

"Have you taken your identification."

"Yes."

"Have you taken some energy drinks?"

"Yes."

"Have you double checked the timings?"

"Yes."

"Have you-

"Enough mom! I have everything in place, don't worry." Rui reprimanded exasperatedly. Lashara was notoriously overprotective. The Martial Entrance Exam was notoriously difficult and dangerous, Lashara had warned Rui over and over that it could be disastrous, but she knew Rui had been preparing for this day for a long time. His resolve was quite unshakeable, she knew her words would have no effect. Rather than antagonizing him and earn his ire, she decided to give him her blessings.

Six years had passed since the kidnapping incident, Rui was now thirteen-years-old. The time for the Martial Arts entrance exam had come. It was quite unnerving to Rui, even though he had been mentally preparing himself for this day for a long time. No, it was because he'd been preparing for this day for a long time that he was nervous.

He breathed deeply, trying to calm his racing heart down as he prepared his pouch with some basic essentials.

"Let me travel with you there, Rui." Julian smiled. He had managed to graduate from the Kandrian Institute of Sciences, and was accepted into the

Institute as an apprentice scholar under a prestigious Scholar in the research and development department.

"Thanks." Rui nodded. Julian had always been a calming influence, he was a true genius too, unlike Rui.

Lashara hugged him one last time and kissed him on the head.

"Be safe, don't push yourself too far, okay?" She told him, a tinge of anxiety rippled across her face.

"Yeah, don't worry mom. I'll be fine."

After receiving well-wishes from the whole of the Quarrier Orphanage, he bid them farewell and set out with Julian on a rickshaw.

"Nervous?"

"Surprisingly not as much as just a while ago. Being supported by my family puts me at ease, even though the significance or difficulty of the exam hasn't changed at all."

"I'm glad to hear that." Julian smiled.

"I'm going to be honest with you. I truly never did expect that your drive to become a Martial Artist would be this strong..."

Rui didn't know how to respond.

"Children undergo a lot of phases as they grow, this is universally true for almost everybody. I say almost true, because I've only ever come across one exception."

Julian turned to Rui with scrutinizing eyes.

"Born with hitherto unheard of prodigious, genius-level intelligence, having mastered two languages, mathematics and sciences at an extraordinarily young age, yet you've never changed, at all Rui." Julian continued. "It's pretty

absurd, your temperament was also unchanging and mature well beyond your age. Your cognitive capabilities only grew exponentially sharper as you grew older."

Rui knew what he was talking about, a human being's brain stopped developing at the age of twenty-five, this was the age at which their cognitive capabilities reached a peak. Rui, however, inherited the cognitive capabilities of his previous brain stacked on top of the growing cognition of his adolescent brain. It was as if he possessed the sum of the IQs of both John Falken and Rui Quarrier. This was one of the biggest advantages of being reborn with your mind intact; His already grown mind received the advantage of growing even more for a second time.

"All of this data points to the conclusion that you're an adult in a child's body..." Julian continued.

Rui turned his head and met his gaze, before smirking.

"You don't actually believe that do you?"

"No." Julian shrugged, smiling. "It's not impossible, nothing is, but it's too absurd."

"Heh."

Inwardly Rui sweating. He had no idea why he was reincarnated, though he suspected there was a reason behind it. He was pretty scared that his secret would come out when Julian began talking about Rui. To think that this guy had been scrutinizing and analyzing Rui for the past thirteen years and correctly hypothesized the actual truth, as expected of an actual genius.

They bantered for a long time until the rickshaw had reached its destination.

"Well then, good luck Rui. I'll be heading to the KIS from here."

"Thanks Julian, goodbye."

"Ah one last thing"

Rui turned to face Julian as he got off.

"Even if you were someone else reborn in a child's body, I would still love you as my brother." Julian smiled warmly. "Go on Rui, fulfill your dream."

Rui smiled back. "I sure as hell will." And with that, the two brothers split paths.

Rui turned to face the Mantian branch of the Kandrian Martial Academy.

There many rickshaws, and even many chariots littered outside the Academy, there were many thousands of adolescent boys and even a decent proportion of girls accumulating inside the gigantic facility. Gigantic was an understatement, the only reason he wasn't too shocked was because he had demanded to see the Academy atleast once before. Still, it was an incredible sight. Just the mere sight of it forcefully inspired ambition from within one's heart.

"This is it."magic

The Kandrian Martial Academy was a multi-sectioned set of facilities that revolved around one primary facility that served as the main facility for training. It was fortified by a huge wall made from stones and cement, that circled around the Academy for many kilometers on end.

The sheer prestige of this Academy alone drove more than a million aspiring Martial Artists to apply for the entrance exam.

As Rui entered the Academy, having passed the huge gates after showing his ID to the Gate security, he took a good look at the competitors, who were heading towards the designated exam center.

('They're almost all older than me.') Rui noted.

Most of the adolescents taking the exam seemed to be sixteen and above.

('I guess it's somewhat rare for a thirteen-year-old to participate.') Rui said, as he received a numbered tag upon reaching the facility, serving as his applicant ID.

The exam center was even bigger than one would think from afar, within the facility was a huge crowd of applicants. The mood was tense, although there were Martial Artists serving as assistant invigilators to prevent the outbreak of violence, just standing in the room with thousands of others put faint pressure on Rui. A cursory glance at the crowd revealed a lot of information about his competition.

('Most of them have trained their body, though not as much as I have. Yet a lot of them are inherently physically superior to I am. I'm only making up for a lack of talent compared to the strongest applicants. The age gap definitely favours them significantly too.')

Rui smiled.

('Not that I give a fuck, I'm going to crack this exam no matter what.')