

The Fall 254

Chapter 254: Beruv Ylvas

Zac didn't know what to make of the situation since the man who had stopped some distance away from him was one of the E-Grade powerhouses in the hunt, and the leader of the Resistance against the Medhin Empire. But he did not really look like a powerhouse at the moment, but rather a war-torn refugee.

"I mean you no harm," the man said with a cough.

Zac frowned and took a second look at the man in front of him. He seemed to be in his fifties, though he might be older as outward appearances weren't the best indicator of age any longer. He had long brown hair that was slightly greying in his temples, and it was held back in a leather hoop.

It was the same with his short beard that seemed to be the result of one month without shaving rather than some permanent style. He was a handsome man, but Zac was rather interested in the reason for his current state.

There were multiple dried spots of blood on his body, and even his aura was slightly erratic, signaling serious wounds. He was also pale from blood loss, and almost a sickly sheen covered his forehead. Zac had a strong suspicion that this was the result of killing Repubat Medhin a few days ago. Only a few others should be able to harm him like this.

"I am Beruv Ylvas from the planet Berum. I have been searching for you and a few others in hopes of entering an alliance against the Medhin. Judging by your clothes you have no problem killing them," Beruv said with a pointed glance at the golden robes Zac wore.

Zac relaxed slightly since it seemed there would be no battle for now. He remembered that Beruv Ylvas was only level 80, but he should be far stronger than the E-Grade beasts he had encountered so far. Beruv must have done something spectacular since he was the strongest person from his original planet, just like he was the strongest person on Earth.

It also meant that he likely had a handful of the frontrunner-titles such as himself, making him stronger than just his level. He would prefer to fight someone like this blind. So Zac kept his guard up in case he was planning a sneak attack for the wealth he had accumulated.

"I'm sorry, I understand that you have an irreconcilable enmity, but I do not have much to gain by risking my life against Nenotheop," Zac warily said without turning off his defenses.

"I understand your position, you are already first on the Gatherer Ladder and you don't have much to gain by joining me. But I am willing to not only give up all the treasure we collect from the operation, but also half of my own," Beruv continued.

Zac's brows rose and he had to admit he was slightly tempted. He had already made away with more treasure than he'd expected, but he was the head of a large force. Setting the foundations for a strong army and skilled craftsmen needed heavy investments, and this would be a huge help. The emperor should also hold the war arrays that he had seen everyone from Medhin use, which he really wanted to get his hands on.

"I have to admit it's tempting Mr. Berum, but why would you go so far to enlist me? You should know by now that I have not broken through to E-Grade," Zac said.

"I go by Ylvas. And I know you are not evolved, but I sense that you are far stronger than any other F-grade warrior I've met. You're likely even stronger than the two sons of Nenotheop," Ylvas said with a serious face. "My senses are telling me I might be in danger just by standing close to you."

Zac surmised that Ylvas should have accumulated a decent chunk of luck by his comment, and he guessed what he said made sense. However, Ylvas did not say that he was stronger than the emperor, which was telling of how strong that man was.

"Still, giving up that much wealth will set you back quite a bit. Why not simply take your treasure and cultivate. There will be other chances to kill the emperor," Zac probed.

"Killing Nenotheop Medhin is extremely hard since either his position is unknown due to him exploring uninhabited lands, or he's safe within his palaces. This place is the best chance for our resistance to kill him," the man said with another cough. "But most importantly I refuse to become the fulcrum for that old goat."

"The fulcrum?" Zac said with a frown, an ominous feeling growing in his heart.

"I managed to gather some intelligence when I killed Repubat Medhin. We have always wondered how the whole family could possess such power when the normal citizens of Medhin were completely unable to cultivate," Ylvas said. "It turns out that some old monster called The Great Redeemer visited their planet thousands of years ago."

"I'm sorry, did you say The Great Redeemer?" Zac exclaimed, not able to hide his shock.

"Yes. Why, do you know anything about him?" Ylvas said, his eyes thinning.

Zac hesitated for a second before he explained the events at the end of the battle with Salvation. Ylvas frowned as he listened to the story, and sighed after Zac was finished.

"It might not be a coincidence that it was our two worlds that were put together on this trial. It seems we both face the same problem," he said with a shake of his head.

"Could you tell me what else you found out?" Zac asked.

"The Great Redeemer set up gathering arrays and taught the Medhin cultivation. Before he left he gave them a task. They needed to completely dominate their planet before it was integrated. So the Medhin already knew about the integration and that their world would sooner or later become part of the multiverse," Ylvas said. "For thousands of years they have waited and prepared."

Zac, unfortunately, wasn't too surprised when he heard the story since it was all too familiar to things on his own planet. The Dominators seemed to have the same past, with the difference that their quest for world domination failed due to the rabid resistance of the Anointed and the Zhix hordes.

But he couldn't completely connect the dots. It seemed that it was Salvation who had the connection with The Great Redeemer, but the terms fulcrum and the similarities were with the Dominators. Were the Dominators working together with Salvation? But they shouldn't have had any contact before the integration.

“What does fulcrum mean?” Zac asked.

