

Last System 420

Chapter 420 What's The Plan For When We Get There?

"I really wish I had something to smoke," I muttered, allowing the innermost desire of my soul to escape through my lips.

It was something that was constantly in the very back of my mind. Something I searched for whenever I had some downtime. Yet, even with all the time I spent in this world, I have yet to find something that I could use as a substitute for tobacco!

"Something to smoke?" Mia asked, snuggling up to my side as she asked. "Do you plan to burn the outpost down to rebuild it from scratch?" she attempted to put a serious meaning behind my words.

"It's nothing like that," I replied with a smile, amused by the silliness of Mia's question. Yet, for how fun it was to me, I had no wish to berate her over her lack of earthy knowledge! "What I meant, is that I miss a certain type of... plant."

"And why did you bring it up out of nowhere?" Mia pushed deeper with her inquiries.

"No particular reason," I admitted. "Boredom, maybe?"

This was the one aspect of traveling that I often thought about.

There was no fast-travel mechanic in this world. And even if it was possible with some intricate use of arrays or by breaking the space itself... it was something that I was far too weak and ignorant to dabble with.

As such, I had no other choice but to travel everywhere on foot.

To a degree, I was already used to it. Yet, the same thing couldn't be said about the others.

"I'm boooooored!" someone in the back of the group complained, stretching out his words to put an emphasis on just how much he meant that word.

"Just how far is this place?"

"Are we there yet?"

Those and countless other questions continued to permeate through our oversized group as we continued to push through the well-maintained road that connected the avenues of the Tuxi sect.

"I think I can see where are you coming from," Mia giggled, clearly aware of all the protests the cultivators uttered all around us. "Worry not, we are getting close," she then added, turning her eyes from my face and in the direction the path was leading us towards.

We walked for a few more minutes in silence, enjoying the refreshing breeze that swiped across the plain.

"Now that I think about it," Mia then spoke out again, "once we reach the outpost," she brought her eyes to my face again. "What then?"

I couldn't tell whether she was genuinely curious or simply attempting to ward off the boredom with some random conversation.

'Does it really matter?' I asked myself.

And a moment later, I shook my head sideways with a peaceful smile.

'It does not.'

"First, we will check if it is abandoned or if there are some people that remained," I replied. "Or maybe we should look for lodging for everyone first?" I then added, thinking out loud.

"Do you think there is anyone who didn't leave?" Mia asked, genuinely surprised by such an option.

The outpost was struck by several of the mana monsters at once. As such, all its citizens experienced the horrors it brought first-hand.

What's more, all the elders of the place either died by my hand when Sangakarts attempted to make their move, died during the appearance of the monsters... or were too cowardly to face either of those situations in the first place.

"Without a proper protector, I doubt anyone would dare to linger," I admitted only to then shake my head. "But we shouldn't underestimate people. While I'm not trying to insult anyone here, humans do have a tendency to be like cockroaches."

"And what do you mean by that?" Mia asked with a puzzled look on her face.

"We are extremely hard to get rid of," I replied with a cheeky smile.

For a moment, Mia turned silent.

On its own, it wasn't anything out of the ordinary, especially when we just kept on walking for hours upon hours already.

This time, however, there was something different about her silence.

'Is it her expression? Her aura?' I attempted to guess, unable to put my finger on the exact reason why her silence suddenly became weird.

"Dear, please, don't take it the wrong way, I'm not saying this to be rude or anything..." Mia spoke. And from the number of pre-apologies and excuses she made before getting to the point, I could tell she was about to drop some kind of a serious bomb.

"But it would be wise if you didn't refer to mortals and cultivators as humans at the same time," Mia finally uttered what was going on in her mind. She then raised his chin and tugged at my robe. "I know that you are different from everyone else," she said, once again trying to add lube to the words she somehow believed to be harsh, "but cultivators would be quick to assume you are insulting them by putting them on the same level as mortals!"

There was no scorn in the girl's voice. Just worry.

"Sure thing," I said, reaching out with my hand and locking it on Mia's waist. I then pulled her closer into a slightly awkward hug. "I will keep that in mind."

The silence ensued again, this time, though, without the weird aura from before.

"Moving back to the topic from before," Mia picked up the conversation a short moment later. "Once we get everyone a place to sleep and a place that's relatively easy to defend... what then?" she asked, pushing the conversation into a casual tone.

"We will need to secure food and water," I replied with a sigh. "Even if we can go on with our mana alone," I raised my eyes towards all the otherworldly cultivators that surrounded us, "it's not the case for them."

In theory, one could survive for weeks without any food after reaching just the fifth stage of cultivation. On that level, the mana in their body alone would be sufficient to nourish them. Yet, it wasn't until reaching the eighth stage and expanding their core that a cultivator could truly survive for long without food or water at all.

Only at and beyond the first stage of enlightenment would one shed the last of their attachments to mortal needs, leaving food as nothing more but a redundant luxury and pleasure.

And as it stood for now, save for the three exceptions, all the other cultivators within our group have yet to reach the eighth stage!

"And then?" Mia kept on pushing further with her questions. "Once we secure provisions, what are we going to do?"

I took a moment to think. And soon, the obvious answer appeared in my mind.

"What would you say... if we were to go for a scavenge run?"