

The Crafts 340

Chapter 340: The True Nature Of The City

Beep

In the middle of the discussion between Tanner and Holad, their communicators sounded with the standard beep of the military. Out of reflex, they stood at attention before realising what they had done and went on to check their communicator.

"Ahem."

Tanner coughed to clear the awkward atmosphere before turning his attention to his communicator. Likewise, Holad did the same.

Immediately, the faces of the two reacted exaggeratedly.

"So it begins." Holad sighed.

The message in the communicators of the two had the same content: the desolate beast horde had begun to move.

The two promptly made their way to the command centre as the message informed them to do so. Even though this was an impromptu meeting, it was necessary to give out orders to the more powerful individuals so they could coordinate their forces well.

After a few minutes, the meeting was over and the 17 seventh level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioners with the 42 sixth level stellar practitioners, moved into action. Under their command was a multitude of stellar practitioners as well as automated battle droids.

Each battle droid was at least equivalent to a peak Body Refinement stage practitioner and at most a second level stellar practitioner. To face off against the thousands of desolate beasts, there were twenty one thousand of these battle droids dispatched into battle. For context, Trundel City's armoury has a total of one hundred and fifty thousand of these automated battle droids, which means that 14% had been put into action.

Automated battle droids were strategic weapons of official powers in a city or district. Although there was a limit to how many they could have, the truth was that very few powers could even reach that limit. This was because the droids were quite costly to make; especially those on par with stellar practitioners as the materials needed were somewhat rare in Eretre. There was also the maintenance cost on these battle droids, which too wasn't a small amount.

For instance, Trundel City actually has a fixed quota of two hundred and fifty thousand battle droids, but they had only been able to build one hundred and fifty thousand of them. Any more and the maintenance cost would affect their budget.

With twenty one thousand (21,000) automated battle droids, hundreds of stellar practitioners, 42 sixth level and 17 seventh level stellar practitioners, the allied force was confident in facing off against the desolate beasts. There was still the heavy firepower weaponry like the rocket launchers, stellar-powered missiles, and .5 decametres[1] stellar howitzer, all designed to handle desolate beast hordes.

But despite all of this, the situation was still somewhat dire and risky. This was because the true threat of the desolate beast wave wasn't the one hundred thousand or so desolate beasts, but the few elites amongst them. 15 seventh level desolate beasts and 3 eighth level desolate beasts with one at the peak of the level; even if the howitzers and other long-ranged weapons could harm them, it was in the condition that they could land a hit. Even though some of these elite desolate beasts had huge figures, they were fast and smart enough to predict and even dodge attacks. To defeat them, the allied force would have to field their own elites, but there was no eighth level stellar practitioner present.

As he joined up with his team for the battle, Tanner sighed at the fate of the allied force.

The reason for the lack of an eighth level stellar practitioner was simple; a battle of profits.

To the allied force, the elite desolate beasts were dangerous monsters that could kill them and cause them to lose this battle. But to the eighth level stellar practitioners in the city, the monsters were walking gold bars.

Desolate beast body parts were very valuable as they could be put into use for various products. The stronger the desolate beast was while alive, the more valuable its body part, so one could imagine how valuable an eighth level desolate beast corpse is.

Eighth level desolate beast raw materials were very rare on the market as such monsters lived in the true depths of the Millennium Mountains. Even for stellar practitioners on the same level,

heading there was too risky. So, the appearance of three eighth level desolate beasts outside that region attracted a ton of interests from the top powers in the city. But this created a conundrum; how would the gains be shared?

Right now, the top powers in the city were currently negotiating, which was why no eighth level stellar practitioner had been sent over. If one happened to sneak over to take down these desolate beasts, whether they were successful or not, the party behind them would be blacklisted by the other organisations, making it impossible for them to survive in Trundel City. Even the Cardoso family was no exception to this as they needed to ensure the other top powers in the city were pleased in order to maintain the prosperity of the city.

If the thief was an outsider, the powers in Trundel City would team up to take them down. They might even raise the matter to the Oklo Dynasty, and this was possible because the Cardoso family was connected to them. Hence, these 3 eighth level desolate beasts were marked as Trundel City's 'pie'. But the matter of how this pie was to be shared had resulted in an impasse.

So, until a decision was reached, the allied forces had to hold on. But Tanner was suspicious that another command had been given to the Desolate Beasts Conflict Organisation's director, who led the charge; and that was to ensure that the desolate beasts weren't scared into a retreat until negotiations had concluded.

"Valuing profits over the safety of the people or the soldiers. Is this how a city should be run?"

Tanner's deputy, known for his strong sense of conviction in the concept of justice and equality, commented as he noticed his captain's murky eyes.

"Watch your tone. You're still under probation for last time." Tanner lectured him.

The man was frustrated but he quietly shut up.

The 'last time' Tanner referred to was during the East Brafford relics incident. His deputy was caught criticising the higher-ups and the city's leadership for not trying to save more people from the relics, and was charged for treason and insubordination. He was supposed to have been fired after a short term imprisonment, but Tanner pleaded for him and brought his achievements to the surface, citing the incident as an emotional outburst. Thanks to that, the deputy was let off with only a short one month suspension and a salary deduction as well as a penalty fee.

Seeing this, Tanner sighed.

"Like I said before, for those above us, the struggle for power and resources is more important than anything else. There are pros and cons to this, so all we can do is ensure that there are as few losses as possible."