

The Return of the Disaster-Class Hero

CHAPTER 22: GOT SOMETHING INTERESTING

“Ahhhk!” The PD screamed in fright. His scream rang throughout the broadcasting station.

“PD-nim! Are you ok?”

“What’s wrong?”

People from the entertainment division and other divisions unrelated to the newsroom rushed toward him. The top stars who had come to improve the image of the twelve Zodiac Saints blinked.

In the end, the frightened PD pointed at the box. “S-snake!”

A snake slithered out of the box. Moreover, it wasn’t a garden variety snake; it was a King Cobra. People wanted to run away, but their panic lasted for only a moment.

“Uh...uh?”

The snake had something in its mouth, a gray plastic envelope. Looking annoyed, it slammed its tail on the desk. The scene seemed as if the snake was threatening to bite these people if they didn’t quickly take the envelope.

Everyone reared back in fright.

“PD-nim!”

In the end, the trembling PD extended his hand. As soon as he grabbed the plastic envelope, the snake opened its mouth in joy.

“Ooh-ahk!”

As though its business here was done, the now-happy snake went toward the booth’s exit. However, the snake suddenly came to a stop. It remembered a warning from its owner before he had placed it in the delivery box.

‘Do you understand? Just deliver the item. If you change into something else inside the box, you’re dead.’

“...!” Cold sweat appeared on the skin of the fearsome King Cobra. It rolled its small eyes to assess its surroundings. The next moment, something surprising happened.

Puhng!

The King Cobra transformed in shape. A slime with the consistency of a pudding appeared in its place. The slime happily rushed out of the room as if it had pulled off the perfect crime.

Soon, screams could be heard outside the building.

“Kyahhhk! What the hell is that?”

“Is that a monster?”

People became frightened when they saw a pudding crawl across the ground. That wasn't all. For some reason, the slime seemed to travel underneath the skirts of K-POP idols. It seemed to like that kind of thing.

“Call security!”

Pandemonium broke out inside the broadcasting station. Of course, the booth within the newsroom turned chaotic for an entirely different reason.

“P-PD-nim. Something's written on the envelope.”

“It says to send this out to the world!”

“Hurry up and open it!”

The PD quickly opened the envelope. He and his colleagues were surprised when they saw the envelope's content.

“This is...”

Inside the envelope was a picture.

“My god! Isn't that a picture of the Sheep Saint?”

“You're right! It's Yang Wei! He dropped off the grid when the Spider Queen appeared in Korea!”

“He falsely stated that he had killed the Spider Queen. Since his lies resulted in damages to Korea, wouldn't Korea want some sort of a recompense?”

“You're correct. He routinely took a lot of protection fees from Korea.”

“Many witnesses say that he tried to bury the evidence.”

“I’m pretty sure he had gone missing...”

This was why everyone’s face turned pale. It was to be expected. The picture showed a problematic scene. There was no way the Sheep Saint would send them this photo unless he had lost his mind.

“PD-nim! Something is written behind the photo.”

“What?”

When they saw the back of the photo, everyone yelled. The words were written with a broad pen, and there was power behind them.

“This is...”

Only one sentence was written on the photo’s back.

Kwahng!

“P-PD-nim?”

“Let’s go live right now!”

“What?”

“What are you doing? Send out the notice for breaking news! We’ll also run a special feature during prime time!”

“Uh? We’re running a special on the twelve Zodiac Saints at that time slot—”

“Who cares about the twelve Zodiacs!”

“What... what will be the title of the show?”

“Message sent by Lee Gun! This is an exclusive!”

“What?”

* * *

While the broadcasting station was in turmoil thanks to Lee Gun’s antics, Hugo became surprised by the item Lee Gun took out. “Hey! That’s...”

The crate emitted chaotic magical energy, shocking Hugo into action. He immediately used his ability.

Paht!

The door shut as Hugo released a large amount of magical energy.

[The barrier around the Archer's holy ground has been activated.]

[<Archer>'s holy ground. It is the Sagittarius's Pit of Hell.]

[Holy Ground Characteristics: Scorching Heat, Foresight, Hero Training, Hero's Grave]

[Caution! You may receive burns if you are not careful.]

[The Serpent Bearer's holy ground is needed to protect you.]

[Your qualification and level are too low to make this corresponding area into the Serpent Bearer's holy ground.]

[You feel the energy of an envoy.]

Hugo put up a barrier to stop the power from leaking out of the crate. He then grabbed the back of his neck. His reaction was warranted. "Hey! Why the hell would you steal a Saint's treasure?"

That was right. The golden crate in front of him was an SS rank holy item called <Imperial holy item>.

"That's one of the treasures touted by the twelve Zodiacs!"

Lee Gun sneered. "What? I found out Oh Taeksoo is poorer than I thought. I'm going to use this as my wallet instead of taking resources from the Poverty Saint."

"What? Why am I the Poverty S..." Hugo tried to glare at his friend, but he understood why Lee Gun had stolen this particular item. It was an item Lee Gun coveted in the distant past.

Why?

'It's a holy item that multiplies other items.'

<Multiplication Storage> The Sheep Saint's Imperial holy item could increase gold, skills, and soldiers.

‘This is a treasure even other Saints covet. How did he get a hold of this.’

“Also, I think something is already in here.” Lee Gun shook the box as he laughed. “Anyway, I’ll open this and multiply the ingredients. Then, I’ll use it to screw over everyone.”

“How?” Hugo asked.

Lee Gun confidently laughed. “I heard most of the twelve Zodiac Saints are receiving funds from the asshat. That’s why...”

“How are you going to pull that off? There’s no one here who can activate this holy item,” Hugo said.

A momentary silence ensued in the room. Lee Gun furrowed his brows as he looked at his friend. “What? You can’t use this?”

“Dude, I’m the Archer Saint!”

Not anyone could use a holy item. In short, Saints were humans blessed by the gods. This meant the holy item of the Sheep could be used by only humans the Sheep god favored. As for the low-rank holy items sold on the market, they had a general use contract.

‘Of course, some gods allow anyone to use their holy items.’

An SS rank holy item was a treasure that represented a god’s pride. There was no way anyone could use these items.

‘Well, this guy is an exception.’

