

## The Fall 521

### Chapter 521: Birds

"You want to enter right now? You sure you don't want to wait?" Zac asked with surprise. "You might die, you know. As I told you in the letter, the masters of the Inheritances all seem to be eccentric characters. Why not wait until you've reached level 75?"

Zac had gifted them each a shot at an Inheritance as thanks for protecting Port Atwood while he was away. So he wasn't surprised to hear her bring it up, but he was a bit confused that she already wanted to take the trial. They knew they only had one chance, so he had assumed that the two would wait until they reached peak F-Grade. After all, that came with a set of powerups, such as titles, bonus attributes, and skills.

Their efforts had slowed down the approach of the invaders by hours, which was the whole reason he could complete the climb without worry. He didn't know what he would do if he suddenly got the prompt of the invasion while he was inside the tower, but he most likely would have left early. He would have lost out on so much if that happened, including the Shard of Creation.

Not only that, the two had actually completely missed out on the quest for defeating the Undead Incursion because of their wounds. Thea and Billy should have been two of the highest contributors in the battle against the undead except himself and the Abbot, but they never got the quest as they were stuck in sickbeds on his island.

Giving them each a shot at an inheritance along with some of the things he had gotten during the climb was the least he could provide in return. The inheritances were limited, so any spot he gave out might mean that some descendant of his missed out in the future. But he figured that he would be powerful enough to be able to provide even better things to his grandchildren if it ever came to that.

Better use the inheritances now while they still could provide a lot of value.

His sister had already claimed the Invoker inheritance, and Adran was keeping his eyes on the craftsmen who had started perusing the Celestial Artisan Heritage. Someone might be worthy of taking on the inheritance as well.

As for the last two inheritances, Zac wasn't sure. It would depend on which inheritances Thea and Billy decided upon, though he had a pretty good idea what they would go for.

"We're sure," Thea nodded. "We can't keep playing it safe. I feel we're not powerful enough to help out as we are. We won't be able to reach level 75 in thirty-six days, there's just no way. We'll enter in a day or two after I've confirmed a few things here."

"Billy wants the Titan," Billy said from the side. "Billy doesn't know why, but it feels familiar..?"

"It does?" Zac asked with interest.

Was it perhaps his bloodline calling to him?

"Billy thinks he dreamt being a big giant that was called a Titan?" Billy muttered with a frown. "Can't remember..."

“Well, I think it suits you,” Zac said. “I’ve seen the statue of the master of the Titan Inheritance. He looks just as strong as you, so you should be able to get things that make you stronger as well.”

The Titan felt like the given choice for Billy, though Zac also felt that the Undying Fiend might be able to provide Billy with means of shoring up his lacking defenses. But the Inheritances were ultimately a matter of compatibility rather than what people needed, and Billy was definitely the most compatible with the Titan inheritance.

“Good!” Billy fervently nodded. “Billy has slept too much. Last fight hurt, Billy needs to get better at thwonkin’.”

“What about you?” Zac asked as he turned to Thea.

“I’ll take the Blade Emperor if that’s okay,” Thea said after a few seconds.

Zac nodded, feeling inwardly relieved. There wasn’t really any standout in Port Atwood that could benefit from that Inheritance. The only one using a sword of the core forces was Sap Trang, but he wasn’t really a sword master, but rather a water mage or beast tamer. Besides, Zac also had the heritage for the Blade Emperor, which probably contained half of the value that the old master left behind.

“What kind of test was there?” Thea asked. “Is it based on strength or suitability?”

“Suitability,” Zac said after some hesitation. “It got a bit dangerous for me because I kind of cheated a bit, and Ogras was only in danger because the master he chose was a lunatic. But the trials should be achievable by normal talented people, as they were meant as gifts for the descendants of Brazla, the tower’s creator.”

“Good,” Thea said with some relief.

“I’m not sure how long I’ll be gone this time while looking for the cultists. Just have my sister lead you in if I’m not around. Oh, the tool spirit is slightly insane as well, so don’t try to anger it. It might mess with your trial out of spite,” Zac said, drawing an even stare from Thea.

“Anything else...?” she asked.

“No, that’s it,” Zac with a shake of his head. “Or well, just compliment it a bit and it might make your lives easier. I need some help from your family with the teleporters, but I’ll just grab someone from your intelligence office.”

“Good luck,” Thea said as she quickly scribbled a letter. “What we can do is limited, but don’t be afraid to ask for help if you need it. I don’t think anyone over at the Intelligence Bureau will cause any trouble for you, but take this letter just in case.”

Zac nodded and left, and he walked over to the building that housed the intelligence department of the Marshall Clan. Charles Marshall immediately met up with him, and Zac couldn’t help but snort when he saw that he looked at the shadows with some worry. The demon had apparently left quite an impression during his last visit to the Bureau.

“Ogras isn’t here,” Zac said with a smile. “I need to be teleported to Main Paris without anyone finding out.”

“Main Paris...?” Charles repeated with a calculating look. “You’re not...?”

“I’m not planning on taking out the New World Government,” Zac snorted as he handed him Thea’s letter. “At least not yet. I am looking for the base of operations of the cultists. You don’t happen to know anything else?”

Charles’ eyes lit up, and he quickly took out a stack of documents. He quickly provided a rundown of their findings, and much of it was similar to what Julia had said. The old spy had singled out three possible locations, one of which was the same uncharted territory as Julia pointed out.

A second one was in the middle of a vast marshland that spread out to the south of the heartlands of Pangea. There were some settlements there, but only at the edge. The place was swarming with hostile wildlife, the worst of which being the millions of massive mosquitoes that could suck a person dry in a second.

