

The Return of the Disaster-Class Hero

CHAPTER 26: BEING HANDSOME IS A PROBLEM

“This is it.”

“No way! Please give me your real ID.”

“That is my real ID!” Lee Gun slammed his hand against the desk in frustration. He had come to a holy item trading center at the Gangnam station. It was the biggest market in Korea.

Lee Gun had come here for a simple reason. It was what had happened at the Archer’s holy ground.

“Hey, Oh Taeksoo.”

“No. Don’t pay attention to that. Also, I want you to uninstall that game.”

Lee Gun turned to look at Hugo with a baffled expression. Hugo had been acting anxious since the previous day. Lee Gun had caught him hiding his family photos for some odd reason. So, he kicked Hugo as a reply.

“I’m not talking about the game, idiot. I’m talking about this.” Lee Gun was holding a monkfish. It flopped in his hand. “Can you hear this ugly b*****d?”

Yang Wei, who had been put inside a fish, almost cussed. Of all the people in the world, Lee Gun was disparaging his looks!

In the times gone by, the Archer Saint was famous for being the most handsome amongst the twelve Saints. He had taken great care of himself over the years, so he currently looked like a Hollywood actor. However, Lee Gun was different.

‘He was the ugliest amongst the thirteen.’

There was a good reason people made fun of Lee Gun for being ugly.

‘Also, he was bald!’

Hugo sometimes questioned why Lee Gun was popular. However, that wasn’t important right now. “Uh? It’s faint, but I can intermittently hear its voice.”

“Oh! This must be effective then.” Lee Gun laughed as he looked at a yellow ribbon.

<Ribbon Containing Serpent Bearer’s Power> Rank C

This ribbon contained the “13th Sense” skill. Anyone favored by the Serpent Bearer could temporarily use it. The effect would disappear when the person would separate from the holy item.

– 13th Sense Applied: Hear voices of souls

While making an accessory, Lee Gun had tried to imbue his skill into a ribbon and this was the result.

‘It’s a low-rank item and unstable, but it should be ok.’ Lee Gun satisfactorily tied the ribbon around the monkfish’s head. The fish looked pretty. It was also a bizarre sight where Yang Wei was wrapped like a gift.

“Alright, asshat. You said you know who the owner of the knife is, right?”

“!”

Lee Gun took out the knife that had been the reason he fell into the trap. The engraved design on the knife, which he had never seen before, bothered him. “You said you saw this knife at a brokerage warehouse. I’ve given you enough time to go over your account books.”

“I couldn’t find the information! The books during the period when the knife was stored are gone!”

The words surprised both Lee Gun and Hugo.

Hugo, who had his arms crossed, reacted as his eyes flashed. “If you think you can get away with a half-assed excuse like that...” A light flashed in his eyes as wild magical energy erupted from his body. It was the power of a Saint, and the ground started to shake

Boom!

The ferocious magical energy frightened Yang Wei. Even if Hugo had fallen from grace, he was a high-ranking Saint.

“Why would I lie when I’m in your holy ground! They are really gone! All the records during that period are gone!”

“Do you think such a lie would work on me?”

“It’s fine. He isn’t lying,” Lee Gun suddenly said.

“!”

He tapped Hugo’s shoulder. The Saggitarius’s angry magical energy dispersed in a peaceful manner. This surprised Hugo. His patron god had a very bad temper, yet he calmed down very quickly.

Lee Gun waved a piece of paper as if it weren’t a big deal. “If he lies, he’ll immediately be reborn as a maggot.”

This term was included in the holy contract that Lee Gun had made Yang Wei sign.

“Then...”

“This b*****d’s records books are his holy items. If those were stolen, there’s a high probability that the Thief Saint took them.”

“That’s right! I don’t know anything. That is why...” Yang tried to explain.

“Today’s dinner is steamed fish.”

Yang Wei screamed when Lee Gun tried to cut open his stomach. “N-now that I think about it, I’ve seen them before!”

“Where?”

“Great Auction! They were sold in the Great Auction by a mere F rank User. This is why I remember it vividly!”

Hugo was surprised. “Since it appeared in the Great Auction, I’m sure an SS rank Appraiser appraised it.”

It meant the scope of the investigation had considerably narrowed.

“An SS rank Appraiser?” Lee Gun asked.

“He’s quite famous, but he’s currently missing...”

Lee Gun laughed as he glanced at the holy items he had created. ‘An Appraiser...’

That was why Lee Gun had come to the holy item trading center.

He laughed. ‘I can make this work.’

The holy item trading center was located in a large commercial district. Since it was a place where one bought and sold holy items, this place was filled with appraisers. Of course, SS rank Appraisers weren't guaranteed to be found here, but that didn't matter.

Why?

<Holy item made by the Manufacturing Saint sold for 300 million dollars>

<After breaking through the 1000:1 competition rate, the general of the European Taurus temple acquired it with much fanfare>

'I wonder how much my items are worth.' Lee Gun's eyes twinkled. His bank account had never exited the negative balance. Moreover, this was a great chance to measure his weapons and himself against the market. 'I also have to acquire ingredients if I'm going to make more weapons.'

If Lee Gun could sell the holy items that he stole from Yang Wei, he would be killing two birds with one stone.

'According to the information I received, this place also has stores privately owned by the twelve Saints.' Lee Gun grinned like a terrorist. This was the reason he had come to the market in secret. He didn't want his friend, who was the king of nagging and worrying, to know about what he wanted to do.

However...

"You can't enter the market with those goods."

"..."

Lee Gun, who was holding his passport, had a sour expression on his face. He had just shown the guard his passport. It seemed Hugo had kept it in storage for the past twenty years. The passport had expired, but Lee Gun had brought it here just in case it might be useful.

"You need a badge to enter the holy item trading center. It's important to verify everyone's identity. Still, that's a really well-made Lee Gun-nim merch. Why don't you sell it to me?"

"..."

It wasn't merch, but that wasn't the problem. Lee Gun had revealed his identity for identification purposes, but it was futile.

“Junior,” the guard looked at him and said.

Lee Gun looked at the guard with a baffled expression.

“I understand your intention, but Lee Gun-nim isn’t as handsome as you.”

“...”

In the end, Lee Gun was denied access at the lobby. He grew serious. Being handsome was a problem in itself too! In fact, he was told that a couple hundred Lee Gun imposters had tried to enter the marketplace saying they were Lee Gun.

“You are the most handsome one so far,” the security guard complimented him for his accurate voice mimicry and lines, then shook his hand.

‘S**t! What kind of a problem is this?’ In the end, it couldn’t be helped.

Brrrr!

‘!’

Suddenly, the phone that Lee Gun had stolen from Hugo started ringing. Lee Gun answered the call and immediately started a verbal assault. “Hey, what the hell is a badge? Why can’t I sell anything without it? Do you want me to destroy your house?”

Instead of a greeting, Hugo got a verbal assault. The development surprised him initially, but it didn’t take him long to laugh in derision.

– What the hell? You went there to sell items?

“Whatever! What is this badge?”

The question made Hugo cackle.

– Even the mighty Lee Gun got stopped there.

“Hurry up and answer me.”

– The badge is a form of ID for disciples. It gives you access to certain places, and it’s where the rented skills can be stored. The engraving, shape, and function vary depending on the gods. FYI, the Archer Saint’s badge is shaped like a clock.

“Basically, it’s a licensed holy item... So how do you acquire it?”

– You have to take an aptitude test.

An odd look appeared on Lee Gun's face. "Test?"

– Yes. A test to see if you are qualified to wield your power or you have to be accepted by a construct.

Lee Gun was baffled at why people had to jump through such a hoop, but in the end, he laughed in derision. "That sounds easy. It means I just have to beat up a construct, right?"

The words surprised Hugo.

– Hey. That's not what...

However, he suddenly stopped. He thought it might work if the person doing it was Lee Gun.

Lee Gun felt the same way. He made an invidious remark. "Good. If I have to, I'll just beat up one at the nearest shrine..."

Hugo cut him off.

– If you can reach that point, it might be possible.

"?"

– There are too many applicants, so the country does a round of tests first. You have to pass that first.

"...!"

In the end, Lee Gun would have to take a test.

– I could help you out. I do have an informal way of making it happen.

Lee Gun's face brightened. "Oh. Thanks. Give me one..."

For some reason, Hugo sounded smug.

– It doesn't get issued for free. Even if it's an informal way, you need to take a test. There needs to be a paperwork trail. Even the great Lee Gun can't avoid that.

"..."

Lee Gun's eyebrows twitched.

Hugo sounded like he was having the time of his life. He was excited because it was rare to have an upper hand on Lee Gun like this. The informal test would be taken the next day...

