

Last System 305

Chapter 305 To Be An Invader Or Not To Be

Ever since I appeared in this world, I became quite a gambling addict.

It wasn't something that happened out of my own free will. I never allowed any gambling den to bait me in and then force this unhealthy activity into my daily schedule.

The only reason why I continued to gamble over and over again was that I had no other choice.

If there was anything that made this world different from the world I originated from, then outside of the existence of magic, it would be exactly this.

Back on earth, there would be a cushion for one's every fall.

At first, the cushion would take the form of the parents, always willing to support their kid's growth and help him fare through mistakes.

Later on, one could count on his friends and colleagues. Yet, even when one's responsibilities grew, he could always rely on the last line of civilized defense in the form of government support.

But this kind of cushion never existed in this world. If one aimed higher than they were capable of reaching, they would lose their hands. If one made even the simplest mistake of annoying the wrong person, they could very well lose their life because of a random fit of rage of a random young master.

As such, prompted by a nearly complete lack of knowledge about this world, I had no other choice but to keep on gambling over even the minor stuff.

Not because I wanted, but because this world forced me to get out of my comfort zone of silently training and into the disastrous zone of conflicting with others.

And now, this bad gambling habit of mine made me cross another line. Because up to this point, I could accept my gambling attitude. Yet, the second it wasn't my health and prosperity that I was putting on the line, this addiction became extremely dangerous.

"Who is she?" the monster asked once it followed the movement of my hand with its eyes. Despite how its massive size should make it impossible for me to see its eyes, not to speak about their movements, I could somehow tell where its attention was.

"Who am I, who is she," I repeated the last two questions the monster posed. I then shook my head as if lamenting over an unruly child. "You didn't know who we were, but you attacked us nevertheless," I pointed out as my expression turned wrathful. "And now you expect me to explain things to you?" I then asked, widening my eyes as if surprising myself with the words that I had prepared in advance.

Then my face turned still as I uttered just two words.

"How shameless."

For a moment, I hoped to get some sort of reaction out of the monster. No matter what it would be, it would prove that this being had an ego, an ego that I could exploit.

Yet, as if to spit on all my hopes, the monster didn't bother to reply to my childish taunt, opting to just stare me down instead.

"Who is she?" the monster asked again, paying no mind to my provocations.

"She is called Hera," I revealed, forcing my feet to carry me forward. 'One foot in front of the other,' I thought, encouraging myself to keep ongoing. 'Just one more time!' I screamed from the bottom of my soul, finally standing right where my place was right now.

Between Mia and that monster.

"Is she an invader?" The monster changed its question. Even then, it was still oriented about the one axis of interest that it had.

"Invader this, an invader that," I mocked the beast, dancing around the issue. "First and foremost, she is a victim of her world crumbling," I stated, raising my head high and refusing to lower it.

"That's why, in order for me to tell you whether she is an invader or not," I hung my words right before revealing the main question.

My lips then turned into a small, mocking smile.

"I need to know who do you consider invaders to be in the first place!"

For some, this was nothing more but demagoguery. But for me, this was the last chance to save ourselves without the need of sacrificing the very girl that I did my best to save before.

"Invaders are..." the monster spoke out, its voice once again ruling over the entire area...

But for the first time, the monster hesitated before finishing its sentence.

"Invaders are invaders," the monster quickly came to its senses before giving me the statement I asked. "If she is an invader, then she is an invader," it added, appearing as if it didn't realize how little sense its words made.

"You commit a logic fallacy," I pointed out. "You can't reference me to definition if said definition references me back to itself."

It was the same as with the natural paradox occurring in most families across the world. With the father always wanting the child to go ask the mother while the mother doing the same for the father, the child would be then stuck in an endless loop of asking one only to be referenced back to the other.

"Is this girl an invader?" the monster asked once again, opting to just ignore all the points that I had brought so far.

"You are the invader," I spat out on the ground so strongly that only Mia coming up to support me from behind stopped me from falling down. "What? Are you going to kill yourself now?"

And then it shook me.

'How come I got annoyed so quickly and so effectively?' I asked myself, puzzled by the unnatural reaction that I showed.

I glanced over at the monster's head hidden above the clouds, hoping that it would provide me with some answers.

'Huh?' I shrugged, noticing a peculiar change because the perfectly black pitch of its eyes that struck me so strongly before was currently nowhere to be seen. Instead, the monster's pupils turned fully red and were now directed straight at me.

