

Overgeared 1071

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“...?”The dukes’ retainers were confused after arriving at Reinhardt through Mass Teleport. It was because they had teleported to the king’s palace, not the middle of the city. They thought they would have to wait until after the king’s big ceremony, yet he returned so quietly...?

‘Why not hold an event?’

The ruler of all countries, including the emperor of the empire. No, even a lord would make a big move. Every time they left the castle, they brought people together to carry out an event and praise them. It was propaganda to capture public sentiment. The ruler’s reason for going out might be trivial and personal, but it was easy to package it as a service and sacrifice for the people.

Yet Grid didn’t take advantage of this great propaganda opportunity. This was despite the fact that he had returned with nobles of the empire.

‘I thought he would use bringing us back for propaganda, but he didn’t even hold a simple return ceremony...? Was he not interested in managing public sentiment?’

Our king returned with dozens of imperial nobles. The nobles of the empire respect our king.

It was a great way to spread positive thoughts among the people. This was a situation where it would be possible to produce a good performance. Yet Grid didn’t take advantage of it. Was it because he was short-sighted? No, he had established a kingdom alone. It was said that he was a traitor who defied the laws of the heavens, but his abilities couldn’t be doubted or denied. This wasn’t about being ignorant.

Then a crazy thought made their eyes widen.

‘It is consideration for us!’

The dukes’ retainers had committed a great sin. They dared to lead an army to invade the emperor’s territory and took out the dukes that the imperial family had locked up in the Abyss. It was an act of loyalty toward their owner, but this excuse was insufficient to make up for their sin as their master was the imperial family.

‘If it is known that we visited the Overgeared Kingdom as well...’

‘Regardless of the circumstances, there would be allegations that we conspired with the Overgeared Kingdom to betray the empire.’

‘The dukes’ position would be even worse. The Overgeared King secretly returned with this in mind.’

‘How many times have we received his grace...’

Admiration and gratitude intersected. There was a strange excitement in the eyes of the retainers following Grid.

“Sigh.”

Grid led the dukes to their rooms and returned to his office. His mental fatigue was due to the events after the battle that required a high degree of concentration. He took off his armor and cloak, placed them in his inventory, and smiled at Lael. "Thank you. You advised me that it was better not to publicize their visit to the Overgeared Kingdom."

"I can't be negligent." Lael hadn't been excited when he heard that Grid would return with 40,000 imperial cavalymen and dozens of imperial nobles.

It was likely that the position of the Overgeared Kingdom would greatly increase even if a small amount of this information was leaked. The dukes led tens of thousands of soldiers to visit the Overgeared Kingdom...? This little rumor would spark all types of speculations and cause the neighboring nations to fear the Overgeared Kingdom.

However, Lael was patient. It was because the empire had a high probability of declaring the dukes as traitors.

'The dukes shouldn't be expelled. The dukes must preserve their power in order to become our strength.'

It was a relationship that Grid had worked hard to build up. Thus, it should be used more thoroughly. Lael thought so. Unlike Grid who was purely concerned about the dukes, Lael perceived them as useful cards. Of course, Grid also knew this. Even so, he had no intention of criticizing Lael. After all, this was Lael's role.

Grid asked with a bitter smile, "Then Sehee... When will Ruby arrive?"

"I've sent the Overgeared Shadows to escort them, and they should arrive in two hours."

"The Saintess class is a scam. I never dreamed she would be hunting at the Galgunos Temple."

"Of course, the class is great, but she also has excellent senses. I analyzed her movements during this period and found that she played the game very effectively. Ruby and Sexy Schoolgirl both have talent in the game."

"Really? She isn't like me at all..."

Unlike her stupid brother, Sehee was smart. With a good personality and beautiful face, she was different from her brother. Sometimes he wondered if they were siblings since they were different in every way. Therefore, it was reassuring. How many times had he been glad that she didn't resemble him? The moment that Grid thought this...

"She looks just like you when she is angry."

"Eh?"

"The two of you. When you are angry, your eyes and mouth look exactly the same. The rough tone is also the same."

"It doesn't seem like a good thing," Grid said. Then he quickly asked with a serious expression, "Can the dukes be fixed?"

Sadness could be felt from his tone and expression. Grid was sincerely concerned about the dukes. They had only been together for a short time. However, they shared many experiences and stories, so they quickly became friendly. The shock he had experienced when he saw the dukes still remained.

“Grenhal’s eyes were destroyed, and Morse’s limbs were shattered. That wise woman Basara has become a complete idiot.”

They suffered too many wounds. A Saintess might be defined as a ‘person who creates miracles’, but was it possible to heal such major wounds? Grid had boasted in front of the dukes, but he was actually anxious. His promise that the Saintess could fix the dukes was probably to calm his own anxiety.

Lauel spoke with steady eyes, “The Saintess is someone who threatens even the authority of the goddess of light.”

The biggest penalty of the Saintess class was the necessity to do dozens of good deeds every day. Lauel had already heard hundreds of times that Ruby had healed people with disabilities. It was a divine force that destroyed even the soul of a great demon. The system explained that it wasn’t the goddess of light’s power but a Saintess’ own aura.

“The power of the Saintess is real. I think it is good to believe in her.”

One day, somebody would pull down the fallen god. The new goddess of light would be born from this fall. This was Lauel’s guess. It meant the class of Saintess was extremely special, and it wasn’t difficult to estimate that it had the potential of a myth because its abilities could directly influence the worldview.

In front of the room where the dukes were lying, each retainer expressed their opinions.

“The empress must be behind this event.”

“That’s correct. It doesn’t make sense that Edan would do these things to the dukes just to cover up the truth. How could he do these extreme things without being completely insane? It is hard to see that Edan did this on his own.”

“His Majesty has been giving power to the Five Pillars. Maybe he is using this opportunity to oust the dukes and increase the power of the imperial family...”

“This is an unreasonable assumption. How will he handle the resistance of the nobles after touching the families of the founders? The emperor has been somewhat depressed since the empress died, but it is impossible for him to do this.”

“That’s correct. Now is the time to worry about His Majesty. Maybe Prince Edan has already sinned against His Majesty. That’s why he could do this without any fear.”

“What can Edan do to His Majesty? Edan’s talent is excellent but His Majesty is already complete, and he has the protection of the Five Pillars.

“The pillars might’ve betrayed the empire. The problem is the grandmaster. We need to know if he has given any strength to Edan.”

Whisper whisper.

The retainers were speaking in low voices, but the dukes' hearing capabilities had reached the highest limit. Morse lay in bed, listening to the voices outside and not missing a single word of the discussion. "Kukuk, it's funny. No one knows that Edan is a completely crazy guy." Their explanation was also lacking. It was too hard to give a laborious explanation. Honestly, it was hard to stay sane.

"...Shit." Morse looked down at his trembling limbs. No matter how hard he tried, there was no strength in his fingertips or his toes. It was natural since all the tendons were destroyed.

"...Hat." He could only laugh. He didn't want to think about anything. He hadn't expected to lose the use of his limbs one day. How could he have imagined that he would end up like this?

"Shit... Shit..."

The most disturbing point was that he was too helpless. Despite having fully grasped the weakness of the magic machine in the Berith raid, Morse hadn't been able to cope with their ambush. The genes of the dukes who had served the royal family for hundreds of years were imprinted with the nature to submit at the right time.

"Dammit!" Morse, who could only move his neck, hit the pillow with the back of his head. He honestly wanted to bury his head somewhere and die. Did he have to live as a vegetative person for the rest of his life? It was better to die. He had heard several rumors about the Saintess, but he wasn't expecting anything. Even divine power that had risen to the highest level couldn't cure permanent disabilities.

While Morse was cursing, Grenhal lying on the opposite bed was just silent. "..."

He was also feeling complicated.

'It is shameful.'

Why had he been loyal to his country and the imperial family? Was it true that he was loyal? If he were a true loyalist, he should've seen that the bloodline of the royal family was moving on the wrong path and held him to the right one. Yet that didn't happen. He had been incompetent from the time he couldn't protect Piaro. The wounds on his body weren't as noble as heroic medals.

"Shit! Shit! Kuaaaaak!"

"..."

Morse's craziness gradually grew worse, and Grenhal's expression steadily darkened. For both of them, reality was hell. Then just as they were going crazy... in this terrible despair...

"Purification."

A bright light that was warmer than the sun surrounded the two people, and a calm feeling came over them. The spirits of the two men—intertwined with anger, resentment, pain, and futility—were instantly refreshed. Morse came to his senses and turned to the side with wide eyes.

"Hello?"

A beautiful girl with black hair was smiling.

“...Ah.”

Would there ever be another intense encounter like this in the world again? Morse glimpsed a halo from the girl. The darkness restraining his body melted in front of the light. However, this impression was short-lived.

“...?”

The girl waved her wooden staff. Her staff started to beat Morse’s limbs like a scarecrow at a training camp.

“S-Saintess?” The retainers were shocked by the unexpected development and didn’t know what to do.

“Huup! Uh! Uhit!” Then as he let out reflexive groans, one of Morse’s fingers moved. It was real and not an illusion. Everyone saw it. Grenhal’s retainers witnessed the miracle and sucked in a breath.

‘W-What will happen?’

‘Will the duke’s eyes have to be hit with that staff?’

Why the eyes...?

Their hatred for Edan grew even bigger. Grenhal’s retainers shed tears of blood. Additionally...

“...Gulp!” Grenhal trembled with fear. He might’ve lost his eyes, but he could guess what was happening thanks to his developed senses. Grenhal fidgeted and eventually started snoring. He intended to buy time until he was ready by pretending to be asleep.

Then another girl, who appeared to be the Saintess’ companion, poked his cheek with her finger. “This uncle is cute.”

“...”

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“This uncle is cute.”

“T-This disrespect!”

Even if the mantle of duke were stripped away, Grenhal’s power had accumulated over generations and was great. He was one of the best in the West Continent. If the imperial family abandoned Grenhal, he still had the power to build a nation if he could safely return to his territory. Yet this girl dared to poke their respected master’s cheek with her finger? It was a blasphemy that they had never imagined.

“Daring to poke Duke Grenhal in the cheek...!”

“Get your hands away immediately! You might be in the Saintess’ party but you should show the basic manners!”

Some of the retainers roared. It felt like they would draw their sword at any moment, and all types of notification windows appeared in front of Sexy Schoolgirl.

[You have fallen into the ‘fear’ state.]

[You have fallen into the 'oppressed' state.]

[You have fallen into the 'chaotic' state.]

[The passive skill 'Defender of the Miracle' has allowed you to resist the 'fear' and 'chaotic' states.]

[The effect of the passive skill 'Person Who Put a Foot in the Miracle' has reduced the duration of the 'oppression' state. Transfers the 'oppression' to the target for as long as the reduced time.]

[The target has resisted.]

[The target has resisted...]

"...!" Grenhal's retainers were stunned. She didn't shrink back and even confronted their momentum...? This weak-looking girl actually contained a powerful force.