“It’s fine.”

– What?

“I don’t need to take a test,” Lee Gun said.

Hugo laughed in a triumphant manner.

– Really? You need the badge to—

“Why would I go through all that?”

– What?

Lee Gun laughed in a bright manner. “I just have to repurpose a license from someone near me, right?”

Silence flowed. Then Hugo exploded. He sounded very flustered.

– Wha... what? What did you just say?

“Since the rental skills are stored in there, it’s a win-win for me. I’ll let you get back to work. Adios!”

– Hey, Gun! I misspoke! I’ll just make one for—

Click!

The call ended.

“.....#*\$&!” Hugo hit his head against the wall. It seemed he was the idiot.

* * *

It was unknown as to how much time had passed.

[A string of robberies is happening inside the holy item trading market. I’m repeating this information once again. A...]

Unrest rose within the market.

“My god! It’s a robbery!”

“Did they identify the robber?”

“They don’t know his identity.”

“From what I heard, he stole from a Cardinal rank disciple!”

“Is it perhaps a calamity?”

“It has to be a Red zone ranked monster at the very least if it was able to defeat a Cardinal rank User!”

The warning of robberies spread through the holy item trading center as the unrest spread.

At that moment...

“What? You can’t buy this item?”

Lee Gun was inside the appraisal center located on the third floor of the holy item trading center. While the others were comparing him to a red zone rank monster, Lee Gun was furrowing his brows.

He hadn’t been able to find a suitable target, so he had decided on a duo who were up to no good. Of course, some righteous foreigner had appeared in the process and thought that Lee Gun was with the duo. He had decided to beat up all three of them.

In the end, Lee Gun had legally(?) extracted compensation money and acquired a badge. It allowed him to enter the holy item trading center. However, he was confronted with another problem.

“Why can’t you buy it?” he asked.

“Even if our Saint shows up, it will be impossible.” A young appraiser pointed toward the Sheep Saint’s holy items.

“The best I can do is buy all the items for three thousand dollars. They are low rank, but good quality items. However...” The young appraiser sighed as he looked at the wooden doll amongst the holy items. “This item is not certified by the twelve Saints... I don’t know if buying this with good money is worth it...”

The appraiser showed reticence when it came to an item made by Lee Gun. Of course, the item wasn’t some amazing item. Lee Gun had made it while watching a drama. He had done it as a pastime.

“You should still appraise it properly,” Lee Gun said.

The appraiser sighed and said, “It isn’t as if the rank one Manufacture Saint made this item. Even the rank C Users on the streets won’t buy this.”

Two Saints wanted Lee Gun’s item very badly, yet this appraiser was talking about rank C beings.

“Above all else, the design is pretty bad, and its ability is to purify the air. I’d rather use an air purifier appliance.”

Lee Gun pouted. ‘The world has improved. They have air purifier appliances for homes now.’

In the end, he was about to turn around with a sour expression.

“Why don’t you take this opportunity to open a phone?” the appraiser suddenly asked.

“Phone?”

“Yes. From what I see, you have an old model phone. In truth, our store is affiliated with phone carriers for awakened beings. If you open up another line, you can get the latest phone for free. We can give you a better price on your items. I’m willing to give you 400 dollars for the muscular female warrior sculpture.”

“Oh.” Lee Gun had made that item because he had been bored. It seemed he would be able to make a quick buck selling it.

“Of course, the subscription fee is free. As you probably know, there is a lot of competition in this space, so we are giving out these phones at a loss. This is an opportunity for you.”

The appraiser would be able to sell his items, and Lee Gun would acquire a new phone. It was a decent deal since Lee Gun was using his friend’s phone right now.

‘Let’s see if this deal is real!’

Lee Gun checked the contract. He didn’t see anything wrong with it.

The young appraiser read Lee Gun’s expression. Laughing, he handed him the phone and the contract. “If you like the deal, you can sign here...”

Suddenly...

“Why are you trying to cheat him?”

“!”

Someone stood next to Lee Gun. The voice was familiar to him. He had heard the voice from the game he played. Moreover, the voice seemed similar to that of the character Hugo had wanted him to erase for some reason.

“That is a TKBM handphone. I wouldn’t take it even if it’s given out for free. I’m pretty sure all these phones were recalled.”

The appraiser scrunched up his face.

The voice continued, “These holy items should be worth over 300 thousand dollars. Moreover, if the wooden sculpture really purifies the air, it’s a valuable item that most Cardinal rank Users are searching for.”

“...!”

The appraiser broke out in a cold sweat as he looked at Lee Gun. The woman didn’t pay attention to him as she said to Lee Gun, “This is where the appraisers gather, but most of them are swindlers. If you want talented appraisers, you have to go to the Integrated Exchange.”

“Integrated Exchange?”

The woman was kind enough to point out a map on the wall behind her as she left. The exchange looked like a messy and large labyrinth. It seemed one could use a teleport in this building to reach a world exchange market.

When Lee Gun glared at the appraiser, the appraiser yelled at him, “Go! Whatever! You won’t be able to reach that place today anyway.”

“?”

“The Saintess is making a trip there. Everyone in the exchange market will flock to her.”

“Saintess?” Lee Gun snorted.

‘Such a place exists?’ Lee Gun hadn’t come across the information in his research.

“Needless to say, she probably has business with an SS rank appraiser there.”

The light in Lee Gun’s eyes changed. “Oh! There is an SS rank appraiser there?”

When Lee Gun showed interest, the young appraiser laughed in a mocking manner. “Hmmp. You won’t be able to meet him. He is a proud man that even Saints have a hard time meeting.”

When Lee Gun showed signs of wanting to go to the Integrated Exchange, the young appraiser snorted. “You look like an amateur. I doubt you have enough money to enter the Integrated Exchange. It has been a while since I’ve come across an easy prey!”

Kwahng!

“Ahhk!”

Lee Gun let out a cold laugh as he kicked open the shop’s door.

“Pick one of the two.”

“What?”

“Inside or outside..”

What?

CHAPTER 27: -DID YOU TRY TO SWINDLE ME?

Integrated Exchange was a large exchange that could be accessed from trading centers all over the world with teleportation. If one wanted to reach that place, one needed the right to use the teleporter. It meant one needed a token. And if one wanted to acquire a token, one needed money or an offering.

Lee Gun beamed as he spoke to the appraiser, “Hurry up and choose. If you don’t, I’ll do as I like.”

“What the hell are you—”

Boom!

Lee Gun slammed his hand on the desk as he shamelessly laughed. “What’s wrong, boss? You tried to swindle me.”

“What? Swindle? Nonsense. When did I—”

Kwah-jeek!

Lee Gun crushed the plastic soda bottle on the table.

“...!”

He had only pressed down on the bottle's top with his thumb, yet the bottle became deformed as if a hydraulic press had crushed it. It was flattened like gum on the ground. This frightened the appraiser.

“I told you I didn't know the current market value, and you tried to swindle me. You tried to give me s**t prices for items worth tens of thousands of dollars.”

Cold sweat erupted on the appraiser's face. “I-I guess I did when I think about it.”

Lee Gun started pouncing on what the other person had said. “You tried to sell me a phone that has been recalled, and you made it seem like you were doing me a favor.”

“Yes, yes. Yes, I did.”

“Moreover, you said my item wasn't worth much.” The last part had been a minor detail, but that didn't matter. “Even if merchants have to make a living, there should be a limit, right?”

“Yes, you're correct.”

Lee Gun let out a bright smile. “Then, why don't you let me borrow a token for free?”

‘Borrow, my a*s!’ The appraiser was taken aback, but he couldn't say anything. He had no choice.

Suddenly, Lee Gun said, “Oh hey! I see a useful crafting material here!”

Doo-doo-doohk!

“...!”

It seemed Lee Gun was unsatisfied with crushing the plastic bottle. He picked up the discarded steel chopsticks inside the shop and started working on the metal.

Doo-doohk! Doo-doohk!

It was an incredible display of strength. Lee Gun easily bent the thin yet solid steel chopsticks, then threaded them to create a flower.

Since Lee Gun had tried to sell a product he had made himself, the appraiser had thought Lee Gun was weak. Now, the appraiser saw how wrong he had been. ‘S**t! He's definitely affiliated with a war god!’

If he wasn't careful, his body would be bent like those chopsticks. Therefore, the appraiser's attitude changed at the speed of lightning. "I-I'm sorry for trying to swindle you. However, a lowly merchant like me can't easily acquire a token."

"Oh really? According to this, resident merchants receive direct support from the exchange market. It says many merchants collect and sell these tokens."

"!" The appraiser looked at Lee Gun, who displayed his old phone's screen to him.