Lee Gun had never revealed how he had done it, but in the past, he had nonchalantly stolen and used SS rank holy items of the twelve Zodiacs. Hugo had been no exception to this. He had to come up with some bullshit excuse to his God saying he had lent the item to Lee Gun.

Since Lee Gun could use items of other Saints, was he assuming Hugo could do the same? It seemed that was the case.

“Why can’t you use it?” Lee Gun couldn’t understand why Hugo was unable to do it, and this made Hugo’s eyebrows twitch.

“Why are you trying to make me use it?” Hugo asked.

“It uses a c**p ton of magical energy.”

‘This b*****d is trying to use me as a battery for magical energy.’ Hugo had a baffled expression, but Lee Gun remained shameless.

Saints received magical energy from their gods, but Lee Gun’s magical energy came from himself. If he used this item, he would fall over from exhaustion. He would be crazy to use it.

“You’re the only one of the twelve Zodiacs who I recognize and accept. I don’t know why you’re incapable of doing something so easy.” Lee Gun looked at him.

“Your standards are insane. Are you never going to admit that?”

In the end, Lee Gun raised the crate as if to show that Hugo was useless. However, a fierce rebound suddenly knocked his hands away.

Boom!

[Intruder! You aren’t a disciple accepted by the Sheep god!]

An unfamiliar voice rang out as the crate emanated red magical energy.

Hugo quickly summoned his auxiliary bow. “Gun! Get back!”

Despite the warning, Lee Gun smirked. There was no way he would back off. He imbued powerful magical energy into the item.

Flash!

Lee Gun’s personal characteristic called <Perverted Eyes> allowed him to mimic another person’s technique and magical energy to a certain extent. He had used this skill to develop holy items and nonchalantly borrow the holy items of others.

In the past, he had to be mindful of not stepping on the toes of others, but there was no need for that now.

‘The god of wealth ran away, so what’s he going to do?’

Kwahng!

Two incredibly huge magical energy waves clashed against each other. Lee Gun was trying to brute force the crate by destroying the barrier set by the god.

Was it because the god of wealth had gone into hiding? Whatever the reason was, the wind pressure generated by the rebound dissipated in no time. Lee Gun quickly retracted his hands in desperation. It was to be expected.

‘My hair...’ The wind blew off several strands of Lee Gun’s hair, surprising him. At the same time, he heard a familiar voice.

[Your hair will be sacrificed when you use the Sheep’s holy item.]

[Warning! If you pursue wealth too much, you might become bald.]

“...!” Lee Gun bit his tongue.

When one borrowed the power of a god through a holy item, one needed to give a tribute or fulfill a requirement. It meant payment had to be paid for borrowing the power. Of course, the rental fee differed depending on the Saint. Some gods gave power to the humans who needed it. However, some liked to put their own amusement above all else.

‘No wonder that asshat had thinning hair!’

It seemed Hugo was also shocked by this scene. The disciples of his god also had to pay tributes, but it wasn’t this type of thing. He wondered if the disciples of the Sheep knew about this.

Soon, Lee Gun’s eyes flashed in anger. “Are there any disciples of the Sheep nearby?”

Hugo looked fed-up as he gazed at Lee Gun. “Is losing your hair that big of a deal?”

Lee Gun grumbled. Of course, it mattered. “I’ll have to kidnap one from nearby.”

Hugo held Lee Gun back. Even he couldn’t bury the story if Lee Gun kidnapped someone. “You’re asking too much in the first place. It’s an SS rank item. You need at least a Saint to use it!”

Lee Gun grumbled as he pointed toward the trunk with Yang Wei’s corpse. “Are you sure he’s dead?”

Hugo burst out laughing. ‘Isn’t it obvious?’ “You used your ignorant power to pierce his heart! Even I would be dead!”

This remark caused Lee Gun to lash out in anger once again. “He’s a Saint! Why’s he so weak? How could he die from just that attack?”

Hugo was dumbfounded. “He’s not weak! You’re the weird one for expecting him to live after being stabbed like that!”

“Whatever! Just bring him back to life, Taeksoo.”

“Hey!” In the end, Hugo groaned. “Even if the rental fee is fully paid, you need the secret code to use the crate to its full potential.”

“Secret code?”

“Yang Wei had a distrustful personality, so he put secret codes on many of his holy items,” Hugo explained.

“Secret code?”

Hugo let out a bitter laugh. He seemed like a father looking at a troublemaker of a son. “I understand what you must be feeling right now, but you should give up on it. You won’t be able to use it.”

Suddenly, Lee Gun kicked Yang Wei’s corpse in anger.

[You have acquired special data.]

“!”

CHAPTER 23: 13TH ABILITY - Infobagh

“...?” Lee Gun’s eyes turned round when he heard the unexpected voice.

Puhk!

[You have acquired special data(Saint rank)!]

– Blubber (F rank)

Puhk!

[You have acquired data.]

– Not Much Hair (S rank)

Puhk! Puhk puhk!

[You have acquired data.]

– Unbridled Greed for Wealth (C rank)

[You have acquired data.]

– Money is the greatest desire (C rank)

Puhk puhk puhk puhk!

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

“Jackpot! This is f*****g sweet!” The surprising thing was the grin on Lee Gun's lips. Of course, the secret password wouldn't come out of this, but...

Puhk puhk puhk puhk puhk puhk puhk!

In the end, Hugo couldn't stand by and watch what Lee Gun was doing. He shouted, “What the hell are you doing?”

Saints were contracted to their gods; they weren't normal humans. This meant their bodies didn't decompose at the same rate as normal humans. Of course, that “thing” could no longer be called a corpse.

Puhk puhk puhk!

“F**k this fatty!”

“Hey. Stop it!”

Suddenly...

[Your Saint EXP has reached the 50,000 mark.]

[Your level has risen. (Lv. 2)]

[It'll be automatically converted into points.]

[You have 3 points.]

[The remaining Saint EXP is 0.]

[You can use points to create a new skill or upgrade an existing skill.]

The next moment, something amazing happened.

The symbol that existed only on Lee Gun's left palm appeared on his right one too. This symbol was the one that had appeared on the magic circle when Lee Gun had

opened his Creation Workshop. It confirmed that this symbol was the seal of the Serpent Bearer.

When Lee Gun stared at the unique symbol, the symbol moved and projected words above it.

