

## The Fall 264

### Chapter 264: The Final Sprint

"Billy! It's nice to see you," Thea said with a smile to the incoming giant. "Zac told me you came to save me. You're a real hero as well."

"Ha ha, did you see Billy's Big Thwonk?" Billy said and heroically flexed his muscles, but quickly stopped with a yelp due to his wounds.

"How are your wounds, Billy?" Zac asked.

"Billy will be okay. What happened with the scary spear-guy?" he asked and looked around.

"I beat him up with the help of Alien-man," Zac said.

Thea threw him a questioning glance, but he only responded with a slightly helpless shrug.

"Alien-man was even worse than Billy," the giant said as he looked over in Ylvas' direction. "He will become a pirate with a tree-leg."

"Actually Billy, you can regrow legs and arms," Zac explained. "If you eat the right treasures."

"Aliens are pretty impressive," Billy nodded sagely, slightly missing the point.

"Uh, yeah," Zac said and started walking toward Ylvas.

The old champion looked better, but it was still clear that the battle had noticeably aged him. There was a real cost to using life force as a fuel to one's attacks, and Zac wouldn't be surprised if Ylvas had lost over 200 years going by his appearance. Then again, that still meant he had much more time remaining than humans had in total before the integration.

"You're looking better," Ylvas said with a slightly weak voice as he opened his eyes. "I am glad your friend is okay. Vasidas has been an enigma since our worlds got integrated. I have no idea what he is thinking."

"I'm sorry we couldn't get him as well," Zac sighed.

"It's okay. Nenotheop was the spiritual pillar of the Medhin Empire. Losing him and almost half of the Medhin royals in a month should have a huge impact on their morale," Ylvas said with a shake of his head. "Vasidas is one of the lesser-known royals, usually acting alone. He won't have the same rallying power as Nenotheop did."

"We also know more about the truth of the Medhin threat and can begin to spread the news the moment we get back. We might not be able to convince everyone, but a seed of doubt should be planted. Perhaps the Medhin will even become refugees, ousted from their position," one of the soldiers next to Ylvas added.

"Sounds like you have things in hand. In any case, the three of us will leave now," Zac said. "We don't want to risk attracting those two Dominators. You should probably do the same."

Ylvas nodded and arduously got to his feet.

"I would like to thank you again. Without the assistance of you and Billy, we would never have been victorious in this fight. Your strength is astounding, and I can't imagine the power you will have when you reach the next stage. As promised, here is your reward," Ylvas said and reached for his bag.

Zac quickly moved to stop Ylvas hand with a shake of his head.

"There's no need for that. Everything changed when they caught Thea. I would have gone here with or without you. Besides, I've already taken the emperor's pouch, that's more than enough. We have the same enemy. Who knows, if you manage to save yourself from The Great Redeemer it might help us on Earth as well," Zac said.

It was true. They still had no idea exactly what the Redeemer's plans were, most were still conjecture. Perhaps losing just one of the planets would ruin the whole thing for him, saving Earth as well. It would be a worthwhile investment to leave Ylvas with his treasure so he could use it in eradicating the Medhin Royals.

Ylvas looked surprised but slowly nodded his head in agreement.

"You will be remembered as the hero of Berum," Ylvas said and stretched his hand forward. "I hope to meet you again in the vast cosmos."

Zac grabbed his hand in a farewell before he started walking down the mountain with Billy and Thea in tow. As they walked down the mountain, Zac opened his status screen to allocate his free points. As he expected he'd already reached level 65, and he put the free points into dexterity.

He knew he'd gain a large boost in Strength from the levels awarded from the hunt, so he needed to shore up his Dexterity a bit. Otherwise, there was nothing to note. He hadn't made any progress in his Daos, and he also hadn't gained any title even though Nenotheop was the first proper E-Grade cultivator he defeated.

He wasn't too surprised by the lack of title, but the situation with the Dao was a bit surprising. He had been through an extremely intense fight with the strongest enemy he'd ever encountered. There'd also been at least twenty warriors utilizing various Dao Seeds during that battle, yet he hadn't even gained a spark of inspiration.

It was as though something was missing in the air, or like he had blinders covering his head. If this battle had taken place on Earth, he was sure he would advance one of his seeds. But now he knew there was no point to sit down and meditate since there was nothing to meditate on.

He closed his status screen and turned his focus on his Cosmos Sack next. The moment he touched it he was shocked to the point that he stumbled. Nenotheop was rich.

"You okay?" Thea asked with some concern but suddenly understood what was going on when she saw Zac's wide grin and his hand touching his pouch.

"Just a bit surprised is all," Zac said.

The Cosmos Sack had expanded with an entirely new section dedicated to Nenotheop's loot, and it was far bigger than the original space. There were simply mountains of treasure inside, far eclipsing what he gained even when taking Salvation's treasure.

It was also far more organized, with neatly arrayed sections depending on the type of valuable. There were also roughly thirty piles of random treasure, and Zac immediately realized that was the loot that Nenotheop still hadn't organized.