Lee Gun had used that time to search up a reputable community site. He proudly shook the search result in front of the appraiser. "A person should use new technology. This is the age of information."

The appraiser was at a loss for words. The man in front of him was using a slow old phone yet had dug out that information!

Lee Gun nonchalantly smiled and extended his hand toward the appraiser. "You should let me borrow a token. In fact, you should lend me a phone too. I'll return them after two years."

The man had the audacity to rip off a phone from a phone seller! The expression on the appraiser's face became quite the sight.

Lee Gun let out a bright smile. He had caught the appraiser cheating, and his expression became one of a man who had caught a big fish.

"It says all the phones being sold here are done with support from the gods. You could give one away, right?" Lee Gun waved another search result in the appraiser's face. The appraiser took deep breaths.

Lee Gun continued, "I guess it can't be helped if you don't want to help me."

He started bending metal once again, and this made the appraiser cry out. "Alright, alright! I'll give them to you! They are all yours!"

The appraiser quickly took out a token and placed it on the table. The symbol of the Gemini looked similar to the consonant ㅁ in Korean. It was engraved on an item shaped like a coin. The appraiser also put a decent phone on the table. "You'll have no problem using this..."

Lee Gun clicked his tongue as he used the search engine again. "According to the product number, this is a model released three years ago. The best phones are the newest models."

“...#*\$&!” The appraiser’s insides burned, but in the end, he brought out the latest model.

Lee Gun looked somewhat satisfied. He was still ignorant on this subject, but according to the search, this phone was the latest-gen model released a couple of months ago. ‘I guess it doesn’t matter if the phone is functional.’

The appraiser snorted when he saw Lee Gun’s expression. ‘What a hick! It’s from the same company as the recalled phone.’

It was true that this phone was one of the best phones the appraiser had. However, it was a TKBM product, which phone aficionados usually avoided.

‘If I can make him take that one, I’ll come out on top.’ The young appraiser laughed. He said, “Then I’ll give you that one, customer.”

“Alright...” Lee Gun replied.

Suddenly...

“No way! You should avoid that company even if it’s a premium phone.”

The voice startled the appraiser.

Lee Gun’s eyes turned round. A familiar young man stood next to him.

“Are you buying a phone? Instead of a TKBM phone, this one is better.”

The appraiser was shocked when he saw the famous face. ‘Chun Sungjae!’ This young man was a senior in junior high, yet he was a very famous disciple known for his genius talent.

Lee Gun looked relieved as he greeted Chun Sungjae. “Are you knowledgeable about phones?”

“Very.”

“Then pick the best one here for me.”

“Does the price not matter?”

“Yeah. It doesn’t. Right?” Lee Gun looked at the appraiser.

The appraiser inwardly laughed when he saw Lee Gun’s smile. “Ah! Yes, that should be fine. All the phones displayed here are a secondary line of merchandise that—”

“What? Why are you lying? You have the good stuff over here.”

The appraiser screamed when Chun Sungjae took out a box from the drawer.

“Ahhhk! Not that one!”

“???” Chun Sungjae was surprised by the appraiser’s reaction, but Lee Gun just grinned.

“Ok. I’ll take this one,” Lee Gun said.

“No, you can’t! This one is reserved for—”

“What? You just have to acquire the same one.”

“But...”

“I guess it can’t be helped. Ah! There is more scrap metal over here!” When Lee Gun started bending the metal again, the appraiser despaired.

* * *

“Oh, this place is like an underground city!”

Integrated Exchange.

Lee Gun had used a teleporter to reach a district in Asia where gambling flourished. The sound of casino chips being thrown and fighters fighting reverberated in the surroundings. Cliffs with floors were built in the stages below. One could see moving staircases connecting the cliffs and neon signs everywhere.

It was an awesome sight, but Lee Gun was too angry to notice it. His reaction was understandable considering what he had experienced at the teleportation zone.

[You will have to wait 3 hours and 40 minutes.]

The line had been longer than he had imagined. However, the long line wasn’t what had pissed him off. He had been wondering why it was taking so long, but he had never expected that.

[An additional fee(\$500) will allow you to use the express lane]

It seemed they were just obsessed with making money.

Of course, Chun Sungjae had stepped in to help Lee Gun. The teleporter was an object created by the Gemini, so Chun Sungjae didn’t need to pay additional fees. It was one of the benefits afforded to him.

“It must be nice being a disciple affiliated with this temple.”

Chun Sungjae became careful when he heard Lee Gun’s words. The reason was simple.

Brrr!

– Did you meet up with the guy who killed the Spider Queen?

His know-it-all general had contacted him. He had told Chun Sungjae to make sure to recruit the young man, and this didn’t sit right with Chun Sungjae.

Suddenly, Lee Gun asked him, “Why are you looking at me with that constipated expression?”

“!”

“You said you will introduce me to an SS rank appraiser you frequent. So why did you stop walking?”

“Ah... That is....” Chun Sungjae was about to say something, but the vibrations were loud.

Brrr! Brrr! Brrr!

– Tell him we’ll issue him a black card as soon as he joins our temple.

– He can use the teleporter for the rest of his life.

– We’ll give him the best contract terms.

– I’ll also put in a good word with the Gemini Saint.

Chun Sungjae sighed. In the end, he forced himself to speak. “Do you have any plans of serving a god, hyung? If you enter a temple directly managed by the Gemini Saint, the problem with the teleporter will be solved. Your ID will be immediately issued.”

The guard who had come along with Chun Sungjae became surprised. It was to be expected. Chun Sungjae hated doing recruitment work; he had done none for the temple.

‘In fact, the only recruitment he did was to get others to join Lee Gun’s fan site.’

Chun Sungjae always received demerits as his recruitment score was too low. Therefore, the guard naturally found his actions odd. “What’s gotten into you? You hate doing business for the temple.”

‘S**t! Why do you think I’m doing this?’

Brrrrrrrrrr!

Brrrrrrrrrr!

Lee Gun laughed at the excessive amount of noise. “It seems your superior is overanxious.”

Chun Sungjae flinched in surprise. ‘Is it obvious that I’m in contact with someone?’

Lee Gun laughed. “Here! Take this.”

“!” Chun Sungjae’s eyes turned round as he received the item Lee Gun tossed to him.

“Thank you for letting me use it last time.”

This item was none other than the blade Lee Gun had taken from him and used to kill the Spider Queen.

Chun Sungjae became surprised when he saw the status of his blade. ‘The blade was ruined!’

For some reason, his blade now had a much better edge. Yet, the only change Chun Sungjae could see was a slight change in the design.

“I repaired it while I was at it,” Lee Gun explained.

“You didn’t buy a new one?”

“Why would I? Would you have reimbursed me?”

Chun Sungjae was taken aback.

‘It was the mysterious civilization’s poison that damaged the blade, yet...’

Regardless of what had happened, Lee Gun had benefited in the end. He was able to test out the <Repair Reinforcement> skill within the Creation Workshop, so he was quite pleased. ‘It was pretty high in rank, so repairing it gave a good amount of EXP.’

The Manufacturer skill had a <10% speed increase> attribute. The Repair Reinforcement skill had a <Random Luck> attribute.

“Any holy item I work on has a tendency of changing in odd ways. Don’t be surprised later,” Lee Gun said to the young man.

“W-what?” Chun Sungjae looked to Lee Gun for an explanation, but Lee Gun just glanced toward the blade as an answer.

<Janus’s Desire! Rank A (Gemini)>

Special attribute: Summon Two-Faced Soldiers(Rank A)

Summon Red Soldier and Blue Soldier.

<Janus’s Desire! Rank A (Gemini)>

Special attribute: Summon Two-Faced Soldiers(Rank A)

Summon soldiers that like to follow the disposition of the summoner (M)! Summon soldiers that like to attack (S) (Change)

Random skill activation (Additional)

“I’ve already warned you. It isn’t my fault no matter what comes out,” Lee Gun warned.

“???” Chun Sungjae and the guard were taken back.

Lee Gun ignored them and headed toward the tunnel. Soon, they arrived at Chun Sungjae’s favorite store.

Around the same time...

“My god! She’s here!”

In the gambling district of the Integrated Exchange appeared a beautiful woman guarded by SS rank disciples.

“It’s the Saintess!”

“Why is she here?”

The Saintess’s beautiful forehead scrunched up a little bit. She had received some outrageous news.

“Our temple’s holy item was appraised at one dollar?”

She was here to meet the most famous appraiser at the auction. This SS rank appraiser was someone even the gods acknowledged. One needed his appraisal to get a good valuation in the auction.

So what had happened?

‘It’s only worth a dollar?’