《Upgradable Skills》

[Super Regeneration (F

E)] (Needs 1 Point)

- Time for regeneration will get reduced. Duration will be increased by 10 seconds.
- The scale of regeneration will be increased.

[13th Sense(F

E)] (Needs 1 Point)

- Amongst the senses of the snake, the vision ability will be upgraded. Duration will be increased by 30 seconds.

《Possible new Divine Skills that can be created》

[Act forbidden by the gods] (Needs 5 Points)

[Hundred Poison Resistance] (Needs 1 Point)

[Get hit instead of me] (Needs 2 Points)

[Generate Holy Ground] (Needs 3 Points. Special requirement needed.)

[Subordination] (Needs 5 Points / Needs activation of Holy Ground)

It seemed Lee Gun would be able to use accumulated EXP to upgrade his skills. All the skills looked interesting, but one stood out to him. ‘Act forbidden by the gods?’ That wasn’t all.

[If you create new Divine skills, you will be able to utilize the Sheep Saint’s corpse.]

Hearing the voice, Lee Gun laughed in amusement. ‘I don’t think I have enough EXP yet.’

Hugo instinctively flinched when he saw his friend’s evil smile.

In the end, Lee Gun threw caution to the wind. ‘Let’s level up a variety of skills.’ He released all the skills that needed only one point. The points were applied as soon as he thought of it.

[Skill allocation has been completed.]

– [Super Regeneration (E)] and [13th Sense(E)] have leveled up! [Hundred Poison Resistance (F)] has been acquired!

After the upgrades were finished, the symbol on his palm and the light disappeared at the same time.

‘Now, now.’ Lee Gun stomped on Yang Wei’s body. He had been able to upgrade his abilities in an unexpected manner. However...

Puhk!

[You have acquired data.]

– Sheep’s Symbol (A rank)

He still couldn’t comprehend what had brought on this development. It was to be expected. ‘EXP and data never come out from the dead.’

In the past, Lee Gun had tested this against dead monsters, but he had received the following notification.

[Your target is not fresh, so you cannot gain anything from it.]

[The data has been damaged.]

It meant he couldn’t extract data from corpses. So why was he able to extract these things from Yang Wei’s body?

‘Is he not dead? No, that isn’t the case.’

[Yang Wei]

[The level of your <Gaze of a god> is too low to see the corpse’s special characteristics.]

Yang Wei was really dead. ‘Is it because the corpse is fresh?’

This sounded preposterous, but it was the most likely explanation. However, the reason for this development couldn’t be as simple as a corpse being fresh or spoiled. ‘There must be a different reason...’

At that moment, something happened.

Flash!

The holy item, which Lee Gun had made earlier, unexpectedly reacted. It was the horse with his name engraved on it. Lee Gun had placed it on the desk earlier.

[It has absorbed the magical energy of the <Sheep Saint>.]

An odd expression appeared on Lee Gun’s face when he heard those words. Of course, that horse was a holy item that absorbed magical energy. It absorbing magical energy wasn’t strange, but...

‘Why did it have to be the Sheep Saint’s energy?’ Lee Gun finally wised up to what was going on. He laughed. ‘Can it be?’

“Gun?” Hugo was baffled.

Lee Gun laughed in disgust as he activated a skill as a test.

When he activated [13th Sense (E)], his eyes turned into the eyes of a snake. He saw things that he normally didn’t. Naturally, he could also see suspicious dark spots, but it was a bit different now.

“G... Gun?” Hugo was still puzzled.

Lee Gun’s entire world had turned black and white like an infrared image. All the color disappeared from the world, but a blue human could be seen moving. It was Hugo. In Lee Gun’s vision, the people outside and the animals he saw were blue. It seemed the color blue represented living organisms, while inanimate objects were black.

‘Looks like items related to the unknown civilization give off a red color.’

One of the prime examples of this was the item within Hugo’s room. It was an item Lee Gun had created from a monster’s needle.

“...!” Suddenly, Lee Gun saw something unique on top of the desk, next to the red horse. “...?”

It was a red flame. The flame acted as if it didn't want to get close to Lee Gun, yet it was covetous of the holy item Lee Gun had made. It was exerting a lot of effort to pull the holy item toward it.

Lee Gun approached the flame to see what it was.

“Uh, uh? Stop! Don't come here!”

“...!” Lee Gun's lips curled up when he heard the familiar voice. He quickly moved forward and grabbed the flame with one hand. Then, he picked up a stuffed b***y doll lying on top of Hugo's desk.

Lee Gun ruthlessly shoved the flame into the doll. Something surprising happened the next second.

Puhng!

[The ability of the Man Who Pounds on All Creations has been activated.]

Accompanying a flashing light, the doll suddenly raised its head. It frantically jumped out of Lee Gun's hand.

This development surprised Hugo. “Wait a— What the hell is that?”

“What do you think it is?” Lee Gun stepped on the flustered doll, which was trying to run away. “It's the bald b*****d I killed.”

“...!” Hugo was appalled by the words. “That's Yang Wei? That?”

“Yes. Don't you hear it talking?”

The doll, which was being crushed underneath Lee Gun's foot, was cussing. It was telling Lee Gun to move his foot.

However, Hugo couldn't hear the voice at all. “Hear what talking...”

“Ah! It seems only I can hear him.”

The flame was nothing more than Yang Wei's soul. Lee Gun, too, hadn't been able to hear Yang Wei's voice until not too long ago. It seemed he could hear the soul only after activating <13th Sense>.

‘Since his soul is still here, his body was treated as fresh.’

Lee Gun finally realized why he could extract data from Yang Wei's corpse. The magical energy was being extracted from the latter's soul. 'It's said Saints make a soul contract with the gods.'

Lee Gun just glanced at the soul and felt the Sheep Saint's magical energy around it.

Hugo became more flustered when Lee Gun identified the soul as Yang Wei's. It was to be expected. 'There is no way a Saint's soul would stay behind!'

When a Saint died, the god took their soul. It was part of the contract. Of course, Hugo had no idea what happened to the soul after that.

"How can his soul still be here?" he asked Lee Gun.

"It might be because the Wealth construct ran away." Lee Gun tried to explain.

"What?"

"I have no idea why, but the Sheep god's construct ran away when I killed this b*****d."

"...!" Hugo's mouth fell open in disbelief. The idea of a construct running away while leaving behind its Saint was absurd, but...