'She is a great talent. There is a reason she is accompanying the Saintess at this early age!'

This was a country that hadn't succumbed in the war with the empire. The Overgeared Kingdom was small but powerful. The retainers admired her, but it was only for a moment. They were still furious as they looked at Sexy Schoolgirl. Sexy Schoolgirl stuck out her tongue and laughed. "I'm sorry. This uncle is just too cute. Please excuse my rudeness."

"Eek...! You keep saying he is cute, cute! You know who he is yet you keep talking nonsense!"

"What if I don't know?"

"..."

She didn't know...? The retainers didn't know what to say and were at a loss for words. It didn't matter. Sexy Schoolgirl Yerim stroked the hand of Grenhal who was lying asleep. It was a hand full of deep wounds.

"I think you've been through a lot. It must be hard. Get some rest."

"..." Grenhal's eyebrows trembled. Maybe it was because of this extremely harsh situation, but a few words of comfort from an unnamed girl stimulated Grenhal's weakened heart. The imperial family, whom he had devoted his entire life to, had threatened him and turned a blind eye to him. Yet the king of a distant country protected him while its people comforted him. This was...

"..." Grenhal's eyes twitched slightly as he bit his lips.

An existence who reigned at the top... It was only after being protected that he realized he was also an ordinary person.

All sorts of thoughts shook his mind.

'They've become friends.'

At first glance, Sexy Schoolgirl Yerim was surrounded by imperial nobles. Ruby had felt anxious when she heard why she suddenly had to return to Reinhardt from hunting, but that mood had dissipated.

'They will soon become closer.'

Saintess Ruby had a bit of a shy personality. She didn't get close quickly to new acquaintances, so she was still unfamiliar with many Overgeared members. On the other hand, Sexy Schoolgirl was different. She always faced people with curiosity and was straightforward and bright. Thus, she quickly became friends with others. Without her, Ruby might still have yet to adapt to Satisfy.

'I would've been hiding behind my brother's back and not become interested in the game.'

Although Ruby didn't want her as a sister-in-law, her friend was really great. Ruby smiled while thinking this.

"Uh...! Uit...!"

She was still hitting Morse and continued to do so with the wooden staff in her hand.

"M-Morse..." Morse's retainers were restless. They thought they should stop the Saintess from assaulting their master but couldn't because the Saintess wouldn't commit senseless violence. A Saintess...

It was the empire who interpreted the Saintess as the 'agent of the goddess of light' in the famous legend. For the empire, the Saintess was an incarnation of a god and an existence to be worshipped. There had long been rumors among the nobles of the empire about the Saintess who carried out many good deeds and miracles in the Overgeared Kingdom. It wasn't yet clear if she was a legendary Saintess or heretic, but the person who recommended her was the Overgeared King. They had more trust than doubts.

"..." In the tumultuous room, Ruby was quietly focused. In her vision, she saw a 'red dot' attached to Morse's body. It showed the damaged body parts and was an effect derived from the skill 'Regenerative Healing' that Ruby gained when she reached level 180.

[Regenerative Healing Lv. 3]

[Activates the 'Hand of Kindness' to promote the regeneration of wounds with abnormal physical conditions.

* If the target is a player:

The moment the Hand of Kindness touches the wound area, the wound is restored. If the physical injury is a 'cut', the Hand of Kindness must touch the body for at least 10 seconds.

* If the target is a pet or a player's pet:

The Hand of Kindness must touch the wound for 3 seconds for the wound to recover. If the physical injury is a 'cut', the Hand of Kindness must be in contact with the body for 20 seconds. The health of the target will be restored while the Hand of Kindness is in contact with the target.

* If the target is a NPC:

The Hand of Kindness must touch the wound several times for the wound to recover. The number of touches depends on the severity of the injury. If the physical injury is a 'cut', it can't be healed with the current skill level.

Skill Mana Cost: 3,000 per second. Or 3,000 per use.

Skill Cooldown Time: None.]

A skill that could only be activated through touch was a bit difficult to use in combat. Furthermore, the mana cost was very large, especially for players who used a number of skills. Therefore, Ruby wasn't able to take advantage of the skill. It was a skill that could only be used during her daily quest 'Good Deeds.'

However, that story changed after the Berith raid. The extraordinary reward obtained for annihilating Berith's soul was to evolve the Wooden Staff one step further.

[+7 Wooden Staff]

[Rating: Unique (Transcendent)]

Durability: 830/830 Attack Power/Defense: 733

* All stats apart from intelligence increased by 200.

* Intelligence increased by 300.

A staff made of unidentified wood. It is very hard and can't be cut by a sword.

*All healing effects +7%.

* Grants a random buff to two party members every 5 minutes.

* Deletes a party member's debuff every minute.

* 10% reduction in the resource consumption of all skills.

* Hand of Kindness can be given. Damage can be eliminated when Hand of Kindness is used.

* 10% increase in the effect of Hand of Kindness.

Conditions of Use: Saintess.

Weight: 180]

It had a very ordinary name and appearance, but it was the only weapon of the Saintess. Grid had enhanced it to +9, but this was lost after Ruby tried enhancing it further. After learning that the enhancement value was reset every time the rating evolved, she became satisfied with a +7 enhancement.

This staff originally only had one option, 'increase all stats.' However, like other players, Ruby had grown. She had gained many achievements from the repetition of her daily good deeds, and she had gained hidden pieces from doing hidden quests and leveling up. She had also destroyed the souls of the great demons Belial and Berith.

Every time Ruby grew, so did the staff. The staff now had seven options including the stats upgrade, all of which seemed like treasures. If anybody who knew the game saw these fraudulent options, they would suspect that Chairman Lim Cheolho was the grandfather of the Grid siblings.

In particular, Ruby liked the Hand of Kindness option. In addition to Regenerative Healing, Hand of Kindness was activated with the skills 'Strengthening Healing' and 'Waves of Punishment.' When using Hand of Kindness directly, it was difficult to actually utilize it because the premise was that she should approach the target. Now that the staff could be used as a mediator, a distance of 2 meters was secured, and it was relatively easier to use.

'Who did this...'

Despite using Hand of Kindness with the staff to touch his wounds dozens of times, the red dots imprinted on Morse's body didn't fade away. This meant that Morse's wounds were deep, and Ruby's heart grew heavier. Just imagining how much pain Morse might have suffered caused her to be in distress. If she didn't restrain herself, she would be crying tears of fear.

"..."Morse was staring at Ruby.

Why was she making a face like she was going to cry? He was just a stranger. Why was she grieving for him?

'This is... a Saintess...'

...A person who gave lifelong service and devotion to others. Morse hadn't liked the legendary Saintess very much. She seemed like a so-called pushover. Life was short, and one should live for themselves and their family. Why should they take care of others? He even laughed at those who admired the Saintess, but that wasn't the case anymore. Her kindness was healing the scars of his heart.

"..."

He felt like he had fallen to the hell of despair and was then pulled up. Her goodwill was saving his life.

'Now... I understand...'

This was why so many people admired the Saintess. A smile appeared on Morse's face at the realization. His eyes that were as sharp as a beast's became gentle. He declared, "If I recover, I will surely—"

"...?"

"I want to protect you by your side."

"Huh?"

What was going on all of a sudden? The confused Ruby's hands fell. The staff missed the red dot it should've hit.

"Eek!"Morse's piercing scream rang through the room.

"Drung..." Grenhal, who woke up from his thoughts, started snoring again.

"..." For a moment, an awkward silence swirled around the room.

[Regenerative Healing was successful!]

[The target's wound has been fully recovered!]

"That's it!" Ruby exclaimed with joy. Her thin neck, collarbone, and face were covered with sweat. It had taken six long hours. She had repeatedly rested and healed the two dukes, so it was natural to be exhausted.

"Waaahhhhhhh!"

"Congratulations on your recovery!"

"Thank you! Thank you, Saintess!"

The retainers cheered. Grenhal's eyes, which had been covered with dark scars and lost their light, reopened while Morse's limbs were restored to normal. Everyone present had witnessed a miracle. Even though their masters might not recover completely, the retainers were happy as long as their masters could see and walk on their feet. They felt so grateful to Ruby that they had an urge to pull out their gallbladders and everything else to give to her.

Ruby felt just as much joy as them. It was an indescribable happiness to be able to correct the misfortune of others.

'If my brother had met someone like that in the past...'

Notification windows were rising continuously in Ruby's vision.

[You have healed the great noblemen of the empire, strong representatives of the current age. It is an achievement that will remain in history!]

[Reputation throughout the continent will rise by 8,000.]

[You have become a very important person. You won't fall down easily. The special reward has increased your maximum health by 10,000.]

[Affinity with Duke 'Morse' of the Saharan Empire has reached the maximum.]

[Morse is willing to live for you.]

[Affinity with Duke 'Grenhal' of the Saharan Empire has reached the maximum.]

[Grenhal wants to give you many things.]

She didn't know about anything else, but it was really good to improve her health. It seemed that she wouldn't die easily now. Then someone stroked Ruby's hair.

"Thanks for the hard work." It was Grid. He was smiling as he watched his sister from afar, not wanting to disturb her. "What do you think about healing Duke Basara?"

"Her wounds are different, so I think I need to look a bit more closely."

Facing the gazes of those filled with anticipation, Ruby approached Basara who was lying down, staring silently at the ceiling. Then Grenhal and Morse approached Grid and bowed to him.

"I promise that our family will always repay the grace of the Overgeared Kingdom."

“More than that... I’m glad you have recovered.”

“Your Majesty...”

“Take a break. Won’t you return to the empire as soon as Duke Basara is restored?”

“No. I want to be near Duke Basara, but time is pressing. We need to go to the empire right now. I’m afraid His Majesty might be hit.”

Edan was running completely wild. It wouldn’t be strange for him to harm the emperor since there was a hidden card Edan seemed to believe in. They were particularly concerned about the grandmaster.

“It is our duty to protect the imperial family. First, we should try to fix the royal family.”

“Take care. I will cheer for you from afar because I can’t get involved... Huh?”

What was he worried about? The dukes exchanged meaningful glances at Grid’s words and bowed low to their waist. Then they promised to meet Ruby and Sexy Schoolgirl again before urging their subordinates.

“Go to the capital. If you detect even the slightest thing suspicious, immediately return to our territory and raise the entire army.”

“Yes!”

This was right before the storm. Many things would change. At the center of the changes were the Grid brother and sister.

“Hihit! Hi, Oppa!”

“G-Get off.”

...Oh, Sexy Schoolgirl as well.

[Chapter 1073](#)

“Fourth Prince Edan captured Dukes Grenhal, Morse, and Basara and imprisoned them in the Abyss. The soldiers of the three dukes ignored the warnings and advanced to the capital, but they disappeared immediately upon arrival. The Tower of Eternity reported sensing a large-scale Mass Teleport.”

In the imperial capital, Titan...

Emperor Juander returned only to receive ridiculous news. When he found out the situation, he immediately ordered, “Release the dukes and deem Edan a traitor.”

