

Hammer God 358

Chapter 358 Loyalty

Kyle snorted. "Of course not."

The Colonel furrowed his brows.

"How am I supposed to swear on something like that? What if some guy from the army tries to kill me because some rich guy pays him to kill me? Am I supposed to not fight back?"

"I can't swear on something this general."

"If you're fine, I can swear a couple of things, and you can decide if that's enough or not," Kyle said.

The Lieutenant Colonel looked at Kyle with an evaluating expression.

"Please," she said.

"Alright," Kyle said before taking a deep breath.

"I swear that I have never been to the Winterfire Kingdom."

"I swear that I have never talked to anybody from the Winterfire Kingdom... as far as I know, at least."

"I swear that I'm not a follower of the Cult of Final Fate."

"I swear that I don't have any problems with the King, the Champion, or the General. In fact, I don't think I have problems with anybody from the Skysand Kingdom except for some asshole that tried to kill me once, but I don't think he's part of the army."

"I swear that I don't want to become King. Just imagining all the mundane, daily duties and administrative work that I would have to do makes me puke. I'm better in small groups or on my own."

"I just want to grow more powerful and do my job, while I'm at it."

"I swear that I take debts very seriously and that I will repay any debts to the best of my ability."

"That enough?" Kyle asked.

The Lieutenant Colonel kept looking at Kyle for a while.

"Where does your allegiance lie?" she asked.

"Myself, I guess. Secondarily, the Stark Brotherhood," Kyle answered.

The Lieutenant Colonel nodded. "What if a powerful person were in your way?"

"I can't give a clear answer to that," Kyle said. "Just like with every interesting question, the answer is always, it depends."

"Are they going to try to kill me? Well, fuck them. I'm going to kill them back."

"Are they just trying to use their soft power to suppress me? Well, there are ways I can deal with that."

The Lieutenant Colonel kept looking at Kyle.

"You have promised quite a lot so far, but the most important aspect has not been covered yet."

"Which is?" Kyle asked.

"If you ever reach the Peak of the Third Realm, how will you gain access to an Ether Essence? We do not fear a rebelling person in the Mid Third Realm or even Late Third Realm, but someone in the Peak Third Realm with an Aristocrat's Body can cause a lot of damage."

"How do you plan on getting access to an Ether Essence? This is the most concerning thing to us."

"Oh, that?" Kyle asked. "Easy, I don't need one."

The Lieutenant Colonel furrowed her brows.

"He's speaking the truth," the Chief interjected. "He doesn't need one. That's also why we can work together. The limited resources we are all fighting for are not relevant to him."

The Lieutenant Colonel looked at the Colonel before looking at the Captain.

Both of them showed that they didn't know what the Chief and Kyle were referring to.

"Please explain," the Lieutenant Colonel requested.

"I'm a half-dwarf," Kyle answered. "I can eat metals and beasts. I don't even need Ether Crystals to become stronger. I'll just hunt a couple of Monsters and eat them. That's how beasts do it, right? As far as I know, Monsters don't need Ether Essences to become Nature Gods."

"I mean, how do you think I became a Peak Warrior within just three months? I just mined a bunch of ore and ate it to advance."

The three people from the army looked at each other for a while.

"Do you have an old weapon?" the Colonel asked the Captain.

The Captain pulled out a small knife. "I bought this for skinning beasts, but I haven't used it in years."

The Captain put the small knife onto the table.

"Prove your claim," the Colonel said to Kyle.

"Oh, you brought food?" Kyle asked as he grabbed the knife.

The others didn't answer.

Kyle put the tip of the knife into his mouth and bit down.

The knife was quite hard and didn't give way immediately.

Yet, as the knife remained in Kyle's mouth, it started to weaken and became more brittle.

Every beast's maw had properties that broke down Ether, and Kyle's mouth wasn't different.

Weapons were more resistant to these effects, but they were not immune.

After some seconds, the knife became weak enough that Kyle could bite the tip off.

Then, he started crunching the blade into pieces before swallowing them.

"You ever had spicy food?" Kyle asked before taking another bite.

The three others just looked at Kyle with furrowed brows.

"Eating a weapon is kind of like eating spicy food. It burns a bit while going down, but you get used to the taste."

Kyle threw the remainder of the knife into his mouth.

The protective runes on the knife had already been broken when Kyle had consumed the tip.

Now, this knife was nothing but refined metal.

After three quick chews, Kyle swallowed it.

"Thanks for the meal," he said. The three from the army looked at each other.

Finally, the Colonel nodded at the Lieutenant Colonel.

"That is proof enough," she said. "With your promises, we believe that you are not a danger to the kingdom."

"Wait, me just randomly saying I'm not going to do some stuff is enough proof for you?" Kyle asked.

"We have our ways to verify your words," the Lieutenant Colonel said.

"Great!" Kyle said. "Thought this would be more troublesome. You didn't even ask me how I got my Aristocrat's Body."

The Lieutenant Colonel just threw a polite smile at Kyle.

"Now, Mr. Freeman, since your loyalty is no longer in question, let me ask you..."

"Are you willing to join the army?"

"No," Kyle answered immediately.

The Lieutenant Colonel just blinked a couple of times.

"You don't even know what we're offering," she said.

"Doesn't matter," Kyle said. "Joining the army means my resources will be up for others to decide. I want the power to keep whatever I find. I want the freedom to improve my power however I want."

"The Stark Brotherhood is giving me that freedom."

The Lieutenant Colonel looked at Kyle with an awkward expression. "Are you sure?"

"Yep, certain," Kyle said.

The Lieutenant Colonel looked at the Colonel.

The Colonel just moved his head to the side to indicate that they should get on with it.

"If that's your choice, it's fine," the Lieutenant Colonel said, "but keep in mind that you can always join the army."

"Sure," Kyle said. "I'll keep that in mind."

"Good," she said with a smile.

Finally, she gestured for the Captain to take the lead.

"I will be handing out your rewards," the Captain said.