'I see.' If that were the case, Hugo could accept how a soul was left behind. 'It meant the construct didn't even have time to collect the soul.'

Hugo finally understood why Lee Gun was able to easily kill Yang Wei. Of course, he didn't think Lee Gun was weak, but...

'Saints aren't normal humans.'

A god's power differed greatly depending on the number and quality of disciples they possessed. The Sheep God had many disciples under him. It meant the power of his protection was pretty strong at a fundamental level. That was why a knife couldn't penetrate any vital points of a powerful Saint. It was a specialized power that had been developed over time.

In fact, Lee Gun and Hugo had fought a life and death battle with the Sheep Saint in the past due to a problem involving Hugo's wife. In the battle, this power had deflected almost all of Hugo's arrows.

'I was wondering how he had pierced the Sheep Saint's heart.'

It was still a pretty big deal. Even if a construct had run away, Yang Wei was the Sheep God's human. Although he didn't have the direct protection of his god, it wouldn't have been an easy task to pierce his vital point. This was the reason Hugo hadn't been able to mess with Yang Wei in the past.

'Could it be?'

Hugo's heart raced as he looked at Lee Gun.

In contrast to Hugo, Lee Gun was nonchalant. He didn't pay attention to his friend and put on a wolfish grin as he looked at the b***y, which was trying to escape. "You should give me the password before I shove you into the body of a fly. I hope you aren't thinking of running away."

Yang Wei, who was crushed underneath Lee Gun's foot again, clenched his eyes shut. Escape was not an option. Even if he got lucky enough to be found by the other twelve Saints, they would steal his disciples from him. He knew their personalities. Moreover, the psychotic Lee Gun was too good at tracking, and the Archer wouldn't miss with his arrows.

The Archer's holy ground had been broken by other Saints, so Hugo couldn't use the full extent of his abilities. However, it didn't matter since Lee Gun was backing him up.

As expected, Lee Gun laughed. "Just shut up and become my slave." He laughed as if he were a loan shark.

In the end, Yang Wei cried out in despair. "S**t! I'd rather become a rag than be your slave!"

Yang Wei desperately pulled himself out from underneath Lee Gun's foot. It resulted in the doll's arm being ripped away, but he didn't care. "I'll kill you even if I have to self-destruct!"

Yang Wei moved toward his corpse and took out something. It was a golden key shaped like a sheep.

'That's...' Hugo became surprised; he tried to use his power.

This key was a holy item that summoned the construct of a god. Usually, Saints could easily summon constructs of their gods, but this item was created to summon a construct in case of an emergency.

'There will have to be a different negotiation after the summoning!'

“Get down, Gun!” Hugo quickly called forth his flame.

Yang Wei laughed in derision. “You’re too late!”

The construct he had called was powerful enough to belong to the god of war. It was very dangerous. There was a chance that it could eat him instead of negotiating with him. However, Yang Wei didn’t care about that now. “With this, I can—”

Suddenly...

Smash!

The golden key broke apart, shocking Yang Wei. “What the hell! Why did it break?”

Lee Gun laughed as Yang Wei was paralyzed from shock.

[Your opponent dared to summon a construct belonging to the Serpent Bearer.]

[Since it is no longer his construct, he cannot summon it.]

“Are you looking for this?” Lee Gun gestured with his hand, and something appeared along with a blinding light. It was a beast.

[Piggy Bank is in a critical condition.]

The pixiu whined as it fell over. However, when it met Lee Gun’s eyes, it jumped up in surprise and tried to run away. In the end, the flustered Yang Wei hurriedly tried to pick up another key. However, a sharp knife appeared in Lee Gun’s hand.

[The basic attribute of the Serpent Bearer has been activated.]

[Serpent Bearer’s attribute <God’s Prohibition>]

[Serpent Bearer’s attribute <Finder of Death>]

[The Serpent Bearer’s attribute allows any item to inflict a critical blow.]

[Any item will be given a sharpness property.]

The ordinary knife emanated a nightmarish energy wave all of a sudden. In a flash, the knife headed toward the doll’s neck.

Poo-oohk!

“!”

Lee Gun aimed for the black vessel present at Yang Wei's neck. When his knife sliced the vessel, a black flame erupted out of the doll. The doll fell to the ground lifeless.

Hugo mourned the loss of the doll his daughter had given him, but Lee Gun didn't care. With a savage laugh, he grabbed the black flame. "I'll list exactly three conditions right now. I want you to discuss it with this construct."

"...!"

"First, I want you to withdraw all your troops from Korea."

"...!"

"Second, I want you to give back all the wealth you stole from me."

"...!"

"Third, I want you to give me all the fees you charged to see my possessions! You took the liberty of robbing my house and running a museum, you b*****d!"

Yang Wei despaired. Despite everything that was going on, the construct didn't give a reply. 'I probably wouldn't have been able to win against Lee Gun even if I had the construct on my side anyway.'

Suddenly...

"Let's be real. You aren't going to listen to me. That's why I want you to give me the contract," Lee Gun said to Yang Wei.

"W-what? C-contract?"

"You know what. You guys have a holy item called the Life Contract. I want you to give me ten for now."

Yang Wei became appalled as he processed Lee Gun's request. "Do you know how much one page of that is worth—"

"Ah! This makes me want to stop a cockroach."

"Ok! I understand!" This was why Yang Wei hated Lee Gun. It was apparent that Lee Gun would work him to the bone while eating away the wealth of the Sheep Saint. 'S**t! I should've stayed hidden in the Sheep's territory. Why did I come to Korea?'

Lee Gun was satisfied when he received the contracts. It didn't take him long to write one contract and sign it. "Sign your name here."

“S**t!”

Hugo clicked his tongue as he watched Yang Wei sign the contract. Suddenly, Lee Gun discreetly pushed another contract toward him.

[The Archer god’s constructs and his subordinates will follow Lee Gun-nim.]

“What are you doing? You have to sign it too,” Lee Gun shouted.

“...” There was no way he would sign it! Hugo tore the holy item.

CHAPTER 24: HE CAME BACK?

“It seems Lee Gun is alive.”

In the beginning, Chun Sungjae hadn’t taken the rumor seriously. However, when he heard these words, his heart pounded.

“Your first rank temple has been incompetent without Lee Gun.”

