

"What? What happened? Where am I!?"

Alex's mind was confused beyond belief. He knew that something had happened to him. He felt like he had been dreaming, and just now woke up.

However, he had no idea where he was.

Alex only knew that he was currently standing in the most imposing hall he had ever seen in his entire life. Just the sheer size of this place struck him dumb. Alex suspected that this hall was over a kilometer wide! It was probably even a hundred meters tall!

Who would build such a thing!?

The entire place was colored in black and red, evoking a kind of evil feeling. 'Did they hire some teenager to design this place? Who colors such a grand hall in black and red?' Alex thought as his brows furrowed. 'Even more, why is everything empty? Sure, there are some things at the walls, but there is nothing in between them except for this big, dark carpet.'

Alex looked at the carpet and noticed that something was embroidered on it. It was a white jester's mask. Basically, it was a white mask with the face of a laughing person.

'Creepy.'

Alex looked to the front, and his eyes widened.

About a hundred meters to Alex's front was a vast and tall throne. The throne was probably over ten meters wide and reached the ceiling of this gigantic hall.

Alex also noticed that someone was sitting on the throne.

It was a young man, probably in his early twenties, just like Alex. He had long black and red hair, but Alex couldn't see how long his hair was exactly since this man was currently facing Alex, looking at him with a smirk.

Another interesting aspect of the man's appearance was his red eyes, but Alex didn't notice them from such a distance.

Although, he also looked a bit ridiculous since he was far too small for such a wide throne.

'Is that a goth kid?' Alex thought. 'Wait, as far as I know, goths are more black and grey. I think emos are more black and red. Did he design this place? Probably, judging by his get-up.'

Alex continued staring at the young man while the young man only smirked back.

Seconds passed.

Alex was looking awkwardly from side to side. The other party wasn't initiating a conversation and only stared at him.

Should he initiate a conversation?

Well, he had enough questions, so why not?

"Excuse me!" Alex shouted loudly, his voice echoing in the vast, empty hall. After all, the man was around 100 meters away from him.

No reaction.

'Maybe he didn't hear me?' Alex thought, unsure.

Alex took a step forward.

Thump!

Alex fell forward and barely caught himself with his hands.

'What? Where's my cane?!' Alex thought in panic as he searched around for his cane. Sadly, he couldn't find it.

'I mean, I can kind of walk without a cane, but it's awkward as fuck,' Alex thought as he stood up.

His balance was rather stable, which surprised him. Usually, due to the nerve damage in his ankle, his right foot always awkwardly flopped around. Alex could only stand on that foot by perfectly balancing his bodyweight along his entire leg. Alex took one step forward, and he took a deep breath in shock as he realized that he could use his right foot!

How?!

Alex balanced on his left leg as he moved his right foot in the air.

Full mobility!

No awkwardness!

Whoooosh!

Alex performed a roundhouse kick, and his mind was going wild.

This was just like back when he had been fighting!

'What the hell?!'

Alex tried out his right leg some more as he jumped and kicked a couple of times. However, after some seconds, Alex deflated with a sigh. 'There's no way my foot is actually healed. Even if it had been healed, there should be some minor awkwardness in my movement, and some of the muscles in my foot should have atrophied.'

'This is obviously a dream.'

BOOOOM!

The sound of an explosion rang throughout the hall, coming from Alex's front! The sound was so loud that Alex's ears started ringing as he was thrown back by a shockwave.

Luckily, the shockwave didn't injure him.

"Every damn time!" an angry voice shouted.

Alex shook his head to regain his calm.

"Every damn time!" the voice repeated, obviously working itself into a rage. "Every time I get a soul from your world, they always think that it's a dream!"

Alex lifted his head and looked towards the throne.

Was the young man speaking?

It was hard to see from such a distance.

'Wait, then how can I hear him? It sounds like he's just beside me.'

"This is getting boring!" the voice said with annoyance. "How about, one time, one of you guys just walks forward? How about, one time, one of you guys just walks up to me?"

Alex looked around as he tried to find the origin of the voice, but there was nothing around him. On top of that, the voice was coming from the front.

Was it really that young man?

"Every damn time, I watch you guys, and every damn time, you do the same fucking thing!" the man shouted.

Alex saw that the man's body was slightly moving from side to side, but it was hard to judge from such a distance.

"Oh, what's this hall? Oh, what happened to my body?" the man shouted with a sarcastic tone.

'I think he lifted his right arm to imitate someone speaking,' Alex thought as he concentrated on the throne in the distance.

BANG!

Another explosion, but this time, Alex managed to barely remain upright.

However, this explosion was even more shocking than the first one.

Why?

Because Alex had seen what had caused the explosion.

