

Oracle 561

Chapter 561 - Don't Regret It

Fortunately for him, their new enemies spared them this misery. Fearless, the thirty or so little monsters raised their daggers and short swords and charged at them. Just over 30 three-foot tall fellows against nearly 600 Evolvers and creatures. It was so preposterous that none of the refugees found it in them to laugh.

"To the death!"

"These girls look good!"

"I'm the most handsome!"

"I want to eat this one!"

These goblin Digestors began to squawk nonsensical rallying cries or squabble idiotically despite the fact that the attack had not yet started, stumping their opponents.

"They speak Oraclean?!"

This was probably the most shocking thing they had come across in the past week despite being in many battles. Low-level Digestors weren't supposed to speak.

Paying attention to their statements, however, Jake and many others realized that they had overestimated them. Apart from repeating a finite number of sentences devoid of any context, they had no intelligence of their own. They were at best lousy parrots. The bigger issue was where they got their vocabulary from.

Xort and Niss hesitated, seeming to want to say something, but the Goblin Digestors were upon them. Predictably, it was an instant massacre.

The refugees on the front line were somewhat nervous before the first collision, but when the grayish goblins rammed into them, most of them were knocked out cold just by the sheer momentum of their own charge.

To be blunt, these little monsters weren't even fast, reminiscent of a bunch of 5-6 year olds running around a school playground, only much more hideous. Their strength wasn't much different either.

Jake, Kyle and Svara, who stood at the very front to check out these new enemies, were taken aback when they found out just how weak these monsters were.

"Are these things really Digestors?" Kyle froze after kicking one of these monsters in the head like he was shooting a football.

His victim took off like a cannonball in the opposite direction, his fractured head clearly ahead of the rest of its decapitated body.

"That's pretty unnerving." Svara acknowledged as she clamped her palm against the forehead of one of the smaller goblins to keep it at bay. Its arms were so short that its dagger couldn't even scratch her.

"Tsk, stop playing around, Svara." Jake chided her lamely, wiping the silver blood from under his boot after squashing one of these goblins to death on his own.

The other refugees on the front lines were undergoing a similar experience, and seeing that these monsters posed no danger, Jake relaxed and stopped participating in the fight. The other factions, especially that of Melkree, who were watching the action closely, were also relieved to see that they didn't have to get their hands dirty.

Less than a minute later, the skirmish ended and Jake and his men who had just fought began to inspect the corpses for loot. With Urul present, no faction dared steal their rewards.

Jake was still pondering the meaning of the whale Crygo's words, who had promised them such rewards and benefits that no one would dare flee after that, when a refugee let out an ecstatic cry,

" My, my Aether stats have gone up!"

"What?!"

"Ah, me too! My Strength has gone up 0.5 points!"

"Now that you mention it..."

Jake stiffened as an uproar of delighted shouts erupted around him. The other factions who hadn't participated in the fight changed their expressions as they heard the unexpected benefits these cheesy refugees had gained.

One should bear in mind that by default, the Aether Stats of an Evolver were capped at 100 points with Grade 1 Aether. Beyond that, it was necessary to use a Grade 2 Aether Encoding or possess an Aether growth/Self-Encoding Skill.

Of course, there were many mechanisms involved in this threshold and this exact value could vary slightly from individual to individual. Notably, Players who had completed four or more Ordeals would soon find upon returning from an Ordeal that their Aether stats could now climb to 110, 120, 150 and sometimes more.

It was just that their soul, body and Spirit Body had acclimated to a higher-level world and therefore could accommodate a little more Aether even if the Grade of it had not changed.

Nevertheless, relying on Aether acclimation to slowly push the limits of one's body was not a viable solution when time was of the essence. Above all, one needed an extremely high Aether density to hope for tangible results and below a Fourth-Ordeal World, it was just too darn slow, while from the fifth, the mortality rate was such that one would have to be suicidal to resort to this method.

So it was easy to imagine what was going through the minds of these refugees and Evolvers when they learned that they could increase their Aether stats beyond this threshold simply by decimating these harmless little monsters.

