

The Fall 357

Chapter 357: Adriel

Lord Atwood wasted no time as a storm of energies started to churn around him, and a palpable sense of dread instinctively entered Alea's heart as an extreme killing intent blanketed the area. She wanted to walk up to him, but her body wouldn't listen, so she could only watch him from afar.

A huge woodsman's axe suddenly appeared above him, and the next moment it swung in an effortless motion, drawing a wide arc in front of Lord Atwood. Alea's brow furrowed, not understanding the meaning of the attack, but the next moment her eyes widened in understanding. An invisible wave of carnage spread out from Lord Atwood, destroying everything in front of him in the blink of an eye.

Only the flanks of the undead army were spared from getting cut into pieces, but the vanguard was utterly decimated, not leaving anything standing. Lord Atwood didn't stop at that point, and he flashed forward with his movement skill, almost taking him out of Alea's vision. Her consciousness was blurring, but she bit her lip to the point that it bled, forcing herself to stay awake to witness the miracle.

The fact that the Young Master and a handful of others jumped down from the flying treasure to take down the leftovers in the flank barely registered in Alea's mind. Her eyes were glued to the broad back of the one she had waited for these past days.

Tens of thousands of elite zombies remained, and they hadn't lost too much of their strength as most of their core combatants stayed in the back. The wraiths also stood there, protected by the encirclement of Unholy Beacons and E-Grade Corpse golems.

But not even a second passed before another, even more powerful, axe appeared above the Lord, this one causing the very air to ignite from its scorching heat. It looked like its swing heralded the end of the world, as a towering inferno ripped across the earth, swallowing the whole Undead Army.

There were no screams or wails, just the deafening sound of the crackling fire. But the wave of destruction ended just as abruptly as it appeared, leaving a scorched ground and pieces of flesh burnt beyond recognition. Only a small handful of elites remained, protected by the circle of Unholy Beacons and the hooded cultivators within.

It looked like they had managed to erect a strong enough defense, but doing so didn't come without cost as two of the hooded cultivators had turned to cinders even though they stood in the middle of the group, and smoke rose another one.

Alea wasn't worried though as she and Sui silently gazed at the destruction in the distance. She knew that this wasn't the limit of Lord Atwood's powers. And as expected the air above him shuddered before it shattered to let out the enormous hand that would bring an end to all resistance.

It looked different compared to the last time Alea saw it. It was at least twice as big as before and covered in dense fractals that resonated with the world itself. Shockingly enough the burnt cinders below turned into fertilizer as tall grass frantically rose from the ground, stretching toward the hand in the sky like children reaching for their parent.

The hand moved so fast it looked like teleportation, almost immediately appearing in the sky above the remaining elites of the undead army. A massive fractal appeared beneath the hand and it caused the area underneath to be subject to a tremendous strain.

Only the largest Corpse Golems were able to stay on their feet, while the others were forced down on their knees. The incorporeal specters were even more impacted it seemed as they shrieked while miasmic clouds were released from their bodies. They quickly tried to enter the ground to escape, but they were rebuffed somehow. It was as though the planet itself was rejecting them.

The next moment something unbelievable happened. The fractal rippled like a pond of water as an enormous mountain emerged from it, its sharp summit pointing straight down at the undead and their defensive array below.

The mountain didn't look like something created by Cosmic Energy, but rather something solid, something true. It emitted an ancient solidity that spread all the way to where Alea was lying. The mountain kept emerging from the array, and the pressure the undead beneath kept increasing, forcing even the giant Corpse Golems on their knees.

Finally, the mountain hit the defensive array, which at this point shone in with almost blinding light as the ten Unholy Beacons poured out a storm of miasma to reinforce it. The whole area shook from the clash of the two powers, but neither seemed able to gain a foothold. Sui sighed in regret from the side when she saw that the mountain was stopped, and its sharp summit unable to pierce the thick shell protecting their enemies.

However, it was clear that the array was barely holding on, as cracks kept appearing before they quickly were mended with the help of the beacons. One small push was all it would take to crack it open.

The enormous wooden hand looked extremely small as it hovered above the mountain, but it still looked like it wanted to help the mountain descend. It floated down and gave a light tap at the array, but Alea couldn't see what happened next as she was thrown back by an enormous shockwave.

Everything turned white for a second from a burst of pain before she felt the warm sensation of the golden light reappearing, and she arduously opened her eyes to see Sui desperately infuse her with divine energy again. People were climbing up all around them, many sporting some light wounds from the terrifying wave that swept everyone off their feet.

"Wha-" Alea said with a weak voice.

"It's over," Sui said with shock in her eyes. "The hand pushed the mountain into the ground. The undead... are all gone. He destroyed them in one fell swoop."

Alea arduously focused her eyes to see what the purifier meant, and the sight was shocking. The hand was gone, but the mountain and the array in the sky remained. The summit had been pushed at least fifty meters into the ground, and that was after having created an enormous crater where the Unholy Beacons once stood. There was not any sign of the undead who had huddled inside either, but their fate was painfully obvious.