She already had a headache thanks to Lee Gun’s name being repeated here. Moreover, many Saints had gathered here because Lee Gun’s holy item would be put up for auction. She had to quickly increase her funds, yet something preposterous had happened.

She found it absurd that her holy item was treated so lowly.

In the end, the Saintess spoke, “Is that the store with the appraiser in question?”

She pointed in a certain direction, toward the store Lee Gun had entered.

CHAPTER 28: WHO MADE THIS?

“Oh! So this is where the SS rank appraiser is?”

From the outside, the shop looked like a nondescript pawnshop. Lee Gun was having a good time looking at the contents of the shabby workshop as high-quality items were on display here.

<Butcher> Rank S

– A translucent wire that never breaks. It extends a maximum distance of 500m.

<Oil that eats monsters’ blood> Rank S

– It never dries up. The more blood it drinks, the thicker it becomes!

– Permanent increase in durability and strength.

The items were much better than those in the nearby big stores. However...

‘Why is it so expensive!’

Five ml of that oil cost several hundred thousand dollars.

‘At these prices, weapons are out of the question! I won’t even be able to buy a stack of clothing!’

From what Lee Gun had heard, it seemed the quality of items was guaranteed. However, the store ruthlessly overcharged Saints for their items. This was why Chun Sungjae came only here to sell his items.

‘Still, it will be a waste to return empty-handed.’ Lee Gun thought that if he used the items here, he could make a decent weapon. He forlornly looked at the items when someone spoke up.

“Are you sure it’s a good idea to introduce him to the owner of the store?” The guard, who had accompanied them, grabbed Chun Sungjae. All the disciples under the Gemini were magicians. This man in his twenties specialized in strength-based magic. “This is a VIP store that the General regularly visits. Most disciples can only wish to meet this appraiser.”

“Why? What’s the problem?” Chun Sungjae sounded apathetic.

It seemed the guard was feeling more and more uneasy after meeting Lee Gun. “He poured salt in the wound of the phone seller when he left. Why did the phone seller give a token to him?”

“The phone seller was probably a crooked dealer. It’s obvious that Hyung turned the table on the phone seller,” Chun Sungjae replied.

“The holy items he is trying to sell are odd too! I’m pretty sure I saw an item that the Wealth Saint was supposed to list in this auction.”

“That’s probably a coincidence. It should be a common item,” Chun Sungjae again tried to explain.

“What about the badge he has! I saw a badge for the Libra and the troublesome Leo! The rest are our badges! I’ve never seen him in our temple!”

“...” Even the great Chun Sungjae could no longer shield Lee Gun. ‘Of all the people to steal from, he picked a general of the Libra temple.’

Soon, the guard asked a question with a serious expression, “He stole those badges. Are you sure we shouldn’t report him? He looks like a fob. There is a high probability that he’s a swindler. Why do you want to take him to our temple? Our general will get angry if you do...”

Chun Sungjae was dumbfounded. It was the general who had ordered him to bring that man in. In the end, Chun Sungjae ignored the guard and headed toward the store's reception area. However, there was one small problem.

I'm sorry! We are swamped with commissions. We are closed!

Please return after a week!"

Chun Sungjae was in a bit of a bind as he looked at the CLOSED sign. "S**t! I can't believe it's closed."

The guard clicked his tongue as if he had expected this. "Of course, they are. They are swamped with work. A lot of people are trying to raise extra money for this auction. Even the Saintess will be participating in the Lee Gun auction. This will be the most competitive auction so far."

"!" The one to open his eyes in surprise was none other than Lee Gun. He didn't know what the Saintess looked like, so she was secondary to the other news.

"Lee Gun auction?" Lee Gun wondered why his name would show up here, but Chun Sungjae acted as if it was nothing special.

"Lee Gun-nim's holy item will be put up for auction. I thought Hyung was here for that."

Lee Gun hadn't come here for that reason. He had been wondering why he kept hearing his name from various places. Now, he knew the reason. He asked, "Which item is being put up for auction?"

"I'm not sure. According to the rumor, a whale put that item up for auction. Many are assuming one of the twelve Saints might be behind it."

"It doesn't matter what comes out! The item will be extremely expensive!" The guard butted in.

[Hwahng Young]

Awakened Name: [One who doesn't yield after being hit]

Attribute: Resilience! Doesn't fall after being repeatedly hit. The body becomes harder the more it is hit.

– Skill possessed by One who doesn't yield after being hit

[Imposing S rank (Gemini)]

[Roly-poly A rank (Gemini)]

[Appearance Change A rank (Gemini)]

The guard continued, “It was said that Lee Gun’s equipment was created by constructs. Also, everyone is saying Lee Gun has returned. It’s a bedlam out there. There’s so much interest in him that any rental magic related to Lee Gun has been sold out. My Appearance Change spell was especially popular.”

‘This b*****d is the reason why there are so many Lee Gun wannabes.’ Lee Gun clenched his fists.

The oblivious guard laughed. “If I’m being honest, Lee Gun’s charisma was on another level. Even if his face was like that, his voice was crafty. I have to watch old footage to make my spell, and I’m always impressed by what I see.”

“Oh, really?” Lee Gun’s fists relaxed a little bit.

“However, that doesn’t really matter. He makes me money—

“Ahk!”

The guard screamed when he received a hit from Lee Gun. “Kuh, kuhk! Why are you hitting me!”

“Give me money for using my likeness, you b*****d.”

The guard gave up after being ruthlessly beaten.

“Ok. I’ll give you my token for the auction! Stop!” The guard had tried to have a good opinion of the man since Chun Sungjae was trying to scout him. However, it seemed this man was a lunatic. ‘I should’ve picked up on it when the crying phone seller begged him to leave.’

Since he had acquired a token, Lee Gun was about to stop beating the guard. Suddenly...

[You have acquired data]

[You have acquired Saint’s EXP]

“!!” Lee Gun’s eyes turned round as he continued beating up the guard. He hadn’t expected his EXP to increase. ‘Does the EXP increase depending on the rank?’

To be precise, he had no idea what exactly triggered the increase in EXP. However, a big smile appeared on his face nonetheless.

Puhk puhk puhk!

Data and EXP continued to pour out as he continued to hit the guard. It might be because the guard was resilient, but he could take a beating. In the beginning, Lee Gun's eyes had been filled with anger, but enjoyment gradually replaced that.

All this frightened the guard. "I get it! I get it! I'll give you one more token!" He tossed the expensive teleport token to save his life.

"The Saints will be participating in the auction."

"!!"

Chun Sungjae surreptitiously spoke up. "That's why if you plan on participating in the auction, you should change your name. You might incite anger amongst the Saints if you claim that you are Lee Gun-nim."

Chun Sungjae was just warning him, but Lee Gun's eyes flashed in anger. It was to be expected.

'It seems I won't have to go to the stores directly owned by the 12 Saints.' That was right. Lee Gun had planned on kidnapping generals to lure the twelve Saints out of their holy grounds.

He had heard that high-rank disciples frequented the stores owned by their respective Saints. However, the Saints were coming to the auction on their own.

'I don't have to waste energy. I just have to head toward the auction house.' Lee Gun laughed.

He favorably looked at Chun Sungjae, who had saved him from doing unnecessary work. However, that wasn't the only reason his opinion of Chun Sungjae had risen.

"I'll try to get the highest price for Hyung's item. I can probably sell it for five times the market value."

Lee Gun laughed. "You don't have to overdo it like that. This store is temporarily closed."

"You fixed my weapon. Also, you won't be able to buy Lee Gun-nim's miscellaneous items with so little money!"

It seemed there was a big misunderstanding, but Lee Gun didn't elaborate. 'If I reveal my identity, I think he'll run away.'

Chun Sungjae was doing all the annoying tasks for him.

The guard pounded at his chest with rage when he saw Chun Sungjae's love for Lee Gun. "Phew! If it wasn't for his fanaticism for Lee Gun, he would already be at the SS rank."

"Why would being a Lee Gun fan matter?"

"What do you mean why?! His faith toward the Gemini god is a fat zero percent!"

"Ah!" Lee Gun had heard about this from Hugo. Disciples brought EXP to the Gods, and they awakened when the Saints blessed them. The blessing allowed them to develop their skills. The problem was loyalty. Basically, one needed faith for all of this to happen.

'The power gap between awakened beings develops in that process.'

In other words, the more loyal one was to one's god, the more one had a chance to develop a variety of skills. If one received support from one's temple, there could be an explosive growth in power.

If a person had zero faith toward their god, it meant the god basically ignored them. That person was fortunate that their god hadn't disowned them.