The Black Orc was unfazed, plainly knowing that this would be the case. The other faction leaders and their Fourth-Ordeal Evolvers were equally calm, but from their look it was clear that they had taken this information with a grain of salt before seeing the evidence right before their very eyes. Now that they were sure that the game was indeed worthwhile, their attitude was quickly changing.

"From now on, me and my men will fight on the front lines!" Bhuzkoc declared overbearingly as he swung his axe.

His men immediately let out an enthusiastic war cry and shoved Shaktilar, Melkree, and Jake's own people aside to push their way to the front. For the sake of their temporary alliance, Shaktilar refrained from arguing, but his face was ugly. He was clearly not pleased with his partner in crime's arrogance.

As for Melkree, with her aloof temper she had never intended to respond to his provocations and her men had no choice but to step aside, clenching their fists down in frustration.

Of course, having sampled this fine soup, the Myrtharian Nerds had no intention of giving up their excellent spot. When Bhuzkoc's army hustled their rear guard, the refugees concerned refused to budge a single step.

"Hey, didn't you hear what our leader Bhuzkoc just said? If you want to keep your life, scram!" A Fourth-Ordeal Nawai warrior poked the stubborn refugee in front of him with his assegai, not daring to go too far on account of Urul Tak, who was monitoring the whole argument.

The refugee was weaker than the arrogant Evolver, but he didn't let his panic get the better of him. Without an order from Jake, he would not move.

" Fuck off." Nicolet came over with the overwhelming urge to fight. The Egean had killed one of those goblin Digestors a few minutes ago and his good mood had not yet subsided.

No matter how confident he was, in the end in front of him stood a real Fourth-Ordeal Evolver. This Nawai warrior was one who had performed poorly throughout his four Ordeals, but he wasn't one of those who had failed.

This subtle distinction was important, for it meant that even without the Oracle's protection, this Nawai would have survived all four trials. This warrior was one who placed his life above all else.

In contrast, Will, whose Ordeal ratings had been much better, had died in his first and third Ordeal, while Kyle had died in his first Ordeal and failed the main mission in his second. It was hard to tell at first glance who had the brightest future between these three.

And this Nawai proved immediately after he was not to be trifled with. His killing intent washed over Nicolet and the nearby refugees, and the latter who had never endured this kind of oppression fell to their knees, their eyes rolling back in horror.

Nicolet, who came from Ega, was not completely new to spiritual pressure, but this was the first time he had been the direct target. He resisted for a few seconds longer than the others, tensing all his muscles, but it was all for naught. He had not awakened his Extrasensory Perception stat for very long, and he fainted like the others a moment later.

His battle buddy Diccon, short and stocky, rushed over at once as he saw his friend collapse and promptly punched the Nawai warrior in the face. The Evolver calmly wrapped the fist in his own palm, then folded his fingers and applied a slight twist and a chilling crack rang out.

Diccon's hand, wrist, elbow, and shoulder had just completed a 360 degree turn on themselves. On the surface, everything seemed normal, but the arm was ruined. Diccon didn't cry, but his livid face kneeaded with pain. When the Nawai warrior aimed his killing intent at him, he also passed out a blink later.

"A bunch of weaklings!" The tall man spat as he planted the butt of his spear into the rocky ground.
"Now, make way for your daddy or scam!"

Learning their lesson, the other refugees didn't foolishly try to avenge or save their comrades, but looked at Jake who had coldly witnessed the scene.

The Nawai warrior was a moronic bully, but he knew who he could offend. When he saw these refugees asking for their leader's opinion, he realized that he was actually quite nervous. This Third-Ordeal guy was giving him the creeps. Unconsciously, he clutched his spear tightly in preparation for a hard fight.

When Jake frowned, Bhuzkoc couldn't help but yell hatefully,

"Don't go too far, Jake! You're just a Third-Ordeal Player. Don't think we can't kill you."

Jake snorted, but to the disappointment of his men he did not respond to the provocation. Picking up a distant thud with his senses, a playful grin crept over his face. A flicker of pity also flashed faintly in Urul Tak's eyes.

"Let them pass." Jake ordered stoically.

Then turning his gaze to Bhuzkoc, he chuckled enigmatically,

"I hope you don't regret it."