Long sentences weren’t necessary. The moment he was proclaimed a traitor, Edan was deprived of all rights. All the troops in Titan moved in unison. Thousands of soldiers entered Edan’s palace and confiscated all of his property. The property naturally included his army. All of his forces, including the magic machines unit, was under the emperor’s control. However, the four operable magic machines had already disappeared.

“Damn bastard! Get out of here! I am the empress of the empire! I am the mother of the future emperor! How dare you, soldiers of the empire, block my way?”

The palace of Empress Marie was also besieged by thousands of soldiers. The empress had immediately rushed to find the emperor when she heard her son had been declared a traitor, but the knights stopped her.

“Are you saying a traitor will become the emperor? He committed treason. Treason. Please be careful with your words.”

“W-What? A mere guard dares to...!”

“The empress seems to be very agitated. Please take her inside.”

“Yes!”

“Let go! Let go of me!”

The knights didn't blink no matter how loudly the empress raised her voice. Did they know she was the real murderer of Empress Aria? No, they didn't know. The emperor had yet to announce the truth. Nevertheless, the attitude of the knights was apathetic because they were imperial knights. The imperial knights were the emperor's knights. The other person wasn't important when carrying out the emperor's orders. No matter who it was, they only carried out the emperor's will.

“Marquis Aileen?”

“There is news that he immediately left the capital after Edan was declared a traitor. We've already dispatched 5,000 people to chase him.”

“5,000 aren't enough. Send an additional 10,000 troops and contact the generals of each army to march to Marquis Aileen's territory.”

“Yes!”

Armored Cavalryman Chensler was the only imperial knight among the Five Pillars, and he actively started eradicating the traitors. He thoroughly used the military power entrusted to him by the emperor to pressure the faction of Edan and the empress. It was his judgment that the forces who helped Edan had to be thoroughly trampled in advance. The handling of the Red Knights was in the same vein. There were doubts about them because Sword Duke Limit was part of the empress' faction.

“What about the Sword Duke and the Red Knights?”

“The whereabouts of the Sword Duke are unknown. However, the rest of the knights are gathered in the barracks. I have sent an official letter to the Neo Red Knights to punish them, and news should be forthcoming.”

“Yes.”

Obviously, the Red Knights were also loyal to the empire and the imperial family. The problem was that Limit, the leader of the Red Knights, was a traitor. Since Limit had contaminated the Red Knights' thoughts, it was better to handle all of them so they didn't become a variable later on. The Red Knights' skills were outstanding, but they weren't a match for the Neo Red Knights that the grandmaster had been involved in training.

“Did the Sword Duke escape with Edan?”

In fact, the empress’s palace and the Red Knights were all additional factors. The greatest sinners were Empress Marie, Edan, and Sword Duke Limit. Additionally, the magic machines had to be obtained unconditionally. They couldn’t be missed.

“Hurry,” Chensler urged the soldiers.

“How interesting.”

Bain, the emperor’s shadow and one of the Five Pillars, had come to visit the Abyss. It was to carry out the order to release the dukes. Yet there were no dukes in the Abyss. Remnants of sword energy floated in the darkness like stars. It was the Sword Duke’s sword energy.

“Limit is dead?”

“Yes, he ran over after noticing the intruder wanted to escape with the dukes and died.”

This was the answer from the chief guard, Biplonz—a mysterious demonkin whose identity was unknown even to Bain. Only the emperor and the grandmaster knew Biplonz’s identity. Even Biplonz himself didn’t know, but Bain wasn’t interested.

“Who was the intruder?”

Only the Five Pillars in the empire could break through the Abyss and kill Limit. However, none of the Five Pillars would do such a thing. First, Kyle and Chensler were dogs who only moved according to the emperor’s orders. They couldn’t have recognized and resolved a problem the emperor didn’t know about. Magician King Goldhit was stuck in the Tower of Eternity, and Grandmaster Zikfrector wasn’t someone who would engage in this trivial matter.

“Outsiders.”

Bain guessed easily, “The continent’s best spearman, the descendant of the Undefeated King, the recluse of Grenier, the childless specter, Mercedes...”

He listed the strong people outside the empire one by one, and there were 13 people. Surprisingly, among them was...

“The Overgeared King.”

Grid was also included. In Satisfy’s world view, Grid was now perceived as a ‘powerhouse of the continent.’

Biplonz shrugged. “Who knows? He never told me his name. I didn’t share personal information with the intruder, so how should I know his identity? In the first place, I fell down as soon as I started fighting to protect the keys. Limit was dead when I got up.”

“You have a long tongue because you keep lying. Well, it doesn’t matter if you answer or not. Someone already knows the answer.” Bain turned his attention to various parts of the Abyss covered in darkness.

He glanced at exactly 14 places. They were the locations of the surveillance spells that the grandmaster had secretly installed.

Bain sniffed. 'Smelly guy.'

From the very first day Bain saw the grandmaster, he had smelled a terrible stench. Well, it didn't matter to him what the grandmaster was up to. He just had to protect the emperor's back until he got what he wanted. He would always protect the emperor in order to achieve his will, even if the grandmaster suddenly revealed his true colors and threatened the emperor.

It was a leap. Bain disappeared from Biplonz' vision in an instant and left the tunnel. Biplonz was left behind and clicked his tongue. "I couldn't see it. Humans are truly scary..."

Then... Bain escaped from the Abyss and gave an order to empty air, "Look for traces of the dukes."

'Eclipse' started moving.

It happened when Bain was going to report to the emperor what happened in the Abyss.

"I'm glad you're safe."

Two of the missing dukes returned. They were Grenhal and Morse, who looked well. The emperor stood up and greeted them, only to feel a sense of alienation. The wounds that could be seen on Grenhal's body were gone. Was this someone else disguised as Grenhal? No, it truly was Grenhal.

The emperor operated his red energy and was able to gain some insight.

"I think many things have happened."

The wounds on Grenhal's body weren't simply scars. They were badges of loyalty to the emperor and the empire. The way that they were erased wasn't important. However, the fact that they were erased was important. It was proof that Grenhal's loyalty to the empire had weakened.

"Who helped you?"

"The Overgeared King."

"...?"

"There is a truth I have to tell you before explaining our relationship with the Overgeared King."

"If it is about Marie, I now know that she worked with the Yatan Church to murder the empress."

"...!"

"Some time ago, Benoit told me."

"I see..."

"I'm ashamed. Without knowing her true identity, I hid in the empress' skirt as she made the country sick and eventually endangered the nobles."

The emperor didn't bother with the matter of the dukes' soldiers marching to the capital. It was natural. The emperor didn't want to lose the few remaining dukes. Now that the imperial family was in great turmoil, he needed the power of the dukes to rally the wandering nobles. Grenhal and Morse knew this as well.

'Your hair has become completely white...'

The emperor, who he hadn't met for a long time, now had completely white hair. The blood of the founding emperor, Saharan, ran deep in him. Yet the only 'natural born transcendent' was becoming helpless before time like ordinary humans. Grenhal's heart was heavy when he saw how great a mental pain the emperor must've suffered after learning the truth.

'I have to support His Majesty. I can't let the country that my ancestors built—that my father and previous family generations guarded—to collapse.'

In fact, Grenhal had been feeling troubled whilst on the way here. Maybe it would be right to leave the empire. This was the aftermath of being captivated by Grid.

However, he changed his mind at this moment. As Grenhal faced the cold reality, his shaking heart stabilized. He stared at the emperor and knelt down. "Your Majesty, please reveal Marie's sins and impose the greatest penalty on both Marie and Edan. Only then will the nobles feel reassured that the imperial family's discipline is sufficient."

The biggest penalty was not to kill them. The greatest punishment of the Saharan Empire was to place sinners in the Abyss and make them die after a long time in despair. Moreover, in the present era, Emperor Juander hadn't locked a single prisoner in the Abyss. He didn't think of it even when Piaro betrayed him, and he ended up executing all of Piaro's family members.

The Abyss wasn't that easy to approach. That's why Edan was immediately declared a traitor. Edan's action of locking the dukes in the Abyss was unforgivable to any noble, and the emperor abandoned his son without hesitation. If he showed a bit of hesitation, then he would've brought the distrust and resistance of the nobles on him.

The current situation was the same. It was time to show his courage. The woman he loved, who was the mother of his child, and his child...

"Justice is right. I will reveal the sins of both people and then lock them up in the Abyss."

Emperor Juander would send them to the place his father had proclaimed as the 'hell of another world' before Juander actually became emperor. This way the nobles, including the dukes, would support the emperor, and the broken reign of the royal family would rise again. This was the moment when the emperor controlled his bitterness.

"Your Majesty! There is news that the armies advancing to Aileen are being defeated in various places!" Chancellor Velmont rushed in to report.

"...!"

"...!"

The dukes' eyes widened. The imperial family was currently operating the troops at a very rapid pace. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that the moment the emperor returned, troops from all over the country marched to Marquis Aileen. Yet Marquis Aileen, who was being chased, read their movements and destroyed the army before even arriving at home...?

Vermont told the shocked emperor and dukes a shocking fact, "It is the work of the Valhalla Kingdom."

"What?"

That's right. For Sima Qian of the East Continent whom even the grandmaster was interested in, the chaos of the empire was a great opportunity. As such, he didn't miss this great opportunity. He planned to shatter the empire and take some of the land for Valhalla.

A truce between the empire and Valhalla...? Valhalla's agreement was with the grandmaster, not the empire. In the past, the grandmaster met Ares and Sima Qian in the Celestial Palace and told them, "We will be good partners."

[You have detected the evil aura eating away at the spirit of the target!]

[Your power has succeeded in denying the gods!]

[The spirit of the target has been fully restored!]

[You have healed a legitimate bloodline of the great empire. Your reputation will rise greatly every time the healing target 'Basara' makes a great achievement in the future.]

[There is a close bond between you and the Saharan imperial family. Some of the imperial family will show a great liking toward you while others might hate you.]

[Affinity with Duke 'Basara' of the Saharan Empire has reached the maximum.]

In the capital of the Overgeared Kingdom, Reinhardt...

Duke Basara opened her eyes. It was thanks to Lady Ruby who spent all day by her side treating her.

"Worse than dogs," Grid swore when Ruby confirmed that God Yatan's energy was eating at Basara's spirit.

The empress had already poisoned Asmophel with the Yatan Essence and made many people, including Piaro, unhappy. Edan had known this and tried to do the same thing again. Thus, he didn't seem to be human at all.

'I have to start.'

Grid hadn't been able to focus on anything because he had been worried about the dukes. Now that the last remaining duke—Basara—was healed, Grid could feel relieved and finally decided to do what he had been putting off.

'Create a new mineral.'

Pavranium—it was the symbol of Pagma and a class-only item. Now it was time for Grid's symbol.

“Sigh,” Grid breathed deeply and focused as he pulled out all his materials and equipment from the inventory and placed them on the table. What would be the best four minerals to combine with pavranium? For the best result, Grid needed to think carefully.

