means it really did collapse," she stated something massive, only to turn silent and copy me by gazing into the flames.

"I understand that it's hard for you to digest your situation," I said in a calm voice, "but I need to understand what's going on. Especially given how your descent is only the beginning of the series of disasters that are about to strike this land."

Despite me urging the girl, she remained silent for a few more moments. Only after taking her sweet time did she bother to open her mouth and sate my curiosity a little more.

"If I'm right, then what you saw was me coated in all the power that I managed to cultivate back before my continent shattered and collapsed into the void," the girl explained, her face blank as she kept on staring into the flames. "To be perfectly honest, I never expected this measure to work," she added before turning silent once again.

'Shattering? Collapse?' I repeated those words in my mind before raising my eyes to the skies. 'Could it be that this world is nothing like the one I came from on a cosmic scale?' I thought, trying my utmost to figure out just what the hell was going on.

Following the rule of an Ockham's razor, she likely lived on a different continent... that was somewhat above the one we were in right now. And from what she said, that violet energy that she brought with herself was just a different kind of mana that permeated her world before it collapsed.

'Could it be that it's like matter and anti-matter, then?' I thought, adding the stuff that I discovered on my own to the equation. 'Surely, it doesn't work exactly like that, given how those two kinds of energies refuse to merge... But how else can I explain my engine?'

Even though the conversation so far was pretty short, I already learned so much stuff that I had to take some time to process it all.

Yet, before I could think anything further about those topics, a sudden, silent rustling alerted me and forced me up.

"What's wrong?" the girl asked, surprised by my sudden move.

But I couldn't care less right now.

"There is someone here," I muttered, scanning the area in search of any signs of familiar mana.

It took me just a single look to locate the source of the noise. Yet, even though I knew where that someone was hiding, they were still pretty well hidden amongst the forest vegetation.

"Come out!" I shouted, raising my Mage's Tower while making sure to pull all my mana from the girl's proximity.

Given how the violet energy worked on me, the mana of this world was likely the same kind of poison to that girl!

"Arthur?" the person hiding in the bush suddenly called out my name. And then...

Mia came out of the bushes with a peculiar look on her face.

Step by step, she marched closer, her face filled with uncertainty and fear.

My heart trembled, only for my mind to steel up my resolve.

"Don't come any closer!" I cried out in panic.

Just like back at the outpost, I couldn't afford to let Mia anywhere close. Not while I was still full of that violet energy that would likely kill her on the spot!

Mia obediently stopped in her place... and then tears started to stream down her cheeks.

"So you really don't want to have anything to do with me anymore?"