

Last System 422

Chapter 422 Division Of Labour

Entering the city... turned out to be far harder than I expected it to be.

Not because it was hard to actually get inside. Not at all. Sure, some of the ruins fell apart and covered the roads in the rubble. There were some places that we couldn't cross at all and had to resort to Mia guiding us around.

But overall, it was surprisingly easy to walk around the ruins of the Tuxi Outerpost. So easy, I couldn't help but suspect that someone either already tried to clean it up... or that the rubble was simply missing.

The question was... who and for what reason would ever bother trying to move rubble away?

No, entering the city in a physical way was easier than I expected. It was the mental side of the action that actually dragged my soul down.

'Isn't this the coffee where I saw Mia for the first time since our parting?' I asked myself, looking at no more than just foundation, floor, and two, unconnected shy stretches of wall.

If it weren't for the plaza outside that lucked out and remained somewhat in its former shape, I wouldn't be even able to guess that much.

The arena that once was the landmark of the place, standing tall above all the other buildings as the symbol of the sect's power and careless spending of its construction budget... was nowhere to be seen at all.

And while I couldn't care less, I could see the longing looks Mia sent every now and then in the direction that massive building once stood.

"This is really bad..." I muttered under my nose. "The damage, I mean," I added so that Mia wouldn't get on the edge, expecting some sort of trouble.

"It is..." Mia said in a dejected voice. "I..." she hesitated for a second before lowering her face and putting her eyes on the ground. "I'm sorry, I thought it wouldn't be as bad," she then apologized.

"I didn't mean to put any blame on you, dear," I quickly replied, reaching out with my hand and gently tapping the girl on her shoulder. "I just can't come to understand... just how did it happen?"

The first few monsters that appeared in this place ended up as fuel for my mana engine. As such, while they brought forth some level of damage... it shouldn't be anywhere near the level of what I was seeing now!

'Did more monsters come here?' I attempted to put forth an educated guess. 'Or maybe there was some sort of fight where this place became a battlefield for it?'

I looked around, searching for the marks of a battle... but amidst all the destruction, it was impossible to discern what building burned down due to a random fire and what building burned down due to some cultivator's fiery technique.

And the worst part about it all...

The worst part about the current situation was that the cultivators we brought here with the promise of a new start didn't seem to enjoy the level they would be starting at either.

'We need to do something quick,' I realized. 'If we just let them roam around like that...' I shook my head.

"It will be only a matter of time before all the order collapses and they will start going off on their own," I muttered, not even realizing that those words slipped out of my mouth.

"Arty?" Mia muttered by my side, pressing herself to my shoulder in what would look like yet another display of affection to others. "What do you want me to do?" she then whispered to my ear, taking advantage of how close she got.

I took a deep breath. Then, I raised my head and looked around, searching for a building that would fit my demands.

And sooner than I expected, I saw it.

"How can that be?" I couldn't help but mutter once I recognized the structure of the building.

It was one of the very few that remained structurally intact, with the only damage ending up on its exterior. Its walls were all covered in soot, most likely from a fire that consumed the entire place. Parts of its roof were missing and the elaborate glass art that once filled its window was all gone.

And yet, the structure of the auction house remained as sturdy and unchanged as it was when I last saw the place!

"Everyone!" I pushed Mia aside a bit before shouting from the bottom of my lungs. I then raised my hand and pointed it at the building I was looking at. "We are going to take that building and settle in there for now!"

It would only ever be a temporary solution. There was no way so many individualistic people could all huddle together in a single complex, even if there were more than enough rooms to keep them all apart.

But a temporary solution... was better than no solution at all.

And so, as soon as enough cultivators turned their attention to me, I took a huge stride forward, pulling Mia along.

At first, only a few people followed. Yet, once those few got on the move, others started to follow them, then even more people joined. And soon, the herd instinct kicked in, making nearly every last cultivator follow me toward the auction house.

I crossed over the empty frame of what used to be the building's main gate. I then moved over some scattered rubble, destroyed boxes, and a scattered glass of bottles.

'Someone looted this place already,' I realized... only to ignore it and keep on going until I reached the only place where all of the cultivators under my lead could fit at the same time.

"Do you have some sort of announcement?" Levi asked, appearing to my side seemingly out of nowhere.

"Yes," I shortly replied, climbing up the scorched stairs to the stage before turning around and locking my hands behind my back. Then, I simply waited in silence for all the cultivators to get inside and settle down.

"Everyone, we will be taking over this place and restoring it to the point where we can somewhat call it home!" I started with the obvious. "This place will be our base of operations while all the rooms this place has to offer will become your private quarters."

That was it for the basic organization of the place. And now, we could finally begin the organization of the most hated aspect of most human lives.

"I need twenty people for gathering the rubble we can reuse to fix this building. Then twenty more for actually fixing this place. If you have a skill related to those tasks, step forward and stand over there!" I shouted, pointing my hand at an empty space to the left side of the stage.

At first, not a single person moved.

'As expected,' I thought, releasing a small sigh.

"Guys, just for you to know," I put a wide smile on my face, "there won't be any better jobs than this. This is something that will benefit all, so I will make sure to compensate everyone for their troubles as soon as I can."

This time and after some hesitation, some of the cultivators finally took the bait.

And surprisingly enough, Levi joined the ranks of constructors, giving me a playful smile as soon as I took a surprised glance at him.

It wasn't without some growing pains, but soon, the work organization started to pick up.

"I need ten people to scavenge the insides of this place, cleaning it out from any uninvited guests, animals, or traps!"

"I need twenty more people to scavenge the surrounding lands in search of food!"

"Twenty more to find and restore the well!"

Bit by bit, the army of cultivators that I brought to this place ended up divided into the jobs they would do for the rest of the day. Yet, the most important moment of the organization would only come now.

"Now, let me tackle one topic that I bet you guys are wondering about," I shouted, taking my time with the following pause to let everyone focus on me again.

"Some of you might've realized it already, but the crux of my strength comes from my mastery in using and deploying arrays and formations!" I shouted out loud, even though saying that meant revealing some of my cards.

But right now, I needed one more thing. One element that would keep all those individualistic cultivators in place.

An incentive.

"In here, right on this stage, I will create a powerful formation that will be used to suck all the energy from the treasures we recover from the ruins!" I shouted from the bottom of my soul, before spreading my arms open and smiling as wide as I could.

"Couple that with the energy I will contribute myself, and all of the energy gathered here will be distributed to all those who will contribute to their jobs!"