

Last System 37

Chapter 37 - There Has To Be A Trick To It

'This isn't going to work in the long term,' I thought after yet another perfect punch against the stone.

Right now, I had no idea whether the perfect punch was more effective than a simple and careless slap. What I could be sure, though, was that the harder I sweated during the training, the less blood I would shed during a real fight later on.

Yet, this didn't make it any easier on me.

With about a hundred punches required to advance the mana pool by one, I couldn't waste my time on testing whether or not my focus during the punch had an effect on my growth.

In fact, I was at the stage where I no longer had the time nor the resources to find things out with a trial and error method. For example, if I were to punch the training pillar a hundred times and consume a single stone between every punch, I would long fill the status gauges before finding out anything useful!

'Not to speak about the cost of doing that,' I thought. If I were to use a single stone for every punch, and if all my statuses would raise one by one, then I would need to use thirty spirit stones just to reach the end of my current stage!

One hundred and twenty gold coins. Roughly a tenth of what I earned by selling the one thing I figured out that would sell well.

"If my feeling is right, the further I advance, the more resources I will need," I muttered, voicing out my concerns to myself.

Just by crossing from the purification stage to the mana condensation stage, I had to come up with a hundred and twenty gold coins to satisfy my demand for training resources. Considering how I crossed the purification stage without wasting a single coin...

'There has to be a better way to train,' I thought, stepping away from the stone and just glaring at it.

Right now, I knew only a few things.

By consuming the stone, one would have to spend a short amount of time gathering and focusing the energy inside their body. One could raise their energy by continuously punching the stone.

How did those two facts connect? Or rather, how could I make the best use of the resources at hand by using this knowledge?

'How about this...' I thought, pulling out the same stone that I flashed earlier while making sure to not touch it directly. The excessive material of the robe came pretty useful doing that.

Holding the stone in my left hand, I moved back to the pillar. I once again gathered my focus.

I brushed my thumb directly against the surface of the stone and threw a punch.

It was yet another of the perfect punches, using the strength of not only my arm but my shoulder, torso, and legs as well.

'Huh?' I took a step back, startled by the discovery.

Even though I clearly absorbed a little bit of the mana from the stone, there was no lag to my focus!

'Was the amount of energy too little, or...' I thought. But there was a simple way to figure it out.

'Status!' I called forth.

Mana Condensation 102/900

{

Mana Pool 33/300

Mana Flow 1/300

Mana Density 0/300(+75)

}

Just like expected, my status grew. Not only the mana pool but also its flow. Regretfully, mana density remained stuck at the same level, proving that there had to be another trick to the entire situation.

"Did it work?" Mia asked.

Turning my head around, I saw her sitting with her hands wrapped around her knees. Her eyes were glued to my back and brimming with interest.

"More or less," I replied, shaking my head. But as I did so, my eyes laid on the lifeless body of the disciple from before.

'Could it be that?' I thought.

The elder advised that having the disciples fight with each other was actually the sect's aim. It was surprising to the point that I could still vividly recall that scene.

Could it be the last thing I needed to properly grow my status?

"Where I am...?" the disciple muttered, slowly coming back to his senses. Although beaten up, he was still far from the limits of what his body could handle.

Perfect.

"Mia, could you do me a favor and strap him to the training pillar?" I asked, a vicious smile appearing on my lips.

What a perfect opportunity to test my theory out!

"On it," Mia replied, jumping up only to kick the disciple's chest.

The man no longer reacted to this level of beating. He accepted it as if it was a new part of his entire future.

Most likely, he could no longer feel the pain of another attack, already overwhelmed with the pain of the injuries he sustained so far.

And I was likely about to change it.

'Should I let Mia have a go at him first?' I thought, watching how the girl quickly worked on fulfilling my request. 'After all, if my strength really does grow along with my stats, I'm likely to seriously wound him with a single hit,' I thought, raising my eyes on the trembling body of the young man.

From just a single look on his face, it was clear that he could sense something bad was about to happen to him.

'Yeah, let's do just that,' I thought, unwilling to risk it.

Beating a fellow disciple up was one thing, but causing him serious harm was a whole different manner altogether. After all, being a disciple meant that he was under the protection of the sect!

And crossing the sect's bottom line was something that I have yet to gain enough power to dare to do freely.

"Mia, I know you have yet to eat, but would you mind training for a bit?" I asked as soon as the girl was done with her task.

"Huh?" Mia twitched in surprise. "You mean, strike the pillar or... him?" she asked, pointing at the disciple with a nod of her head.

"And why do you think I asked you to strap him in?" I replied with a question on my own.

"Will do!"

Mia didn't waste even a moment of her time. She stood right in front of the bloodied man. She then took a deep breath, calming and then focusing herself on the training.

And then, she punched with all her might!

"Urghg..."

The pitiful disciple let out a mouthful of blood as soon as Mia's fist sank deeply into his chest. From the cracking sound, at least a few of the man's ribs shattered under her powerful attack.

'I guess this was the right choice,' I thought, watching how Mia stepped to the back and looked at me with question marks written all over her eyes.

'Should I keep punching?' her expression appeared to say.

"What the hell is going on here?!" Someone shouted in an enraged voice.

Turning around, I saw familiar, blue robes.

But the face of the man wearing them wasn't familiar at all.