

Hammer God 25

Chapter 25: Incubator

Kyle followed Samson, and for once, he was allowed to walk on his own.

Although, after about an hour of running, he wished that wasn't the case.

'I haven't eaten anything in a while. I'm fucking starving!'

Sure, Kyle had some breakfast, but it was just "normal" food.

"Wait!" Kyle shouted as he suddenly stopped running.

Samson looked at him for a bit.

"Smell good," Kyle said, pointing in a direction.

When Samson saw the direction Kyle was pointing to, he frowned. "Don't ever go there," Samson said.

"Why?"

"That's the territory of the Great Anaconda," Samson explained. "It's the strongest beast in the surroundings. It has already become a Ferocious Beast."

"Ferocious Beast?" Kyle asked. He knew what beast meant, but he hadn't heard that other word before.

"It's what we call the Second Realm of beasts," Samson answered.

"Second... Realm?" Kyle repeated.

"I'll tell you later. Follow me," Samson answered as he continued running.

Kyle kept his urge to ask more questions in check and just followed Samson.

The two of them kept following the trail of destruction, which became thinner the more they ran.

Eventually, they reached its end.

The trees were healthy, and only a bit of withered grass remained.

"Tar Golems are not natural," Samson explained. "They are man-made. Someone must have put it here. This is not our first run-in with a Tar Golem, but we never managed to find the source."

Samson pointed at the grass. "It only starts attacking trees after about three days, and the grass recovers very quickly. Finding the origin of a Tar Golem is very difficult."

"You can smell it, right?" Samson asked, pointing at his nose.

Kyle only got half of it, but he understood that he should sniff out where the Tar Golem came from.

"I smell," Kyle said with a nod.

Then, he walked forward and sniffed the surroundings.

His eyes became a bit teary again as he actively tried to smell the stench.

Kyle followed the stench.

After walking for 30 minutes, all the grass had already recovered, and there was no sign of the Tar Golem's presence anymore.

Yet, the smell was still very clear to Kyle.

Another 30 minutes later, even Kyle had difficulties smelling the stench.

'Doesn't matter how embarrassing it is! I got a job to do!' Kyle thought as he went on all fours to smell the ground.

As he sniffed the grass, his eyes started to tear up again.

Samson watched Kyle without a comment, keeping an eye on the surroundings.

Yet, the more they kept advancing, the more nervous Samson became.

They were getting awfully close to the Great Anaconda's territory.

'Is he just following the good scent?' Samson thought as he looked at Kyle.

Then, he saw Kyle's face scrunching up in disgust and his eyes tearing.

'Doesn't seem like it.'

Another ten minutes later, Samson became quite nervous.

They were way too close to the Great Anaconda's territory.

If the unknown perpetrator placed the Tar Golem in the Great Anaconda's territory, they would be in a lot of trouble.

This meant that the perpetrator wasn't afraid of a Ferocious Beast.

Suddenly, Kyle stopped as he continually sniffed the surrounding grass.

The stench had become very faint, but Kyle could tell one thing.

'It gets weaker if I move from this spot.'

He focused on the spot where he was and started to dig like a dog.

After digging for a bit, Kyle sniffed his little hole, and his eyes teared up again.

He jumped up and coughed several times as he pointed at the hole.

Samson walked over and carefully dug a hole.

At a depth of about half a meter, Samson found something.

He carefully put his hand in the hole and pulled the object he found out.

It was an unmarked satchel.

The earth around the satchel was black and had no Ether or nutrition inside it.

Samson carefully opened the small satchel, and a clear sphere rolled out.

"Good job," Samson said as he looked at the sphere.

'No markings on the satchel, but it's made of Bryce Stalk. Its origins should be local to the surrounding cities,' Samson thought as he looked at the two objects.

'The glass is made of the cheapest Ether Gem, Ether Rubble. The runes on the incubator are messy. This is not the work of a professional but of someone with a bit of knowledge in Golemancy. Most likely a dropout from the Artificer's Academy that is earning some money with shady business.'

'Roland is keeping the town quite clean. Either this is a newcomer, or this was purchased from one of the surrounding cities.'

'The Incubator was most likely purchased from one of the black markets in one of the other cities.'

'This stuff is quite expensive despite its crude production.'

'Since they are using individual incubators and not an incubator array, they most likely don't plan on destroying our territory, or they simply don't have the finances to purchase an entire array. They most likely just want to cause damage.'

Samson looked in the direction of the Great Anaconda's territory.

'I don't think this is a coincidence,' he thought with narrowed eyes.

'The perpetrator probably hoped that the Tar Golem would move into the Great Anaconda's territory and make it move.'

Now, things made sense.

'They are after its Life Water!'

Samson almost crushed the incubator in rage.

'Those idiots! If the Great Anaconda returns after the Tar Golem pushes it out and notices that its Life Water is gone, it will go on a rampage! This could endanger the entire town!'

"Good job, Kyle. Finding this helped a lot," Samson said as he put the incubator in his pocket.

"I help!" Kyle said with a nod.

Samson nodded with a smile. "Let's make some rounds through the forest, and while we're at it, we can also get you some food."

Kyle's eyes opened in excitement when he heard the mention of food.

The two of them walked through the wilderness for another couple of hours, and Kyle got to kill another beast, but that beast was nothing to write home about.

But it was food!

Eventually, the two of them returned to life, and starting on the next day, Kyle's regular life as a hunter started.