These words turned the atmosphere of the state dinner at Cheongwadae chilly. Everyone looked in one direction. Reporters, as well as important political figures, were present here. Then there were the VIPs of the day, who were leaders of the temples. Murderous intent lingered in their eyes.

The one who had spoken those words was a muscular man. He laughed as if he were oblivious to the stares. “What? Am I wrong? You guys couldn’t even kill the Spider.”

The temperature in the room dropped further. Finally, the person next to the muscular man tried to rein him in. “Leo General-nim. Please...”

The employees of the Cheongwadae were anxious. It was to be expected. People from the top to the lowest temples were all gathered here. Two such meetings were held each year, each an important event. The temples’ representatives were honored guests at the Cheongwadae. Even the representatives of the top temples of other countries directly under the gods were present here.

Of course, these people and organizations weren’t on good terms with each other. A slip of the tongue could lead to a fight of an epic level. It was unknown whether the Leo General didn’t know this or he was doing it intentionally.

The Leo general, the leader of the Korean temple of the Lion, laughed at someone. “What? The Spider Queen in Bucheon was eventually killed by Lee Gun. It’s the one

you guys lost track of in Manchuria. You couldn't even pick up after yourself. I can't believe you guys are considered a first-tier temple of this country."

The general of the Gemini Temple was the first to turn his head. He seemed offended. Chun Sungjae could only watch the scene in nervousness.

The muscular man didn't pay any attention to them. He played innocent and portrayed a happy-go-lucky attitude. "So how did Lee Gun kill the Spider Queen? Did his skills match up with the epic stories?"

In reaction to his words, the sound of a cup being crushed rang out. Everyone stopped breathing. It seemed time had come to a stop to discuss this topic.

"Why are you bringing up Lee Gun?"

"That's right. Take back what you said right now!"

The disciples of the Gemini reacted in anger. However, the Leo general just grinned. "What? Lee Gun is the greatest hero of Korea. He caught the Spider Queen instead of the Gemini. I don't see a problem with that. That coward Sheep Saint should've grabbed Lee Gun's leg in the first place."

He let out a hearty laugh, making the disciples of the Sheep grind their teeth. This man was mocking them.

"It seems you're acting arrogant because the Leo Saint is a battle Saint. You guys wouldn't have been able to kill the Spider Queen either!"

"Why are you insisting on comparing us to Lee Gun!"

Lee Gun was a respected hero of Korea, but these people considered themselves superior to him.

As if to prove his discontent, the man who had broken the cup sneered. "It seems you must have been infatuated with Lee Gun's heroic tales in your younger days."

This man was Choi Sunghyuk, the general of the Gemini temple in Korea. Their god was known for his magic.

The general of the Leo temple in Korea laughed. His temple was ranked second in Korea. "What? Haven't you seen Lee Gun's famous battle in Russia?"

"Hmmp. It was possible because he probably received buffs from the twelve Saints. If we receive a similar amount of buffs, we will outperform him by a mile."

“You’re ranked one only because you sell academic talismans. I don’t know why you’re so confident.”

In reaction to these words, violent waves of magical energy emanated around the general of the Gemini temple.

Kwahng!

The table where the Leo general was sitting broke in half, and the Gemini general let out a contemptuous laugh. “Your opinion is based on hearsay. Wake up! Monsters and awakened beings have become stronger.

“Even if he was strong 20 years ago, he was a mere brawler. I can’t believe you’re comparing us to him.”

The two groups bickered. In the end, Lee Gun was considered someone unable to handle the Devil’s tower. He was unworthy of discussion in the eyes of some people.

President Yoon let out a low groan. ‘I think Lee Gun would be much stronger than them.’

Sitting in the corner, he could only sigh. When he was young, Lee Gun had saved his life. President Yoon had never forgotten that moment when Lee Gun had beaten and ripped apart the monster in an overbearing manner.

Many Users, the awakened beings, were now stars around the world. In terms of presence, they couldn’t be compared to Lee Gun. Yet, each of them had too inflated of an ego to acknowledge that. This had also been the case during the subjugation expedition.

‘If Lee Gun’s manual is brought up, they’ll mock it as being outdated.’

Now, Lee Gun was considered a mediocre awakened being before Red Eye was killed. This disappointed President Yoon. It was the reason his heart had trembled when the Devil’s Tower had fallen. He had wondered if the long-awaited hero had returned.

‘There’s no way it’s true.’

No one here truly believed that Lee Gun had returned alive. When the story about the Devil’s Tower’s destruction was brought up, it had been ridiculed.

‘Everything is going to hell.’

The number of monsters around Korea was increasing. The Saints contracted from neighboring countries wanted sovereign power in Korea; they wanted the right to colonize. Therefore, it was odd that the Sheep Saint hadn't contacted President Yoon these days. The Sheep Saint used to press him for payment every day.

In the end, the president sighed as he remembered the Lee Gun from before. 'It would be great if that hero is still alive.'

All of a sudden...

"This is bad!"

An employee of the Cheongwadae rushed into the dining hall. "Please check the news!"

"What's going on?"

"It... it's Lee Gun!"

* * *

At that time...

"Hey, Oh Taeksoo."

"I'm not signing it."

Lee Gun snorted at Hugo's decisive words. "No! I—"

"I'm not signing it."

In the end, Lee Gun hit Hugo. "Just sign it, idiot. Also, what the hell happened to your rank?"

"What? Rank? What rank?"

Instead of answering Hugo's question, Lee Gun pushed the phone toward him. Hugo's face instantly froze when he saw the screen.

[Korean Alliance Temple Ranking]

Rank 1 – Gemini temple (Directly managed by the Gemini Saint)

Rank 2 – Silver Lion (Directly managed by the Leo Saint)

Rank 3 – Golden Fleece (Directly managed by the Sheep Saint)

...

[Global Alliance Temple Ranking]

Rank 1 – Balance (Directly managed by the Libra Saint)

Rank 2 – Luminosity (Directly managed by the Virgo Saint)

...

Lee Gun's eyes flashed like those of a wild beast. For some reason, his friend couldn't meet his eyes. Lee Gun asked, "Since I've been here, I've seen only two disciples under you. I knew something was off."

"No, Gun. Listen to me before—"

"Why isn't the Archer Saint listed in the global ranking? You aren't even listed in the domestic ranking. Why are temples directly managed under you ranked lower than those of amateurs?"

