

Oracle 547

Chapter 547 - Aether Spell Fireworks

"Bloody Hell! What the heck is that!"

The eyeballs of the remaining refugees left in ignorance from the other factions bulged out as they saw this tide of enemies pouring out like an endless tide from the ash forest. It was one thing to hear the cackling of Digestors drawing closer, but where did these beasts come from?

Those who had scanned, scouted or warned their comrades beforehand had long since fled, and it was the weak, panicked and ignorant refugees who had to bear the brunt of this stampede.

Jake and his group were focused on the refugees and Evolvers standing in their way, but they flinched when they heard the screams of agony and terror from the refugees at their backs. Their position was not much better than that of these clueless factions. They had advanced only about a hundred meters or so toward the mountain since leaving the forest.

They would not make it out in time.

"Fuck it! Forget the previous plan! Defensive formation, brace yourself for the impending collision!" Jake shouted dully as he met the rampaging beasts behind him.

The refugees from his faction were jumpy, but they were still alive today thanks to having followed his orders so far. Gritting their teeth, they ignored the refugees and Evolvers blocking their path and turned back to face the tide of enemies bearing down on them.

Fortunately for them, the Evolvers and refugees barring their way were no fools either and hesitated for only a second before doing the same. The high-ranking Evolvers began barking a series of commands and some semblance of order reappeared in the midst of the panicked survivors.

Nevertheless, that brief moment of indecision was enough to cause hundreds of casualties. The refugees who were closest to the forest and unprepared were trampled mercilessly before they could react, while the others were no match for the huge beasts launched at full gallop. Some resisted for a couple of seconds, but the others were immediately crushed.

These deaths were not in vain, however. Their sacrifices helped slow the charge of the berserk beasts, which soon found themselves trapped in their position. This gave the other refugees time to regroup and take up a fighting position.

After half a thousand deaths resulting from the initial surprise, the survivors slowly recovered their composure and started to demonstrate all they had learned during the last few days of intense carnage.

These beasts were too big and heavy to be stopped head-on, but they didn't have to fight them fair. Faced with this flood of creatures, it was best to skirt around them to better attack their flanks and other vital points.

It was an interesting plan on paper, but hardly applicable in reality for normal humans and aliens. Because of the 60+ Aether density, their 100 Aether stats did not give them a huge advantage. Their strength and agility were not even twice as good as normal. Still, with the intelligence and perception boost, some of them managed to get some results.

The refugees of one faction in particular did not collapse like the others when they received the impetuous charge. Just before impact, their bodies momentarily doubled in size, their muscles and bones swelling grotesquely. Their weapons, which before seemed disproportionate in their hands, were now the right size, proof that this was no accident.

"The Gigantism Skill." Jake blurted out as he recognized Boris and Chizen's fetish technique. It was the Pagans' core skill.

Chizen, who he had killed during the Monster Game could only change the size of one of his arms, but these refugees were doing much better. Yet, compared to Boris who could transform himself into a gigantic titan they looked more like adorable gnomes.

Looking around at the group of refugees, he noticed a burly alien with dark horns instead of hair and thick scales all over his body reminiscent of stone. Seeing his body grow tenfold in size in the blink of an eye, he immediately identified this Evolver as the faction's leader.

Clearly, he had chosen to share his Gigantism Skill with his party. It was a good choice of First Faction Skill. Based on the performance of these refugees, this skill had about 20% of the power of the original. In other words, this faction was level 3.

A faction leader ready to fight on the front lines with his men deserved his respect. Like a spear point cleaving through its target, the tide of monsters split in two after a short clash with them.

The giant leader charged fearlessly against the beastly horde and using a huge axe he began to tear apart the huge behemoths deigning to run at him or his men. Meanwhile, his subordinates, 4 to 5 meters tall, used their increased strength and mass to physically dominate their opponents.

Using huge shields and equally heavy swords and spears, they methodically chopped their enemies without flinching. At the same time, Jake noticed that after each kill, they would take a step back and maintain their formation in good order, retreating slowly but surely.