‘First of all, there must be the insane dragon iron.’

This was a mineral that naturally occurred in the nest of the insane dragon Nevartan. It had the nature of proliferating once every ten days. Currently, the total amount of pavranium was only enough to make one sword, but the total amount of the new mineral that Grid would create would grow over time. While most hidden classes only had a single item, Grid could theoretically have dozens or hundreds of exclusive items.

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Care was necessary when choosing a production material. The excellent options attributed to minerals meant that if the basic properties of hardness, strength, ductility, brittleness, and so on were overlooked, the work would be less complete. It was like seeing a diamond described as ‘very hard’ and using it as a sword material. No matter how powerful the sword was, what was the point if it would shatter after swinging it once or twice?

‘It is different this time. I don’t have to think too much and can choose to focus on performance.’

The essential material for the newly evolved Mineral Creation skill was pavranium. Pavranium’s durability wasn’t infinite, but this problem had already been solved. Grid chose the insane dragon iron as one of the four minerals to be combined with pavranium and planned to consider the remaining three minerals which had no great restrictions. He didn’t need everything and would use something good without fail.

The medium and top minerals that could be obtained easily were excluded from the candidates. Minerals that couldn’t be obtained with money, time, and force. He had to use the extremely high-grade minerals that could only be obtained when luck followed.

‘The insane dragon bead and insane dragon stone are exceptions. I must be vigilant about the characteristics of suppression and rampage.’

Like the insane dragon iron, the insane dragon stone and insane dragon bead were minerals affected by Nevartan’s madness. The insane dragon stone could suppress the mineral’s inherent properties when mixed with other minerals while the insane dragon bed had the ability to multiply the mineral’s properties when mixed with other minerals. Suppression threatened to undermine the peculiarity of pavranium, and there was a danger that rampage would be hard to control.

‘I don’t know what will happen if pavranium’s ego is amplified... Wait? Ah, this sucks.’

Grid became more troubled. It was because he sensed that the mineral sorting would be much more difficult than expected.

‘It isn’t just suppression and rampage. I have to avoid any big bias of the properties themselves.’

The new mineral to be created was different from pavranium. It would be better than pavranium, and the quantity wasn’t limited. Instead, it would increase gradually. This meant it could be used actively.

Grid would be using it as a material for all the items he would produce in the future, so distinct properties were likely to be poisonous.

‘Oh, it’s rotten...’

Grid examined the minerals and various weapons on the table. There were so many varieties that there wasn’t enough room on the table where 20 people could sit at side by side. Several items lying on the ground were at least of the unique rating. It was a scene that would stun anyone who saw it.

‘Originally, I planned to disassemble the Holy Light set to get adamantium and use it as a material for Mineral Creation...’

As mentioned earlier, the properties wouldn’t be too strong. Minerals with the ultimate divine power were difficult to use as materials for items with unclean attributes. Even if the production process was successful, there was a possibility that conflicts would occur in the process of imprinting options. The basic performance would come out as expected, but the options would be garbage.

‘In the same vein, I need to exclude the by-products of the great demons. Let’s aim for getting no properties as much as possible.’

Simply put, the newly created mineral should be like dough. The color of the dough itself was white and light, but different dishes could be made depending on what ingredients were put in and the recipe used. The created mineral would be a framework for making different types of items. It would be used as a material for all types of items, and it was ideal to give it a property appropriate to the situation at the time. Therefore, the created mineral itself should have no property. If the quantity was limited, like pavranium, it could maximize the power by attaching as many attributes as possible.

“Kuoong...” Wrinkles appeared on Grid’s face.

The higher the level of the mineral, the more pronounced the properties would be.

‘The best mineral with no attribute is blue orichalcum.’

Blue orichalcum was a mineral born with the power of moonlight and the magic power of the Guardian of the Forest. Additional features like ‘strengthened in dark places’, ‘lightning’, and ‘cutting power’ resulted from this, but it didn’t have properties such as the four elements, divine power, or demonic power.

Additionally, blue orichalcum was the strongest mineral. It might be less impactful than adamantium—which contained the ultimate divine power—or blood stone which was the mineral of hell, but there were no problems compared to other minerals of its class.

Great demons and fallen gods...

It was hard to say if this world was worse than the divine realm or hell. Blue orichalcum was hard to find in the first place. They had to defeat the Guardian of the Forest of the Forest. It was a boss monster that spawned in the Overgeared territory, so it was monopolized by the Overgeared Guild. For the general public, blue orichalcum was as hard to find as a star in the sky.

‘Yes, there is nothing wrong with the value and performance of the blue orichalcum. Just...’

[Blue Orichalcum]

[Orichalcum is a mineral born with the power of moonlight and the Guardian of the Forest.

It is impossible to erode the Guardian of the Forest's magic power, but it has the best hardness and strength among all minerals.

It is lightweight and becomes much stronger in darkness.

Weight: 3]

The reason why the blue orichalcum had no properties was that the nature of the magic power was unable to be eroded.

'I will be ruined if I use this as a material for Mineral Creation.'

The reason for granting properties was to increase the utilization of the minerals. It would be the end if he used blue orichalcum where other magic power couldn't be given to it.

'Sometimes I will need to give magic to the items I make with the new mineral.'

He fell into a swamp. The longer he thought about it, the deeper his distress and confusion became. The moment Grid started to get a headache and the phrase 'long-term use of Satisfy could be harmful to health' passed through his mind...

"Ah."

Grid was reminded of a talent that would've completely ripened. Minor—he was a minerals detector who had helped Grid find special materials such as pavranium and the insane dragon iron. His minerals knowledge came from Grid forcing him to study minerals for 10 years, and he was now almost at the sage level.

In the meeting room...

"What is the best mineral with no properties?"

The savior ran over at Grid's call. Well, no, Minor walked over and gave the answer, "It is naturally black mithril."

"..."

The years had gone by really quickly. The 13-year-old when Grid first met was now in his mid-20s with a handsome beard. Grid, who met Minor for the first time in ages after the exploration of the insane dragon iron, was deeply moved. On the other hand, Minor wasn't very happy.

[Talent will Reveal Itself (SS)]

[A talent that one person per 10 million people will have.

No matter how you try to hide, your talent will reveal itself to others. It is your destiny to live a life being scouted by others. You will inevitably receive a lot of temptations.

Your stats will grow very quickly, and you will become arrogant.]

Minor believed that all the riches he enjoyed today were due to his own ability. He thought the only monarch who could rule over him was the emperor. To him, Grid was always lacking. It wasn't enough for a genius like himself to be forced to study minerals. He was also placed as the general manager of a weird organization called the Minerals Detection Department.

Yet Minor didn't betray Grid. He always grumbled, but he faithfully followed Grid's orders. The reason was that his respect overshadowed the 'Talent will Reveal Itself' trait. Minor tried not to show it, but he had a lot of respect for Grid. A commoner like himself established and led the country. He had to feel respectful toward Grid.

This was why Minor had ignored all scouting proposals from other countries that came to him over the years. If the empire—not another country—had tried to recruit him, he would've turned his back on the Overgeared Kingdom. Unfortunately for him, that didn't happen.

"Black mithril?"

Minor, who had fallen to distraction after seeing Grid, regained his senses.

He nodded at Grid's question. "Yes, black mithril is as strong as ordinary mithril, but its hardness is comparable to that of blue orichalcum. It is called 'black' because it doesn't have divine power like normal mithril, not because its color is black. Black mithril doesn't have any divine power. It is empty."

Minor raised his lips after speaking. It was a very good smile. "Well, a layman like Your Majesty wouldn't know, but this is a hidden secret. The imperial family has been using black mithril for generations."

"I know. Black mithril is like white paper and absorbs any property well. Isn't that why it is noticed by the empire?"

"How do you...?"

"The material of the armor worn by the Red Knights is made of black mithril that contains red energy."

"How do you know that?"

"I know by killing a Red Knight."

"Truly, Your Majesty... As the king of a small country, you run around every day and gain a lot of knowledge."

"Don't be sarcastic and continue with what you're saying. I'll teach you a lesson afterward."

"...I'm praising you."

'Cute guy.' Grid smiled mischievously every time he met Minor. It was cute to see how this person worked well, despite all his grumbling. In fact, he became very fond of Minor during the insane dragon iron expedition. At the time, he saw the feeling of 'respect' on Minor's status window after discovering the insane dragon iron. It was nice to see a talent respect him. This was to the point that the impoliteness was attractive.

“The reason why black mithril is the best no properties mineral is that blankness you just mentioned. It has less natural power than blue orichalcum which is stronger in the darkness and can cut anything, but it can transcend the mineral adamantium depending on how it is harmonized.”

“Hrmm...” Grid, who had peeked at the true nature of the gods, couldn’t deny Minor’s words. It was wrong to say that minerals of human descent were unconditionally inferior to a mineral of the gods.

‘Okay. Then the second one is black mithril.’

Considering that the concept of the created mineral was to be the ‘framework’ of all future items, black mithril was a truly ideal mineral. Grid’s creative mineral would play a role in maximizing the properties whenever new properties were added to future items.

There was just one problem. He had no black mithril. Grid only owned one piece of black mithril, and it had been a long time since he used it as a material for Mercedes’ armor. Regardless of the usefulness for Mineral Creation, he was unwilling to break down a myth rated item.

‘Can Minor obtain it?’ Grid thought.

Then he explained his question in detail, “I’m going to create a new mineral by mixing two more minerals together with pavranium, insane dragon iron, and black mithril. What type of minerals do you feel will fit it? What about the other two minerals?”

“You are planning to multiply it indefinitely and use it for a variety of battle gear. That’s why you are looking for a mineral with no attributes,” Minor said with an interested expression. “Of course, they are adamantium and blood stone. They are the best minerals that represent the realm of the gods and hell. I can’t think of alternatives. Adamantium can be obtained by melting the shining armor that Your Majesty wore before, and blood stone is obtained by melting the transparent red sword.”

“...Then remove their properties with the insane dragon stone.”

“Yes, they are such great minerals that they will be superior to blue orichalcum even if their properties are removed. Ask me again what are the best minerals with no attributes. I’ll answer that it isn’t black mithril but adamantium and blood stone with their properties removed.

Grid had the hammer and anvil made of the insane dragon stone. It was possible to use them to remove the properties of adamantium and blood stone. However, there was another problem. Adamantium only required disassembling the unused Holy Light Armor, but in order to obtain blood stone, he had to disassemble the World Crushing Sword of the Noble White Tiger. That was the sword Mercedes was using. It was even a myth rated item, so he didn’t want to break it down.

Grid pointed out Berith’s by-products to Minor. “Is there anything among them that could replace blood stone?”

“...?” Minor picked up Berith’s Hoof and looked bewildered.

“Does this look harder than blood stone?”

“...I think so.”

Then there was only one thing left to do.

“Okay, go and get black mithril,” Grid said.

“Huh? What did you say just now?”

“Obtain black mithril.”

