

Last System 313

Chapter 313 Preplanned Doom

"And this is the gist of the story," the protobear finished, a sense of satisfaction reverberating through its voice.

'What, is it the first time it had an audience to tell its past to?' I couldn't help but ask myself while doing everything to keep a mocking look away from my face.

Yet, even if I initially wanted to make fun of this fact, when the scale of the problem dawned upon me, I ended up taking pity on this being.

For humans, it was a monster that spelled doom. Just sighting it anywhere near a city or a town would lead to a panicked evacuation... even if the protobear's only intention was to pass through to a more comfortable sleeping spot.

'I guess that's why their creator forced them into slumber until the crumbling world would break their sleep,' I thought, trying to make some sense of the details of the story that protobear told us.

I shook my head and raised my eyes, curious to see how the others reacted to the story. And if I was between being baffled and shocked by the news, then the others were simply stunned.

Mia appeared not to care at all. She was simply plastered to my side, humming lightly and occasionally rubbing her cheek against my shoulder. But when it came to Hera and the man that she saved...

They couldn't utter a single word. And to be frank, I wasn't all that surprised by it.

'Well, that was only to be expected,' I thought, rolling my eyes when it turned out that checking the reactions of my companions only forced me to think over this complicated topic again. 'I guess I would be stunned beyond words if I learned that earth's existence was all for the sake of keeping the moon safe or something,' I thought, trying to draw a parallel between what I just heard and my old world.

And that was the gist of it.

The world where Hera and the other man came from turned out to be a part of the greater world. The greater world that already reached the brink of the total collapse and complete culling of all living forms on it by the end of what the locals called the ancient age.

Back then, when magic and technology were not only synonymous but also developed beyond anything I myself could consider rational, a certain group decided to take matters into their own hands.

They didn't care about politics. They paid no attention to the will of the others. They didn't allow their own greed to take over their actions... Or rather, in a certain way of thinking, they turned out to be greedier than anyone else in the ancient world.

Because instead of just ignoring the doom that was approaching their world in favor of living comfortably through the few centuries left to their world...

They arbitrarily decided to do something about it.

"So the world was about to fall apart because the total momentum of its innate energy grew too much, right?" I asked, trying to sort my thoughts out and ensure that I actually understood the general concept of what happened.

"It's quite shocking that you can wrap your head around this concept," the protobear answered before releasing a powerful sigh. A sigh that instantly threatened to flatten a massive chunk of the forest we were traveling through. "But yeah. Our creator used that increasing momentum to forcefully split the merged energy into its subparts again. Or, to be more precise, he used up all the potential of the fuel that powered the ancient world to separate its two components and split them into two distinctive worlds," the protobear explained.

'So I was right,' I thought while gritting my teeth.

Combining the mana of this world with the mana of the mirror-like world where Hera came from wasn't some kind of discovery. More like, it was a technology that was simply long lost to this world.

'Well, assuming the presence of the borderlands, I think it's safe to say that some technology of that kind still does exist,' I thought to myself, scanning the area around us from the elevated position on the protobear's back.

I couldn't really tell what pushed me into this strange glance. Was it a curiosity whether I could spot some ancient structures hidden in the wilderness? Or maybe it was something that I did without any deeper meaning behind it?

"Tell me, then," I muttered, still sorting stuff in my head. "What's your role in this new, changing world?" I asked.

According to the protobear's story, the collapse of the artificially created world that Hera came from was inevitable. It would take thousands upon thousands of years before the gears keeping it in place would wither out and stop working, but they were doomed to fail nonetheless.

And it was this collapse, the sudden influx of the type of mana that was formerly banned from this world, that woke the protobear up from its slumber.

'If the mechanism of waking it up is connected to what's happening right now, that can only mean the protobear and its kin has some role to play,' I thought, gritting my teeth as thousands upon thousands of brutal scenarios played out in my head.

I swallowed a gulp of saliva, feeling how my body tensed up.

For beings capable of splitting the world into two and then forcefully separating them for millennia, killing a million people wasn't something bad but a regrettable consequence of what they deemed necessary. As such, it was hard for me to believe that the protobear would follow any sort of human reason when aiming to fulfill whatever its mission was.

"It is to prevent the invaders from the mirror dimension from bringing the other component of the true magic into this world," the protobear explained without even a second of hesitation. "Killing them, eating them, licking them, making phantom women drain their powers and then casting them off into space..."

The massive shoulder blades of the protobear shook as it shrugged them.

"Whatever the means to it are, I don't care. I will do everything I deem necessary to stop the return of the true mana to this world," it added.

Gulp.

For me, the sound that my saliva made when I swallowed it was akin to my own confession.

Because even if I wasn't sure that we spoke about the same thing, I was pretty sure that engine of mine... The power it outputted was exactly the true mana the protobear spoke about!

In other words, even more than the invaders, I was the true target of this beast!

"And why are you so set on doing so?" I asked in a low voice, unable to hold back my own fear.

I already faced this protobear once. As such, I knew better than anyone that, at least for now, I wasn't a match for it.

'Still, its mission exists for a reason. If we somehow don't stop that violet mana from reaching this world, it's going right back on its earlier course into destruction, isn't it?' I thought.

If there was any question that I had about this new life of mine, it was just a single one.

Why?

Why did I appear in this world right in time to witness it reaching its climax? Why did I appear in the times when the stakes of the entire damned world were at a play?

Or maybe I was looking at it from a completely wrong standpoint. Rather than asking why, weren't my questions embedded with an answer?

I appeared in this world exactly because it was reaching its doom. I appeared in this world precisely because my technical knowledge could allow me to understand the situation and, by extension, figure out a way to stop it.

But if those assumptions were correct...

Who was the one who dared to put such a heavy burden on my shoulders?

'Or rather, what I should be asking, is how could someone so powerful make such a basic mistake?'

"Arty?" Mia muttered, cuddling up to my side as she brought her eyes up and looked at my face.

"Are you alright?" she asked, easily sensing that there was something wrong with me.

But right now, I could only think about one thing. One thing that was making me wish was to just burst out in laughter. And if not for fear of being taken for a crazy person, I would likely just do it.

Because whoever potentially brought me here to help this world to stave away the disaster failed to realize one important thing.

Back in my first life, back on Earth, we were in the same spot as the whole of humanity. Our excessive reliance on fossil fuels brought us to the point beyond any recovery.

In fact, if not for the artificial manipulation of the atmospheric content, the Earth would've long turned sterile. Yet, at the same time, the measures humanity as a whole took to stave off this problem were also the poison that slowly but surely would kill every last living being on the planet.

And I had no problems with that. In that failing world, rather than looking for a way to save the planet... I simply pursued my own agendas, more set on living my life to the fullest despite the systematic oppression than I was concerned with the impending doom of the entire planet.

That's why, if my assumptions about the reason why I appeared in this world were correct in the first place, there was only one question that I would like to ask whoever orchestrated this entire thing.

'If I didn't care about my original world in the slightest,' I thought, raising my hand and patting Mia's head. 'Why would I care about this world that's foreign to me in the first place?'