Seeing Lee Gun's cold smile, Hugo realized he had to face the music.

"Why are you ranked below the bastards you taught?" Flames erupted from Lee Gun's mouth. It was to be expected. Hugo had developed various holy skills and taught many how to fight.

"You should be above them, so why aren't you even in the rankings? You are even behind that a*****e Leo! You wanna die? This is embarrassing as hell!"

Cold sweat erupted on Hugo's back when Lee Gun displayed his fiery temper. "Listen to what I have to say. Those rankings are dependent on various factors like personal wealth and number of disciples."

Lee Gun didn't even bother acknowledging his words. "Jeez! Your kids ran away from home because their father is a good-for-nothing."

"They didn't run away!"

Lee Gun snorted as he punched at the empty air. "Isn't your son an awakened being? His father is a Saint, so why did he decide to join a different Saint's temple?"

Hugo had nothing to say. He just glared at Lee Gun. 'Why? It's because of you.'

Lee Gun completely disregarded Hugo's glare.

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

“Oh! This is sweet.” Suddenly, Lee Gun, who had been limbering up his body, laughed in satisfaction. A suspicious smoke wave rose in front of him. The sound of mosquito monsters dying in the surroundings rang out.

<Fragrance Loved by Mosquitoes> Rank B

- While the flame is lit, it will attract bugs of various levels.
- Caution! It must be used outside.
- If used inside, your house might get ruined.

Lee Gun cackled at the holy item he had created for an at-home workout. He wanted to level up inside a home, so he had developed this item by remodeling the holy item he had seen in the home he previously stayed in.

The item was very effective. Lee Gun filled Hugo's holy ground with mosquitoes' corpses. He had found a great way to gain EXP and get warmed up by crushing the flying monsters.

When the light died down, Lee Gun flicked on the lighter once again. “Let's do it one more—”

Hugo couldn't take it anymore. His veins popped in anger. “Hey! Stop it! Are you planning on turning my house into a mosquito slaughterhouse?”

“Tsk!”

Hugo ground his teeth as he shook off the dead mosquitoes piled on top of his notebook. ‘I have to chase him out.’

“Let's make it look like Yang Wei had run away,” he suddenly suggested.

“What?” Lee Gun tilted his head in puzzlement. He couldn't see the logic behind the move, but Hugo was serious.

‘It'll be a problem if Gun causes more trouble than this.’ Hugo thought.

Immediately after returning, Lee Gun had razed the Sheep Saint's holy ground to the ground. He had also killed Yang Wei.

‘Does he not realize how much effort I have to spend to keep that event under wraps?’

If one also included the small stuff, Lee Gun had vandalized Hugo’s vending machines. However, Hugo had yet to know that.

Hugo’s eyes flashed. “This is a great opportunity since those bastards don’t know for sure that you’re alive. We should make preparations before hitting them from the back. It’ll give us the advantage.

“That’s why you should stay quiet for a couple of days. Just give me time to sort out everything. Alright?”

Hugo’s plan made sense, but it wasn’t how his friend liked to operate. Lee Gun spoke as he watched the slime climb atop his head. “Mmm! I’m sorry.”

“Why? What did you do?” Hugo asked.

“I’ve already stirred up some trouble.”

“Ah! Is that so? I guess you can’t help— W-what? What? What trouble?”

Lee Gun grinned.

* * *

<The Sheep Saint, who had ordered his disciples to bury people alive, beaten to a pulp!>

<Shocking photo sent to a broadcasting station!>

<Questionable message written behind the photo!>

<After handwriting analysis, the handwriting is revealed to be Lee Gun’s!>

<Who is the message for?>

This news took the world by storm. Before the broadcasting company could broadcast a special feature, articles were sent out. It was inevitable.

<I AM BACK>

The words were written in Lee Gun’s distinctive handwriting. This had happened after the Devil’s Tower had fallen. As if he hadn’t been satisfied in sending the message to the broadcasting station, Lee Gun had also sent it to newspaper companies around the world.

The wave his antics created was comparable to that during the news of the destruction of the Devil's Tower. The whole world was abuzz as they kept up with the breaking news.

CHAPTER 25: HE HAS RETURNED?

One person was currently grabbing the back of his neck at this development.

“Archer Saint! Please come out and talk to us!”

“Do you know the whereabouts of Lee Gun-nim?”

“Is he really alive?”

“Is the hero whom the world has been yearning for really back?”

Hugo almost threw the convenience store bento on the ground. It was to be expected. After all, a group of reporters was crowded outside his building. This group included foreign press reporters and government officials as every channel was reporting about this situation.

“Saint!”

Hugo, who had been plugging one ear with his finger, threw his chopsticks. “Why did you have to cause trouble?”

The chopsticks flew toward the sofa for guests, like arrows. Lee Gun was sitting there.

“What were you thinking? Sending that picture and message to a tv station? I can't go out today because of you!”

Lee Gun whistled and easily snatched the chopsticks out of the air. “What do you think I'm doing? It's obviously a declaration of war. I know those bastards will watch the news. I'm just telling them to wait and wash their necks since I'm coming for them.”

‘What an attention w***e!’

In the end, it didn't matter. Even if Lee Gun hadn't caused trouble, his presence would've been exposed soon. This was inevitable after he had killed the Spider Queen.

‘He’s capable of killing SS rank Users, so there’s no way he could stay under the radar.’

However...

“You should’ve revealed your face if you planned on going this far!”

Lee Gun picked at his ear. “If I had done that, everyone would’ve started searching for me again. I don’t want to hunt in difficult mode. I would have to be crazy to do that.”

“...” Hugo couldn’t say anything. ‘What the hell? So why did you stab Yang Wei as soon as you encountered him?’

“Whatever! If you have time to spout that nonsense, you should stop watching TV. You should be diligent like me, Mr. Oh Taeksoo.”

‘What? Diligent?’ The words surprised Hugo. “You’re doing nothing right now! You’re playing games and watching dramas on your phone!”

Lee Gun scratched his rear. “Ah! I’m out of hearts. I need to recharge them.” Without any hesitation, he selected the option to recharge his hearts in the mobile game via a credit card.

This made Hugo sigh. Whenever Lee Gun acted as if it were his right to do so, Hugo would get angry. It was understandable. Lee Gun was using Hugo’s phone; the payment would come out of Hugo’s card.