“Do you know that the empire is using black mithril with red energy injected? Think about it. The route to securing black mithril should be monopolized by the empire. How can I obtain it when it is managed by a huge workforce or, at worst, directly controlled by the imperial family? Yet I have to go and obtain it?”

“Certainly... It could be hard for you. Then I’ll obtain it.”

“Did you hear me just now? It means death!”

“Didn’t I say I wouldn’t send you and will obtain it myself?”

“Then Your Majesty will die!!”

“I won’t die. I might be able to find a solution if I ask a duke of the empire.”

“Did you eat something wrong today? Who will you ask?”

Minor wasn’t a senior noble. He was acquainted with Grid and played a large role relating to minerals, but he wasn’t in an important position from a nation perspective. So, he didn’t know much. Minor didn’t know that Grid had established a great friendship with the imperial dukes at the Ruins of the War God and then defeated the great demon together. Neither did he know that Grid had rescued and treated the dukes of the empire.

The most recent news he heard about Grid was that he had killed Sky King Rigal. Minor wondered if Grid had gone crazy. “Damn, I’ll just infiltrate the empire. I am a talent, so I’ll be welcomed by them. I’ll go and get some work, collect information, and find out the location of black mithril. It will take 10 or 20 years, so just wait until then.”

“Wow, look at this guy. You are trying to go to the empire.”

“Yes, but I’ll still obtain black mithril for you.”

“Please stop. I’ll obtain it.”

“No, what is this?”

Minor felt like he was talking to Jude. Then it happened when Minor was going crazy.

Knock knock.

A polite knock, then Prime Minister Lauel’s voice rang out, “Duke Basara is asking for an audience.”

“...?”

‘Basara?’

The only monarch Minor could serve was the emperor of the Saharan Empire. Minor had always spoken like this, and he was quite interested in the trends of the empire. In the course of studying minerals, he

naturally studied the empire. So, the name Basara was familiar to him. The only person who could be called Duke Basara on the continent was Basara with royal blood.

Grid smiled when he saw the stiff Minor and called out, "Come in."

Then...

"I greet the Overgeared King."

It was a beautiful woman wearing a gorgeous golden crown. The person who looked exactly like the Duke Basara in rumors entered the meeting room and politely greeted Grid. She bowed her head as much as possible. This was someone with imperial blood.

"I was late to see you because I was focused on recovery. I owe you a great deal."

"There is no need. What is the relationship between us? It is right to help each other if possible."

"...Basara Ella von Saharan, duke of the Saharan Empire and legitimate successor of the throne, vows in the eyes of the goddess of light. I will repay three great favors to the Overgeared King for the rest of my life. It is a grace that must be repaid even if I give up the succession to the throne. Please don't forget it."

"Huh?" Minor replied on behalf of Grid. His blank expression no longer saw Grid as a king but a god.

Grid spoke immediately, "I want to obtain black mithril."

[Chapter 1075](#)

"I want to obtain black mithril."

"I understand," Basara replied immediately with a slightly perplexed expression crossing her face.

It was only a moment, but Grid didn't miss it. "Is it a tough request?"

"No."

"Please be honest. It will be hard for me if your position is risked by my request."

"You don't have to consider my position. Your Majesty only needs to tell me what you want."

Was it because she just swore she would pay back three favors? Basara's attitude was very strong.

As a result, Grid became frustrated. "You are the one responsible for the harmony between the Overgeared Kingdom and the empire. Until then, your position shouldn't be weakened."

Basara spoke honestly, "In fact, you have to take a big risk if you want to obtain black mithril. The black mithril mine is managed by His Majesty the Emperor."

"It isn't the empire but the emperor himself?"

"Yes, black mithril is an important resource for the imperial family. The black mithril mine has been managed by the emperor or the crown prince for generations. However, the crown prince hasn't been decided yet, so His Majesty has to manage it himself."

“Are they going so far just because black mithril can accept the red energy?”

“That one reason is enough. Red energy has the effect of strengthening, restoring, and awakening the body’s physical abilities. The ultimate goal of the Saharan Empire is to acquire as much black mithril as possible to equip as many soldiers as possible. The founding emperor was able to establish an empire due to the power of the Red Legion. It is no wonder that his descendants are obsessed with black mithril. Titan was chosen as the capital because it contains the only black mithril mine on the continent.”

“...!”

It was a story that told of the emperor’s obsession with black mithril since he chose the location of the capital based on the mine. Grid realized that securing black mithril would be much more difficult than expected. “Yet it doesn’t seem to be a big deal to have black mithril outside.”

“Yes, it is very difficult to obtain. The only practical way is to subdue a Red Knight and rob them of their armor, but that would be hard now. The moment Edan was declared a traitor, the Red Knights would’ve been purged.”

“The Red Knights would be purged?”

Grid had witnessed firsthand the loyalty of the Red Knights to the emperor. Mercedes was a prime example. The emperor would purge them despite knowing their loyalty...? Even if the commander Limit was a member of the empress’ faction, why purge the knights under him? It wasn’t easy to understand. Grid was baffled.

Basara smiled. “It is an easy and sure way of governing. The vast majority of Red Knights would still be loyal to the royal family, but if a handful of them are tainted by Sword Duke Limit’s ideas, they would be a big risk in the future.”

“It is too harsh. Purging knights who have been devoted to the nation just because of the possibility that they could be dangerous...”

“It isn’t anything new. The Red Knights, including Sir Piaro, have been purged once already.”

“...”

“It is a problem if they aren’t purged. There would be a big backlash. There are no nobles who can accept an organization contaminated by traitors.”

“Then the nobles would recommend to the emperor new knights to replace the Red Knights. Their relatives,” Lauel interrupted. He spoke on Grid’s behalf because he thought there would be no progress in the conversation, “Is it impossible to infiltrate the mine and secretly mine black mithril? There is a great sage here capable of using Mass Teleport.”

“There are all sorts of enchantments in the mine, so teleportation and communication magic are impossible. Additionally, black mithril can only be mined once a year.”

“Once a year?”

“Yes. On that day, His Majesty leads the guards and heads to the mine. In order to mine black mithril, you have to visit the mine on the same day as His Majesty the Emperor. Even if you succeed in infiltrating the mine, you’ll have to face the guards. You will immediately become hostile to the imperial family, and the harmony between the Overgeared Kingdom and the empire will never be achieved.”

“Then there is no way after all?”

“There’s only one. Infiltrate the emperor’s royal treasure house where the black mithril mined for generations is kept. If you aim for the day when His Majesty goes to the mine, it is worth trying because many of the guards will be away.”

“The emperor’s treasure house...”

It was the treasure house of the emperors who dominated the West Continent. Many of the guards might be away, but it would almost certainly boast more guards than anywhere else. It might be much more difficult than approaching a dragon lair. Still, everything was relative. It was certainly better than heading for the black mithril mine and encountering the emperor.

‘In any case, the most superior materials are always a problem.’

Their whereabouts were unknown, and the difficulty of obtaining them was also high. Grid clicked his tongue and asked Basara, “What is the day that the emperor will leave for the mine?”

Would it be a few months later? Would his patience run out if he waited while sucking on his fingers? While Grid was worried, he received an unexpected answer.

“In the next eight days.”

“Eight days?”

“Yes. It is just a short time away. It might be easier than you think to infiltrate the emperor’s treasure house because of the confusion Edan caused. Even so, I can’t guarantee success.”

“I see.”

Edan running wild really helped in this situation. The moment that a smile appeared on Grid’s face...

“By the way, why aren’t you paying attention to the meteorite?” A familiar voice rang out. Grid looked back and saw a small shadow under the large table lined with wood. It was the dwarf Ke. The visitor had come without permission.

‘How did he get in?’

The entrance of the meeting room was naturally guarded by knights. Then the assassins of the Overgeared Shadows were waiting inside. Yet Dwarf Ke managed to come here without being stopped. The baffled Grid suddenly looked at Ke’s feet. A small yellow golem was sticking its head out of a tunnel. It seemed to resemble an elemental, but it was different. The light elemental didn’t respond at all.

Ke laughed. “It is an artificial elemental. The golem—made of earth and metal—was imbued with an ego by processing an earth elemental, but it is pretty useless. As you can see, its digging ability is excellent, and it can smell minerals and guide me there.”

“Then can’t you easily infiltrate the emperor’s castle?”

“Oh, that is a big deal. I did it over 100 years ago and got stuck in that cage. I’m not going to repeat the same mistake.”

“...”

Why was he trapped in the Abyss? It turned out he was a thief. Grid frowned as he stared at Ke. “You destroyed my castle at will and invaded this place illegally. Thus, you’ll have to go to jail again.”

“W-What... Do you need to do that? A broken castle can be fixed in a few days. Just fill the hole again. Additionally, I broke in, but... it wasn’t intentional. This artificial elemental smelled minerals and did it at will!”

“How will you take responsibility for the inconveniences that people will experience while a broken castle is repaired? Additionally, whether you did it intentionally or not, is it right to intrude without permission?”

Grid treated Ke as a guest. This was the first dwarf he’d met and he wanted to make a good connection, which was why he saved Ke. However, this concept was too much. Grid wanted to establish a good relationship, but he was going to explode. The first thing to teach such a person was courtesy. Manners must be established. The moment that Grid decided to place Ke in prison...

“I won’t just repair the castle, I’ll expand it! I was originally a castle-building craftsman! Even the King of Lubana once asked me to build him a fortress!”

“...King of Lubana?”

“It was Madra. He was a very old man and the king of a failed country, so he didn’t leave a proper name in history. You won’t know him.”

He had met someone who knew Madra. Grid’s mood became strange. Ke kept talking, “The reason why I broke into your castle was due to my desire to see your great works. It was never an act of malice. Please let me off just once! I’ll be careful not to do it again!”

“...It is hard if I want to set a standard of discipline.”

“I accidentally overheard your conversation. Are you planning to create a new mineral? Using blood stone and adamantium? I don’t know about blood stone, but you don’t have to remove the unique properties of adamantium. The fragment of the meteorite that fell from space and lost its light is adamantium. This sword is made of a meteorite.”

Dwarf Ke was pointed to the Star Sword. It was an item left behind by Sword Duke Limit. The item information described it as a sword made from a ‘star fragment’, but Grid hadn’t known it meant a meteorite. He never imagined that a meteorite’s identity would be adamantium that had lost its properties.

‘Isn’t this good?’

Adamantium’s properties didn’t only consist of its powerful divine power. Adamantium also had the strength, hardness, and brittleness that producers wanted. Of course, there were limits, but it was a

mineral that could be utilized actively. It was a pity that those properties had to be deleted, but Dwarf Ke provided him with a new solution.

Grid barely restrained the corners of his mouth from curving upward as he spoke with a bold expression, "Okay. If you rebuild the castle as promised and cooperate in the creation of this mineral, I will forget about putting you in prison."

"Ohh! Thank you! Really, thank... you?"

Was this a situation where he should feel thankful? Ke suddenly felt doubtful, but he let it go. He was just relieved that he wouldn't have to go to prison.

