

## **Hammer God 196**

### Chapter 196 Paid Course

"Oh? Are you also here for the course?" a smaller man with a long halberd asked.

"Yep," Kyle answered.

"What's your name?" the man asked.

"Kyle Freeman."

"Well then, Kyle, welcome to my course," the man said with a smile. "You're quite early. The others aren't here yet. By the way, my name is Gill, and I'm the instructor."

The two of them talked about Kyle's battle experience and why he thought this course was right for him.

"Ah, I see," Gill said. "In that case, this should be the right course for you."

Kyle nodded before taking out five Ether Pebbles, but Gill held his hand forward to stop Kyle.

"Payment happens after the course. If you are unhappy with the course, you are free to keep your money, but I will also not instruct you again in the future. That's my policy," Gill explained.

"Oh, okay," Kyle said, putting the money away again.

After a while, seven other people arrived. Six of them were Initial Fighters, while one was an Early Fighter.

Gill was a Mid Fighter.

"Everyone, we got a new member," Gill said. "Say hello to Kyle."

"Hey, Kyle! I'm Bundt!"

"I'm Snerlak!"

The different members all introduced themselves, and Kyle greeted them back.

'Seems like this is an established class,' Kyle thought.

"Kyle, you are going to be running the gauntlet today. Every new member goes through that," Gill said.  
"You will fight everyone else one at a time, and we see how you are doing."

Kyle nodded, and Gill called out the Early Fighter first.

'I get to fight the strongest one right off the bat?' Kyle thought with surprise.

The man in front of Kyle was the one who had introduced himself as Bundt, and based on his shield and one-handed mace, he was a Shouter.

Bundt pulled out his weapons and motioned for Kyle to come forward.

Kyle also pulled out his hammer and readied himself.

"Come on. You don't have to hold back. Trust that I can handle whatever you throw at me," Bundt said.

Kyle nodded and activated Air Current before charging at Bundt.

He knew that he couldn't beat any of them, which was why he didn't hold back.

During the swing, he also tried to move his Ether in the way Bonk had taught him, but he couldn't enter the right headspace for it.

Using a technique during practice was different from using it in a real battle.

During a battle, there were a lot of emotions and nervousness involved, while during practice, there were no worries.

Bundt lifted his shield to block the hammer.

BOOOM!

The ground below Bundt shook, and he let out a groan.

BANG!

Then, he pushed Kyle's hammer to the side and took a step back.

'He's taking it easy on me,' Kyle thought as he saw Bundt moving backward. 'I was open to a counter, but he didn't use it.'

"You're stronger than expected," Bundt said with a laugh. "Blocking that strike was not easy. Come on! Hit me again!"

Kyle changed his approach and decided to run forward with his hammer extended.

This would make it harder to predict how he would attack.

Bundt watched with interest and also charged forward.

BANG!

The shield and the hammer collided head-on.

Then, Bundt shoved the hammer to the side.

But then, the hammer's butt shot right at Bundt's face, which he hadn't expected.

At that moment, Bundt used the power of the Mental Tome he had consumed in the past.

Time slowed in his perception, and he could come up with the perfect counter.

The hand holding the one-handed mace punched the side of the hammer's butt, moving it to the side.

Then, in a fluid motion, the hand also punched Kyle's armored chest, pushing him back a couple of meters.

Bundt just smiled at Kyle and told him to continue.

For the next two minutes, Kyle kept attacking Bundt, but all of his attacks failed.

Bundt hadn't launched an attack of his own during the entire battle.

"Come on, get serious," Bundt said. "You can use your True Body. Just because I'm not using mine doesn't mean you can't use yours."

"I don't have a True Body," Kyle answered.

At that moment, everyone's eyes widened in surprise.

"You didn't learn the Physical Tome?" Gill asked from the side.

"Not yet," Kyle said. "I'm still a Peak Adept."

"Oh!" Gill said. "That's rare. The Stark Brotherhood rarely accepts Adepts."

"Wait, you're a Peak Adept?" Bundt asked in surprise.

"Yeah," Kyle answered.

"Are you sure? That hammer strike of yours was not weak," Bundt asked.

"Half-dwarf," Kyle answered.

"Oh, right! I remember! You are Bonk's new friend, right?" one of the other members asked.

"Yep," Kyle said.

"Oh, yeah," Bundt said. "I can see how that would improve your physical power."

Of course, this wasn't the reason for Kyle's physical strength.

Kyle wasn't this strong because of being a half-dwarf but because all of his Aspects of Power had been increased.

His Center fed Ether into his body, improving his physical power even more.

Knights had more physical power than Fighters since their Center could also push Ether into their bodies.

However, their improvement in physical power wasn't as significant as Kyle's improvement.

The reason was efficiency.

Moving Ether from the Center to the body was technically an alteration of Ether, and every transformation of Ether cost more Ether.

As long as they used their Center, Knights could make their bodies 50% more powerful than Fighters of the same level, but it cost quite a bit of Ether.

Meanwhile, Kyle's improvement was around 100%. Thanks to his strong mind, he could transform more Ether at a time, and thanks to his strong Soul, infusing his body with foreign Ether was much easier and cost less energy.



The mind increased the maximum output at a time, while the Soul improved efficiency.

Lastly, Kyle had also used many expensive materials during Theodor's trials to improve his Aspects of Power.

That was why the physical power he could unleash was equivalent to an Initial Knight's physical power.

'And yet, I still can't beat the Newbies.'

'I'm so much stronger physically, and I have much more Ether, but I can't make use of it.'

'I really need to learn how to fight.'