

Hammer God 120

Chapter 120: Ether Pebble

Luckily, the Metal Rain Bird didn't launch any attacks and just kept circling its mountain.

'Asshole,' Kyle thought as he looked at the feathers.

That was when he got an idea.

He looked back at the bird before charging out and collecting the feathers.

'These things are heavy!' he thought as he pulled them back into his hole.

"Hey, can I use these?" Kyle asked.

"This is organic metal," Theodor answered. "You can't forge them."

"But I can eat them, right?" Kyle asked.

"You can try," Theodor answered.

Kyle looked at one of the feathers and broke it into pieces with his hammer.

Then, he put one of the shards in his mouth.

'Ouch!' he thought as the piece of the feather opened a cut in his mouth.

'These things are sharp!'

He very carefully and thoroughly chewed it before swallowing it.

'Ouch, fuck!' he thought as he felt something spiky and sharp going down his esophagus.

When it reached his stomach, Kyle didn't feel well.

He didn't feel any pain, but he could tell that his stomach was not happy.

After some agonizing seconds, the uncomfortable feeling vanished, and Kyle felt a bit energized.

But only a bit.

'Yeah, no,' Kyle thought. 'I'm not eating that again.'

"Can I strengthen my hammer with this?" Kyle asked.

Theodor had gotten used to Kyle referring to the mining weapon as a hammer by now.

"A bit, but not much," Theodor said.

"Well, it's better than nothing," Kyle said. "My hammer has become a bit light after I advanced."

The Earth Stone was a bit too low quality to improve his hammer.

Kyle allowed his hammer to absorb the feathers, and just like Theodor said, it became a bit heavier.

But not a lot.

'Improvements are improvements, I suppose,' Kyle thought.

Then, he ate some more coffee grounds and returned to digging.

Nothing special happened for several hours.

He just found more Earth Stone.

Almost ten hours into this day of digging, Kyle felt something interesting.

By now, his tunnel was almost 100 meters deep.

"I feel something delicious ahead," Kyle said.

"Then, dig it up," Theodor said.

Kyle kept hitting the wall, and eventually, he unearthed a shiny stone.

"Oh, what's that?" he asked, looking at the shiny stone.

"You got lucky," Theodor answered. "It's an Ether Pebble."

"Is that like an Ether Gem?" Kyle asked.

"Yes, a really bad one," Theodor said. "You remember the Ether Essence I mentioned?"

"The one that the King didn't want to give you, right?" Kyle asked.

"Yes, Ether Essences are the cores of Ether Mines, which are what an entire Kingdom is built on."

"Ether Essences create Ether Crystals around them. Ether Crystals are extremely valuable."

"Ether Crystals create Ether Gems around them, which are also quite valuable."

"Ether Gems create Ether Stones around them. Ether Stones are used as the primary currency for people in the Second Realm."

"Then, there are Ether Pebbles. Ether Stones can create Ether Pebbles, but Ether Pebbles can also appear naturally."

"About 100 Ether Pebbles are worth one Ether Stone."

"That one Ether Pebble you just dug up is worth about half of all the Earth Stone you harvested so far."

Kyle looked at his big pile of Earth Stone.

Then, he looked at the finger-sized gem in his hand.

'Doesn't sound too amazing, but it's better than Earth Stones.'

"Are Ether Pebbles used for transactions in the First Realm?" Kyle asked.

"Yes," Theodor answered. "If you manage to get 50 of them, you could probably ask for an escort to the Big Bazaar. That's where we want to go."

"Cool," Kyle answered. "How much was all the ore I mined in the Cradle worth?"

"Between four and six Ether Pebbles."

'Wait,' Kyle thought. 'So, one of these Ether Pebbles is worth several days of work for me?'

'That's not so bad!'

"How much is a Narvonian Worm worth?" Kyle asked.

"I don't know," Theodor answered. "I didn't trade in wildlife. I would expect something between one and five Ether Stones."

'100 to 500 Ether Pebbles!' Kyle thought with a deep breath.

'I really cost Samson a lot of money!'

As Kyle looked at the Ether Pebble, he realized something.

'This is between 0.2% and 1% of what I owe Samson, and I got that in two days.'

'Yes, Narvonian Worms are worth a lot, but I can actually repay Samson.'

'Just gotta work for like a hundred days or so.'

Then, Kyle sighed.

'But I will do that later. For now, I need to get stronger. With more power, I can earn more, right?'

"I assume I should not eat this, right?" Kyle asked.

"No," Theodor said. "If you were a normal human, I would tell you to eat it. Pure Ether like this can be digested by humans and helps them become stronger. However, you are a dwarf-"

"Half-dwarf," Kyle corrected.

"Dwarf!" Theodor shouted. "And as a dwarf, you can get Ether much more easily."

"Sounds good, Boss," Kyle answered, putting the Ether Pebble into one of his pockets.

Then, Kyle continued digging.

After another five hours, Kyle felt something.

"There might be another Ether Pebble," Kyle said.

"Let's hope not," Theodor said.

"Why not?" Kyle asked.

"Ether Pebbles need Ether. Finding a random Ether Pebble is good luck. If you find several random Ether Pebbles in the same place, they are not random."

"And that's bad?" Kyle asked.

"Foolish inheritor, have you already forgotten what I have said?"

"Risk and reward go hand in hand," Theodor said. "Nothing comes free in this world."

"If there is a gathering of Ether Pebbles, there must be a source of Ether present, and if you're not strong enough, a source of Ether is bad news for you."

"We want to go to the south, and you are digging through the mountain because every other way is too dangerous."

"If the mountain also proves to be dangerous, where will you go then?"

Kyle gulped.

"Okay, I see where you're coming from," he said. "Let's hope I'm wrong."

He continued digging, and sure enough, there was another Ether Pebble.

This one was even a bit bigger than the last one.

Even worse...

"Boss," Kyle said. "I think there's another one right in front of me."

"What should I do?"