

Hammer God 390

Chapter 390 Intense Conflict

Kyle didn't have to wait long for the fallout.

A team from the Stark Brotherhood was killed during a routine mission near the border of the Shoreshells.

After investigations, the conclusion was that the team had received false information from the scout.

The target was a powerful black cat, which was a Mid Ferocious Beast.

When the team arrived and saw the black cat at the expected location, they attacked without checking.

Yet, the black cat had turned out to be a Peak Ferocious Beast.

The person who had scouted the cat had been put under extremely close investigation.

Was it on purpose?

Were they an agent from their enemies?

Sadly, the scout wasn't prepared for things to go this wrong, which was why they hadn't documented every single one of their steps.

There was no proof of their innocence.

However, there was also no proof of their guilt.

It was difficult to come to a conclusion.

They could only make guesses.

Two days later, another team didn't return from their mission.

Another instance of bad luck.

The team had been on their way to apprehending a Peak Sorcerer deserter.

Sadly, somehow, that Peak Sorcerer had become a Grand Sorcerer in the meantime.

Within just a couple of days, ten people had died.

Some days later, another incident occurred, but this time, the team had noticed beforehand.

They had been hired to deal with a couple of Earth Elementals in a mine.

They had already killed two Earth Elementals when the leader of the team got the feeling that something wasn't right.

Luckily, the team had an insanely talented scout, who excelled at staying hidden.

That scout went deeper into the mine, going past two more Earth Elementals without being noticed.

That was when the scout noticed a dead Earth Elemental.

Behind the dead Earth Elemental was a new tunnel that led much deeper into the underground.

Even more, there was no ore near this place.

An ore mine with no ore in its depths.

Either someone had mined all of the ore while being surrounded by several Earth Elementals...

Or a Metal Elemental was here.

One didn't need to be a genius to realize that fighting an Earth Elemental was quite different from fighting a Metal Elemental.

This was a team comprised of Peak Fighters.

In order to kill the weakest Metal Elementals, the Stark Brotherhood would need to send the Ace Team, and they might not even succeed.

Luckily, this time, nobody died, but this was the third incident of extreme danger within one week.

When Kyle saw Naga and Shore during the next meeting, he could tell that something was up.

Naga refused to look at him, while Shore kept smiling at him with a smile that didn't reach her eyes.

Kyle didn't say anything to them.

This was not his fight.

Everything was up to the Stark Brotherhood.

Then, Kyle didn't receive any significant updates for a week.

During the next meeting, Shore approached him.

"Are you sure you don't want this conflict to end?" she asked with a smile.

"I'm not the Guild Leader," Kyle answered.

"Have it your way," Shore said.

One more week passed.

Kyle didn't get any significant news.

Yet, Shore acted very differently.

She seemed almost nervous or frustrated.

'She looks like she wants to talk to me but doesn't know how to,' Kyle thought. 'Something's going on.'

Three days after the meeting, Shore appeared in Kyle's storage room, alone.

"Yes?" Kyle asked.

"Listen, this conflict has become more intense than we both have expected," Shore said.

"Has it?" Kyle asked evenly with a raised brow.

"Yes," Shore said. "You can't feign ignorance on this matter."

"I'm not feigning," Kyle said casually as he pulled out a bunch of letters from Noah.

The next moment, he showed them to Shore.

They basically all just said that they were still fighting.

"I don't have a lot of information," Kyle said.

Shore looked with skepticism at Kyle. "You're telling me that your Guild is not keeping you informed?"

"I mean, they are, but only to a degree," Kyle said. "They are fighting. They are not telling me that they don't want to fight. I've gotten a couple of reports here and there, but I have not read any complaints. It's like a Fighter that got injured by a beast. It's to be expected."

Shore took a deep breath.

"Within the last month, your Guild has lost 13% of its members," Shore said. "You have also lost 40,000 square kilometers of territory. Three of your Grandmasters died. Your mission acceptance rate has dropped from 95% to 75%. Your mission success rate has dropped from 99% to 92%."

Shore gave several more metrics to highlight the Stark Brotherhood's situation.

Kyle knew what all of these metrics represented and how powerful they were.

To be fair, the metrics genuinely painted a horrible picture.

If this continued, they would lose their spot as a Four-Weapons Guild in the next tournament.

"And you're here because of altruism?" Kyle asked.

Shore furrowed her brows. "Our metrics have also suffered. Our situation is not as bad as yours, but we are not unscathed."

"Stark, none of us want this to continue," she added. "You have shown that you can keep up with us, and we have shown that trying to walk all over us will have consequences. The Stark Brotherhood is a worthy Four-Weapons Guild."

"You might not realize this since your Guild keeps you uninformed, but the tensions between the Guilds have started to turn personal."

"This is turning from a conflict between organizations to an ideological war between two different kinds of people. This thing is starting to become very personal."

"If that happens, the Skysand Kingdom will step in, and then, all of us will be forced to bow our heads and accept the whip lest their sword beheads us."

"The Skysand Kingdom is just waiting for an excuse to conscript all three of our Guilds for five years without seeming like a tyrant."

"They are not blind. They see what's going on."

"This conflict has to stop!"