"The general was flabbergasted. Even civilians have a faith value of fifty percent. He wondered why this young man even bothered to enter the Gemini temple!"

It was a joke, but someone would wonder if Chun Sungjae held a grudge against the Gemini because of his zero faith. He was somehow hanging on using only his own talent, but his ceiling was Rank A.

"His achievement puts him in the top three, yet he's ignored. It isn't easy to become rank A without the support of one's god." The guard clicked his tongue. "Anyway, both siblings are oddballs. Sungjae's noona is a Lee Gun fan too. She's beautiful and talented enough to be an S rank disciple."

"Is that so? Who is it?"

"You don't know? She's very famous. Anyway, I don't know why they are obsessed with Lee Gun instead of their affiliated gods. I heard their father hated them being fans of Lee Gun, so he almost kicked them out of his house. It's said their father threw away all of their Lee Gun figurines." The guard found the situation so regrettable that he cursed out the blameless Lee Gun. "If it wasn't for Lee Gun..."

Even Lee Gun felt sad by what he heard. He looked toward Chun Sungjae. “Hey, Is his faith that bad because of his fandom of me?”

“The connection hasn’t been proved, but there’s no other explanation for it...!” The amped-up guard suddenly went silent. He tilted his head in puzzlement. “Fandom of me?”

* * *

At that moment, Chun Sungjae was very flustered. He had awakened a sleeping SS rank appraiser, so he overlooked the fact of being hit with the appraiser’s slipper. However, the issue was Lee Gun’s holy items, which Chun Sungjae had come to sell in his stead.

“You brought very good items for a rookie. Even if you poorly negotiate, you can get hundreds of thousands of dollars for it. What if I give you a million dollars for it?”

“One million?” Chun Sungjae’s mouth fell open.

That amount meant a billion Won. None of his items from before had received such a high valuation before. ‘Where the hell did this item come from? Did he really steal this item from the Wealth Saint?’

“It seems you’re doing well, kid. I heard your temple takes a cut as soon as you deposit anything. It seems you’re making a lot of money.”

“Ah, no. This isn’t my item,” Chun Sungjae explained.

“Ah! You’re selling it for someone? Is that it?”

“No. I have one more. It’s the most important one.” Chun Sungjae brought out the wooden doll Lee Gun had made. “This is it.”

The middle-aged appraiser smirked a bit as he pushed up his glasses. “What the hell? This is a no-brand. Did an amateur make this?”

The appraiser looked over the wooden doll. “Haha! I can’t give you a lot for this. At most, no-brand items are priced 500 dollars. I’ll give it to you in Korean currency of 500 thousand won.”

Chun Sungjae scratched his cheek. He felt bad for his hyung, but he had expected this. If a product in question wasn’t made by the Manufacture Saint, it wouldn’t sell for a high price. Of course, Lee Gun hadn’t expected much either. He would be satisfied if he got enough to order several rotisserie chickens later.

However...

“Hey, Sungjae,” the appraiser looked at him.

“I know, ahjussi. However, you know that I’ve done a lot of business here. Can you give an additional 300...” Chun Sungjae tried to bargain.

“Who made this?”

“What?”

“Where’s the person who made this!” The appraiser was reacting oddly. He was shaking.

* * *

“Fandom of me?” For a brief moment, the guard thought he had heard wrong. He looked at Lee Gun. “What do you mean by—”

Suddenly...

“Hyung!” Chun Sungjae, who had gone to meet the appraiser, hurried out of the store.

“You came back really quick. Was he willing to buy it for a lot of money?”

“No. I got a good valuation, but that’s not the problem.”

“?” The guard was shocked when he saw the estimation sheet brought out by Chun Sungjae.

Chun Sungjae, “Hyung, you said I will only be able to get enough to buy a couple of rotisserie chickens for the wooden doll, right?”

“At the very least, it should be worth \$400. The phone salesman was an appraiser, and he said it wasn’t worth enough to buy a single phone. Do you think I should’ve sold it to him?”

“No!” Chun Sungjae still couldn’t forget the SS-rank appraiser’s reaction.

This appraiser was a veteran, who was never surprised no matter which holy item was placed in front of him. Famous Users and Saints used his service. Yet, his expression had drastically changed when he had seen that handmade wooden doll.

“Please follow me for now.”

Lee Gun followed Chun Sungjae into the store.

On the other hand, the appraiser was pacing back and forth after he had sent Chun Sungjae out. He cleared the food that he had been about to eat and silently stared at the wooden doll with a serious expression.

‘I’m sure of it.’

He wished Chun Sungjae would hurry back.

Bul-kuhk!

“I brought the maker, ahjussi.”

The appraiser shot up to his feet. However, it didn’t take long for his expression to change. “...!”

Chun Sungjae had brought a young man with him. At most, the young man looked like a recent high school graduate. This surprised the appraiser.

In contrast, Lee Gun let out a bitter laugh. “What? How much are you going to cut the price of my item?”

“No. This...”

When the appraiser brought up the wooden doll, Lee Gun furrowed his brows. “What about it?”

“Did you really make it?”

Chun Sungjae had an odd look in his eyes as he stared at the appraiser. He had no idea why the ahjussi was acting this way.

Lee Gun laughed. “Why? Is there some reason I shouldn’t have made it?”

“No.” The appraiser was in disbelief after he saw Lee Gun.

He hesitated for a bit, then asked, “Do you perhaps have a connection to Lee Gun-nim?”

“I do.”

“!”

The one to reply next was Chun Sungjae. “He is a fraud.”

The guard was flustered as he looked between Chun Sungjae and Lee Gun. Chun Sungjae was apathetic. ‘I can understand why ahjussi would ask that.’

Chun Sungjae knew the other man with him was a maker, and it seemed he had created an exact copy of Lee Gun’s holy item.

“I know the confusion you’re going through, ahjussi. However, my father said he isn’t...”

“Jeez! Get out of here for now!”

“???”

The angry appraiser kicked Chun Sungjae and the guard out of the store. He knew Chun Sungjae’s father was the Archer Saint, but Saints were nothing in his eyes. In the end, only Lee Gun and the appraiser were left within the workspace.

The appraiser grabbed Lee Gun with trembling hands. “I’m being serious when I’m asking you this question. What is your relationship to Lee Gun-nim?”

“Why?”

“Lee Gun-nim gained his fame as a fighter, so most people don’t know this. However, he was a Maker who made his own equipment and holy items.” The appraiser brought up the wooden doll and continued, “This sculpture was sculpted through the same method Lee Gun-nim used... I’ve seen countless copycats before, but this is...”

Lee Gun laughed out loud. This man was an SS rank appraiser, who the Saints treasured. He had been curious to meet the man, and it seemed the appraiser was better than he had expected.

“Then there are the patterns on the sculpture. It’s the exact same pattern as that on the Lee Gun-nim’s holy item that is being put up for auction today!”

“!” Lee Gun’s eyes turned round. ‘If it has the same pattern... Ah! That one is coming up for auction?’

He had acquired a pretty valuable piece of information. It seemed his reaction made the appraiser feel anxious. “How do you know a pattern that hasn’t been revealed to the public...”

Lee Gun thought for a brief moment. If he revealed some information about himself, would he be able to increase the valuation of his item? ‘I also have to ask him about the blade that was thrown at me.’

Lee Gun asked for more information. “It seems you’re well-informed about Lee Gun. How are you so knowledgeable?”

“I have no choice but to know him well.”

“Ah! You’re an appraiser. Did you appraise his items?”

The appraiser whispered his next words. “This is for only your ears. I’m actually Lee Gun-nim’s disciple.”

“...?”

‘What?’

‘Who’s the disciple of whom?’

CHAPTER 29: WHO MADE THIS?

‘What did this b*****d just say?’

He was Lee Gun. So what the hell was this? He didn’t recall ever taking in a disciple.

The appraiser, who was impersonating as Lee Gun’s disciple, spoke with great pride, “Amongst the disciples Lee Gun-nim took under him, he treasured me the most.”

‘I never nurtured a disciple like this man.’

The appraiser remained oblivious as he continued to praise Lee Gun. “You can’t be Lee Gun-nim’s direct disciple considering your age, but you’re pretty good. You almost fooled me with this item”

‘Should I sue this man for being a charlatan?’ Lee Gun thought whether he should punch the man or drag him out by his feet when...

“There’s a problem, Appraiser-nim!” An employee burst into the room.

The appraiser angrily replied, “I’m in the middle of an important conversation. Can’t you see that?”

“But... Outside...”

“Get out! I’m talking with an important guest.”

In the end, the employee was chased out of the room.

Lee Gun limbered up in the meantime. 'I should get decent data from hitting an SS rank appraiser, right?'