“I am not completely sure, but it has something to do with The Redeemer’s plans. A few powerhouses seem necessary to use as focal points of arrays. I would be turned into an array flag essentially, and I would rather kill myself than see that happen. But if I die then they will choose someone else,” Ylvas said with fury smoldering in his eyes.

“Turned into an array flag...?” Zac muttered with disgust.

That sounded like an extremely sinister method, and it wasn’t something that was mentioned in the array crystal in his possession. Worse yet, if that was how the arrays were created, then the array itself couldn’t be anything good either.

But that begged the question of why The Great Redeemer put all that effort. Ogras had already told him that finding inhabited planets that yet weren’t integrated was like searching for a needle in a haystack. However, The Great Redeemer had actually found at least two and initiated the same plan for both of them.

It was not a good feeling to know that some old monster might have a vested interest in his planet. But Zac couldn’t figure out the reason. New planets certainly had a lot of valuable things, but there was simply not enough wealth to make an old monster traverse the cosmos and scheme for thousands of years.

“Do you know what The Great Redeemer is planning?” Zac asked.

“No idea. I don’t think even Repubat himself knew. Either Nenotheop keeps that secret to himself, or perhaps none of them know what’s truly going on. The only thing Repubat knew was that The Great Redeemer called the people of the world 'fuel', and that the Medhin would be taken to a cultivator’s paradise for fulfilling their task,” Ylvas said with a shake of his head.

“Fuel?” Zac repeated with trepidation.

That obviously couldn't be good news.

“Have you figured out anything to stop this?” Zac asked.

“I can’t be sure, but I have formed a hypothesis. Why did The Great Redeemer visit our planets thousands of years ago? Why did he give a family cultivation manuals? I believe he has formed a Karmic Link with those who use that cultivation technique, and he now uses that link as a means to locate our planets,” Ylvas explained.

“Don’t he already know where our planets are?” Zac asked skeptically. “I mean he’s already been there before.”

“He only knows where the planets were previously. But the integration fused and moved them. We might not even be in the same part of space any longer,” Ylvas said with a shake of his head. “Our planets are shrouded by the system for a hundred years, but I think he has found the means to get around that.”

"You're right," Zac said, feeling a bit stupid. "You're thinking that if you manage to kill all the members of the Medhin Clan you will sever that Karmic Link, making The Great Redeemer lose track of your planet."

"Exactly," Ylvas said with a nod. "I think this might be our last chance. If the Emperor is still alive when we return I will have no way to kill him. Their capital is a fortress with extremely strong arrays and legions of soldiers. That's why I am willing to make that deal. Help me kill him and half the treasure I have accumulated is yours. I would give my points as well, but they are not transferrable," Ylvas entreated.

Zac was pretty tempted, but he didn't immediately reply. Beruv Ylvas was on the 5th position on the wealth ladder, so the treasures he had accumulated shouldn't be small. But Zac needed to be alive to enjoy them. He needed to be careful. This wasn't as simple as a 2 on 1 assault. Even discounting the Emperor's personal guard there was also his son, another E-Grade powerhouse that had a comparable level to Beruv Ylvas.

"I can sympathize with you, but I am not sure about this. It would probably not just be us versus Nenotheop. There is also his son and their war arrays," Zac said.

"I believe we do not need to worry about Vasidas. Our spies indicate that the two are at odds and that Vasidas might even be planning a coup. If we assault the emperor Vasidas will likely stay on the sidelines, perhaps only appearing after his father is dead to kill us if he sees there's an opportunity," Ylvas said.

"So we would be doing his work for him?" said with a thoughtful nod.

"Also, it would not only be the two of us. I have gathered a few hundred cultivators of Berum who are currently lying in wait. They will help lessen the pressure from the army. Unfortunately, we do not possess as good war arrays, and I therefore need the assistance of another powerhouse," Ylvas added.

"My plan would be that you stay hidden inside my army, and before they realize who you are you need to strike at the Emphyrean Guard and kill as many as possible. That's the elite force of Nenotheop, and the source of his war array," Ylvas said. "I will hold the focus of the emperor himself, and after the array is dealt with we will pincer him."

Zac nodded thoughtfully. Having an army on his side would make things easier, and the plan Ylvas proposed was one where Ylvas himself did the heavy lifting. If Zac managed to get close to such an elite squad while the emperor himself was occupied he should be able to make short work of them all.

But Zac couldn't discount the possibility that Beruv Ylvas was lying through his teeth just to enlist some help in his quest to kill his nemesis. It was worth remembering that if they managed to kill the Medhin Emperor and his son, then Beruv Ylvas would be the strongest man on their planet.

But there were two days to go, and Zac did not really have anything to do apart from grinding some beasts. He could check things out and gather intelligence to see if the plan would be viable or not.

"I do not have anything against working together," Zac finally said. "But if I feel its too dangerous to complete I will back away. I am sorry, but I'm not ready to risk it all against Medhin Nenotheop."

“That’s all I can ask for,” Beruv Ylvas said with a nod of relief and stretched out his hand. “To a successful cooperation.”

Zac hesitated slightly before he turned off [Nature’s Barrier] that had swirled around him all the while, and grasped the other man's hand.

“To a successful cooperation.”