

The Fall 385

Chapter 385: Protect Your Wallet

"It's pretty quiet, I thought things would get rowdier if there were no laws," Zac said with a low volume to Ogras as they walked down the seemingly endless road leading toward the tower.

"Everyone here is an elite of their force, bringing hidden aces to climb as far as possible in the tower. Only a real mouthbreather would risk their lives against enemies of unknown power for no reason. This might be the only chance they have to come here, most people are only concerned to gain strength before evolving," the demon responded. "Of course, there are always some who were just born without a brain."

Zac followed Ogras' gaze and saw a scene where three burly beastkin cultivators seemingly had bumped into a group of hooded beings that were shorter than a meter in height. Even Calrin was slightly taller than the diminutive cultivators who covered their appearance. The beastmen towered above them like giants and they seemed to be rearing for a fight.

"Look where you walk you little shits," one of the beastmen growled as it threw a forceful kick. "You puny things should scurry in the sewers like the other rats."

Zac could sense that the power of the beastman wasn't too bad, and his kick was even imbued with some Dao seed that was at least middle stage. But the kick was forcibly stopped by the small hand of the leading hooded cultivator.

A shockwave erupted from the clash, but Zac noted with interest that its power was quickly swallowed by the atmosphere, and not even those standing within 5 meters were affected apart from a small flutter of their clothes. If such a collision took place on Earth it would have been able to topple trees over twenty meters away.

The beastman seemed shocked how effortlessly the little cultivator stopped his kick, and he hurriedly took out a large axe with some fear in his eyes. However, before he even had time to swing the group of hooded cultivators disappeared, only to reappear again at the same spot a second later. As for the three beastmen; they stood frozen for a second before their bodies started to fall apart into neatly separated chunks.

Zac looked at the beastmen, knowing they were deadlier than dead. He had barely been able to see what the hooded creatures did, but he realized they were actually some sort of small beastkin that all focused on Dexterity. They hadn't used weapon when dissecting their bulkier brethren, but rather a set of sharp claws on their furry hands.

The people in the surroundings didn't care in the slightest that a murder had taken place just in front of them. Not even the other beastman in the area lifted a brow when seeing their kin get slain. They rather looked down at the killed beastmen like they were idiots, and Zac had to agree. You would have to be extremely powerful or extremely stupid to harass people in a place like this.

Interestingly enough the blood and the bodies of the killed cultivators turned into motes of light that soon enough dissipated, and only the cosmos sacks were left behind. One of the hooded cultivators

snatched them up before the group walked away without a care, walking toward the inner parts of the city.

"Some people come here without a real understanding of the world, thinking they're unbeatable," Ogras snorted with a shake of his head. "Let's go."

"Weren't those small guys supposed to be suppressed or something?" Zac asked curiously as he took a last look at the beastmen.

"The larger ones attacked first, so whatever happened next was counted as Self Defense by the Ruthless Heavens," Ogras smiled. "So remember, if you want to kill someone try to make them hit you first, even if it's just a shove. Then you can kill them without any repercussions. This is another reason why there's so little fighting."

"Even if you win, as long as you hit first you will still get hunted down, right?" Zac confirmed.

"Right," Ogras nodded as he kept walking. "There is an exception though, but it doesn't relate to us. You can simply follow the rule to not hit first and we'll be fine."

"Where are we heading?" Zac asked as he walked along.

"You said we only have ten days here at most, so we better make the most of it," Ogras said. "First off, let's get something to eat. I haven't had a decent meal since I arrived at your godforsaken planet."

Zac stopped in his tracks and gave the demon an even stare, making Ogras roll his eyes in exasperation.

"We need to get a feel of the current situation here. Listening in on the discussion at a tavern is a good way to get some of the latest gossip of the area," the demon snorted. "It might allow us to save a lot of money to learn what we need to know. Information brokers are pretty damn expensive."

Zac reluctantly agreed with Ogras even if he felt the urge to start running back and forth to complete all his various goals of coming here. There was so much to do, with helping Alea and learning more about his Specialty Core being the top priorities before entering the Tower itself. So it was with some reluctance he let the demon drag him to a decently sized open-air restaurant roughly halfway between the stairs and the tower.

"This is roughly the halfway point," Ogras said as they walked inside the huge courtyard of the restaurant. "The buildings from here on out generally have permanent owners. Of course, if you feel the need you can always take a building by force. But there is no point in us doing that even if we have the strength to do so."

It was completely packed, but the two luckily managed to get a table in the back. Almost the moment the two sat down a golem arrived and gave them each a crystal containing the menu. Zac curiously looked at the waiter, but it stood unmoving until the demon placed a round of orders for the two. Only then did it slightly bow before wordlessly walking away.

"...It's a puppet?" Zac finally asked as he looked at the dozens of golems walking around between the tables.

"Yes. Only elites can come here, so most businesses use puppets or arrays rather than living personnel. I hear that the elite stores right by the tower entrance have living waiters, but that's not the kind of place we can freely enter," Ogras muttered.