The appraiser started looking for something. As Lee Gun walked up behind him, he brought out an unexpected item. "I received this when I was accepted as Lee Gun-nim's disciple."

Lee Gun was surprised at the sight of a familiar item. It was a pocket notebook, one that he had used in the past. The only problem was...

'I lost it a long time ago.'

Lee Gun realized that he might have met the appraiser before. 'There's no way. Is he the kid who was crying after being dumped by a girl?' Lee Gun had once traveled to China after receiving a commission. There, he had met an annoying boy, who had chased him around.

The appraiser continued, "He had an excellent eye for appraising items, and he thankfully passed on some of his knowledge to me."

That was true. Lee Gun remembered that the dirty kid had continued to follow him, so he had cussed out the kid in annoyance. He remembered chastising the kid.

"Then, he disappeared after leaving this in my quarters."

'I wondered where I had lost it. Did this b*****d steal it from me?' Lee Gun thought.

"I cannot read his penmanship, but this is a notebook where he jotted down his ideas. I was able to receive such a precious item."

It was just a list of people Lee Gun wanted to kill at a later date. The appraiser's name might be in that notebook too, but he didn't volunteer this information.

Anyway, it wasn't as if Lee Gun didn't know him. The kid he had met in the past had become an SS rank appraiser; it was something to congratulate. However, Lee Gun refused to do so. 'This b*****d dared to keep my item.'

He was about to extend his hand when...

"I like you, so I'll let you have this. I'll give you free merchandise from the store too," the appraiser said.

Lee Gun's hand froze in the air.

“You are a Maker, right? If you see any ingredient you like, you can take it all for free.”

A smile instantly appeared on Lee Gun’s face. “Your teacher was that awesome?”

Sometimes people misrepresented facts, and that was fine.

Lee Gun patted the appraiser’s shoulder with a pleased expression. The appraiser tilted his head in puzzlement, but Lee Gun just put on a smile of contentment. It was to be expected. The notebook held his kill list, but he had also hidden designs within it. He had beaten up the constructs to learn how to make holy items.

‘It helped me a lot when I started out making holy items.’ It was akin to his first textbook, so the loss Lee Gun had felt had been acute. ‘This is great.’

He would have to deal with the appraiser’s misrepresentation of facts at a different date. Lee Gun took back the notebook when it happened.

Flash!

Something surprising happened to the notebook. The worn brown leather of the notebook changed its shape.

[The sleeping notebook is reacting to its owner’s magical energy]

[The notebook has been influenced by the Serpent Bearer’s magical energy. It has evolved into a holy item]

The notebook turned black, and a familiar symbol appeared on it. It was the shape of a snake. The shape was engraved as if it were branded by fire.

The appraiser, who had been fixing his glasses, expressed his surprise. “It is a memory-type holy item. Looks like Lee Gun-nim placed this skill on the item when he was alive.”

The fact that this was Lee Gun-nim’s will made the appraiser that much more excited.

Lee Gun discreetly made moves on the appraiser. “Alright! This is Lee Gun-nim’s will. You should pay five times the original price for the wooden doll.”

“Don’t be so stingy in its valuation. I’ll give you ten times the price.”

As the conversation between the two men dragged longer, the appraiser’s employee became more anxious. “Can you hear me, appraiser-nim?”

“What now! I said I’m not seeing any more customers today!”

“The Saintess is outside!”

“!”

* * *

Tap! Tap! Tap!

The Saintess looked at the clock as her finger tapped every second.

“My god! It is the Saintess!”

“It really is Sophie-nim!”

A commotion occurred inside the small pawnshop.

Sophie Mardi! She was from a new country established in Europe. She was the Saintess who represented the European Union.

When Chun Sungjae and his guard saw her, they couldn't keep their mouths shut. They reacted like everyone else.

“S-she's the real deal.”

“Wow! I've never seen her in person...”

Everyone's eyes became fixed on her beautiful face. Her hair was bright blonde, and her skin was extremely fair as if it hadn't been exposed to the sun even once. Everything about her was beautiful.

Above all else, there was an aura around her that differentiated her from the others. It was a special aura that made normal people not even dare to approach her.

All of the twelve Saints were like that, but it was especially true for those with powerful gods.

Even though the Saintess had stolen his gaze, Chun Sungjae was very confused by her presence. “The Saintess never leaves her holy ground unless there is official business. I heard her temple is very particular about her leaving the country.”

The threat of her being kidnapped was real. Some coveted her healing power.

However, the guard dismissed it. It wasn't odd to see her here. “This is the auction where Lee Gun's holy item will be sold. I can understand why she would come here herself.”

Chun Sungjae's eyes twinkled. It was rare for his guard to speak highly of Lee Gun.

The guard clicked his tongue in response. "Do you know why I followed you here? You might have come here as a fan, but many famous Users have come here today, aiming to acquire Lee Gun's holy item. If things go south in the auction, fights between temples might erupt."

Chun Sungjae praised Lee Gun-nim's item, but the guard clicked his tongue again. "Even if it's Lee Gun's item, another Saint gave it to him. Lee Gun's items and buffs were all loaned from the other Saints. If I were to receive that much support, I could become an SS rank... Hey. Are you listening to me?"

The fanboy completely ignored his words.

The guard inwardly felt anxious, all thanks to meeting Lee Gun earlier. 'There is no way he's the real Lee Gun...'

If he were, Chun Sungjae would leave his current temple. Chun Sungjae didn't know it, but in his entrance test, his potential was measured to be of SS rank. Moreover, he was the king of getting things done. An A rank disciple leaving a temple was a blow to a god, and that blow would be heavier if that disciple were a genius like Chun Sungjae.

However, that was a problem to solve at a later date.

"I can't believe I get to see the Saintess's face. I'm glad I followed you here. She is this era's m****r Teresa." The guard melted when he saw the Saintess's benevolent smile.

Of course, the Saintess felt differently. 'Why are these lowly assholes staring at me?'

She didn't like being stared at by everyone. However, it couldn't be helped.

<Lee Gun was murdered!>

<Lee Gun was judged wrongly!>

<The 12 Saints lied!>

'It's always like this when I come out.' Sophie had no idea why people thought so highly of Lee Gun.

Of course, there were good reasons for his popularity. At one point in time, the calamity had spread at a speed so terrifying that talks of sealing off several countries

had begun. In one incident, people were in danger of being buried alive; they had begged for help. However, the Saints had ignored them.

The Saints thought that it was more profitable to help the large countries instead of the smaller ones. However...

[What? Lee Gun went in there by himself?]

At the time, the US had ordered a premature burial for political reasons. Soldiers had blocked access to the people with guns. However, all that was futile in front of Lee Gun.

[Open it before I throw you in there!]

[Kuh-huhk!]

Lee Gun had drop-kicked an American General in front of everyone. The footage of that incident was still in the top ten most viewed videos on youtube to this day.

Lee Gun had disposed of the coward and cleared the nest of the calamity by himself, something the world had given up on accomplishing. Of course, he had received support from the Archer Saint, but all the other Saints knew the score.

[In truth, he did very little.]

[...!]

In the end, they had become the eleven idiots who had been able to do nothing.

That wasn't all. Lee Gun was the brute who had messed up the Saints' hustle. The twelve Saints slow-walked everything to extract the highest rewards. However, it was all for naught.

[You idiots are too slow. I'll take care of it]

The Saints received a single message each day as Lee Gun continued to steal all their commissions. Their requests for him to stop fell on deaf ears. His skills were like a slap to their faces.

Above all else, Sophie also had a personal vendetta against him.

'You want to die?' Lee Gun's low voice had been terrifying, and his face monstrous. His name had been forever poisoned for her. Whenever his name was mentioned even now, she couldn't react properly.

'That ugly-a*s orc...'

Sophie's guard saw Sophie's face harden and said, "It seems you need a break, Saintess. Your complexion..."

"No." The Saintess was curt with her words. 'I can't mess this up because of the Golden Lion.'

It was a given that the Leo Saint would once again try to collect Lee Gun's holy item. Even if Sophie wanted to concede the item, she couldn't. 'That item is...' That was why her current situation was vexing.

She said, "I want to speak to him face to face"

"Saintess!"

'How dare he appraise a holy item from our temple at one dollar?' This appraiser was a SS rank disciple under a different god, so she had been lenient. However, when the time came, she would get rid of him.

Nevertheless, she had to see him right now. Yet, his employee didn't let her through and said, "He's with a guest. Even if you're the Saintess, I doubt he will meet with you..."

The holy maiden and her guard were both flabbergasted.