The Saharan imperial household's army was strong. The level of the soldiers was high and comparable to the imperial army. They had many skills and excellent equipment. It was as if the Ares Army and Overgeared Army were combined. However, Valhalla's players defeated the imperial household's army relatively easily.

It was thanks to the active role of their military adviser, Sima Qian. Sima Qian noted that a civil war was currently occurring. He used the imperial household's mentality to arrive at the marquis' territory one step ahead of Marquis Aileen. He placed troops along the shortest route available to each army and ambushed the imperial household army, defeating them all over the capital. Only messages of victory could be heard.

"Wonderful. Absolutely wonderful." Ares burst out laughing as he received good news about the level of the guild members and soldiers soaring.

Sima Qian was humble. "It was possible due to the information from the grandmaster. Without his information, we wouldn't have been able to put the soldiers in the right place."

"He just gave a small hint. It was purely your talent. Then are you now going to save Marquis Aileen?"

"That's right."

He would save Marquis Aileen and escort the marquis to safety, then they would stay in the marquis' territory and wait for Edan's arrival. Prince Edan would rally the Red Knights, allowing him to endure the offensive of the imperial army for the time being. It was for a maximum of 10 days. This was enough.

"Prince Edan is relatively young and has less exposure to outside forces than the other princes. If he raises the banner of independence from the imperial royal family to protect the rights of the minorities, he will win support from ethnic minorities all over the nation."

"Many minorities will rally to Marquis Aileen and the empire's civil war will be lengthened. At that time, we will move the main army to the border and conquer the outskirts of the empire."

The Saharan Empire, which reigned over the West Continent, was treated as something insurmountable that players couldn't surpass. He would be the first to break down the mighty empire that even Grid never crossed. Ares' blood was boiling.

[Chapter 1076](#)

“It is a report from the scouts.”

“Viscount Donut’s engineering unit has been tied up in Elkas swamp. It is believed that the Thallen Dam collapsed and flooded the river, affecting the swamp.”

“The dam suddenly collapsed? It is Valhalla’s handiwork.”

“Due to the delayed arrival of the engineers, the army of the five eastern nobles—including the viscount—can’t cross Gran Canyon. The bridges connecting the canyons are too old for us to march over.”

“According to a report submitted by Lord Cran, the canyon’s bridges were repaired three months ago. Yet they are already too old? Is this the work of Valhalla?”

“It appears that the report was fabricated.”

“He made a false report. Immediately put him to death.”

“The 2nd and 3rd armies, who were tracking Marquis Aileen, split into 23 units. It seems that they plan to spread out after determining that the traces of Marquis Aileen ended at Mount Teri.”

“Yes, we have to hold onto Aileen. If he escapes, he can become a focal point of the empress’ nobles.”

“It is said that the spread out 2nd and 3rd armies are being attacked by Valhalla!”

“A battle has begun in Delpito Forest! It is that damn Valhalla again!”

“Those bastards!”

Chensler, who had been responding calmly to the incessant reports, finally jumped up. Originally, his mission was to search for the traitor Edan and neutralize Edan’s forces, but Valhalla’s malicious intervention twisted things.

“These despicable guys decided to break the agreement by using the chaos in the imperial family. Why did Vermont make a peace treaty with these lowly guys?”

Bang! Chensler slammed his hand on the black iron table, and it cracked, quickly splitting in half. Amazed by the ridiculous power, the lieutenant gulped and reported carefully, “I found out a little while ago... The person who led the agreement with Valhalla was the grandmaster, not Vermont.”

“What?” Chensler looked like he had been struck by a lightning bolt. Grandmaster Zikfrector had already served several emperors. He was the transcendent being who acted as the imperial guardian for so long that it was impossible to measure his age. Of course, he never acted as a guardian. He always moved privately and showed disrespect to the emperor. Yet the emperor relied on him.

No, it was more accurate to say that the emperor was forced to rely on him. The grandmaster knew more about the secrets of the imperial family than the emperor, and his armed force exceeded common sense. The emperor relied on him, and as a loyalist, Chensler also respected him.

At this moment, suspicion started to grow. The grandmaster, who had never been involved in external activities, negotiated with Valhalla directly? Now, Valhalla was disturbing the imperial army as if he could see through the army’s movements...?

'Don't tell me?'

A turncoat? No, it was still too early to tell. It wasn't convincing that someone who had been staying in the imperial palace for hundreds of years would suddenly become a turncoat. Then it happened when Chensler was at a loss.

"Breaking news! The remnants of the Red Knights are attacking soldiers searching the capital!"

"Weren't the Red Knights defeated by the Neo Red Knights?"

"We can't figure out what is going on! We can't communicate with the Neo Red Knights!"

"Dammit!"

His Majesty was in danger. A chill went down Chensler's spine as he ran out of the barracks.

"Go to the imperial palace right away!"

"Please give permission for the forces of our two families to enter the capital. Together, we will search for Edan," Duke Grenhal and Morse requested the emperor. Once they learned of Valhalla's intervention, they realized that the situation was much more serious than they had thought.

Prince Edan wasn't running wild. This occurring situation was a thorough plan. It was dangerous. There would surely be someone big hiding behind the scenes. The dukes became nervous once they calculated up to this point. They felt compelled to arrest Edan as soon as possible to calm the situation.

"Okay." The emperor didn't think about it for too long. He was also fully aware of the seriousness of the situation. Furthermore, he was in a situation where he had to show trust in the dukes. He needed to regain their loyalty after they had been greatly angered by the imperial family.

"Call your army to the capital right now..." At the moment when the emperor was giving a command...

The jade door of the audience hall, larger than a house, opened slowly and an unexpected figure appeared. "Please take back the mandate. A noble's soldiers aren't suitable to enter the capital."

It was the traitor who the soldiers had been searching the capital for—4th Prince Edan.

"Y-You!" The emperor exclaimed, standing up with a red face. He raised his bloodshot eyes and shouted, "Stupid guy...! In order to cover up the sins of your mother, you threatened the nobles supporting the nation and worsened the situation here...! You became drunk on power, and your eyes darkened!"

The moment he learned the truth from Benoit, the emperor vowed to punish Empress Marie, but he had no intention of punishing Edan. It was natural since there was no evidence of Edan's involvement in the Piaro situation. That's right. Edan would've been able to survive the waves that came. His position might've been weakened, but he could've avoided a disastrous end. He could have enjoyed the pride of having the great Saharan's blood and lived his life quietly.

Yet the foolish man did something stupid. He was guilty of the crimes of covering up the truth, pleading for his mother, and imprisoning the innocent dukes. The emperor was also a father. Juander felt heartbroken. He resented the terrible reality of having to kill his child with his own hands.

Edan smiled as he gazed at the red-faced emperor. "Then I should do nothing? My stupid mother fell into a bucket of shit, and I should just suck my fingers?"

"...!"

"What blasphemous words!" Surprised by the harsh tone, Duke Grenhal shouted on behalf of the emperor.

Still, his shout couldn't stop Edan. Edan's nostrils flared, and he continued to speak nonsense, "This is the fault of my father for not doing his job. Why didn't you let go of your expectations for my weak first brother, my unqualified second brother, and my third brother who left home to wander? You should've appointed me as crown prince after I worked hard, proving my qualities and gaining the achievement of discovering the ancient weapon—the machine machines."

"...Shut that mouth."

"Why didn't you make me the crown prince? Is it because I was the offspring of a concubine? No, that can't be. Wasn't your father the child of a concubine as well? Then why? Is it because I'm not the blood of Aria who you loved?"

"Shut up!"

"You should shut up! Emperor! Don't you know that you have always been the problem?! If your arrogance hasn't pierced the sky...! If your gaze had been directed to your side instead of the East Continent, my mother wouldn't have dared to commit the sin! Empress Aria wouldn't have died, Piaro wouldn't be labeled a traitor, and today's events wouldn't have happened."

"...!!" The emperor read the poison and killing intent in Edan's eyes. Now, there was no turning back. There was no point in any conversation beyond this. He made a sorrowful expression and ordered Bain behind him, "Grab him right away and lock him in prison."

"Yes." Bain showed no hesitation. His loyalty to the emperor, which hid the fact that he was a Lantier, was false. He had no respect for the royal family, so he had no hesitation to kill the imperial princes. Duke Grenhal felt wind pass by his ears. Then Edan, who was 30 meters away, was seen flying.

"Kuek...!" Edan rolled on the floor covered with red carpet and wiped the blood flowing from his lips. He stood up, unaware that he had fallen at the emperor's feet, but it was useless. Bain appeared behind him and grabbed Edan's back with his hand, making Edan unable to move.

"Get rid of your dirty hands! I am the future of the empire! I am the only person qualified to be emperor!" Edan shouted and launched his red energy. The blade-like red energy emanated from Edan and threatened Bain, causing him to jump away. Edan finally regained his freedom and pulled a sword from his waistband. It was a black sword surrounded by a dark red energy.

"That sword!" The emperor's eyes widened. The sword that Edan pulled out was made from smelted black mithril, but the level of red energy injected into it was unusual.

'Is it above my level of red energy?'

It wasn't enough to say that he was inferior. This was an altogether different dimension. Who did this red energy belong to? The moment the emperor felt doubts.

'What?' Bain stopped in place as he tried to subdue Edan again. He was convinced that he would be cut the moment he approached Edan.

Edan smiled as silence fell. "Didn't you wonder why His Majesty's army couldn't find me?"

Step.Step.Step. The sound of someone's footsteps could be heard from the corridor outside. They were unhurried footsteps, moving without the slightest hesitation. The footsteps were familiar to everyone.

Edan's words continued, "There is only one place that His Majesty's army can't reach." It was the Celestial Palace—the palace where Grandmaster Zikfrector lived. "It was because I was hiding there."

At the same time as Edan's shocking words...

Step.The footsteps from the corridor stopped in front of the audience hall. The emperor, the two dukes, and even Bain couldn't take their eyes off the owner of the footsteps.

"I will now install 4th Prince Edan as the new emperor. The proof of qualification for the replacement is the sword of the founding emperor, Saharan," the master of the footsteps, Grandmaster Zikfrector, declared with a polite expression.

Simultaneously, in Marquis Aileen's territory...

"Isn't it past the scheduled time that Prince Edan should arrive?" Ares, who faced the increasingly fierce imperial army, felt that things were going wrong. The current situation seemed abnormal. Didn't the military adviser Sima Qian guess all of the imperial army's paths and hinder their advance? Why were there so many imperial forces surrounding the castle? There was at least three times the number that Sima Qian expected. It would be hard to hold out against the offensive unless the imperial prince, the magic machines, and the Red Knights joined quickly. Yet they weren't present.

Ares' anxiety grew.

"...It seems we have been used," Sima Qian said desperate words. "It seems that the grandmaster has been using us. Prince Edan won't be here. I'm sorry. It is my fault. Please cut my throat now."