No one moved, some even forgetting to breathe, after seeing the terrifying display in front of them. The air was still a chaotic mess after being subject to both Lord Atwood's towering aura and the terrorizing power of his attacks clashing with the undead's final defense. But one thing was clear.

They had made it.

The huge army full of undead elites had been swept away in less than 20 seconds, leaving a scene of utter devastation. Yet no one cheered or celebrated getting saved. Alea gave a weak sigh as she understood their feelings.

The past days had pushed them all beyond what anyone should be able to endure. They hadn't stopped for more than a few minutes for almost ten days. They had been harassed, pushed, and almost broken by the unrelenting zombies. The people around her only managed to keep standing from pure defiance, no one had the energy to celebrate.

So it was with hollow eyes they silently looked at their leader as he quickly made his way back toward their ranks. His aura reached toward the skies as he passed the sea of corpses he had created, but he restrained it as he hurried to Alea's side. He quickly got down on a knee in front of her, and Alea felt a flurry of emotions in her heart as he looked into his eyes.

"I knew you'd come," Alea smiled before the darkness took her.

"Hm?" Adriel said as his hollow eyes turned toward the distance, his eyes moving away from the enormous crystal in front of him.

He was sitting in his large study that was illuminated by thousands of azure lights, giving it a comfortable sheen of undeath. The moans and wails from a few of the still surviving experiments provided a soothing ambiance as the lich followed the progress of his grand array.

Things were progressing as expected, with only some futile attempts to stop the hordes. But the harassment was of no import, as it only cost them a few million of the newly aligned. It had even turned into a decent grindstone that would hopefully birth a few promising recruits among the unthinking children.

But there were always factors beyond one's control, and the battle he just witnessed through the eyes of his clones was beyond his expectation. The lich king scratched the desiccated skin that formed a thin layer over his skeleton as he considered the implications of what he had just seen.

"What is it, my lord?" the hovering ghost attendant asked with worry.

"I finally saw the top human, I was wondering when he would appear.... Interesting," the Lich muttered. "He killed four of my clones in an instant."

"What?!" the ghost said with some shock.

"Well, I still haven't really mastered the skill, they contained only a fraction of my strength," Adriel said without a care. "Still, a very impressive specimen to release such power while still at F-Grade. He would make great material."

"Do we need to change our plans, my lord?" the attendant asked.

"No need Triv, he is saddled with a handful of refugees and is stuck a long way from the fault-lines," Adriel said with a shake of his head. "It's a shame. I found a person with a semi-complete poison constitution. I have a friend who would pay dearly for that body."

"Do you want to send one of the Generals after him?" Triv probed.

"No, they have their tasks. Besides, the humans seem to have figured out what we are doing. They will have to come to me sooner or later in any case if they want to stop the realignment. There's no need for us to go out of our way to look for them," Adriel said as a small smile displayed the blackened teeth in his mouth.

"What about the one who visited us?" the attendant probed.

"Void..." Adriel muttered, some hesitation flashing in his eyes. "Very strong."

It had truly been a surprise to see the native insectoid appearing in his own palace, completely calm as though he was taking a stroll in his own boneyard. But the Lich soon found that the man's confidence wasn't without reason. He was extremely powerful, a top tier progenitor with a higher level than himself. Fighting him outside his own domain would be a risky venture, and killing him inside would not come without a cost.

"Should we agree with his proposal?" the ghost asked as he saw his leader fall into silence.

"No need," Adriel said with a shake of his head, waking up from his stupor.

"His aura... It's from that place though. Is it not better to extend some courtesy and delay the realignment? It shouldn't affect our goal too much," the ghost said.

"It's true, the insectoid is connected to that family, but not as you expect," Adriel said with a small smile.

"My teacher found out some more details. His connection is to an exiled bastard who has not been part of the family for tens of thousands of years. He turned to the unorthodox path, so no one in the family will stand up for him. In fact, they have tried to kill him on numerous occasions out of embarrassment."

The ghost nodded in understanding, no longer worried about the implications. That family was a bit troublesome, but it was no problem if the one called The Great Redeemer was long excommunicated. His Lord might even stand to gain a new friend by making things hard for the so-called Redeemer, as the iron-clad rules of the old families were not just for show.

"On another note, Threzz has requested permission to fight the Church. Four of his subsquads have been decimated by them," the attendant added, taking the opportunity to go through the docket now that his master was out of his revelry. He hated being interrupted while watching his crystal, and many had paid dearly for ruining his fun.

"No. Let them prance around for now. Activating the array comes first. But give him three new hordes, and promise him the vanguard when we conquer the entrances," Adriel said.

"Should we not focus on taking control of one of the entrances?" Triv said with confusion. "We are still not in control of a single one, while the Church has three."

"The treasure has yet to mature. It is still absorbing the Origin Energy of this infant planet. There are a few months before the realm closes its doors to protect the treasure as it comes into being. The world

will have realigned before then, allowing us to fight with an advantage," Adriel snickered. "The efforts the bodysnatchers are going through now will only benefit us in the end."