

Hammer God 536

Chapter 536 True Free Market

"One Contribution Point or five Hunter Cores."

Kyle stopped moving as he suddenly heard a voice in his head.

He looked around but couldn't see anyone else. "Eh, what?"

Kyle could feel some annoyance in the atmosphere around him, which was weird.

He hadn't heard anything else, and he didn't see the other person.

So, how could he feel that they were annoyed?

"Did the person who brought you here not tell you that this planet belongs to someone already?" the person spoke in Kyle's mind.

"Nobody brought me here," Kyle answered. "I came by myself."

Silence.

"You came by yourself," the person repeated in a tone that made it seem like they didn't believe Kyle.
"From where?"

"From there," Kyle said, pointing at the big planet with the base on it.

Silence.

The next moment, a half-wolf, half-human thing appeared in front of Kyle.

Based on the thin waist and the... breasts... Kyle could tell that this was most likely a woman.

The Ether gathering around her was extremely dense, and just like with some of the beings in the big portal room, the Ether around her was moving in a very mechanical way.

It didn't feel natural.

"You're a Transcendent," she said matter-of-factly. "Not many of those can leave Orchis."

'Guess Orchis is the name of the planet with the base,' Kyle thought.

"Why not?" Kyle asked with a shrug. "You just keep moving upwards until the gravity gets weaker."

The wolf-woman furrowed her brows.

"What kind of Law did you use to accomplish that?" she asked.

"Hey, I'm new here," Kyle said. "I'm not sure if it's a good idea to share my Laws with someone else. Feels like telling someone what's in my bank account."

"I didn't ask you for your specific Law," she said with annoyance. "I asked what kind of Law it is. Didn't they tell you that during Initiation?"

Kyle blinked a couple of times. "Initiation?"

The wolf-woman furrowed her brows.

At the same time, Kyle felt the wolf-woman's Ether washing over his body.

"You're not part of the Cult," she commented.

"Honestly, I have no idea if I am part of the Cult or not at this point," Kyle said with some annoyance. "I was brought here because an old friend of mine recruited me, but as soon as someone took a closer look at me, they just told me to walk out the door."

"I have no fucking idea about my current status. Am I part of the Cult? Am I not? Nobody of importance actually clarified that to me! I just met three random guys on the street who told me that I could come to this planet to comprehend Laws as long as I had payment."

The wolf-woman looked at Kyle with an evaluating gaze. "You have a True Sin Aura."

"No shit," Kyle said. "Everyone here has one. Well, almost. The other new recruits didn't have one."

"Were you a victim of the Array of Stars?" she asked.

"They hired me as an Overseer, and yeah, I did what they asked me to do," Kyle said with annoyance. "How come everyone keeps asking me that? Does that happen regularly?"

"I see," she said with furrowed brows. "Am I right in assuming that you advanced with a Complex Level One Law?"

"Yep," Kyle answered.

"That explains things," she said. "Leaving Orchis is usually impossible for Transcendents without a movement-related Level Two Law."

"What? Why?" Kyle asked.

"Gravity and regeneration," she explained. "Moving upwards, even very slowly, consumes more Energy than they regenerate."

"But if you managed to break through with a Complex Level One Law, your Core Spark decreases Energy usage and increases Energy recovery for the kind of Energy you use."

"Ether, right?" Kyle asked.

"Excuse me?" she asked with a raised brow.

"You keep saying Energy. You mean Ether, right?" Kyle asked.

"Energy and Ether are the same thing," she said. "Tertiary and sometimes Secondary Worlds have their own words for Energy. Mana, Ether, Qi, and so on."

"In the Supreme World, we call it Energy, because that's the best description for what it does."

"Okay," Kyle said.

'Fuck you, I'll keep calling it Ether!'

"So, what's all this about?" Kyle asked. "Am I part of the Cult or not?"

"No, you're not," the wolf-woman said.

"Okay, so, I have no obligations, missions, or code of conduct I have to follow, right?" Kyle asked.

"That is correct," she answered. "You may do whatever you want and go wherever you want. You're not part of the Cult."

"Why?" Kyle asked.

"Why what?" she asked.

"I thought I was recruited. You guys pulled me out of the world. If I had ascended normally, I wouldn't have ended up here, which means you guys got involved and actively interfered with my ascension. That can't possibly be cheap or easy."

"So, why do all of that and then just not ask for anything in return?"

"Are you guys a charity? You don't seem like a charity."

Surprisingly, the wolf-woman didn't seem bothered by all of Kyle's questions. It was like she had expected all of that, which was probably also true.

Plenty of people who had been in Kyle's shoes had probably had the same issues.

It made no fucking sense!

"Wait! Don't answer that!" Kyle suddenly said as he got an idea. "I think I know what's going on."

The wolf-woman just raised an eyebrow.

"So, most Transcendents can't leave Orchis, right? Especially freshly ascended Transcendents can't, right?" Kyle asked.

She nodded.

"There are barely any Laws anyone can comprehend on Orchis, right?"

She nodded again.

"And even if they can, the surrounding planets are probably all owned by the Cult, right?"

She nodded again.

"And the owners of said planets want payment in exchange for services, right?"

Another nod.

"Okay," Kyle said, "if I wanted to find a free place where I can comprehend Laws, how long would I need to travel?"

"Our territory gets less dense at a distance of about four light weeks," she answered.

"Alright, so," Kyle continued. "I have absolutely no way to become stronger in a reasonable way, unless I willfully join the Cult of my own volition. Is that right?"

"It would be very, very difficult," she answered.

Kyle sighed.

"Fucking society, man," he said. "Everyone keeps saying there are no rules, but there actually are rules. Gotta work to make money to buy shit you want. You probably even pay taxes."

"No, I don't," the wolf-woman said.

"Wait, you don't?" Kyle asked.

"No taxes," she said. "This planet is mine. Almost all the planets are owned by individuals."

"The Cult doesn't have a set territory. We are just individuals and groups of individuals that work with the Cult. I don't have to pay them anything."

"However, if any stronger member on Orchis was interested in taking ownership of this planet, I also wouldn't receive any protection."

"Huh," Kyle said. "How come you don't have to pay taxes?"

"I'm an Associate," she said. "That means I have a loose agreement with the Cult. I can make and use Contribution Points, but I have no obligations."

"If I wanted to, I could leave and go wherever I want."

"Meanwhile, you are just a stranger. You have not entered into an agreement with the Cult."

Kyle sighed.

It was clear what the Cult was trying to show him.

Sure, Kyle was free to do whatever he wanted, but he wasn't powerful enough to become stronger on his own.

Powerful people owned everything around him, and they were not interested in the measly resources a Transcendent could bring them.

They were interested in the Cult's currency since the Cult's currency could be exchanged for all kinds of things.

'Even more, the only reason why any of these people are even talking to me is probably because some powerful person on Orchis wants me to become one of their recruits.'

'If I refuse to join, they might give up, and their goodwill might dry up.'

Kyle looked at the wolf-woman.

'She might have just killed me if this person weren't protecting me.'

'Yes, I am free to do whatever I want, but everything I want isn't free.'

'I have entered the true free market.'