

## The Fall 444

### Chapter 444: Dreams

Hot hot flames and darkness. Billy didn't like it. Billy tried to get away, but it kept following wherever he went. But suddenly the hot darkness was gone, and Billy saw he was on the mountain again.

"You were having a nightmare," the statue said.

"Billy told you, Billy won't listen to you, Statue-man!" Billy snorted with disdain as he glared at the twenty-meter statue. "Trying to trick Billy that Billy is not human!"

The statue-man loudly groaned in response. Did he finally realize that Billy was too smart to be tricked?

"Remember, I only told you that you have Titanic blood due to your ancestry? It has simply awoken in you, pushing your mundane human bloodline aside," statue-man said, using a soft voice like a woman. "You are a descendant of mine, remember how I awakened your bloodline transformation?"

"Keep trying to trick Billy with big words," Billy muttered as he started to turn over rocks and rip up bushes.

"...What are you doing now?" the statue finally said after some silence.

"Billy is looking for a way out. You think you can trap Billy here? Billy is a genius, Alien-man said so himself. Billy will find the door," Billy muttered as he started digging a hole.

"Look- Listen. I am not trapping you, remember? I simply created this world so that I can guide you in your dreams. Isn't it working? Aren't you stronger after waking up?" the voice said with a sigh.

"Stupid statue, everyone feels better after a good night's sleep. Mama always says so," Billy snorted as shot another despising glare at the huge Statue looking like a human.

The statue was a bit annoying, even if it looked almost as handsome as Billy himself. Statue-man had big muscles like Billy, and he held a really big hammer that looked good for thwonkin'.

But Statue-man was always trying to trick Billy, so Billy had tried to break it. But the stone was very hard, even Billy couldn't thwunk it to make it go quiet. Billy did manage to drag it away once, but the next night it was right back. But Billy would one day find a way to thwunk it for good.

The trouble was that Billy always forgot about this stupid mountain and Statue-man when waking up. Statue-man said that it was to protect him from enemy forces, but Billy believed that it was just so that Thea wouldn't help Billy figure out a way to thwunk him. Thea was almost as smart as Billy, and she had a lot of books.

Billy bet that at least one book could tell him how to make a statue shut up, mama always said that books had all kinds of smart things written down.

"Lord, help this child," Statue-man groaned.

"Billy is an adult," Billy muttered in response.

"Never mind," the statue sighed. "What happened to you? You have pretty serious wounds. I can only help so much through this dreamscape."

"Are you peeping at Billy? Mama said that peeping toms get no dessert," Billy said with a scowl.

"We are connected through our bloodline, I can tell without peeping," Statue-man said.

Billy hesitated for a bit, but he eventually decided to tell Statue-man what happened. Statue-man was a bit stupid and a liar, but he had helped Billy a few times with getting better at thwonkin'.

"Bad guys are attacking Billy's friend's town while he is away. Billy came to help. Their boats had a lot of fire," Billy muttered before his face lit up with glee. "But Billy thwonked one of their boats and now the zombies and lizardmen are fish poop."

"Good! A real man is true to his brethren, and ruthless to his enemies," Statue-man roared. "But your enemies are pretty strong. Why don't you draw the Array I imparted to you and I'll-"

"Billy won't fall for your tricks!" Billy cut off Statue-man "Billy knows that Statue-Man wants to use the drawing to escape Billy's dreams!"

"Ai, this child's bloodline might actually be too pure for his own good. The other Emperors would laugh if they heard how hard it was to get a disciple."

"What did you find out?" Adriel asked as he gazed down at the ocean waves.

"It was Thea Marshall and Thwonkin' Billy," the ghost answered with a hollow voice. "They managed to sink one of the advance vessels before being forced to retreat by the Bishop. They were both wounded in the conflict and will likely not be able to fight for a week or two."

Adriel nodded with satisfaction. Those two weren't a real threat to his plans, but they had been a constant annoyance for a few months now, like two flies who refused to go away. It was good to hear that they finally had been brought to justice, and he knew that Krisko would perform a rite of thanks to the Founders upon hearing the news.

Besides, it was good news for another reason. Neither the Super-Brother-Man nor the two incursion leaders who chose to join his banner had participated in any of the raids that tried to impede their progress. The human champion was truly held up somehow, perhaps even sent off-world by the Ruthless Heavens.

If they hadn't captured a couple of the living to gain access to their Ladder, Adriel would have thought that the man was wounded after enduring the tribulation. But he was clearly still at level 75, proving he hadn't taken that step just yet.

"Our soldiers?" Adriel asked.

"Less than 5% survived from the vessel," the scout reported. "There are extremely bloodthirsty beasts in the waters, some of them seem to be controlled by the powerful contracted cephalopod."

"What about the arrays on the ship?" Adriel asked, cutting to the heart of the matter.

"We managed to recover them," the ghost nodded.

“Good,” Adriel sighed with relief.

Losing a few hundred Revenants born on a world with such abundant Origin Dao was regrettable. These were among the first to awaken, and they would no doubt have become strong subordinates. But the mission could still be considered a win as long as they managed to plant the arrays.

The alignment would commence in 5 days, and as long as they managed to trap the Super-Brother Man on his island kingdom until then he would have won.

The brains of the zealots must have been scorched by their flames, as they still believed that they could actually kill the target in the middle of his own kingdom. Adriel knew better. He was happy to let them fight it out as he placed the spatial locks down.