'How important is the guest that he won't meet with me?' The movers and shakers of the world would cancel their schedule to meet with her. They would run out to her without bothering to put on their shoes. She was the most desired face in the world, yet he didn't want to meet with her! Sophie felt an odd sense of humiliation bubble up within her.

"Saintess."

"Open the door!" Faint killing intent appeared in her voice.

In the end, the employee quietly opened the door. The pissed-off Saintess glared at him.

'Who...' The Saintess suddenly came to a stop as soon as she entered the room. A bit far away, she saw a man handsome enough to jump-start her heart. He stole her gaze. She unconsciously tried to approach him.

However...

'...!' Her expression suddenly changed.

“S-Saintess?”

Sophie’s hands started to tremble. She failed to reach the place where the appraiser was standing. It was because of the man standing next to the appraiser

‘What is that magical energy?’ The magical energy surrounding that man was dreadful enough to be scary. Sophie could clearly see that magical energy. The man’s broad back was emitting waves of wicked magical energy. The shape of the energy wave looked like a snake. The rusty green magical energy formed into the shape of a slithering snake. It looked like the snake would pounce and swallow her at any moment.

That wasn’t all.

“...” She felt like she were standing in front of a door leading to hell. Sophie didn’t know why, but she had a feeling that if she moved any closer, she would die. A chill ran down her back.

The man was facing another direction, but Sophie’s body moved on its own. It refused to get closer to him. This was instinct. “I-I have to get out of here.”

“What?”

The pale Sophie started walking backward. “Let’s get out of here quick.”

Her guard was taken aback. The Saintess had come here looking like she wanted to bite the appraiser’s head off, so why did she want to leave?

Sophie placed a hand over her mouth. “I’m feeling nauseous.”

Suddenly...

“If you’re feeling nauseous, should I give you some medicine?”

Sophie flinched when she heard the voice.

It was Lee Gun’s voice. Lee Gun stood up.

Clank!

“Saintess!”

The surprised Sophie quickly exited through the door.

* * *

The appraiser saw Sophie run out of the store and was taken aback. “What the hell? Why did she leave? She even dropped her badge.”

Lee Gun looked toward the direction where the Saintess had run away with an odd look in his eyes.

[Someone under the control of a different god dared to approach the Serpent Bearer from the back.]

[Your opponent’s soul has become more alert.]

[Current Divine Status: 35%]

[If it falls below 20%, activating your abilities will become more difficult. You need to recharge it.]

[You can use your construct to steal your opponent’s Divine Status.]

-Construct Currently Available for Use (1)

<Piggy Bank> (Low-Rank Enslaved Subject / Hungry)

– Ability: Gluttony (It eats anything that makes its stomach full, including treasures and power.)

[Will you like to send out your construct?]

The Serpent Bearer’s magical energy crawled over Lee Gun as if it were trying to protect him. The power was suppressed, but the energy was familiar to him. Therefore, Lee Gun asked as he took out the blade he was investigating. “Was she the Saintess, the woman who tried to come in here?”

“Who else in the world would be called the Saintess except her?”

Lee Gun, who had an odd expression on his face, furrowed his brows. “Didn’t they say the Saintess was a beautiful woman?”

“Can’t you tell by her looks? She’s worshipped for her beauty. She’s regularly discussed in columns about the twelve Saints.”

“I haven’t looked them up at all.”

Why the hell would Lee Gun search up positive articles about those bastards? On top of that, he hated seeing his pictures from twenty years ago, so he purposefully avoided those topics even more.

“So she’s discussed in columns about the Saints? Is she affiliated with them?” Lee Gun asked.

The appraiser looked at Lee Gun with a surprised expression. “She’s one of the twelve Saints!”

“!” Lee Gun took out his phone. He searched for a term that he usually didn’t.

– Saintess

Since he hadn’t been interested in these matters, he had never tried to search her up...

Paht!

Lee Gun’s eyes turned round when the image search brought up results. Then he laughed at the silliness of it all.

‘Ah! She’s the Saintess?’

CHAPTER 30: MAN WHOSE NAME STRIKES FEAR

When Lee Gun saw the photos, he burst out laughing. Everyone praised the Saintess so much that he had thought someone amazing had appeared in the past twenty years. “Ah! She’s the Saintess?”

The appraiser was puzzled by Lee Gun’s sneer. “That’s odd! I heard that even Lee Gun fanatic Sungjae fancies her a bit.”

“Is that so?”

“All men become fools in front of a beautiful woman.”

The words made Lee Gun burst out in a loud laugh once again.

The appraiser tried to change the topic. “Ah! Of course, there is one other Saint that others consider the fairest of them all.”

The appraiser was saying that one should respect other people’s tastes. Lee Gun found it all absurd. ‘At this point, it could be considered a disguise.’

Of course, Sophie looked different from twenty years ago. Her buckteeth and snaggletooth were gone. It was true that she had become very beautiful. If Lee Gun were being objective, her original appearance wasn’t that bad at all either.

However...

‘She can’t hide her nature.’

In the first place, Lee Gun hated every member of the twelve Saints excluding Hugo. There were degrees to his hatred, and he classified the twelve Saints as fishbone, pests, and waste. Sophie was on the same level as a pest. Lee Gun couldn’t treat the Saints as humans or categorize the eleven of them under normal categories.

He couldn’t believe Sophie was the Saintess. ‘She prioritized her skin-care appointment over saving the lives of people.’

That wasn’t all.

<Interview with the Saintess: “Healing Lee Gun’s wounds wasn’t easy, but her efforts paid off!”>

<Saintess’s efforts were rewarded through Lee Gun’s achievements>

‘When the hell did she heal me?’

Sophie was a fraudulent healer and also a half-wit. As if that wasn’t enough, she had treated Lee Gun as a creature lower than human.

She routinely told him that she didn’t want to touch him because he was a monster. She threatened to sue him every chance she got. This was the reason Lee Gun had learned about herbal medicine to heal himself. It seemed she hadn’t even bothered to mention that.

‘Well, it allowed me to expand my knowledge about miscellaneous subjects, and I did benefit greatly from all that knowledge.’

It seemed the appraiser knew the truth about the Saintess and Lee Gun as he continued to praise the latter. “Everyone claims that the Saintess used to heal Lee Gun. If so, why was Lee Gun-nim so well-versed in herbal medicine?”

Lee Gun cackled. The appraiser was speaking the truth.

“He used to gather ingredients using a meat cleaver. It was an awesome sight. You haven’t levied until you’ve seen him work.”

‘Yes, yes. A person should be remembered for their exploits...’

“I especially loved it when Lee Gun-nim grabbed the Saintess’s hair and made her cry. That was so refreshing.”

‘Uh? Did I do that?’ Lee Gun seriously mulled over it, but in the end, it didn’t matter.

He had forgotten why he had done it; probably, she had gaslighted him.

The appraiser badmouthed the Aquarius Saint. “I have no idea why the world knows her as the saintess of sacrifice and compassion.”

It seemed he had noticed Sophie’s personality when she commissioned him.

“This is all because she was Lee Gun-nim’s doctor. She’s using that as an excuse to claim the money that has been growing underneath Lee Gun-nim’s name.”

The appraiser felt very aggrieved, but Lee Gun just laughed in response. “There is money accumulating under Lee Gun’s name?”

“Yes! He had quite a lot of money and items twenty years ago.”

The twelve Saints had fought for his wealth and caused too big of a commotion. Therefore, the government had taken Lee Gun’s estate under their stewardship.

“I heard the Saintess recently tried to claim his estate as compensation for healing him.”

“Is that so?” Lee Gun felt contempt as he watched an interview with Sophie.

The appraiser gazed at him with an odd look in his eyes. “Do you know the Saintess?”

He wasn’t a veteran appraiser for nothing; he had a sharp eye. Unlike before, suspicion appeared in the appraiser’s eyes as he looked at Lee Gun.

Lee Gun took out his phone. “I’m just glad to see her.”

“You are glad to see her?”

At the end of the day, she was a healing type Saint, so Lee Gun used to see her often. “She’s a friend. Of course, I’m glad to see her.”

Lee Gun ferociously got to his feet. In his eyes was a look that belonged to someone chasing their prey.

* * *

Lee Gun was the only one glad for the reunion.

“S-Saintess?”

Sophie had walked to an empty emergency staircase. She shook as she grabbed at the railing. Her guard was flustered by this scene. The Saintess was acting as though she were suffering from trauma.

‘I’ve never seen her act like this.’

This place was full of Cardinal-rank Users. There was a chance that Sophie could be attacked or kidnapped. It was a precarious place to be, but Sophie didn’t care about that. Something much scarier than that was here.

“Have you ever faced a situation where you would prefer to die than lose consciousness?” Sophie asked the guard.

