

Last System 384

Chapter 384 Cascade Of Answers

The royal's words caused both my and Mia's eyebrows to skyrocket on our faces.

So sheltered that we didn't know monsters roamed the wilds? Reaching great heights despite being sheltered?

"I'm not sure if you realize," I muttered, shocked beyond any belief, "but you just proved how sheltered you are yourself," I said.

In theory, explaining the situation to the man brought me no benefit. It was counterproductive in a sense, as we could end up fighting.

And yet, the ignorance, or maybe audacity, of the man-made me nearly go bonkers.

"The fuck are you talking about?" the royal squinted his eyes. Yet, rather than making his face look threatening, he simply appeared to be confused.

"Those monsters..." I opened my mouth before my thoughts caught up to me. Thankfully, I didn't say enough to reveal any of the information.

'He can't be that stupid or ignorant,' I thought, gritting my teeth. 'Even if the royals are detached from the rest of the cultivation world, even if they do not interact with others... It's impossible for them not to be aware of what's going on!'

And then it struck me. Several elements fell into the puzzle, miraculously fitting right where they should to paint a full picture.

'How can pathfinders walk through borderlands so often without dying en masse?' the first question popped up in my head, turning into a fuse that brought in a cascade of others.

Each of the questions, thought, preceded an answer to the one that came before.

Not because I was a genius or because I thought about it for a long. It was all because, on their own, each of those questions was insanely simple now that I actually asked them.

'They can't. Unless they are strong enough to do so.' An answer popped up in my mind.

'There are hurdles in cultivating yet that would never put a complete stop for royals from appearing out of the insane numbers of people trying to reach that stage. And it's obvious how hard to manage new royals are, given the scale of Sangakarts scheme that was aimed at establishing just a single one of them.'

I gulped down my saliva.

'In that case, why have I never heard any news about a new royal appearing? Why there are no stories about anything like this happening in the near past?'

Once again, the answer appeared to be so obvious I could only wonder how did I elude myself so far.

'It's because they never stopped appearing. They were just taken care of by the royals that already established and grew their power in an attempt at keeping the current world situation at bay.'

Some questions I've never asked before. But others, I asked back when I had no knowledge necessary to form the answer.

And now, as more and more answers appeared in my mind, I shook my head and looked right at the royal's face.

'Why is he even here?' A question that I couldn't answer when I first met the man.

'Because pathfinder was a royal or someone who was on the verge of becoming one. But something changed and now they are looking around the people they shackled because they are no longer under their control.'

It was a simple answer. Yet, one that put things into the right perspectives.

'Now it makes sense why he believes we cannot avoid the fight,' I thought, barely stopping myself from putting my mage's tower in overdrive right away. 'It's because I consider pathfinder to be my benefactor and would never allow him to do the man any harm.'

Then, the last question popped up in my mind.

'What changed?'

This question I could answer even before meeting the man. Because contrary to him, I wasn't sheltered. I took an active part in living in this world. And I was weak enough for the monsters from the mirror dimension to be a threat to me when they first appeared.

'The shattering of the mirror dimension happened. Or, more likely, the appearance of the huge monsters and an enormous amount of anti-mana with them.'

All those questions and answers led to a single conclusion. A statement that I could never figure out on its own.

No, a truth that I never even bothered to think about trying to find out.

'Whatever they shackled soon-to-be royals with or whatever was necessary for one to advance into the royal rank has to have something to do with antimana.'

And then, a single, recent memory flashed through my mind, making my entire body tense up.

'And this man's power... The mark that I found familiar and which I've never found on anyone else to that day...'

With this one realization, I took a look at the man once again. I even went to the extreme of using my mana sense to do so.

And the answer was right there.

The man's mana wasn't the same as the pure mana I could produce in my engine.

It was the same as the mixture of mana and anti-mana I used to fuel it!

"So that's the secret of becoming a royal," I muttered, so shocked by the massive train of thought that went through my mind in what had to be less than a second.

All those realizations, all those answers and questions, and how they connected with each other... When all of them exploded in my head in just a second, it rendered me unable to control myself for yet another second.

"What did you say?" the royal whispered, his eyes opening wide.

This shocked expression of his lasted for but an instant quickly replaced with a mocking look.

"I get it," I muttered, only to shake my head and then bring my hand up only to slap it right on top of my face. "I really do get it," I said, on the verge of exploding in laughter.

I then took a deep breath, calming myself down.

I ignored the baffled stare Mia sent me. And I raised my eyes to the tense eyes of the royal.

"I finally get it, the secret that you guys appear to want to hide so much. But that doesn't matter," I said, adding the second part before the royal could react to the first part.

"Because royals... are nothing more but a bunch of fucking failures!"