

The Fall 484

Chapter 484: Invitations

"This craftsmanship," Brazla muttered with glowing eyes as he teleported closer. "It almost matches that of the Great Brazla himself. But why does it have a False Spirit within?"

"That's what I came to talk to you about. One of my people was dying and her soul was crumbling. The only thing I could think of was to use a [Divine Investiture Array] to lock her soul in a Spirit Tool in hopes of saving her life."

"Using the holy array for such a purpose," Brazla muttered. "Sacrilege. My creator would have turned you into blood mist if he heard about you wasted such a chance on something so frivolous."

"I was out of options and got desperate," Zac admitted. "I came to ask you, do you know if I can bring her back?"

"Bring her back?" Brazla asked as he looked at Zac like he was an idiot. "Why would you want to do that? As long as the girl's spirit heals she can become a True Spirit. You will have to break some rules to upgrade her, but you already seem all too willing to dabble in the taboo."

"What do you mean?" Zac asked.

"This thing will not be able to improve the normal way. You need to find... creative solutions to upgrade it. Solutions that the heavens won't be too happy about," the Tool Spirit said, clearly taking pleasure in Zac's misfortune.

"Why would I need to upgrade the Spirit Tool though?" Zac asked. "I just want to return her to life."

"Upgrading a weapon will upgrade the spirituality residing within. Just look at the dumb mutt inside your Axe. You will need to upgrade this thing if you want to heal the girl," Brazla said.

Zac frowned when he heard the news. This was clearly bad. He had never had any desire to go against the System by becoming an unorthodox cultivator, but it was exactly what he needed to do to upgrade [Love's Bond] from the sound of it. Even weirder, it almost felt like the System was pushing him in that direction as it was the System that gave him the array.

Just what was it planning?

Was this another type of trial it wanted to have him survive? If he stepped on the unorthodox path he would be turned into a pariah like the Technocrats, and people might get quests to kill him just by coming close to him. Or was the system planning something else entirely? Something related to the Terminus?

But first of all, Zac needed to know if there even was a point to go down that road.

"If I make her a new body, can I put her soul into it and give her back her life?" Zac asked.

"No idea," Brazla shrugged with disinterest. "Seems pretty stupid."

"Haven't you ever hoped to become living? To become able to cultivate just like your creator?" Zac probed, hoping to elicit some response.

“Why would the Great Brazla ever want to become a fleshbag cursed by mortality? I am perfection, unsullied by time, and I will walk these halls long after both you and your planet has turned to dust. I might not be able to cultivate, but I am eternal,” the Tool Spirit harangued, and shining lights started appearing all around him like he was a God’s avatar or something.

“But do you know if it’s possible? Someone as knowledgeable as you must surely have figured some things out,” Zac entreated.

“My creator once mentioned that Spirit Tools can reach a sublime state where they are virtually indistinguishable from cultivators, but he had never seen it himself. Of course, The Great Brazla wouldn’t degrade himself to the point of being mistaken for a lowly Human. But all things are possible,” the Tool Spirit admitted. “Turning a False Spirit back into someone living is probably possible.”

“So it’s possible, after all,” Zac sighed in relief.

“It might be possible, but what you want to do is going against the natural order,” Brazla snorted. “It’s akin to bringing back those from the dead. It might be achievable for the great characters of the multiverse, but what does that have to do with a piece of trash like you?”

“I’ll work hard and get there sooner or later,” Zac said. “As long as it’s possible it’ll be fine.”

A derisive snort was all the Tool Spirit deigned to respond with before he dissipated again.

Zac felt as though a huge weight was lifted from his shoulders as he walked back toward the Nexus House. Brazla was obviously a bit fuzzy on the details, but it really seemed that returning Alea into a demon was within the realm of possibilities. That was all Zac could ask for right now. He knew the process would likely be a long and arduous one, but at least he knew he hadn’t completely messed things up.

The knowledge gave him a sense of purpose beyond saving Earth as well, but for now, he needed to refocus on the task at hand. He needed to get his items appraised and deal with the realignment.

The thought of his items suddenly reminded him of the two Cosmos Sacks he had stowed away just before leaving Base Town. They were from Leyara and Pretty, and curiosity made him take a look before returning to his sister.

The Cosmos Sack he got from Pretty Peak just contained three crystals and a teleportation token, but he was surprised to see that one of them was a Skill Crystal. He didn’t immediately touch it, but rather turned his attention toward the middle crystal that seemed to be a communication crystal. He immediately infused some Cosmic Energy into it and he immediately heard the voice of Pretty Peak in his mind.

I engraved this thing because some things should not be spoken aloud. You should not rely on the Heliophos Clan dealing with the threat to your planet. There are some unsavory rumors about that clan among the top forces of the Zecia sector.

Divination comes with a cost, one that few are willing to pay unless absolutely necessary. One cannot divulge Heaven’s Secrets wantonly. But being able to glimpse the future is also an extremely addicting power from what I have heard.

Zac suddenly remembered Lord 84th who stopped Abbot Everlasting Peace from saying too much. The reincarnated Buddhist had said essentially the same thing. Did divination perhaps mess with the plans the System had set in motion across the multiverse and was therefore punished? Or was it simply that such a heaven-defying ability couldn't be powered by something so basic as Cosmic Energy?

Zac shook his head as he kept listening.

Many believe that the Heliophos Clan is searching for means to avoid the side-effects of Divination and Karmic Manipulation. They are already suspected to have been gravitating toward unorthodox means for tens of thousands of years.

It's possible that Voridis is performing his mad experiments with the clan's tacit blessing, and that they even have covertly protected him from capture by manipulating events behind the curtain. I don't understand how Voridis have survived pursuit for so long otherwise.

