

## **Hammer God 264**

### Chapter 264 Unexpected Turn of Events

'Ah shit, it's the overprotective brother,' Kyle thought.

"Eh, just tell her Kyle was here," Kyle said.

"That's it?" the man asked with furrowed brows.

"Yeah, that's it," Kyle said.

The man blinked once slowly.

"As far as I know, you wanted to join a nearby Fighter Guild. The closest Fighter Guild to the Big Bazaar is the Stark Brotherhood. Did you join the Stark Brotherhood?" the man asked.

Kyle was a bit surprised that this guy knew so much about him.

"Yeah, I joined the Stark Brotherhood," Kyle said.

"Starkhold is almost a thousand kilometers away from here," the man said. "Are you saying you traveled all this way simply to tell her that you were here?"

"I mean, not exactly," Kyle said, "but I wanted to discuss the details for my visit with Selene."

The man snorted. "What's the point of leaving such an empty message? Do you expect her to travel that far just to ask you what you want? Leave me a message with a purpose and some merit to it."

Kyle scratched the back of his head. "Yeah, okay, I can see how that can be a bit sub-optimal."

"Then, can you tell her that I wanted to ask her if she wanted to join my squad?"

The man's brows rose. "Join your squad?"

"Yep," Kyle said with an awkward smile. "That was my original intention for coming here, but after seeing the power of the Forthing Family for myself, I feel like there's no hope for that. I was a bit naïve. You probably have way better options."

"Tell me more about this squad," the man said, leaning back in his chair.

"Well, we need new members. A couple of our members... didn't make it, and I'm building a new team."

"What happened?" the man asked evenly.

Kyle told the man about the tournament and the following attack by the Late Knight.

"You took down a Late Knight?" the man asked with a brow raised in skepticism.

"We were lucky," Kyle said. "Very, very lucky."

"Why? Did somebody else get involved?" the man asked.

"No, it was just us five plus an Initial Sorcerer, who's now part of my new team."

"Wait, you have a Sorcerer in your team?" the man asked.

"Yes," Kyle said. "We also have an Early Artificer who specializes in Golemancy."

The man frowned. "Are you building a tournament team?"

"No," Kyle said. "I simply want to make a varied team. With that, we can take on much more dangerous missions."

"You mean rewarding," the man said.

"Yes, that as well," Kyle said, "but I realized that the mission itself can be more rewarding than the reward. "

In fact, Kyle got that from Theodor.

Theodor said that Momentum and experience were important.

The reward was nice and all, but specifically for Kyle, it was not the most important.

Normal people needed to spend a ton of money on Ether to advance, which made the rewards more important for them.

However, Kyle could just eat his way to a higher level.

This made his path forward much easier and faster, but that meant that he would have much less experience than other people on his level.

Fewer than one in a million people who have reached the Second Realm became Transcendents.

So, if Kyle wanted to become a Transcendent, he needed to be better than a million others who were on his level.

Training was good and all, but practical experience in dangerous situations was the best teacher.

Kyle needed to face true danger.

He needed adversity.

For normal people with normal goals, undertaking one dangerous mission after the other would be stupid.

However, Kyle wanted... NEEDED... to become a Transcendent.

If Theodor believed that Kyle couldn't fulfill his last wish, he would just detonate himself.

Becoming a Transcendent or death.

These were Kyle's choices.

This "choice" essentially boiled down to choosing 100% death or 99.9999% death.

So, might as well try, right?

"Why the effort?" the man asked. "Is becoming a Grandmaster not enough?"

"I mean," Kyle said with an awkward smile, "we only get one chance at life, right? Might as well go all-out."

The man remained silent for a bit.

"Show me your Momentum," he said.

"Eh, sure," Kyle said.

The next moment, Kyle's eyes narrowed, and he imagined himself smashing the man's face in with his hammer.

The man narrowed his eyes, and Kyle's Momentum was pushed back.

Kyle felt a lot of pressure coming from the man, but he didn't lose confidence.

The man in front of Kyle felt extremely dangerous, but he didn't feel unbeatable.

"It's quite good for your level," the man said, "but you're not even one-in-a-thousand."

"That's enough," Kyle said as he deactivated his Momentum.

"How is that enough?" the man asked.

"I don't need to be one-in-a-million," Kyle said with a smirk. "I just need to remain a mere one-in-a-thousand."

"Do we have a thousand people in the Peak Third Realm?"

The man snorted. "Quite optimistic."

"I have to be," Kyle said.

The man wordlessly nodded.

Then, he remained silent for several seconds as he wrote some stuff on a sheet of paper while Kyle just awkwardly waited.

"You already have a Golemancer," the man suddenly said. "A Beast Tamer and a Golemancer fill the same role. There's no reason to have both."

"Instead, what would you think about an Archer Knight?" the man asked.

"Archer Knight?" Kyle asked. "That's... hmm..."

"That would actually be pretty good, but I would need to see the person first. I want to make sure they fit into the team."

"What are your requirements?" the man asked.

Kyle told the man what he wanted out of a teammate.

"That is not an issue," the man said. "My sister told me about you, and I've heard that you helped her a lot. Giving you a fitting teammate would not be an issue."

Kyle nodded. "I won't say no."

"If I may ask," the man said, "why did you think about asking Selene to join?"

"I wanted variety in the team, and I fought alongside her before. She seemed to be a perfect fit," Kyle answered.

"Is that the entire reason?" the man asked.

"Yeah," Kyle said.

"Nothing else?" the man asked with furrowed brows.

"No, that's it," Kyle answered with a shrug. "Would've been nice to have a friend on board, but I'm just throwing shit at the wall and see what sticks. If you got a better alternative, that's fine by me."

The man looked at Kyle with skepticism.

"You're telling me that you exclusively considered Selene's power in your selection process?" he asked.

"Yeah," Kyle answered. "I need someone good. I need someone I can trust with my life and, more importantly, with everyone else's life. Selene was great."

"You didn't consider her status or the fact that she's your friend?" the man asked.

"I mean," Kyle said as he scratched the back of his head, "I considered her as a teammate because she is my friend, but that only gets you through the first round. If she weren't capable, I would be playing with the lives of everyone on the team."

The man looked at Kyle for a while.

"I will leave a message for Selene, but for your own good, I will advise her against joining. The role she would occupy is already filled."

Kyle nodded. "Yep, I can see that. Maybe I should've considered that before."

The man nodded.

"Then, I will come to Starkhold in a week. I still have to finish some business here," the man said.

"Eh, why?" Kyle asked. "You don't need to travel that far. Just send the Knight."

At that moment, the man pulled out a bow from his back.

"How else am I going to join your team if I don't go to Starkhold?" the man asked.

Kyle's eyes widened, and for a second, he swore that he saw a playful smirk on the man's face.

"You?" Kyle asked.

"Yes, why not?" the man asked.

Kyle wasn't sure what he should say.