

Hammer God 388

Chapter 388 First Meeting

Kyle spent all his time training in his storage room.

After a week had passed, he went back to his room for the weekly meeting with the Crown Prince.

It was very casual. Whenever the Crown Prince brought up a topic, it was quickly resolved by one of the representatives.

"Stark," the Crown Prince said after dealing with another issue. "Your Guild is putting a lot of pressure on the two Three-Weapons Guilds between it and the Naga Covenant."

"Yep," Kyle answered.

Silence.

The Crown Prince raised an eyebrow. "We need a variety of Three-Weapons Guilds in the kingdom. The Guilds need competition, and for competition to thrive, we need an abundance of lower-level Guilds."

"Sounds about right," Kyle answered.

More silence.

"He's asking you to tell your Guild to stop their advances," Sky commented from the side.

"I know," Kyle said.

Silence.

"So? Are you?" the Crown Prince asked with a bit of annoyance.

"Should I?" Kyle asked. "Do you want me to?"

"Yes," the Crown Prince said with a dark tone.

"Alright," Kyle answered. "Then, I'll make them stop."

Kyle quickly grabbed some paper and used his Ether to write a quick letter, addressed to the Chief.

"The Skysand Kingdom wants you to stop advancing on the western territories," was what the letter said.

"This good enough?" Kyle asked, showing the letter to the Crown Prince.

When the Crown Prince read the letter, his brows furrowed. "The Skysand Kingdom has not given any orders."

"I didn't write about any orders," Kyle said. "I asked you if you wanted us to stop, and I said that you wanted us to stop."

The Crown Prince narrowed his eyes.

"I may not have been clear with my statement," he said slowly. "My yes referred to your question of 'should I'. It is in your Guild's best interest to stop the advancement. The Skysand Kingdom has not made any statements or orders."

"Ah, ok," Kyle said. "So, we don't have to stop advancing."

"Stark," the Crown Prince said with suppressed anger. "I am not doing this to hurt you or to demonstrate my authority. There is an agreement between the Four-Weapons Guilds to leave territories for weaker Guilds. If every Guild were allowed to grow without abandon, there would be gigantic trade wars."

"The Stark Brotherhood already has enough territory to rival the other Guilds. If you keep growing, you will become a threat to the other Guilds, and they will unite to deal with your Guild."

"Do you understand what I'm trying to convey?" he asked. Kyle nodded. "The powerful want to keep the status quo," he said.

The other representatives threw a glance at Kyle.

That was accurate, but the way Kyle had phrased the statement rubbed them the wrong way.

"You can phrase it like that," the Crown Prince said with an annoyed sigh.

Kyle nodded. "Alright. So, the Skysand Kingdom is not interfering in the Stark Brotherhood's business. You, as a private individual, just wanted to give us some advice. Correct?"

"Yes," the Crown Prince said.

Kyle nodded again. "Thank you for your advice. I will keep it in mind."

Silence.

"You're not going to tell your Guild to stop?" Shore asked.

From the side, Naga also threw an aggressive glance at Kyle.

"Nope," Kyle said.

The atmosphere became tense.

"Larian, is there anything else you need?" Naga asked after some seconds.

The Crown Prince looked at Kyle with annoyance and frustration before turning to Naga. "No, the meeting is adjourned."

"Thank you," Naga said before throwing a look at Kyle. "Shore and I have things to discuss."

Shore nodded.

Naturally, the Stark Brotherhood was between the territories of the Shoreshells and the Naga Covenant.

Since the Stark Brotherhood had refused to play ball, the two Guilds would show them their place.

Kyle was quickly escorted out of the room, but he didn't mind.

He just went back to training.

While this had appeared like a casual get-together, the effects of the meeting were far-reaching.

About once a day, Kyle received a letter from Noah with updates.

After just a week, the letters became longer and longer.

And on the eighth day, Noah showed up personally.

He just walked into Kyle's storage room, escorted by a powerful guard.

"I need your help," Noah said.

"Shoot," Kyle answered while sending the waiting guard away.

"The Beast Master Association has increased its asking price by 70%."

"The Sorcerer Guilds have all said that they want more minimum commissions."

"The import prices for Water Materials have multiplied, while the export prices remained the same."

"The Shoreshells have started to drop their prices considerably."

"The Naga Covenant is using all its resources to conquer the territories between them and us."

Naturally, this was the retaliation of the Shoreshells and Naga Covenant.

They hadn't really gone against the Stark Brotherhood until now.

Their powers had made Sorcerers and Beast Masters almost inaccessible to them. This meant that the Stark Brotherhood had to refuse or fail far more missions.

Their reputation as a problem solver for all kinds of problems was slowly being eroded.

"You've been a representative longer than I," Noah said. "What should I do?"

Naturally, Noah knew why all of this was happening.

Through indirect channels, the two Guilds made it known to the Stark Brotherhood that they were not happy with Kyle's conduct and the way the Guild was operating.

In response, Noah decided to talk to Kyle directly.

But not to blame him or to tell him what to change.

No, Noah was here to ask for help.

Noah wanted advice on how to deal with the adversity Kyle had sent towards them.

Kyle looked at Noah. "There's not much you can do."

"The other two Guilds are not interested in diplomacy. They just want to suppress you and show their power."

"No kind of negotiation will help."

"They're not here to talk. They're here to intimidate you. They are puffing up their muscles while bumping your shoulders."

"Talking will just make them attack even more."

Noah took a deep breath.

"Then, what am I supposed to do?"

Kyle grinned.

"You are not supposed to do anything. You are the representative. You are the Guild's mouth."

"This is not a job for our mouth."

"This is a job for our fists."