The young man had lifted his right arm and then slammed down.

And then, something shocking happened.

The armrest of the throne moved inward and stopped below the young man's fist!

A ten-meter-wide throne had shrunk to just a bit more than five meters!

And the explosion?

That was the young man's fist!

Just the mere act of slamming one's fist down on an armrest had thrown Alex to the ground from a distance of over a hundred meters.

That was insane!

All of this took some time to describe, but barely any time had passed in reality.

The young man was still ranting.

"And then. And then! And then you always say the same fucking words! You always say 'excuse me'! Can't you say something else for a change?! Can't at least one of you guys say 'hello' or 'good morning' or 'fuck you' or just ANYTHING else?!"

Alex still couldn't deal with the situation.

'Okay, that's impossible. This must be a dream!' he thought.

Whooooop!

Suddenly, the distance between Alex and the man shrank. In less than a second, Alex stood barely half a meter in front of the man.

"What did you just fucking think?!" the young man growled with narrowed eyes. "I dare you! Think that one more time! See what happens!"

For some reason, Alex felt terrified right now.

Usually, he wouldn't be afraid of a young man sitting on a throne, but for some reason, Alex felt like he had to be very careful right now. Otherwise, he might make a mistake he would regret!

Alex looked nervously into the eyes of the young man while the young man glared back.

"Then, how about I say it instead?" Alex asked.

The young man blinked a couple of times in surprise.

"Oh, that's a new one," he said, all his rage gone. "Do go on ahead. I want to see how this plays out."

Alex gulped.

"This is obviously a dream," Alex said.

"What makes you think so?" the young man asked as he leaned back. The distant back of the throne moved forward of its own volition.

"That," Alex said as he pointed at the back of the throne. "Thrones don't do that."

"Mine does," the man said with a smirk.

"How?" Alex asked. He wanted to know how the guy could rationalize something

like that.

"Like this."

Whoop! Whoop! Whoop!

Suddenly, the entire hall became wavy. Walls were shooting at Alex and then going far into the distance. The throne was even waving around like one of these wacky inflatable arm tube men on the streets.

Surprisingly, Alex stayed calm.

"See?" Alex said calmly. "Obviously a dream."

The hall stopped, and the young man wrinkled his nose.

"Alright, this is getting boring."

SHING!

And Alex's right foot was cut off at his ankle, just like that.

The young man didn't even move.

Alex fell to the ground in surprise and looked at his bleeding stump of a foot. His face turned into horror, but after two seconds, it surprisingly went back to a calm expression.

"See? I don't feel any pain," Alex said. "Therefore, this is a dream."

The young man chuckled.

"You're under shock. Give it some seconds," the young man said with a smirk. Alex only looked with skepticism at the young man and then back at his right foot.

He moved his right leg around a bit in morbid curiosity.

Some seconds passed.

Alex's face turned into a slight grimace. "Okay, maybe it stings a little."

"Give it time," the young man said.

Alex started sweating as his breathing quickened.

"Okay, maybe it stings a lot."

"Give it time," the young man repeated with a smirk.

"Maybe... maybe... argh!"

Alex's voice stopped as his hand went to his right leg. His entire body was straining itself as it became harder for him to breathe.

And then, Alex lost it.

However, he couldn't be blamed for his poor reaction. Take a normal person from a street and cut their leg off. See how they react.

"There we go," the young man said with a smirk. "Now, do you-"

"Aaaargh!"

The young man's brows furrowed. "Okay, now do-"

"Aaaargh!"

"Shut up!"

Whooop!

Suddenly, all the pain disappeared.

Alex's mind was shocked.

Wait, what?

Alex looked down and saw that his right foot was back.

'What?'

"You done?!" the young man asked with an annoyed tone. "You got that outta your system, yes, or do you want to shout some more?"

Alex couldn't comprehend the situation as he tried to make sense of everything.

"Alright, this is taking too long!" the young man said as he stood up.

BANG!

And then he kicked Alex into the side, throwing him two meters into the distance.

"Alright, so," the man began as he continued walking to Alex. "You died. You are dead. This is not a dream."

BANG!

Another kick.

Alex coughed several times. These kicks were no joke!

The man continued walking to Alex. "You were just on your way to the afterlife, and that's when I grabbed your soul."

Alex started to get up, but before he could straighten himself, he got hit by another kick that threw him into the distance.

"I've transported you to my Realm," the young man said with a smirk as his hands gestured to the hall around him. "This is my personal palace."

Alex quickly got up as the young man reached him again.

Whoosh!

The young man's kick missed as Alex turned his upper body sideways.

BANG!

And then, Alex punched the young man in the face!