

Last System 371

Chapter 371 Hawking's Magical Radiation

'Where the hell am I?'

A single thought appeared in my mind when I came back to my senses.

My surroundings were fully dark as if the concept of illumination didn't exist in the place I found myself.

'Did I die?' My mind conjured the simplest logical explanation behind my current situation.

No, it wasn't logical. There was no logic in death. It was simply the most obvious explanation.

'I can still think,' I noticed only to...

To do what exactly?

In the complete darkness of this strange space, there was no use trying to showcase my emotions through my facial gestures, even if it was only for my own sake.

'No, I can't think like that,' I told myself. 'What if I just went blind?' I suggested, only to forcefully put a cheeky smile on my lips.

This place was dark. And even if it wasn't, I had no mirror to see my own face and check whether my efforts paid off.

Still, it felt like something about me had changed.

'Can I still touch stuff?' I thought, trying my best to move my hands around.

I tried to flail them to the side to grasp at the ground. I then tried to raise them to my face to see whether I actually had one... but to no avail.

'I can feel anything?' I thought, trying to make some sense of the situation.

Or maybe my initial guess was correct? Maybe that's what dying was all about? Instead of going to heaven, hell, or whatever various religions came up with, one would be stuck in limbo for as long as it would take for their reason to wither away and disappear?

Some time has passed. It could be a few minutes, maybe even seconds. But there was an equal chance that I was stuck in this place for ages.

A spark appeared right before my eyes.

Starved for stimulus, I glued my eyes to the event.

The time I spent in the complete darkness of this strange void had already inflicted its burden on my mind.

'It's shiny,' I thought. This was the only reasonable thought I could form in my mind.

And then, as slowly as if it didn't move at all, the spark started to move down.

At first, it acted as some sort of zipper. It moved in a zig-zag pattern, leaving a trail of a small shine in its wake. For every inch that the spark moved, its brightness would dim out a little.

'I guess leaving a trail of light has to cost it some sort of energy,' I thought, observing the events with all my soul.

Then, the spark finally died out. If not for the winding trail of a gentle shine, I wouldn't have a single proof of the spark ever existing.

'Is it over?' I thought when everything seemed to come to an end.

And then, as if responding to the whine of my soul, black lighting suddenly descended upon the trail before my eyes.

'Huh?' my mind shook, unable to understand one thing.

If this place is perfectly black... how can I see black lighting?

Yet, there was a clear difference between the blackness of the void around me and the intense blackness of the lighting. It was as if the lighting had its darkness far more intense, with the difference making it easy to see it on a completely black canvas of the world around me.

The lightning struck directly at the top of the trail left by the spark. And with the same speed that the spark moved at before, the power of the strike killed the remaining shine of the spark.

As the force of the lighting traveled down, the place that used to shine a little would turn even darker than the space around, only for the intensity of the darkness to even out a single breath later.

'Is it mending the space?' I finally formulated a thought more complex than an ape would while staring at a burning candle.

Yet, as if there weren't enough surprises for me in this space, it suddenly all turned bright!

No, that's not the right way to describe it.

A myriad of the sparks that I saw before now appeared all over the place. Yet, this time, rather than moving at a snail's pace, they all just blasted through the space, lost their energy, and disappeared, only to be followed by dark lightning that erased all the traces of their trails.

'What is going on?' I thought, surrounded by the neverending procession of those small fireworks.

The process accelerated with every second that I wasted observing it. By the time I managed to get used to the sight, the exchange of spark into a dark bolt had turned nearly instantaneous.

And a mere moment later, the space around me returned to its usual, dark appearance.

The sparks that I saw before would appear, burn out and then get their trails erased by the lighting simply too fast to let my eyes perceive the flashing of their light.

'Is this some sort of constant process?' I thought, a connection already appearing in my mind.

A connection that led to an obscure video that I once watched the way in the past. It was a graphic simulation of how the fabric of the space worked on its smallest scale, with particles and anti-particles constantly appearing only to annihilate each other.

'Is this how the black holes were supposed to evaporate?' I thought.

Now that my brain had found an anchor for my thoughts, forming more complex assumptions became way easier.

'When one particle of the pair appears right on the edge of the event horizon, its partner gets sucked inside while the particle itself flies out of the universe, chipping away at the black hole's mass,' I recalled the explanation of the process called Hawking's radiation.

'Could it be that I'm looking at this exact thing... just in the world of mana?'

This was a simple thought, a straightforward conjecture. Yet, the moment it appeared in my thoughts, the world around me changed again.