I bet they can't wait to find out what scheme that lunatic has concocted in case they can use it for themselves.

Zac sighed when he heard the explanation. Yet another method to deal with the threat of the Redeemer seemed to have been ruined then and there. It looked like hiding was his only option, but as long as he cut any Karmic Links in time they were likely safe.

After meeting Catheya he finally had a better grasp of just how a Star Sector was constituted. She had likened a Star Sector with a book, where each page was a Dimensional layer. A Star Sector was, in other words, not a coherent galaxy teeming with life, but rather parts of multiple planes stacked so close to each other that dimensional travel was possible.

Not even singular forces were constrained to a single dimension. The Allbright Empire was comprised of planets and continents across thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of realities. Some planets in the Empire might actually exist in the same reality, but so far away from each other that it was infinitely faster to use interdimensional travel rather than normal travel to go between the two planets.

It was akin to wormhole technology that Zac had seen in Science Fiction movies, where space was somehow bent and twisted, and traveling out of the main dimension was like taking a short-cut compared to moving in a straight line.

The whole thing was extremely confusing, but the biggest takeaway was the difficulty of finding one's way without a marker. The Redeemer was probably traveling toward Earth or another seeded planet at this very moment, but he needed to move through multiple dimensions to get here. As long as any Karmic Link was cut off before Voridis was within a few dimensional layers of Earth, then finding this place was almost impossible.

Especially while the System's shroud was still in effect.

This was also why flying treasures that could travel between worlds was expensive to the point that even D-Grade warriors were often confined to their own world, or at least their solar system. The vessels didn't only need to have the capability to fly through the vacuum of space, but they also needed the capabilities to push through dimensional layers.

It was a bit uncomfortable to think about, but Zac's only recourse was to hide Earth so that Voridis fed on some other poor planets instead of Earth. He could only pray that the people of Berum would manage to take out all the remaining members of the Medhin Royals on their side, as no one deserved getting culled by a lunatic like the Redeemer.

That would be the best-case scenario, where all the seed planets managed to hide from Voridis. He already looked as though he wasn't long for the world, and 100 years was a long time. Perhaps the issue would be dealt with by the time that Earth was properly integrated into the Zecia sector.

I will contact the Heliophos Clan for you, the message continued. But you truly shouldn't expect much. You can still get in touch with me by visiting Jaera at the Blossom Rose Sword School that's close to Trasteria, the city where the Teleportation Token leads. She is an elder there, and a disciple of my father.

Trasteria is located on the main continent of the Allbright Empire, a vast place full of opportunities. You can simply use the token to move to a place with more opportunities if you want. But you should know that your situation is precarious. Standing out too much without a backing can cause an endless amount of trouble to arrive at your doorstep.

The universe is full of lunatics ready to risk everything to progress one step further on the road of cultivation, and some might believe you might be the key for them to take that step.

I hope you will be able to survive the following centuries, the Zecia sector needs a beacon.

The second information crystal was a comprehensive introduction packet of the Allbright Empire, its forces, and even some Mystic Realms that provided good limited titles. There were also a couple of identities that Zac could freely assume with the help of the attached skill, which was of the Shapeshifting variety. It was like he was about to enter the witness protection program or something.

The skill was called [Shared Identity], and it worked a bit differently compared to [Thousand Faces]. The skill he got from Pretty seemed to be able to create a greater transformation, where even one's aura could be changed by a certain degree, but it came with only three "pre-loaded" identities.

He could essentially take one of these three shared identities, but he wouldn't be able to change his face as he wished like he could with [Thousand Faces]. Zac held off on learning the skill for now, but it wasn't impossible he'd use it in the future. It would be pretty convenient to step into the shoes of someone with a proper background, but he didn't know if there were hidden strings attached to taking the name of one of these three men.

Zac turned his attentions to the second Cosmos Sack next, but his expression froze when he noticed its contents. There were only two things inside, a short note and a frilly piece of fabric.

A small greeting gift to remember me by. I am not allowed to hand out Teleportation Tokens to the Void Gate, but I would be happy to entertain you if you have the opportunity to stop by. We can talk about fashion and our futures under the light of the Void Star.

-Leyara

Zac blankly looked at the note, his mind unable to compute what was going on. The strained smile of Leyara suddenly flashed by in his mind, before he remembered the apologetic face of Galau. Just what

had the merchant divulged during their meeting? Would he be known as some sort of deviant in the whole Sector because of that one level in the tower?

A sigh escaped from his mouth as he stowed away the Cosmos Sack, unsure what to do with the "treasure". He could only reluctantly put it into his Spatial ring, as it would be weird throwing it out in the middle of his forest. However, things didn't get much better when he returned to the Nexus House where Kenzie stood next to a rack of exquisite dresses, while three Sky Gnomes eagerly went through the mound of treasures.

"Why are there so many dresses in your sack?" Kenzie asked with a weird smile when she noticed his return.

"I was about to ask," the demon laughed from the side. "I thought I absconded with the most 'treasures' back then, but I see that I still have much to learn."

"Are you planning on wooing someone? Is it Thea?" Kenzie asked before she shot him a hesitant look. "Or don't tell me...?"

"Don't be silly," Zac sighed. "The seventh floor had me fighting actual scions from other parts of the multiverse. I looted my new ring and those dresses from a girl who targeted me."

"Do you think any trouble from that will lead back to Earth?" Ogras asked with a frown.

"I doubt it?" Zac said hesitantly. "It kind of looked like my human side was killed by the girl who I looted, and she was killed by someone else in turn. I fought the rest of the battle in my Draugr-form. I don't think the System would allow problems to follow you back home, right? Perhaps it's possible to do something to 'cleanse' the items if needed?"

However, he honestly wasn't as sure as he let on.