Of course, if that was only what was needed to be done he wouldn't have needed to send his strongest clones to this remote corner of the world. He had a secret mission to fulfill, handed to him straight from his master's master.

Who would have thought that some great powerhouse from the Empire Heartlands was touring their remote Kingdom? With the distances involved there might not be a single guest for tens of thousands of years, and usually not people with this kind of clout.

More importantly, the great master had a treasured disciple who craved unique bodies for experimentation, preferably ones leaned toward the Three Great Arts. And didn't he have a prime body waiting for him here? Thankfully his master had managed to hear about it and quickly contacted him.

This was his shot at greatness. Between the contribution of aligning a world with such a unique Mystic Realm and gaining the favor of that great master, he might actually have a chance at gaining a teleportation token to the Heartlands. He had heard that treasures that could cause two forces to fight to the death in this remote sector were sold like they were worthless sticks of incense over there.

Adriel had already promised the body to Harkon, but he would have to get out of that contract even if it meant killing his old friend. He could only pray that they had managed to keep the poison girl alive long enough that she hadn't decomposed or been cremated.

His hollow eyes looked out across the waters, cursing the Zealots for building such bulky vessels rather than the small skippers that their enemies used. They would long have reached the islands if they could move even half as fast as the ships the humans utilized.

But they were so close that Adriel could taste it by now, and he could already sense markings left behind by Mhal even without the help of the tracking arrays. They would be there in less than a day, and without the human champion there they might be able to completely conquer the town.

It was time to make all his dreams come true.

“You were right! He passed the 7th floor. Only took him something like 20 minutes too!” Leyara said with excitement, prompting Pretty to look over. “How did you know?”

“I had a feeling,” Pretty said with a smile.

"You know something, I can feel it," Leyara said with a pout. "I can't take it! Just look at the chaos below! My sister-disciples will be green with envy when they hear of this spectacle. Our sector might never have seen anything like it!"

Pretty Peak sighed as she looked down at the crowd that kept growing by the minute. Three-quarters of the climb was over for Zac Piker, and he could be dropping out at any moment now that he had reached the 8th floor.

One fight after another had erupted as the square was only so big, and forces fought for the opportunity to be closer to the array. Mr. Piker would be drowned in a deluge of attacks the moment he emerged from the teleporter, and everyone wanted to be the one to land the killing blow.

Pretty felt some helplessness as she saw the commotion. She wasn't sure what she was supposed to do in this situation. The man had a minor connection to her uncle, but she couldn't be expected to deal with a mess of this magnitude, right?

"What are you thinking about? Do you want to join? I am sure Prince Yeorav would give some face and let you set up camp next to his array," Leyara said. "Might be a good chance to make a connection? He's pretty handsome and less muscle-headed than his cultivation-maniac brother."

"I told you I'm not joining," Pretty sighed. "Besides, Yeorav has a Dao Companion already."

"So what's wrong?" Leyara asked as she took out a bottle of wine.

"Zac Piker has a small connection to my family, and I'm not sure what to do," Pretty finally admitted, but regretted it the moment she saw her friend's exuberant expression.

"I knew it!" Leyara screamed with excitement. "Secret Boyfriend? Hiding him from your crazy grandpa?"

"What?" Pretty snorted with a roll of her eyes. "My uncle met him by chance. Uncle Greatest sent Average on a training mission, and they met Zac Piker by chance. Mr. Piker beat the crap out of Average, and my uncle was impressed by his performance."

"He's from the Allbright Empire? But why haven't we heard of him before?" Leyara asked with confusion.

"I'm not sure if he's actually from my Empire or not. He was sent to an abandoned planet in the Red Zone for a quest by The System. I think my cousin was used as a prop for him," Pretty explained.

"Well, Average is only 17. Beating him up shouldn't be too hard, he has barely started setting up his foundation," Leyara shrugged.

"Well, my uncle said there's something miraculous about Mr. Piker," Pretty said. "But he refused to say what when dad asked."

"Well, that's not surprising. He beat the 7th floor. There's no way he hasn't had some unique encounters," Leyara said.

"So what do you think I should do?" Pretty asked.

"You can't stop what's going on down there, even if you team up with that mysterious Draugr," Leyara said as her eyes started to radiate with a white glow. "There are multiple peak arrays down there, and the powers are chaotic enough to indicate that there are at least a dozen offensive treasures reaching high-tier."

"So he's doomed?" Pretty sighed. "It doesn't make sense that the System would create a scenario like this. We finally see a great genius emerge in this sector, only to have him die by the hands of a thousand pieces of trash?"

"Well, perhaps things will turn into an all-out brawl where the preparations are used on competing forces rather than on Mr. Piker. Or perhaps he has concocted some sort of counter, who knows?" Leyara said, though she looked less than enthused about Mr. Piker's chances. "But I think the System will only require him to survive for a short moment to consider it a pass."

"Well, he's had almost a hundred days to prepare, and hopefully he'll have found something that can assist him," Pretty nodded.

"Well, it doesn't hurt to get ready just in case," Leyara said thoughtfully as she adjusted her dress to show a bit more cleavage.

"What are you thinking about now?" Pretty asked with exasperation.

"Well, if he actually survives long enough for the quest to expire, wouldn't he become this sector's Number One Prince Charming?" Leyara said as she started applying some make-up to her already immaculate face. "This is a prime opportunity to snag both a dashing husband and an amazing seedling for our forces."