'Figures,' I thought while fighting off the desire to sigh deeply. 'I wouldn't freak out like that for no reason,' I told myself, shaking my head over the futility of the monster's continued effort to rile me up.

Whatever means it was used to upset me, now that I was aware of the fact wouldn't have any real effects. The trick of all the psychological tricks always relied on the fact that the party subjected to it couldn't be aware of the trick!

Only when the truth was shrouded in the fog of mystery would one's brain pain in the blanks, filling the picture with the falsehood it was willing to accept as the truth given. After all, it was one's own creation, so how could they ever consider it false at the deepest level of their soul?

'It's this mechanism that most of the conspiracy theories use,' I thought, recalling the stuff I would often think about back on earth.

But right now wasn't the good time for prolonged flashbacks of my previous life. Not with the situation changing as dynamically as it was happening here.

"I ask one last time," the monster announced, its voice sending a chill down my spine so cold it nearly froze my bones. "Is this girl an invader?"

The color of the monster's eyes intensified.

And right away, I could feel my blood boiling, as if the deepest hate that I gave up on very early in my life suddenly made its comeback.

'It's all an illusion, Arthur,' I told myself. 'Calm the fuck down,' I continued to suppress the monster's technique with my own mind while doing my best not to reveal it was already busted.

"She..." I muttered, making it look as if uttering even a single word was torture. "S-she..." I attempted once again to adjust the intensity of my play to the intensity of the monster's stare.

"SHE IS NOT!" I finally said before seemingly breaking in half and falling to the ground and covering it with my colorful yet stinky vomit.

I allowed the convulsions to shake my body for a few more moments while sneakily gesturing at Mia to stop her in her tracks.

If she were to approach me right now, there was a massive chance she would reveal her surprise upon noticing a complete lack of injuries on me. And in a moment as tense as the current one...

No, it was better to keep Mia in the dark.

Still...

I gave my answer. I made my gamble. And right now, I could only hope that a set of assumptions I made about the monster over the course of this encounter would be at least partially correct. Yet, as seconds turned into minutes and the monster refused to say something or buckle from its place...

I started to get worried.

'I guess I'm still in no state to fight,' I thought, tightening my fists as I forced my head up and looked at the monster.

It was a being I would struggle to beat even when at my maxed out potential. Right now, on the other hand, I was just a small fry this bear-like monster could swat away any time it wanted.

That's why it was crucial to make it believe it didn't want to smack me like that!

"If you want...." I spoke out, unable to take the monster's silence and inaction any longer. Yet, just as I was about to speak out, a familiar violet hue appeared in the sky.

"INVADER!" the monster cried out, reacting as quickly as I did.

Yet, when I turned around to face the approaching threat, I maybe caused a small gust of wind. Yet, when this monster rapidly turned around, its tail flattened several hectares of the forest, only for its landing to send shockwaves spreading through the nearby ground.

"I could point out the invaders for you...." I muttered, pretending to finish off my earlier sentence.

The meteor appeared in the sky. And for some reason, despite lacking the necessary data to judge it, I could tell it was aiming right at where we were.

"What do you want in exchange?" the monster asked, proving that my guess that it could hear even the tiniest noises I made was right all along.

Yet, I didn't expect it to come forward with a question like that!

'Does it think I noticed the meteor before it did?' I thought, trying to rationalize the appearance of such an unusual question in the monster's mouth. And outside of how I brought the topic of those monsters up right before the appearance of the meteor...

'No, that's not what I should be thinking about,' I lectured myself.

Whatever made the monster offer me this question didn't matter. What was important was to find the best answer to this question.

Sting.

A small pain appeared in my soul as if my morals protested against the many ideas that blurted through my mind.

And then, one request of someone else appeared in my mind, pretty much forcing its way to my lips.

"All those invaders have already consumed an innocent person. Just like me, they could prove to be this world's staunch defenders," I spoke out, putting everything that I learned about this monster and mixing it into a crunchy cake of bullshit and horseshit. And those two kinds of craps, once baked in the oven of my own creativity, created a shitty pastry that I fed right into this monster.

"What I want in exchange for my help are two things," I stated, raising my right hand with two fingers raised. Yet, at the same time, I couldn't support my own standing position any longer. As such, I had no other choice but to resort to relying on Mia's shoulder again.

"What it is, human?" the monster asked in its usual, mighty voice.

"First, I will be able to go free with my friends at any time I deem suitable," I stated, pulling one of my fingers down. "And secondly, I want the right to save those poor people from the bellies of those dastardly invaders!"