One particular item in the unsorted piles suddenly drew his attention. It was a large stone statue where the whole thing was just a face that smiled in an extremely creepy manner, and the reason he recognized it was because he had seen Thea sneak it into her pouch when she thought Zac wasn't looking when they hunted together.

When Zac had asked about the statue, she had been embarrassed about it until she admitted she liked kitsch and weird memorabilia. The statue wasn't a treasure, but rather something she wanted to add to her private collection.

"Thea," Zac said as he stopped, drawing the attention of Billy and Thea who had been talking about their time in the hunt.

Zac moved his hand and suddenly a mountain of treasure appeared in front of him. Thea's eyes widened in surprise before she looked at Zac.

"My treasures? I thought Vasidas had them?" she said.

"I guess Nenotheop took them from him to pass me on the ladder, though I don't know if everything is there," Zac said.

Thea immediately moved toward the pile of loot before she hesitated for a second.

"What do you want in return?" she asked.

"Nothing, they're yours," Zac said as he beckoned for her to take it. "More importantly, I have a proposition for you."

"Thank you, I'll remember this," she said with a serious face as she put her treasure into her sack. "What do you have on your mind?"

"I can lend you enough treasure to reach the second spot on the ladder. In return, I'll come and check out your library three days after the hunt ends. There are some things I want to look into," Zac explained.

"You're not worried that someone will pass us on the ladder if you split your loot like that?" Thea hesitantly said.

"That's impossible," Zac immediately said with a shake of his head, regretting it a bit when he noticed Thea's incisive stare. "Also, Billy, how about I give you some treasure as well?"

"Mama said handouts should be saved for those in need, Billy is fine," Billy said with a shake of his head, completely disinterested.

"But Ogras and I owe you a bit for taking the biggest rat, right?" Zac said, changing tactics. "I'll just pay our debt right now. It's not good when there are debts between friends, right?"

Billy seemed to think it over for a bit before he nodded with a smile.

“Right, no debt between friends,” he agreed.

“This all sounds fine, but let’s get away from here first. I don’t want to meet the Dominators while I still only have a small amount of Cosmic Energy in my body,” Thea interjected. “What are your plans for the last day of the hunt?”

“I will hunt as many beasts as I can here in the core area,” Zac said without hesitation. “The money and Cosmic Energy they give are very good even at my level, better than any hunting ground I have at home.”

“Billy also want to thwonk,” Billy nodded. “Billy is a genius in energy control, the stupid beasts are much easier to hit now.”

“Fine, let’s find a good hunting ground a few hours away, and hunt in the same area. That way we can help each other if we run into trouble,” Thea nodded.

They left the Medhin-controlled area without any troubles and found a good hunting spot roughly two hours away. They had gone in the opposite direction from the Zones where the two Dominators stayed, which should hopefully ensure they didn’t run into each other.

As soon they arrived Zac forked over enough treasure to place Thea in the second position and Billy in the 8th. Doing so actually kicked Thomas Fischer down to the 11th spot on the ladder, but Zac didn’t really care. It was not like they were allies anyway. Zac also took the opportunity to finally establish an alliance with Billyville before they got ready to split up to hunt beasts.

Each of them was strong enough that they could freely hunt without a party, and it would likely even slow them down to go together. There were a lot of beasts in the forests, but not to the point that three powerhouses could run together without taking food out of each other’s mouths.

“If we don’t see each other again in the hunt we’ll see each other in three days,” Zac said to the other two.

When Zac had explained that he would visit Thea after the hunt Billy immediately insisted that he wanted to come and play as well, so they all agreed to meet in Westerfort, the main town that the Marshall Clan controlled.

Soon, Zac was alone in the forest, ripping through pack after pack of rabid beasts with wild abandon. He had accomplished everything he set out to do, and perhaps even more, in this hunt. It was a disappointment and a problem that the two Dominators would take the top positions in the Hunter-ladder, but there was simply nothing to do about that.

He had gained a score of levels however, and a mountain of loot, which would help Port Atwood thrive in the future. He had also managed to set up quite a few alliances and even found out about the wealthy underworld. Apart from the splinter stuck in his head, the trial had exceeded his wildest expectations.

He couldn’t wait to get back now. He had trials to take, Incursions to close, and so many unanswered questions that he needed to look into.

For now though, he had beasts to kill. Zac entered an almost Zen state where he methodically moved from pack to pack, the minutes turning to hours. In just a day, tens of thousands of beasts were ruthlessly mowed down, turning into money and Cosmic Energy for Zac.

Zac thought this would continue until the time ran out, but a shocking change took place when there were only 30 minutes left. He had passed Vasidas on the hunter ladder. The battle against the Medhin hadn't been enough, but between Verun injuring the royal and Zac's mindless grinding he had been pushed to the third spot increasing his position by one.

But just a few seconds later he was once again pushed down a position, and Zac realized that Vasidas didn't want to give up the title. But if there was one thing that Zac could do it was causing widespread damage. His reserves had long restored during the day, and the wound from the spear in his chest wasn't impeding him too much. He no longer held anything back, and fractal blades were soon destroying everything in the valley.

Zac didn't even have time to check the ladder anymore and instead gave everything he had in killing as many beasts as humanly possible until the world finally turned black.