

Last System 299

Chapter 299 The Primordial Beast

'Poor guy,' Ackhart thought, looking at the mutilated corpse donning the sect's robes.

One of his arms and both of his legs were long gone, likely consumed by nearby wildlife. But while that alone was perfectly normal for anyone who died in a forest, there was something else about the corpse that made Ackhart actually stop near it.

'How come it decayed so quickly?' Ackhart asked himself, unable to figure out the logic behind this fact.

He was, at most, a single day of march behind the group he was chasing. And even assuming that this poor kid was at the front of the group at the moment of his death, it still wouldn't make any sense for his body to decay so quickly!

'The residual spiritual power should keep his flesh fresh for a few days,' Ackhart thought, taking a knee and leaning over the corpse in search of some clues.

And then he found it.

An injury that didn't fit the image of a monster attack.

A stab wound right into the kid's heart, one that was later widened as if in an attempt to extract something.

And to make matters worse, it was this very wound that was the core of the decay spreading through the monster.

"Who could do something like this?" Ackhart asked out loud, pondering over the secrets this poor man would likely take to his grave.

In all of Ackhart's expertise, there wasn't a single explanation for what he just found out.

He didn't know of any monster capable of doing something like this. And even his limited knowledge of the forbidden rituals and cultivation techniques didn't get any more useful than the knowledge open to everyone.

'Is this some kind of new bred of monsters?' Ackhart attempted to formulate a thesis about the past of this corpse. 'Or maybe those monsters from the sky are the ones behind this death?' he attempted to widen his perception, assuming the things that he normally wouldn't.

But it could hardly be named an uncalled-for. Now that the world around Ackhart was rapidly changing, thinking out of the box could lead to more precise results than following the standard way of thinking that lost its meaning in this changing world.

"Well, I won't learn anything else from this corpse," Ackhart muttered, resting his hands on his knees before using them as support to kick himself up. Yet, the very second Ackhart raised his head; his face turned white.

Now that he had changed his perspective, he fully understood the scale of the situation.

Because the corpse that he found wasn't the only one in the area, it was just the first one he stumbled into.

Right past the small hill on which Ackhart found the first corpse, an entire clearing was filled with dead disciples, all presenting the same signs of decay as the poor boy Ackhart found.

'Who the hell could do such a thing?' Ackhart thought, squinting his eyes and squeezing his fingers into fists.

Death wasn't a foreign concept to the man... But even someone like him, even with massive baggage of bloody experience that Ackhart had...

Nothing could prepare him for tens of fresh corpses, all already rotting away under the influence of some technique that Ackhart didn't understand or knew about.

'It's not safe,' Ackhart thought, instantly taking a step back while lowering his posture even further.

The corpses all belonged to disciples of the weaker strength. Thanks to how fresh those corpses were, Ackhart could still tell that not a single one managed to reach as little as the fifth stage...

And then he saw it.

A corpse of a female disciple that he just happened to have an intimate relationship with in the past.

A corpse of a girl that Ackhart knew for sure was on the ninth stage of cultivation. But it was also a corpse that only gave off the scent of the spiritual energy of a fourth-stage cultivator at the very most!

'Did something consume their strength?' Ackhart formed another thesis, the only one that appeared to make any sense in the current situation.

Thump.

A soft, dull sound of something heavy stepping on the ground appeared from right before Ackhart's back.

The elder slowly turned away, refusing to make any sudden moves.

And as he managed to finally turn his head around, he came face to face with a head of a monster that towered above the entire forest around.

'How could I miss it?' Ackhart thought, his eyes opening wide.

The size of this monster was insane. At the very least, it was twice as high as all the trees around. And given how it took the shape of a fox, the rest of its body extended for at least a hundred meters to the back.

'Its head alone is bigger than the town's gate,' Ackhart thought, biting down on his lips as he stared right into the monster's eyes.

But there was one weird thing about this monster.

Despite being so damn massive... It didn't have even an ounce of that weird, violet energy that all the otherworldly monsters that dropped into this world came with!

"Is ThIs YoUr DoInG?" a weird voice spelled a few words out right within Ackhart's brain as the foxes' eyes zeroed in on Ackhart's eyes.

The elder wasn't weak by any means. He bore the distinction of the elder for a reason, not due to some kind of nepotism. And yet, in the face of this monster, he could only shiver in fear.

"N-no..." Ackhart muttered, forcibly overcoming his fear.

If anything, annoying this monster would be the stupidest thing that he could do right now!

"I sEe..." the voice appeared in Ackhart's mind once again, only to fade away the second the fox turned its massive head away, facing the field filled with corpses once again. "LeAvE tHeN," it added, sending a quick glance towards the elder.

'It'S nOt SaFe HeRe."

This was a pretty simple sentence. Yet Ackhart couldn't help but shiver.

'Just what has to be around for such a monster of monsters not to feel safe?' Ackhart asked as he slumped down and fell on his ass.

Right now, his legs were too shaky for him to move.

"WhAt ArE yOu DoInG?" the monster asked; this time, its voice was filled with annoyance.

It was a really dangerous path that Ackhart was treading right now. But between annoying this monster and annoying Arthur...

Ackhart swallowed a mouthful of saliva.

"I'm sorry, but I can't leave yet," he said, reaching the upper limits of his courage as he denied the monster's order. "I need to save those few that survived..." he said, only to cut his words short as she looked at the scene of carnage.

Ackhart then swallowed his saliva and raised his face to the monster again.

"I need to save those few who survived whatever attacked them here," Ackhart stated, refusing to just leave.

"WhY iSn'T tUxI dOiNg AnYtHiNg?" the monster asked, only making Ackhart freeze all over again.

'It knows about the sect?' he asked, his eyes opening wide.

The elder then swallowed yet another mouthful of saliva. Then, he raised his eyes on the monster's massive yet cute head and asked.

"What are you?"

The monster then released something that could only be called a weird chuckle.

"You are the soul of this forest," a foreign voice appeared in Ackhart's ears. In a sense, it was similar to the one this monster was using ever since its first sentence... But it was changed. Or rather, it sounded as if the voice of this monster was a far-degraded version of the voice that Ackhart heard just now.

"You, the primordial beast of this world, will be tasked to protect it from foreign invasion," the voice continued only to suddenly cut short right after this simple yet meaningful sentence.

"AnD i BeLiEvE tHaT tImE hAs CoMeTh," the monster added in its unnaturally natural voice.