The high humidity of the area had turned the core of the swamp essentially uncharted as well, which was why Charles believed that an incursion could hide there without notice. The pillars weren’t lighthouses that could be seen from tens of miles after all, and Zac had only spotted the undead one through the miasmic haze when he was almost upon it.

The final spot was a remote area to the far north, an inhospitable world of ice north of the even most distant of settlements. It was the least-likely place in Charles’ opinion, but he had scribbled a note that said that they might like the hostile environment to temper themselves since they were fire-attributed.

Zac went over the documents as Charles read Thea’s letter, and Zac felt some relief that it probably wouldn’t take too long to deal with the cultists. He personally felt the northern location was a long shot, which meant he only needed two trips to find his target. The fact that both Julia and Charles had landed on the same spot was a good indicator as well, as both had access to vast, but different, intelligence networks.

“Inheritance,” Charles muttered from the side. “May I ask if this is a real inheritance like the ones described in our library?”

“It is. A peak D-Grade inheritance. I have a few of them, and I gave Thea one slot. Keep this to yourself though,” Zac nodded

“Certainly, though I need to share it with Henry. May I ask if there is there danger?” the thin old man asked with worry.

It was easy to forget that this kindly old man was a ruthless assassin who had murdered a family member for breaking the family rules, rather than a doting grandpa worrying for Thea’s safety.

“Some. She can give up though if it gets too hard,” Zac shrugged. “I’ll take a look at the place near Main Paris first. Do you have a method to take me there?”

“You appeared in Westfort with a disguise. Are you able to take on specific faces with your skill?” Charles asked.

“I can, but it doesn’t hold up to scrutiny too well,” Zac nodded.

“That’s fine,” Charles said as he started tapping on a tablet before he handed it over.

“This is an informant of mine who has access to Main Paris. If that doesn’t work we also control a remote town roughly half a day’s flight from the city. It’s up to you which you want to utilize,” the old man said.

Zac eventually decided to forgo his plan of going through New Paris in his search for the Cultist Incursion. After seeing the location of the Marshall-controlled town on the map, he felt it would only delay him a couple of hours. There were a lot more mountains to cross going from that direction, but it didn’t matter to Zac who had a flying treasure.

This way he was less likely to tip off any infiltrators hiding in New Paris or getting spotted when flying above a trafficked route.

“I’ll go through the smaller town,” Zac said as he stood up. “One more thing. The remaining Invaders gained the ability to use teleporters the moment their Incursion was closed. You might want to increase security going forward. Who knows what a bunch of zealots trapped on earth will do.”

“We have been preparing for this for some time,” Charles nodded. “We’ll slowly ramp up our measures over the next day to not cause any alarm.”

Zac nodded in agreement and things from there went quite smoothly. Zac was led by a nondescript family member of the Marshall Clan to the village called Peyraud. It was apparently a small French town with less than a thousand citizens that had turned to a minor stronghold.

It had survived until now because it was just outside of the hunting range of the mutated birds of the mountain range. The ferocious flocks hunted everything else though, which had scared off any stronger beasts from the area.

Of course, Zac knew that this place would be overrun in a year at most, like most places that only survived thanks to a lack of natural predator. The birds would sooner or later evolve, which in turn would increase their appetite and hunting grounds. These villagers were lucky enough that they at least had managed to get a Teleporter, allowing them to flee before they got gobbled up.

Zac didn’t immediately jump onto his flying treasure but rather kept running through a dense forest for an hour until he was far away from any human activity. Only then did he take out the emerald leaf and set off for the massive mountain range. He quickly understood why people hadn’t ventured past the mountains until now. They were simply enormous.

Something this big was hard to properly gauge, but he guessed that they were a match to the Himalayan mountain ranges of old Earth. However, these mountains were made from an almost pristine white rock, making Zac believe they came from one of the other planets.

The second reason why people avoided the mountains soon presented itself as well, as hundreds of small spots rose from a mountain peak as Zac approached. The distant spots quickly grew in size until Zac realized that some of the incoming birds were just enormous. There were some with a wingspan of just a couple of meters, but the larger ones looked like they could snatch up a fighter jet in their claws.

Zac didn’t want to get embroiled in an aerial battle at this juncture, so he immediately urged the leaf to take evasive maneuvers. But the mutated eagles had no problem matching his speed as they

intercepted. A piercing cry suddenly exploded in his ears with enough power to make him dizzy, but he quickly righted himself just in time to see a bird bursting forward with shocking speed.

It seemed like the bird had activated some inherent skill, as it appeared right in front of him in almost an instant. A light flashed among the clouds as Verun was unleashed, and a rain of blood followed as the eagle was chopped in two. The massive bird had been on the threshold of reaching the E-Grade, but it was cut apart like paper in the face of the upgraded Spirit Tool.

More importantly, the weapon actually emitted a primordial aura that made the eagles stop in their tracks. It allowed him to increase the distance as the flying treasure was pushed to its limits. However, their territorial instincts soon won over their primal fear for the aura the axe emitted, and they swooped toward Zac like kamikaze pilots.

Zac could only sigh in annoyance as he started pushing Cosmic Energy toward [Chop], but he suddenly stopped himself and moved the energy toward the fractal on his left arm instead. He still hadn't tested [Rapturous Divide], but wasn't this the perfect opportunity? He was still just at the edge of the mountain range, far from the supposed location of the Incursion.

However, as he pushed Cosmic Energy into the fractal he realized a problem; the skill refused to activate.