“Hey, stop using my money for games!”

Lee Gun looked at his friend with contempt. “Even I won’t steal from the Poverty Saint.”

Hugo glared at Lee Gun. Lee Gun then picked up a credit card on the table with his toes. It was a gold card. He had no problem entering the card number; as for who the card belonged to, there wasn’t even a need to question it.

[Credit card approved for Yang Wei-nim! 8/27 17:47 Temporary Charge of \$1,000 to Kakao Games]

[Accrued charge of 50,000 dollars]

When Hugo read the alert on Yang Wei’s phone, which was at the table, he was at a loss for words. ‘He’s sucking him dry down to the bone marrow.’

As if trapping Yang Wei weren't enough, Lee Gun was using him as a game wallet.

'I'm shocked that he wasn't blocked from using the card. Aside from his appearance, it feels like I've gained an unruly and immature son.'

Despite all the annoyance he felt, this didn't bother Hugo much. He was happy and thankful that his friend had returned. He also understood why Lee Gun was keeping his appearance hidden from the public.

'He did suffer a lot.'

If Hugo were in the same position as Lee Gun, he might have done the same thing. Lee Gun had told him that he wanted to stay low because there was a penalty placed on him.

"Hell yeah! I got two five-star characters! Sweet!" Lee Gun suddenly shouted.

"..."

'Or did he say that because he wanted to play games?' Hugo couldn't tell if Lee Gun had lost an edge. However, Lee Gun always had a high standard for himself.

'He said he lost muscle mass.' Lee Gun's new body had been reconstructed. His speed had increased, but it seemed he needed to increase his strength.

'I guess that makes sense. He used to be bigger.' Hugo wondered. He then said, "Anyway, a swarm of reporters is here. What are you going to do?"

It happened at that moment.

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

...

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

"...!"

Lee Gun was skillfully killing mosquitoes while playing the game. He suddenly threw something toward Hugo. It was a blade. "Why don't you give that to the reporters as bait?" he said.

Hugo felt underwhelmed. The blade was small enough to be a knife. It was a normal blade that contained no power of the gods; neither did it contain any skills. Therefore, Hugo asked, “What is this?”

“It’s the main culprit that made me fall into the trap.”

“!” Hugo almost dropped the knife in surprise. It wasn’t a holy item, yet it had almost killed Lee Gun. That made no sense.

‘It isn’t a normal blade.’ Hugo saw a crest he had never seen before. ‘Who would do this?’

Lee Gun let out a savage laugh. “I plan on beating up everyone who took credit for my achievements. As for the one who used this on me, beating them wouldn’t be enough.” It couldn’t be an eye for an eye. He had to do more. Lee Gun let out a sharp laugh.

“Even if you give it to the reporters, I doubt they’ll come back with anything useful.” Hugo sighed. “If you were hit by this, it was definitely not Yang Wei.”

“Hmmp! It would be embarrassing if I fell from a knife he threw.”

“So what do you plan to do? You said you killed Yang Wei because you planned on asking me about the others.” Hugo somberly looked at Lee Gun. “I’ll say this again, but I ended my relationship with them after you died. I have no information that’ll be helpful to you.”

“You have no money either.”

“Hey!”

Lee Gun once again used Yang Wei’s credit card to pay for game items. “It’s fine. I’ll just kidnap someone else.”

“Hmmp! What can you do? They are holed up in their impregnable fortresses.”

“Leave that to me. You just have to investigate the knife. I’m busy today.”

Hugo laughed at the absurdity. Of course, it wouldn’t be hard for him to investigate this lead, but...

‘What? Busy?’ Hugo’s angry eyes headed toward the phone in his friend’s hand. “You’re making me work hard for which game!”

He was about to take the phone away when something caught his eyes and surprised him. “This game...!”

Seeing Hugo’s surprised expression, Lee Gun laughed in a pleased manner. He looked proud. “That’s right. This is the number one RPG fighting game. It seems they modeled the characters according to real awakened beings. I haven’t drawn my character, but I bet it is a seven-star character.”

“...” If Hugo told the truth, the developer in Korea would be razed to the ground.

Lee Gun was growing Chun Sungjae’s character and some odd SS rank male character. However, they were separate from his main character.

He said, “Look. She’s the main character I’m leveling up. She’s the most popular character. She’s very pretty in real life. She might be my type...”

“Hey! Erase it,” Hugo suddenly said.

“Huh?”

He rushed toward Lee Gun. “Erase that female character right now!”

“Why! Do you realize how much I had to spend to get her! She’s pretty! She has good abilities too!”

“Don’t even show interest in her!”

Lee Gun asked, “What? Who is she? Is she someone bad?”

“She is...” Hugo was about to say it was his daughter, but he stopped. He thought about what might happen if he did. His daughter was a fanatic when it came to Lee Gun. This was why Hugo had no plans of introducing her to Lee Gun. If she saw Lee Gun’s current face... “No! No matter what!”

“???”

Hugo was a desperate father who was a fool when it came to his daughter.

* * *

<Who got rid of the monster that the strongest amongst mankind couldn’t kill?>

↳ It must be the Gemini temple. They are ranked number one in Korea.

↳ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ They are merely merchants that rent out elemental magic. Rumors regarding Lee Gun's return are everywhere.

↳ ○ ?? Stop bullshitting me.

↳ This is a link showing Lee Gun. 'Shocking! Man wearing Lee Gun mask uses frozen meat to beat monsters.jpg'

↳ Interesting! Which temple are they from?

[Pic.twitter.com/PdjYjd](https://pic.twitter.com/PdjYjd)

↳ Lee Gun killed something the Gemini Saint failed to?

'(58,994 New Comments)' Chun Sungjae broke out in cold sweat when he read the screen. To be precise, his reaction was caused by the person showing him the comments.

"This can't really be Lee Gun, right?"

The one holding the phone was the number two ranked User in Korea. His name was Choi Sunghyuk, and he was the general of the Gemini temple. Choi Sunghyuk was on a short global list of general rank(Cardinal) awakened beings. He was also known for hating Lee Gun.

Chun Sungjae could only move his eyes when he saw his superior's displeased expression.

"Your friend, who is in the hospital, seemed excited. He said that the one who killed the Spider Queen was Lee Gun-nim."

