

The Fall 266

Chapter 266: Council

“Why have so many come to beseech The Great Sage? I am sorry, but I do not accept disciples,” an arrogant voice echoed through the huge hall as the leaders of Port Atwood entered the Towers of Myriad Dao.

The next moment Brazla appeared, this time donned in a golden cultivator’s robe. Behind him was a huge golden sword that radiated a divine might, though Zac knew it was just an illusion. However, those who entered these halls for the first time couldn’t stop themselves from gasping, much to the Tool Spirit’s Delight.

“We need to hold an extremely important meeting,” Zac explained, hurrying to add some compliments when he saw the Tool Spirit’s frown. “And I felt it would be rude to not include The Great Sage in such an important event. Who else would we turn to for wisdom?”

That seemed to placate the Tool Spirit, and it quickly took a pose trying to convey wisdom. It might have worked if it wasn’t for Brazla’s nose pointing so far up in the air that his face was almost looking straight up.

Those in the group who hadn’t had the pleasure to meet Brazla before couldn’t help but look back and forth between Zac and the Machiavellian Tool Spirit with utter confusion. Zac himself felt like he had swallowed a pile of shit, but he had to admit Brazla was far more learned than the others here.

“Very well, the great Brazla will listen in on your meeting,” he said and swung his sleeve.

The next moment an extremely opulent conference table stood in front of them. However, even Zac couldn’t stop himself from glaring at the Tool Spirit when he saw the seating arrangements. There was one massive throne wrought from crystals and gold standing at the end, and it was pretty obvious Brazla saved that one for himself.

As for the others, there were simple wooden stools that were so low that if they sat down on them, they would barely be able to see above the table. It looked like Ogras’ eyes would pop out of their sockets, but before he could explode Zac intervened.

“Is this the hospitality of The Great Brazla?” Zac said with some disappointment as he took out another inscribed tile. “I even brought these supreme tiles at great personal cost to beautify your surroundings, but if this is the reception we will receive, I should probably get some simpler things.”

He felt a bit shameless about his words, but common sense held no sway under these roofs, so he could only play along. Brazla seemed almost entranced by the beautiful tiles, and a second later the paltry stools were replaced with proper chairs for everyone.

“I have gathered you all today to brief you on my experiences inside the hunt. I have learned some extremely troubling things about our new world, and need your input on how we should proceed from here,” Zac started the meeting without any preamble.

The mood around the table quickly got serious, with even Brazla staying quiet as Zac described the events of the hunt. Of course, he glossed over some parts, such as his dual classes and his meeting with Anzonil, and anything about the [Heart of Oblivion].

“So, there you have it. It is very possible that an old monster is currently heading toward us, and it does not seem it would end well if he found us. We need to figure out some precautions against this,” Zac finally said as he looked at the faces around the table.

There was a subdued silence, and most were looking down at the table with a frown or in fear. Zac understood the feeling well. There were so many enemies to contend with as is, and suddenly there was an even stronger bad guy thrown into the mix.

“Excuse me, did you say that there were no incursions on this other planet you partook the trial with?” Abby suddenly said, her enormous eye glistening with interest.

“Yes, no incursions ever appeared,” Zac nodded. “Why, is it important?”

“It might not be important, but I think I understand why this Redeemer gave such a task to his chosen,” Abby said as she bobbed above her chair.

“A newly integrated planet without incursions is practically unprecedented. It is the standard test of the System, and there are more than enough willing parties to go around. But I believe that The Great Redeemer has found a way to stop that,” she said.

“Stop how?” Zac asked.

“I can’t be sure, but I think it has to do with the conquest. If The Great Redeemer simply needed some people with the cultivation technique to survive until the planet integrated, why didn’t he tell his chosen to move into the mountains and cultivate away from the earth? Why risk their lives to dominate their whole planet?”

“I think he has somehow managed to tag his targeted planets as his own through this conquest, and since the planet is instantly owned by an existing faction when it gets integrated, no incursions spawn.”

“But we have incursions on our planet?” Kenzie questioned.

“Yes, because the Dominators failed in their task. I heard a massive war took place where the whole Zhix population banded together against the dominators. Perhaps there would be no incursions if they had managed to dominate their planet before they arrived. Perhaps this can be a clue to their plans?” Abby continued.

“The fulcrum thing?” Zac asked.

“No, I think that is different. But we must ask ourselves, if the goal of the subjects of The Great Redeemer is to dominate planets, why haven’t we even seen their shadows since the integration took place? I think it’s exactly due to those incursions that have popped up,” Ogras interjected.

“There is another possibility. You said you believe that this guy is D, or perhaps even C-Grade? But look at our Incursions. We have the Church of Everlasting Dao here, that’s at least a B-Grade force,” Ogras added.

“Even worse, The Undead Empire is here, and they have A-Grade old monsters holding the fort, perhaps even stronger beings. Even a C-grade hegemon would think twice before offending these forces by stealing a planet from out under their noses,” the demon finished. “And that’s only two of the ones we know of, there might be more powerful factions here.”

“So, they actually want us to defeat those forces without getting their hands dirty, so their boss doesn’t get blamed?” Kenzie said with a frown.