"..." Ares' mind was blank. After a moment of self-doubt, he quickly came to his senses and ordered Luck and Scott, "Take away the military adviser. We have no future if the military adviser dies here."

On this day, most of the players in the Ares Army—including Ares—died. Valhalla lost the bulk of their food and troops that they had been stockpiling for years. It was a big blow for the entire country.

On the other hand...

"Okay." Grid succeeded in melting the Star Sword and gaining adamantium. He was going to act with Basara from now on. In order to infiltrate the emperor's treasure house, it was necessary to enter the imperial palace. It was virtually impossible for Grid, the king of another country, to enter the imperial palace without the invitation of the emperor. Thus, he planned to enter the imperial palace in advance, disguised as Basara's subordinate.

'It is an opportunity to try out a face mask.'

He was excited. He wanted to create the new mineral soon. Grid's spirit was raised as he shouted, "Sticks! Send me and Basara to the outskirts of the capital of the empire!"

[Chapter 1077](#)

Most incidents in Satisfy had witnesses. The operators? No, they were players. There were more than two billion players, and they existed everywhere in Satisfy. They were connected to Satisfy's vast worldview by directly or indirectly experiencing various stories that unfolded throughout the continent.

This time was the same as well. The emperor's palace was regarded as one of the largest buildings on the West Continent. There were players among the thousands of workers. Among them were a few with the skills to deceive the royal guards. Some of them were interested in the imperial upheaval and wandered around the audience hall.

Then they witnessed it. It was the emergence of 4th Prince Edan. The traitor, the source of the current chaos, wandered the palace and indiscriminately slaughtered the royal guards. He opened the door of the audience hall while covered with red blood.

An uproar followed. The players approached the audience hall with great curiosity while holding their breaths. The probability of being expelled from the imperial palace or killed was close to 99.9%, but they couldn't retreat from the 'jackpot scandal.' They had to be the best in each field to work in the palace. As so-called rankers, they knew how powerful information was. They wanted to listen to the emperor's conversation even at the risk of their lives.

'The imperial concubine was the one who killed the empress?'

'This happened because Edan tried to kill the dukes who learned about it.'

'It is a household drama...'

It was pretty good information. Selling this to gossip media would be a good source of income, and they could build up good relationships by notifying the players who were still the empress' knights without knowing the situation. Someone cut open a potted plant. Someone else wiped the dust on a window frame. Then someone's footsteps were heard in the ears of the players who were trying to listen in on the audience hall.

Step.Step.Step.

They were creepy footsteps. Was it possible to walk slowly in the bloody corridor? They were even approaching the turbulent audience hall. The players felt a sense of alienation and became alert. They felt the owner of the footsteps wasn't a normal person and tried to hide as much as possible.

However, it was useless. This was Grandmaster Zikrefector. Some people heard it, and others accidentally witnessed it. The moment the super-named NPC whose exact identity was unknown appeared, the players who used their skills were amazed.

[You can't deceive the senses of the target!]

[The 'Stealth' skill has been turned off.]

[The target has grasped your intentions!]

[The 'Irrelevant Person' skill has been turned off.]

[The target has noticed your magic power!]

[The unique magic 'Chameleon' has been released.]

The players... The skills and magic that the rankers were so proud of were easily neutralized just by the presence of the grandmaster.

"Uh... Uwahh..."The unexpectedly exposed players stepped back with fright. Like ants on the roadside, they felt an endless feeling of helplessness in front of the grandmaster who didn't give them a single glance. Then...

Step.

However, the grandmaster had no interest in them. He ignored them as he entered the audience hall.

"What... A great demon?"

"..."

In any case, they survived. The players touched their chest with relief and sank down. How would the grandmaster intervene in the epic family fight? It happened with the players, whose curiosity increased, listened to the inside of the audience hall.

"Run away now!"Someone's sudden cry rang out from a distant hallway. The surprised players shifted their gaze, and they saw a familiar face. It was Zibal—one of the strongest players and Edan's subordinate. Behind him were dozens of knights in red armor.

"The Red Knights!"

The surprised players jumped up. They didn't know what disaster they had encountered and used all types of skills to escape. Still, they were too slow. The single digit knights stepped out to stop them, binding them.

"Shit!" Zibal cursed and pulled out his sword. Amazingly, he was trying to kill the players. One of the knights pulled out a sword later than Zibal yet managed to block his sword. Her name was Susan. She was the cousin of the legendary knight Mercedes and a member of the Neo Red Knights, who had been created by the emperor and trained by the grandmaster himself.

"They will resurrect if you kill them. It is better to put them in prison. It will be hard if the things they saw and heard here get out."

Susan had a beautiful face that resembled Mercedes', but her expression and tone were ice cold. Her transparent eyes glanced at Zibal. "Sir Zibal. Did you know that and intentionally tried to kill them?"

'What eyes...'

Her cold eyes were like ice. His heart would become cold when facing those eyes. Zibal gulped and smiled awkwardly."No way. I was just short-sighted."

His gaze was directed at the players. The people kneeling on the icy marble floor might be imprisoned for longer than they imagined. They would waste time and fall behind others. Some might have to put down the business card called a 'ranker.'

'Damn.'

When did he become someone who was worried about others? Anxiety grew in Zibal's heart as he clicked his tongue. 'This ruined everything.'

Edan was declared a traitor and was in danger of losing everything. Zibal had plenty of opportunities to leave his side. Yet Zibal didn't leave. He faced a great crisis by choosing to remain with the traitor. Why? It wasn't just out of the expectation that the ownership of Raiders would be transferred to him if he maximized his affinity with Edan.

Zibal had served Edan for a few years and received a lot of favors. As a Blue Sky Rider to an ancient rider, Zibal was a special presence for Edan. When Zibal fled to help the Haken Kingdom, Edan had told him, "Thank you for telling the world about the power of the magic machine."

Zibal wasn't punished. He also had many memories together with the members of the magic machines unit. For him to abandon them and run away alone...? It was impossible for the current Zibal. He had once lost everything and become alone, so he desperately knew the preciousness of colleagues.

'Tsk. I hope this will go well.' Zibal looked anxiously at Edan's back through the half open audience hall. Edan had the support of the grandmaster, but that was precisely the problem. The grandmaster was a man who couldn't be trusted. He couldn't be trusted after betraying the emperor right now.

'What is he trying to do by placing Edan as emperor?'

Edan and the grandmaster were in a relationship of necessity. Edan wanted to become emperor, and the grandmaster decided to help Edan because he could get something. There was no guarantee the grandmaster would be on Edan's side after the grandmaster got what he wanted.

'Sigh, I have to be involved with that bastard.'

In fact, Zibal knew that there was only one end waiting for Edan. It was an unfortunate one. This was natural. Edan lost sight of himself a long time ago. The reason he decided to become emperor a long time ago might've been for his mother, but now he had become a scoundrel who insulted his mother in front of others and pointed his sword at his father. His evil deeds had brought suffering upon many people, and he eventually became someone who couldn't be saved.

'No, I still don't know. Things can work out,' Zibal prayed. He hoped that Edan got what he wanted. From then on, he would live and atone for his sins.

'Don't forget my grace and give me the magic machine. Make me a duke as well.'

While the outside of the audience hall was in turmoil...

"I will now install 4th Prince Edan as the new emperor. The proof of qualification for the replacement is the sword of the founding emperor, Saharan."

“...”

There was silence inside the audience hall. Everyone was stunned by the grandmaster's absurd declaration. Suddenly, Duke Grenhal came to his senses and shouted with a red face, “Zikfrector! It is up to the emperor to decide who will be the next emperor! How dare you try and place a new emperor?”

“You don't have enough understanding. I presented the founding emperor's sword as proof of qualification. Don't you know that this qualification is enough to establish a new emperor?” It was still a careless expression. The grandmaster looked like he was going to yawn.

Morse's anger soared, and he interjected, “How can we believe that? I have never heard of the founding emperor's sword having such authority?! How can you prove it is the founding emperor's sword in the first place?”

“You don't know it but one person knows.” The grandmaster's gaze was on the emperor. “Have you heard the meaning of Saharan's sword?”

“...”

“Your Majesty!”

The emperor was silent, and the dukes' expressions became complicated. The silence was agreement.

“If my descendants don't keep the promise, you can take away the throne at any time.”

“...?”

“Those are the words that Saharan left behind before he died. It was conveyed to all the emperors after Saharan.”

“Why... Why is that?”

The dukes were shocked, and Bain closed his mouth in amazement. They were confused. Why did the founding emperor leave such words? What was the promise? Since when did the grandmaster exist? Grandmaster Zikfrector didn't care about their confusion. He just looked at the emperor and said, “Juander, you have forgotten.”

“...”

“You ignored my warnings several times and turned away from the Abyss.”

At this moment...

“I'm sorry,” the silent emperor finally opened his mouth. “You didn't explain anything to me. You didn't give a proper warning either. You only recommended exploring the Abyss and were idle every time I put it off. Wouldn't it have been nice if you urged me to notice it was a warning? I didn't know the promise between you and my ancestor was intertwined with the Abyss. Many things have been lost and forgotten over the years!”

“You are certainly an ignorant dreamer.” The grandmaster's gaze changed for the first time. It was now a sympathetic gaze like he was looking at a pathetic creature. “The moment you became emperor, you turned away from the space you should be responsible for.”

Step.

The grandmaster took a step forward.

“You didn’t even try to figure out what the promise was.”

Step.

Two steps.

“Instead of blaming yourself for turning away from my voice, you’re transferring the responsibility to others.”

Step.

Three steps. Yes, the grandmaster only took three steps, but he ended up right in front of the emperor. The space itself had folded. Bain felt that way.

“You are the most incompetent and selfish of all the emperors. You used the excuse of losing your beloved woman, but you have been incompetent and dull from the beginning. On the other hand...” The grandmaster finished his ruthless assessment of the emperor and turned his attention to Edan. “Your son has a very good side. He noticed what I wanted after visiting the Abyss once and suggested a deal. It was like the second coming of Saharan. I even felt joy.”

The grandmaster tapped Saharan’s sword with his finger. Then a large amount of red energy emerged from the sword, and the audience hall was dyed red. It was a light powerful enough to be seen by Grid’s group that had just arrived at the outskirts of Titan.

[Chapter 1078](#)

Red energy was an innate force. It was difficult to train or grow, just like the blood-sucking ability of the vampires or the evil eyes. This was why the empire in the past simply established a person with superior red energy as the emperor. Those were the days when the strongest person was the emperor. The empire of that time was truly supreme and reigned over everyone.

Then what about now? Years passed by, and the royal family became intoxicated with power. It wasn’t the strongest but those who were good at machinations that repeatedly became emperor. At some point, the emperor was reduced to a word meaning those who were more insidious or were lucky. They merely habitually advocated the wishes of their ancestors to unify the West Continent and spread to the East Continent. They were busy enjoying a rich life. It was one of the reasons why the imperial family forgot about the commitment to the grandmaster.

The Abyss...

The end of the world...