"Why not?" Zac asked, not understanding why they couldn't shop where they wanted.

"This version of the tower is low-tiered, but the strongest forces here are still Peak C-Grade. Getting involved with those kinds of people before we have some sort of backing won't end well," Ogras explained. "Besides, most of the top tier establishments require referrals or things like that."

"Isn't the point of coming here making a connection with those kinds of forces?" Zac asked skeptically.

"No," Ogras said with a shake of his head. "It's better to look for a weaker force in my opinion. A strong Early C-Grade or weak Middle C-Grade force might be best. They will be strong enough to rebuff that old goat, but not so strong that we'll be forced into a situation we can't dig ourselves out of."

Zac slowly nodded, feeling it made sense. Yrial had full confidence in killing a Peak D-Grade powerhouse even if he was just a soul fragment. It went to show what a huge difference it was between D-Grade and C-Grade. A live C-Grade Hegemon would probably have no problem dealing with The Great Redeemer even if he was stuck in the early stages.

"Besides, those peak forces are millions of years old. What elites haven't they seen before? There's no guarantee they'd bother recruiting you even if you passed the 6th floor," Ogras added after a thought. "Even if you're a monster in human skin you're still a mortal."

Zac ignored the demon's insult as he suddenly realized something odd about what the demon said earlier.

"This version?" Zac asked with confusion.

"The tower services the whole multiverse, how could all the young elites fit in this small town?" Ogras snorted. "There are innumerable Base Towns where elites of the same sector gather."

"Sort of like the incursion forces?" Zac mumbled, remembering that only forces in the same star sector got the opportunity to invade earth.

"Yes, though the area for who gets teleported here is a lot larger," Ogras shrugged. "At least I saw more forces I didn't recognize than ones I knew last time. Its scope is quite large."

"So, the forces we're looking to ally with are locals?" Zac asked. "Are they staying here or further inside the town?"

"Yes they are, but we'll deal with all that after you've proven your worth by summoning a top tier apparition in the sky," Ogras shrugged. "For now we'll be treated like garbage if we go there, and might even get ourselves killed. Remember, those places likely have a bunch of treasures that aren't suppressed like in the tower."

Zac nodded in agreement. He also felt it was no point to sound out strong backers before he had proven himself in the tower. That way he wouldn't need to divulge any of his titles or attributes. He could simply point to the apparition he created with his tower run, and it would vouch for his power.

There were a lot more things Zac wanted to ask about now that he had a better understanding of what sort of place they had arrived at, but just as he was about to ask another question he noticed a squirrely human look in their direction. He was a pure human just like Zac and looked to be somewhere in his thirties.

It wasn't anything too surprising, but most people looked quite young. Looking a bit older could be a sign that they weren't very powerful and had been stuck at F-Grade for a few decades. But it could also mean that he was someone like Zac himself, someone who only evolved his race a bit later than normal.

Some might spend a decade or two perfecting their Daos or gathering achievements, as not all could have direct access to Origin Dao like Zac and Ogras did. So looking even older than Zac was a bit out of the norm, but not unseen. There were even a few people looking middle-aged in the area, though those were likely people who had been stuck on a bottleneck for most of their lives.

When the man noticed Zac's stare he immediately started to walk over to their table. Zac frowned slightly, afraid that trouble had already found them for some reason. Was that man someone from one of the incursions that he had closed? But Zac didn't sense any danger from the man, and he gave a weak smile when he arrived.

"I am sorry. It seems quite crowded here today. Would you mind if I imposed on the two young masters? I am Galau of Clan Beroria by the way, from the Allbright Empire," he said.

Zac's brows rose when he heard of the all too familiar empire, and he immediately indicated for the man to sit down. What were the chances of meeting a countryman of Average and Greatest? He had been thinking of the Allbright Empire often since meeting those two, mainly because he had a standing invitation of Greatest.

It might just have been an offering made out of politeness, but if Zac actually showed up at their doorstep Greatest would hopefully at least be able to arrange something that would help him in his cultivation. Such a powerhouse no doubt had a large network of connections, and he might even be able to introduce Zac to a force that could keep The Great Redeemer at bay.

Greatest was also someone who already knew of his Specialty core but hadn't made any attempts to snatch it, which was Zac's biggest fear in dealing with the powerhouses of the multiverse. He even went so far as to give him his bracer, which was something that he still wore every day to maintain his secrecy.

"I'm Zac," Zac simply said, not explaining his origins any further. "This is Ogras."

"Nice to meet you, I'll order a round as thanks for your hospitality. Have you been here long?" Galau asked.

"We haven't entered the Tower yet, if that's what you're asking," Ogras snorted.

"No, no, I am just making conversation," Galau said with some embarrassment. "I have been frequenting this restaurant for a few months, but it is the first time I see the two young sirs. But I can already tell you're two people destined for greatness."

Zac and Ogras gave each other a weird look before the demon leaned over.

"Protect your wallet and your butt," the demon muttered with a guarded expression.