

## Hammer God 296

### Chapter 296 Fragments and Laws

"Do you remember the fourth trial of my inheritance?" Theodor asked.

"The one with all the math and the fire?" Kyle asked.

"Yes," Theodor confirmed. "This is how you obtain Fragments. The only difference is that getting an actual Fragment is much more difficult than understanding this bit of artificial fire I placed."

"Okay," Kyle said, "you told me how to get them, but I still don't know what they are."

"I was getting to that," Theodor said with a snort.

Kyle waited quietly.

"There are rules that dictate how the world works. Why is fire hot? Why does wind move? Why are you being pulled downwards? Why does time move forward?" Theodor said.

"Physical laws," Kyle said. "Stuff about Newton or something like that."

"Newton?" Theodor asked with annoyance.

"Forget it. Not important," Kyle answered.

Theodor snorted. "In theory, everything in existence can be broken down into Ether."

'Like energy, I guess,' Kyle thought, remembering some random videos he watched.

"All of these rules work on the basis of Ether. The Ether in everything dictates why things are as they are."

"You know Air Current. It makes your weapon faster. Why does it make your weapon faster?" Theodor asked.

"It adds the air-resistance to the speed of my hammer," Kyle said.

"How?" Theodor asked.

"It's because the Wind Ether absorbs the wind resistance and moves it back."

"How does it do that?" Theodor asked.

Kyle furrowed his brows.

He could still answer the question, but it required quite a lengthy explanation.

Yet, he entertained Theodor's line of questioning and answered him.

"And why would this specific movement of Ether affect the air in such a way?" Theodor asked.

"Eeeehhh," Kyle droned.

Then, he shrugged. "I dunno."

"Wind Dash is a more advanced version of Air Current, correct?" Theodor asked.

"Not sure, actually," Kyle said. "They work differently."

"Why do they work differently?" Theodor asked.

"How am I supposed to know that? I didn't invent them," Kyle answered.

"If you perfectly knew how Air Current and Wind Dash worked, would you be able to improve them?" Theodor asked.

"Probably," Kyle said with a shrug.

"Why?" Theodor asked back.

"Because I would know more, and I could experiment," Kyle said.

"Exactly," Theodor answered. "Now, if you knew perfectly how every movement of Wind Ether worked and how it interacted with the world, wouldn't you be able to make a vastly better technique?"

Kyle nodded.

"That's a Law," Theodor said.

"Law?" Kyle asked in confusion.

"You have power over Neutral Ether," Theodor explained. "Neutral Ether can turn into every kind of Ether. It is the basis of existence. If you know how to make Wind Ether, you can make Wind Ether. If you know how to make Time Ether, you can make Time Ether."

"An Affinity just gives you a shortcut. You could technically create any kind of Ether you want as long as you know how. The difference is just that it would be much harder."

"When you move your arm, your mind fires signals that travel through your nerves to specific muscle groups. Do you know which nerves you need to engage to make a certain movement?" Theodor asked.

"Pfft, nah," Kyle answered.

"But if you knew, could you use some form of energy to create a machine that could do that?"

"Yep," Kyle said. "Assuming I also know how engineering works."

"That's what it means to have an Affinity," Theodor added. "You automatically know what to do. You don't have to know how, but you can do it anyway."

"A Law refers to one specific part of the world. Understanding a Law means understanding that part of the world fully. If you know how all Wind Ether works, you can do everything Wind Ether can do."

"You could summon a storm. You could fly. You could control the wind to make heavy things float."

When Kyle heard that, he got reminded of something.

"That sounds like the stuff you told me Transcendents can do," Kyle said.

"Correct," Theodor said. "That is what makes a Transcendent a Transcendent."

"In order to become a Transcendent, you must understand a Law."

"A Fragment, on the other hand, is just a small part of a Law. It refers to something more specific. For example, the Wind Element is a Law that represents the entire function of Wind Ether. Meanwhile, the specific way that Wind Ether uses to create cuts is a Fragment."

"Fragments are just parts of Laws. You could also view them as subcategories."

'Ah, like trigonometry, algebra, and geometry are subcategories of math,' Kyle thought, remembering his horrible time in math class.

"And the Chief knows one of those?" Kyle asked.

"Almost certainly. He has gone through enough fights that he is bound to know at least one," Theodor said.

"How many do the Advisors and Dukes know?" Kyle asked.

"With luck, the stronger ones have one. 80% of them don't even have one," Theodor said.

Kyle's eyes widened.

Fragments were that hard to understand?

Theodor could see Kyle's thoughts just by looking at him.

"Fragments are not that complicated for someone with an improved mind," Theodor said. "If it were only up to understanding, almost every Grand Sorcerer would have one."

"Think back to the fourth trial. Was understanding the flame difficult?" Theodor asked.

"Not really," Kyle said, thinking back to the simple equations.

"Then, you should have passed it after just looking at the fire from a distance for a couple of seconds," Theodor said. "Was that how it went?"

"No- oooohhh," Kyle said. "Understanding is not the issue. The problem is that it's hard to see it."

"Yes," Theodor said. "That's where the problem of the class system comes into play."

"If you have a strengthened mind, you can understand it, but how will you be able to perceive the subtleties of the underlying Ether?"

"You need a strengthened Soul to perceive the Ether."

"But how will understanding something as simple as some normal fire help you? It's just normal fire. This bit of heat doesn't matter to your enemies."

"You need to understand something that is so dangerous that it could even kill you."

"But how will you approach and interact with something this dangerous? You need a strengthened body. If you want to comprehend something truly powerful, you also need a strengthened Center so you have enough Ether to heal your body."

"Artificers have it the easiest when it comes to comprehending Fragments since we have the two most important components. Yet, the Fragments we can comprehend are generally not very powerful since we can't approach the dangerous Elements."

"If you want to become a Transcendent, you need to comprehend a Law, and every Law includes very powerful and dangerous Fragments."

"That is why, to become a Transcendent, you need to either have a normal body or an Aristocrat's Body."