

Hammer God 227

Chapter 227 Physical Refinement

There was a big difference between advancing without the Tomes versus advancing with the Tomes.

Advancing into the Second Realm without the Tomes was very easy. Nobody failed it.

Yet, advancing with the Tomes made it much harder, and there were cases of people failing the advancement.

Failing an advancement was a huge hit to one's wealth, Momentum, ego, and time.

If one failed, they would fall back into the Late First Realm. Even more, they would have to buy the Tomes again.

Failing an advancement was a major setback, and some people never tried again since it had been so hard to get here in the first place.

The reason why it was so different to advance with Tomes was that the Tomes changed the body in an unnatural way.

The Tomes were infusing the advancing person with Ether it wasn't designed to absorb.

This meant that the body had to adapt to this new kind of Ether.

The Tomes couldn't be used outside of such an advancement since the body was usually very stable.

But during an advancement, it became malleable and changeable since it was already undergoing a significant change.

The first circle, representing the Physical Tome, started to shine brighter than the other ones.

The Ether in the surroundings changed yet again.

CRKSH!

The skin on Kyle's muscular right arm burst, releasing a bunch of blood.

'Ouch!' Kyle thought as he gritted his teeth. 'Gotta focus! This is the Physical Refinement! Gotta imagine yourself to be real big! You are a giant!'

The next moment, Kyle's right chest muscles moved inward as they lost their connection to the humerus.

The tendon tore.

Kyle took a deep breath through his teeth, but he just kept imagining himself growing bigger and stronger.

CRK!

Then, Kyle's femur broke under the strain.

The unfamiliar Ether was pushing the old Ether out of his body, weakening different parts of his body.

Kyle's femur had been as hard as a normal man's femur at that moment while having to withstand the pressure of his tensing thighs, which had the power of someone in the Peak First Realm.

Naturally, they couldn't withstand that.

Several more parts of Kyle's body broke, but his imagination never faltered.

'Bigger! I have to be bigger!'

Kyle couldn't see it, but his body was actually growing at that moment.

Within a couple of minutes, he grew enough to almost cover the entire first diagram.

Of course, the diagrams were designed with this expansion in mind.

As soon as the diagrams were activated, they created small shields around them, protecting the actual diagram from being messed up by the expansion.

Despite the accumulating injuries, Kyle's body didn't recover.

There was no Ether it could use to do so.

There was just this strange and unnatural Ether in his body.

More and more of Kyle's body broke, and he was assaulted with unending pain.

'Bigger!'

Kyle's body kept growing as it became more and more injured.

"Stop," Theodor said. "Don't go too far."

Yet, Kyle refused.

He had to become even bigger!

His body grew even more.

"Fine! Suit yourself!" Theodor said with annoyance. "Don't blame me when you fail."

Kyle kept imagining himself growing bigger.

More!

More size!

More height!

More girth!

Big!

Suddenly, Kyle felt lightheaded as his body wanted to take his consciousness from him.

'Alright, that's enough,' Kyle thought as sweat ran down his back.

Then, he stopped imagining himself becoming bigger.

His body stabilized again, but it still kept getting injured.

'Fuck! When is this going to end?!' Kyle thought in panic as his body pulled more and more on his consciousness.

'Fuck off! I'm not sleepy!'

'Maybe a bit.'

At that moment, the first diagram sensed that the body stopped changing shape.

That was when the first diagram vanished, turning into dust.

The dust turned into Ether, which then entered Kyle's body.

As soon as the Ether entered, it was like Kyle's body finally found something it could use to access the foreign Ether.

In a way, the dust acted as an emulsifier. It built a connection between Kyle's body and the foreign Ether.

The body used the emulsifier to access the Ether, strengthening the body and repairing it.

Kyle's pain lessened, and he was no longer in danger of losing consciousness.

'Fuck this!' Kyle thought.

Over the next minute, Kyle's body evenly advanced until he was no longer injured.

He had done it.

His body was now in the Initial Second Realm.

Then, the second diagram, representing the Core Tome, brightened.

The Ether changed again and entered Kyle's body.

It moved through it, reaching Kyle's Center.

'Center Refinement!' Kyle thought, focusing again. 'Fire, Wind, and Metal!'

He remembered Theodor's instructions.

There were two ways to advance a Center while having more than one Affinity.

One was equalized, which meant that the Center would contain Ether of both Affinities in equal amounts.

The other was adaptable, which meant the Ether remained pure but could be transformed more easily.

The first method saved a lot of Ether since it didn't need to undergo any transformations during battle, but it limited the element-specific Ether storage. If one ran out of one kind of Elemental Ether, they couldn't transform the other Elemental Ether into the first Elemental Ether.

The other method didn't save as much Ether, but it made the Center more adaptable. One could transform the entire Ether storage into one kind of Elemental Ether and then change it again.

One would lose some Ether during every transformation, but it didn't lock the person out of the ability to have one Element as their entire storage.

The two methods had their strengths and weaknesses, and choosing one depended on one's battle style.

However, with three Affinities, the adaptable method was superior.

The addition of a third Affinity did not increase the weakness of the adaptable method, while the equalized method would become even worse.

As the Ether gathered in Kyle's Center, he started to sweat.

His chest was becoming hot.

Very hot.

Then, Kyle's chest started to turn black.

The Fire Ether in his Center was strong enough to burn them but not strong enough to break past the strengthened muscles...

Yet.

'Why does this have to be so painful?!'

'I'm not a masochist!'