"They're good." Kyle nodded with respect.

"They are, but we should focus on the beast before us." Will winced nervously.

"Why don't you try to coax them with your Charisma?" Svava nudged him mercilessly.

She hadn't been in the gang long, but she'd seen what their vice-leader was capable of during the final battle of the Monster Game. He had tamed quite a few creatures back then.

Will's face turned ugly hearing that. Giving her a constipated look, he said,

"I've already tried. They're not listening to me. Their terror and determination to flee are monopolizing their willpower and attention. If I want to tame them with just my charisma it's not impossible but Area of Effect Subjugation is not something easy to implement. If I don't direct the Charisma Aether into my voice, a specific part of my body like my eyes or my smile, it's difficult to get tangible effects on sentient creatures. For example right now, none of you are affected by my Charisma Aether when we talk."

Jake frowned, feeling that Will wasn't saying the whole story. He clearly remembered the influence of Charisma Aether on them the first time the businessman had shown them his power. It wasn't to the point of worshipping him, but even he had found Will unnaturally suave and charming at that moment. It

didn't challenge his heterosexuality, but it was rather a kind of goodwill towards him, which made him trust him and forget about his physical or character flaws.

Now that Will had Grade 2 Charisma Encoding and other Aether or Soul Spells to make up for his deficiencies it was unlikely for his charisma to have no effect on these panicked beasts. Even if he couldn't completely enslave them, making them avoid their group should have been reasonably possible, right?

But the reality was before his eyes. Will had no reason not to use his skills if he had a solution to their problem. Having a few secrets and trump cards was normal, but not when his life was directly threatened.

Jake would have grilled Will more about it, but the small fry serving as cannonfodders in front of them had finally collapsed under the enemy charge. Having been quite hard at work for the past few days, the refugees of his faction summoned the shields Jake had forged for them, while others equipped the conventional assault rifles and bazookas that Will had granted them access to.

These firearms and ammunition were normally reserved for critical moments, but this situation suited the description.

"Fire at will!" Jake yelled.

"Fire at will!"

The command was repeated several times by his comrades and a burst of bullets rained down on the rabid beasts charging at them. Several missiles were fired right after, but next to Kyle's mini-nuke these shells were not worth mentioning.

Jake was wary of the refugees who had blocked their path, but they too had given up their delusional dreams and accepted that they would not make it either. Drawing their weapons as well, they took up positions at their side. Notwithstanding their brief standoff, at least one had to give them credit for not having any wimps amongst them.

Inspired by the bravery of the faction leader with the Gigantism Skill, Jake leapt past his subordinates and swung his palms in front of him to summon a huge plasma ball. A miniature blinding star formed in his hands as all the heat from dozens of meters away was siphoned off, along with his own body heat, and then absorbed into the glowing sphere.

Nearly immediately afterwards, a thundering heartbeat sound rang out in the audience's chest and under the effect of an extreme telekinetic force the ball condensed, reducing in size by 2, then 5, and finally 10 in a split second. While performing this feat, Jake's face became covered in sweat and the lava veins on his body dimmed slightly.

Regardless, the spell was worth the effort and his subordinates felt a deep sense of reverence as they gazed at the lethal plasma orb.

Then Jake tossed it. Too bad for those scared beasts, but they didn't have to cross his path. The explosion that came next was different from the mini mushroom cloud caused by Kyle's mini-nuke, but the damage to the environment was no less impressive.

BOOOM! BOOM! BLAST!

As if this first devastating explosion was a signal, the high-rank Evolvers of the other factions also launched their ultimate techniques. Thunder, ice, acid, fire and other more mysterious elements rained down on these poor beasts, instantly causing a massacre.

Not to be outdone, Grash, who was the strongest of their group, roared as he leapt into the air,

"Seismic SLASH!"

Following his war cry, his huge sword that Jake had reforged struck down the ground, generating a huge bottomless rift and a terrible earthquake.. The earth split in two and hundreds of beasts fell inside, their fate unknown.