“What?”

It seemed Sophie wanted to say something, but she could only shake as she thought.

“Saintess?”

‘Why now? Why am I reminded of that incident with that man...’ She had merely visited the appraiser, so why? In the end, Sophie bit her bluish lips and grabbed her guard. “Hurry up and get in there. Find out who that other man is.”

“Understood! How should I handle the appraiser?”

Sophie reacted in anger. “Why are you asking me that question? You have to make him give a higher valuation to our item even if you have to kill him!”

“The appraiser works directly under the Virgo. It might lead to a direct conflict...”

“He put a valuation of one dollar on my item! Also, you should take care of the other man if possible. Do you understand what I’m saying?”

The guard understood the meaning behind her words. At the same time, Sophie used her ability.

Boom!

[Replication Mirror (S)]

Something amazing happened. Water started to rise around her.

“Uh? What the hell? Is there a leak somewhere?”

The nearby Users were flustered as they watched the rising water. When Sophie started laughing, amorphous blobs of water rose in front of her. Each blob of liquid

changed into a person. They took on the shapes of Rank A and above Users who had stepped on the water.

It was a replication skill. Anyone reflected on the water would be copied. Then, the minions Sophie created rushed toward the pawnshop, accompanied by the guard named Isabel.

Boom!

Chun Sungjae and the people inside the shop were surprised when unfamiliar men breached the shop.

‘I feel murderous intent.’

Boom! Boom!

The door was instantly shut, and Isabel drew the sign of the cross.

[Earth Chalice, Bringer of Oblivion]

Flash!

Light erupted. Strange symbols appeared on the floor of the shop, and water started to rise from the floor. Since the store had been sealed, it was like a large container being filled with water.

When the water reached their waist level, people started to fall over as if their souls had been stolen. The only ones not to fall over were Chun Sungjae and his companion.

“This is a neutral zone...” Chun Sungjae, who had become wet, tried to evaporate the water using his flame.

His words made the guard of the Saintess coldly laugh as she stood on top of the water. “We have no business with the disciples of the Gemini.”

As soon as her words ended, a scream rang out. The copied Users shot out of the water to drag Chun Sungjae into the water. The guard of the Saintess was long gone by then, her next destination the appraiser’s workshop.

The appraiser, who was with Lee Gun, reacted in surprise. Users had appeared from beyond the wall.

‘Murderous intent.’ The flustered appraiser reached beneath the desk to bring out an item. It was an offensive weapon.

Suddenly, a white stem knocked the offensive weapon out of the appraiser's hand.

“Koohk!” The white stem immobilized the appraiser.

The guard of the Saintess laughed. She pointed her sword toward Lee Gun's neck as Lee Gun was about to head out of the room. “You don't want to see people die inside your store, right?” she asked the appraiser.

The appraiser was appalled when the guard threatened Lee Gun. It was an understandable reaction. Lee Gun was a Maker. If he were on the same level as Chun Sungjae, the situation might have been different. However, a typical Maker wouldn't stand a chance against these Users. ‘He's going to die if he crosses them.’

Lee Gun just snorted. “It seems countries now tolerate you using your blade in public. Is that how it is?”

“!”

“She acted so sanctimoniously when I used my weapons in public places. She tried to take them away!”

Isabel was surprised. Lee Gun was unperturbed as he tapped on the blade pointed at his neck. Isabel wasn't the only one to be surprised. For a moment, the appraiser was in disbelief about what he had just heard. He had heard Lee Gun's low voice, and there was the oddly familiar way of speaking. Then there was the confident smirk.

“If you want to be paid for damages, you should take it up with them. Don't look for me.”

“!”

The appraiser's eyes widened as Lee Gun's eyes flashed. Isabel raised her eyebrows in anger.

“What the hell... Uh uh?” She kept putting more strength into her blade, but her blade was being pushed back. Then, her mind turned blank for a moment.

Clank!

Pieces of metal were sent flying as the sound of her blade breaking rang out.

Bah-gahk!

The copied awakened beings and other underlings attacked Lee Gun. However, it was futile. The arms and legs of any underling who attacked Lee Gun were broken.

Crunch!

“Ahhhhhk!” The copies were ruthlessly cut into pieces.

Isabel felt a chill run up her spine when she saw the man’s merciless eyes. “Who the hell...”

It was as the Saintess had said.

[This is my intuition as the Saintess. That man is dangerous.]

Isabel broke out of her reverie and used a pattern Sophie had given to her. The pattern summoned beasts.

This development pleased Lee Gun. He looked toward the appraiser. “You said I can take anything I want, right?”

“!”

Lee Gun kicked a wooden box containing an item into the air. A hunting knife spun in the air. The knife was small, but it was a fairly high-rank item. Lee Gun caught the knife out of the air and vanished the next moment. Then, the slaughter began.

Shweeek!

“Gwehhhhhk!”

“Kehhhhhhk!”

The screams of the carnivorous beasts and the appraiser filled the room. Lee Gun was ruthless, but he wasn’t done after killing the beasts. “As expected of beasts grown by that bed-wetter, the ingredients are above rank A.”

He cut off the beasts’ heads. He then ripped away their leather and expertly pulled out their horns and teeth. Lee Gun was a master at extracting ingredients. “Good! These will be very useful as weapon ingredients.”

He had gotten them for free. It was nice since he had come to this exchange to acquire weapon ingredients. This was pure profit for Lee Gun.

Lee Gun changed the arc of his blade. He even killed the carnivorous beasts that were trying to run away and ruthlessly extracted ingredients from them.

Poo-ahk! Poo-ahk!

He was like the devil himself.

[You have acquired data]

– Fragments of Earth Chalice, Bringer of Oblivion

[You have acquired data]

– Fragment of Replication Mirror

[You have acquired data]

– Nocturnal, Don't need sleep (Stop the desire to sleep)

[You have acquired data]

– Obsessed with prey (Cat-like mentality)

[You have acquired data]

– Powerful Grip (Strength increased by 5%)

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

[You have acquired the Saint's EXP.]

It was unclear as to how much time had passed, but a mountainous amount of ingredients were stacked in front of Lee Gun.

“E-excuse...”

When the appraiser called out to him, Lee Gun realized his mistake. He had forgotten about his presence in front of these high-quality ingredients. In the end, he approached the appraiser. He cut away the white stem binding him.

Toohk!

Suddenly...

Bul-kuhk!

“Hyung! Ahjussi! Are you guys ok?”

Chun Sungjae and his guard had suffered outside as they arrived drenched in water. It seemed they were somehow able to break the skill used on them. However, as soon as they entered the workshop, they started screaming.

“This is a slaughterhouse...”

They looked at Lee Gun in fright.

Of course, they knew these beasts were summons brought forth by the Saintess.

“What happened...”

Lee Gun extracted a bone as he tilted his head. “If you release such beings against a Maker, you are begging the Maker to use them as ingredients. What about it?”

It was clear that he didn’t see the problem with what he had done. The guard gripped his head. “We have to leave before the Saintess finds out!”

The two of them tried to quickly usher Lee Gun out of the shop. Lee Gun was going to leave eventually, so he went along with it.

However, the appraiser grabbed him before he could leave. “E... Excuse me!” There was desperation in his actions.

Chun Sungjae yelled at the appraiser when he stopped Lee Gun from leaving. “Ahjussi! Hyung is in danger right now! Please clean up after yourself!”

The look in the appraiser’s eyes as he looked at Lee Gun was different than before. It was to be expected. He had followed Lee Gun in China twenty years ago and witnessed how the man went about creating his items. He had witnessed how Lee Gun skinned the monsters. He had seen how Lee Gun gathered his ingredients.

That was why he knew. He was about to grab and yell out Lee Gun’s name. “Lee Gun-n—”

However, the appraiser became surprised.

Instead of answering him, Lee Gun laughed and brought his forefinger to his lips. This meant he wanted the appraiser to act ignorant for now. It would cause too much of a commotion otherwise.

The appraiser shook from the shock that he felt. He wondered whether this was real or not. Of course, his reaction confused Chun Sungjae. “What’s wrong, Ahjussi?”

The appraiser glared at Chun Sungjae for being so slow at picking up the clues. It looked like he wanted to say something, but Chun Sungjae ignored him. “You must have lost your mind, Ahjussi.”

“Haha! He might be too shell-shocked by what happened.” Lee Gun hid his flashing eyes as he exited the store.

As he did so, he felt a familiar energy outside. "I'll come back later for the ingredients. Store them for me. Also, I have some questions I want to ask you."

The door closed. The appraiser lost the strength in his legs and fell to his knees. Then, he screamed in disbelief.