Chun Sungjae clicked his tongue when he heard this. His roommate wasn't being helpful. "Please don't listen to him. At the time, my friend had been poisoned, so he wasn't in his right mind."

"Are you saying it wasn't Lee Gun?"

Chun Sungjae was in a pickle. Of course, that man had moved uncannily like Lee Gun, and he also possessed Lee Gun's mask. Chun Sungjae had become suspicious when his father, who was one of the 12 Saints, had arrived there. However... "It isn't Lee Gun-nim," he said.

This matter had bothered Chun Sungjae, so he had called his father. A while had passed since the two of them had spoken to each other, yet the Archer Saint had just

coldly scolded his son. Hugo had then told Chun Sungjae to return home if he wanted to continue speaking such nonsense.

Chun Sungjae had then consulted his older sister just in case, but she had also laughed it off. She was an S-rank User who worshipped a different god. She had told him that no Saint could've returned alive from the Devil's Tower.

Choi Sunghyuk laughed when he heard the answer he wanted from one of the witnesses. "Yes. I knew it couldn't be true."

In the first place, a Saint rank awakened being had failed to kill the Spider Queen. There was no way Lee Gun could do it. By putting together several pieces of information, Lee Gun was estimated to be a B rank awakened being.

"It was an assessment given by the Aquarius Saintess."

Those words left Chun Sungjae crestfallen. He had heard stories about Lee Gun from his father and watched many videos of his fights. It was why he had come to admire Lee Gun, but he had to face reality. The tales of heroes were always exaggerated.

This was why most awakened beings looked down on Lee Gun. The general ranked ones looked down on him even more.

The Gemini general laughed at Chun Sungjae's reaction. 'If Lee Gun were really alive...' The chances were fifty-fifty, but if Lee Gun were alive, the situation would be fun for the General. 'I can show that I am superior to him.'

This was the reason Choi Sunghyuk was interested in the young man who had killed the Spider Queen.

Conversion!

Basically, the recruitment of a talented individual helped a lot in increasing the power of one's god.

"The Spider Queen... There's no way a mere User killed it when even a Saint was unable to. I'm sure the monster was suffering under the aftereffects of being sealed..."

In any case, that young man had killed a monster that had eaten an S rank User just before.

"We have to recruit that man. At the very least, he's either an A rank or S rank User."

"Then...!"

Choi Sunghyuk was sure this young man was talented enough to erase the shadow cast by Lee Gun. He would recruit this young man and support him from the back. It would be splendid. The general started making calculations in his head.

He then said to Chun Sungjae, “You’re the only point of contact we have. I want you to find him before the other temples do. Do it while the world is focused on Lee Gun.”

“!”

“You won’t do something unfortunate like introducing him to your father’s temple, right?”

Chun Sungjae sighed when he saw the wary look in Choi Sunghyuk’s eyes.

Chun Sungjae’s reaction meant he understood. So Choi Sunghyuk laughed. “The Gemini Saint will love it if we can bring in this young man.” The general hoped the young man wouldn’t faint in the presence of the Gemini Saint.

* * *

At that moment in time...

“Saintess, we can’t feel the presence of the Sheep Saint. We can’t sense the presence of his construct either.”

A woman talked on the phone near the Sheep Saint’s holy ground. On the other end of the call was the owner of the chalice called the <Aquarius Saint>.

The Aquarius Saintess was praised as the world’s greatest saintess. She was under the healing god, who possessed the most disciples in the world. Many countries and men of power hung around her. The holy water she supplied was worth it.

Her subordinate, who had come out to investigate, burned with killing intent. “Should I force myself into the Sheep Saint’s holy ground and search inside?”

– No. Don’t do that. Killing isn’t good. Those disciples can be used in various locations.

“!”

– Anyway, this puts me in a jam.

The Saintess was anxious. Yang Wei’s disappearance was a big loss, but that was of secondary consideration. ‘Did he perhaps ally himself to a different Saint?’

The biggest problem was that Yang Wei possessed valuable treasures. The first was a golden crate called <Box of Multiplication>, and the other one was <Infinite Storage>.

‘The rest of the twelve Saints stored their most important items in there.’

If anyone other than Yang Wei opened Infinite Storage, it would be troublesome. Moreover...

‘Yang Wei has a hidden ability that even he’s unaware of.’

If the person who took in Yang Wei was quick on the uptake like Lee Gun, it would cause difficulty.

Suddenly, her subordinate, who was observing the surroundings, said, “Excuse me, Saintess.”

– Yes.

“Didn’t the Devil’s Tower collapse just a while ago? There are reports that Lee Gun sent a message to a broadcast station.”

– Yes. What about it?

“What if Lee Gun is really back? There is a possibility he kidnapped Yang Wei.”

A clear ringing laugh came from the other end.

– You like to tell bad jokes, sister.

The laughter abruptly stopped. The Saintess’s voice trembled. An odd mixture of fear and anger appeared in it. Just the thought of that man made her feel terrible.

– In the first place, Lee Gun doesn’t have the ability to pull that off.

“You’re right. He was an incompetent man. He could fight on the level of the twelve Saints only thanks to your power.”

For some reason, the Saintess cringed at the slander. However, she soon started laughing.

– You’re right. How could a dead man kidnap the Sheep Saint? The message might be a fake sent by Lee Gun fanatics. Let’s not pay too much attention to it.

“I’m sorry! I said something unnecessary.”

– Please don't worry too much about it. The Sheep Saint is probably trying to dodge media scrutiny regarding the Spider Queen. Moreover, Korea is the Gemini Saint's territory. There's no way Gemini would stand by and do nothing if Lee Gun had appeared.

– I want you to make preparations. I have something to deal with today.

“What? You want to go out, Saintess?”

Since she had to make holy water, the Saintess never left her holy ground. However, things were different right now. She had received information that one of Lee Gun's items had appeared at the holy item market. It was one of the legendary items she had to acquire.

“What? Are you sure? My god! The legendary item that has been missing...”

It was a rumor that some hidden whale had put out the item for sale. That was why...

Something happened at that moment. An underling ran up toward the Saintess, who was talking on the phone.

“It's bad, Saintess!”

“What's wrong?”

“Other Saints are headed toward the marketplace. They are aiming for Lee Gun's holy item.”

The Saintess immediately got up.