“Exactly. And it’s not like we can’t ignore the incursions. Both those forces are lunatics who leave planets without a single living soul within a few years,” Ogras sighed.

“Damned if you do, damned if you don’t,” Zac muttered before looking up. “So, what do we do?”

“Sell yourself,” Ogras suddenly said.

“What?” Zac gaped.

“We obviously need to close those incursions, and somehow also kill those Dominators. But we have no idea if that’s enough, right? Perhaps that Redeemer can still find us. Those Dominators might have hidden some means on some remote corner of the planet already,” Ogras explained, his careful nature showing.

“So, we need another reason for The Great Redeemer to back away. And that’s where you come in. You’re a humanoid behemoth, and you might be able to join a sect strong enough for The Great Redeemer to back away.”

“Is that really possible? Would he back away just because I joined a sect?” Zac asked skeptically.

“If you become an important disciple, then attacking your home will be akin to attacking the sect itself. But it depends on how crazy the guy is,” Ogras shrugged. “If he is rational, he would back away if the force is strong enough. No need to risk his life over a baby-planet, right?”

“It’s a plan, but it’s easier said than done. We can’t even leave this world, the Nexus Hub is inactive,” Zac said. “And even if it activated, how would we even be able to get to such a Sect. From what I understand it’s extremely hard to travel to higher grade places.”

It was true. One of the first things he’d asked Ogras was why he didn’t simply teleport to an A-grade world to cultivate there instead of coming to a place like Earth. The situation for the poorest saps on an A-Grade continent would likely be better than even the kings of a D-Grade world.

But it was extremely hard to travel upward even though it was something everyone wished to do. There essentially were only two ways. First was getting your hands on a Nexus Token of high enough tier.

Nexus Tokens were tickets to a random place. If you had a C-Grade token, you would be sent to a teleporter on a C-Grade world. But you had no idea where, and you might end up at some extremely dangerous place rather than at a public teleporter in some capital.

These tickets were generally given by the System as rewards for various hard quests. You needed to prove you deserved to travel to those higher-grade cultivation paradises. Perhaps Zac would be able to get one when he reached D-grade after becoming the world leader, but that was far off.

Another way to move upward was to get an invite from a high tier force, which would allow you to teleport to them. But those tokens were extremely rare as well, and they could only be awarded to Sects or Clans from quests by the System.

Essentially you needed to earn passage one way or another, and you couldn't just move about as you wish. The System clearly did not want free movement in the multi-verse. Ogras believed it had to do with limited resources. If wastrels could go to high-tier planets and snatch divine treasures for himself things would get crazy. No one would want to stay on the lower planes.

"Well, there is one place where you can showcase your power in front of a bunch of people from various powerful forces, and that place has always been a place where rogue cultivators find established forces to take them in," Ogras pointedly said. "You simply need to climb high enough to prove your potential."

Zac immediately understood what Ogras talked about. The Tower of Eternity. It made sense that the powerful factions in the multiverse would send invitation tokens with their scions there. If they could recruit some extremely powerful unaffiliated cultivators while they were still young and only at F-Grade they might form ties with a future powerhouse while they still were weak.

"We will have to try everything out," Zac nodded. "But we still don't know what he wants with us."

"Origin Dao," Brazla suddenly muttered.

"Excuse me?" Zac said and looked over at the tool spirit, who seemed quite content to be the object of everyone's attention.

"I would bet he is after the Origin Daos of your baby planet. You should have realized that your accomplishments in the Dao are far higher compared to normal D-Grade planets. It's much easier for you to gain Dao Seeds compared to the norm," Brazla started lecturing. "Perhaps you think you're very talented. But in truth, you just have a superior environment."

"This is not unique for this planet. In fact, it's the same with all baby worlds. Even invaders benefit from it," the Tool Spirit continued.

Zac shot a glance at Ogras, who slightly nodded to indicate that Brazla was correct.

"Why is that? It is due to what some call the Origin Dao. The process of integrating a world is partly to gradually infuse its core with massive amounts of energy, while also imbuing it with Origin Dao," Brazla continued.

"Most of it is lodged in the world core, but everyone who has gained a Dao Seed will also carry this Dao essence for a bit. But over time it will disintegrate and turn into normal spiritual energy. The system uses it to awaken the area to the higher truths of the cosmos so that cultivation becomes possible," the Tool Spirit explained.

"And you think The Great Redeemer is after this?" Zac asked.

"Yes, that would explain why he went through all this trouble instead of just buying a couple of planets. He needs to get to a newly integrated world quickly if he wants to harvest the Origin Dao," Brazla shrugged.

"What would he use this Origin Dao for?" Kenzie probed.

“No idea, but I would venture he has devised an unorthodox method that might allow him to break through whatever bottleneck he is stuck on,” Brazla said. “Sacrificing a couple of worlds to reach a higher grade wouldn’t be anything special in the multiverse.”

A subdued silence stretched across the table. Some, like Julia, seemed physically sick at the thought of some old man being ready to kill billions of people just for a chance to break through a bottleneck. It was a chilling reminder of the ruthless reality they lived in.