It was the origin. It was presumed to be a passage connecting this world and hell and was a very important place to fulfill the wishes of both Emperor Saharan and the grandmaster. Now, the grandmaster found it ridiculous because it was only treated as a prison.

“On the other hand, your son has a good side. He noticed what I wanted after visiting the Abyss once and suggested a deal. It was like the second coming of Saharan. I even felt joy.”

“What do you want in the Abyss?”

The grandmaster’s meaningful words caused Emperor Juander’s eyes to widen. The emperor knew that the Abyss was the end of the world. As a person went deeper, the concept of dimension and time disappeared, and it became an ominous place that touched hell.

“Is your purpose to break down the boundaries between this world and hell, bringing about chaos?”

“That is a poor guess. Saharan, who joined hands with me, would swear at you.”

“...!”

The grandmaster tapped Saharan’s sword with his finger, and a large amount of red energy started to emerge. The blood red scenery changed into an ominous and terrible place. Edan was engulfed in great power and barely suppressed his boiling instincts. “Emperor! Make me the emperor right now! Then you won’t lose your life!”

“I can’t do that! No emperor has ever been usurped by his son!” It meant Juander alone couldn’t be humiliated.

“Do you care about that despite coming to this point?”

Saharan’s red energy and the emperor’s red energy clashed in the air. The emperor gritted his teeth. He might be accused of being incompetent and selfish by the grandmaster and Edan, but Juander was still the reigning emperor.

Juander might’ve overlooked the grandmaster—who had existed since the time of his father and grandfather—and made the mistake of not looking after his family properly, but during Juander’s reign, the empire abolished many ethnic minorities and made a stable economic development. From an external point of view, he was a ferocious villain who created a livable world for his people.

What about now? The grandmaster—who turned away from state affairs—and his son—a high profile criminal whose sins couldn’t be covered up—were criticizing him? The emperor felt resentful. He felt great hatred for both Edan and the grandmaster who were standing side by side in front of him.

Juander’s red energy was exceptional. Saharan’s red energy didn’t lose momentum and stayed strong. Yet it was only for a moment. Saharan’s red energy—the tsunami-like power and sun-like heat that bound to matter and had dominance over life—far surpassed Juander’s red energy. Saharan’s red energy devoured all of Juander’s red energy, and Edan’s red energy became stronger. It happened in an instant. The force was absorbed.

“What?” The emperor was astonished by the strange phenomenon.

Then the grandmaster murmured, “The source is irresistible.”

“You...! Zikfrefector!!” The emperor’s bloody gaze returned to the grandmaster. His resentment was concentrated on the grandmaster.

Looking back, didn't this person know everything? He had known the fact that it had been Empress Marie who killed Empress Aria and condemned Piaro. (TL Note: For those wondering, different Korean words are used for empress in regards to Marie and Aria. Aria is the official empress while Marie is like the imperial concubine and the Korean empress word used for her is one level below Empress Aria.)

If the grandmaster had given him a small hint, then he might not have lost Aria and Piaro. Yet the grandmaster hadn't told him anything. He hadn't warned Juander that the promise between the grandmaster and the imperial family shouldn't be forgotten and never ended up telling him about the promise.

"You! You pushed me to this point!!" The red energy in the emperor's sword shot at the grandmaster's chest. The power was far beyond that of the dukes, and Zibal—who was watching from afar—was amazed.

'As expected, the emperor's level is above 500?'

It was common sense that an NPC in an important position would have a higher level and stats. He predicted that the emperor's level might be the best on the continent, but it was great to actually see it. Zibal thought that the grandmaster wouldn't be able to avoid a big injury.

Then what was this? The grandmaster stood still and blocked the emperor's attack. The pull of gravity suddenly increased, crushing the emperor's body and pushing the emperor's sword to the ground. The grandmaster's and emperor's eyes met.

"..."The grandmaster was silent. He didn't have to explain. His silence was a positive answer.

"...!" Crushed by gravity, the emperor, who had been distracted by the grandmaster, stepped back in amazement. Saharan's sword flew at the place where he had just been standing. It was a narrow escape.

"Your Majesty!" The dukes watched with a sense of urgency as the emperor's shoulder was cut. They were forced to watch. Saharan's red energy, the origin of all the red energy, controlled the dukes who had served the imperial family for generations. The dukes couldn't deal a single blow. They could only kneel down and watch the situation with despair. It was the crisis of the emperor they served all their lives. A berserk maniac was trying to become the new emperor.

'Is there no one who can break through that line?'

The dukes' eyes were aimed at the corridor beyond the audience hall. Dozens of Red Knights and magic machine riders could be seen. They were a power that could be described as the most elite of the empire. Even if the imperial guards and the dukes' people joined forces, it would take a great deal of time to break through. The moment that the dukes began to despair...

"How long will you stay there? Escape quickly and call the army!" Bain blocked Edan's sword. As expected of the emperor's shadow. His attitude of defending the emperor was very desperate. They were confident he could be trusted.

"I know...! Please hold on a bit!" The dukes tried to move their heavy legs and raise their bodies.

"You have to stay here. I need someone to support the new emperor who will soon be born."The grandmaster flicked his fingers and changed the gravity around the dukes.

The dukes, who just stood up, were forced to lay flat again. “S-Shit!”

It was a mighty magic power that went beyond that of the great demon Berith. This wasn’t in the realm of a human. Grenhal opened the power of a berserker while Morse drew on the power of a beast. In order to stand up to the transcendent, they also approached transcendence.

“Annoying,” the grandmaster muttered at the sight of the dukes overcoming gravity and took out two transparent orbs, letting them float around him. The orb was a tool that amplified magic power. It was the first time the grandmaster used magic, and the aftermath was severe.

“Kuooock...” Grenhal and Morse barely managed to stand up before being forced to sit down again. Those who opened up all their power couldn’t beat the grandmaster because the dimension of their skills was different. Then there was a disturbance in the corridor.

“Get lost!”

There was the sound of blasts from the corridor, and the Red Knights’ bodies started to float in the air. The Red Knights coughed up blood as they were thrown into the wall and became blood puddings. Grenhal and Morse’s eyes shone brilliantly. “Sir Chensler...!”

It was Armored Cavalryman Chensler—the most loyal of the Five Pillars. His arrival changed the situation dramatically. The Red Knights—apart from the single digit numbers—fell like autumn leaves, and even the single digit knights were pushed to the entrance of the audience hall.

“Your Majesty!” Chensler roared as he saw the situation inside the audience hall. Behind his back, hundreds of imperial guards could be seen.

“Shit!” Zibal and the riders tried to summon their magic machines.

“There is nothing good about a bigger turmoil.” The grandmaster stepped in and restrained the riders.

The two orbs still floated around him as he held a sword in his hand. A magician using a sword? Zibal and the riders thought it was absurd, but those who knew the reality of the grandmaster became more nervous. In the beginning, the title of grandmaster was given to those who reached the peak in all fields.

Chensler held a halberd and controlled his distance from the grandmaster. It was an attempt to create an area that was favorable to him, but he failed. The grandmaster’s Earthquake forced Chensler to dodge. Chensler avoided it by leaping into the air, and this allowed the grandmaster to break through easily.

“Kuek...!” Chensler would’ve been fatally wounded if it wasn’t for his armor. A chill went down Chensler’s spine, but he kept fighting back. During this time in the air, he drew a half-moon with the halberd and pressed the grandmaster. In the meantime, the imperial guards tried to enter the audience hall.

However, the Red Knights barred their way. The guards cried out, “Why are knights loyal to the emperor on the side of the rebels?”

“I realized how vain this loyalty was after learning of Zikfrector’s greatness.” Susan fought against the guards. Her lineage couldn’t be deceived. Like her cousin Mercedes, she had great skills. She wasn’t an

easy opponent for the guards. Blood and flesh were scattered throughout the corridor, and cruel screams filled the imperial palace.

The situation inside the audience hall was reaching the worst. Bain was defeated by Edan. Edan, armed with Saharan's sword, was stronger than anyone else here.

Edan pointed his sword at the emperor's neck and said, "Over the past few generations, the empire has become stagnant but it will be different in my generation. I want to know. Why did our ancestors want to advance to the East Continent? I will surely cross the Red Sea."

"You will regret it one day. A sword will be pointed to you, just like the grandmaster did to me."

"That is possible... Still, isn't it a hundred times better to die as the emperor than to die now?"

"..."

"Father, I will inherit the throne." Edan no longer hesitated. He gave strength to his hand to insert his sword into the emperor's neck.

Simultaneously...

"Knight Summoning!"

"...?"

A strange voice was heard from the corridor filled with metal colliding and screams.

"Piaro!"

"...!?"

A completely unexpected name popped up. The emperor who was waiting for death, the two dukes who were looking on with sorrow, the watching Bain, and Edan who had the throne in front of him... Everyone was baffled and turned their attention outside the audience room. There...

"..."

The pillar who once sustained the empire...

The hero of the past was looking around the audience hall with disinterested eyes.

The eyes of the imperial guards and the Red Knights were bloodshot. It was a reflexive reaction. All of the people here respected Piaro.

"Piaro, I'm sorry, but let's save the emperor," the voice of someone standing behind Piaro echoed in the silent hallway. Everyone could see the black-haired man. It was Overgeared King Grid. His authority was astounding.

Piaro, who showed killing intent when he saw the emperor, quickly became a gentle sheep. "Yes, Your Majesty."

The peerless Piaro, one of the greatest heroes in the history of the empire, was politely receiving the Overgeared King's order.

“Why is the traitor here?” Susan belatedly blocked the path in front of Piaro. Piaro was a great swordsman in the past, but Susan had also recently become a great swordsman. She even learned magic from the grandmaster and was confident in her skills. Her ambition was to be better than Mercedes, and she wasn’t afraid of Piaro.

“Torrent of Protection!”

A pillar of transparent light fell around Susan’s body. It was the grandmaster’s personal best buff that greatly increased all stats. The moment she tried to swing her sword at Piaro...

“I won’t allow your comfort,” the Overgeared King quietly declared. The light that surrounded Susan’s body was extinguished without a trace.

“Ah?”

A hand plow struck the forehead of the baffled Susan. No one in the corridor was able to stop Piaro. All the agricultural tools in his hands caused everyone to harden like stone statues.

[Chapter 1079](#)

The red light from the imperial palace covered the entire capital, Titan. This meant that Grid could witness the sight from the outskirts.

“A very large butcher’s store...!” This was Grid’s impression.

Grid shouted it unknowingly, but fortunately, Basara’s group didn’t hear it. No, they heard it, but they couldn’t afford to worry about it. It was because they were busy worrying about the change in the capital that was now unfolding in front of them.

“The sky and the earth are red... Why is this...?”

“A fearful omen. The 4th imperial prince is crazy, and the empire will be destroyed.”

Basara’s retainers lamented. They felt a great ominous feeling from this incomprehensible supernatural phenomena. This was when Basara’s clear voice awakened everyone’s spirit, “That is red energy.”

“Red energy?”

Anxiety was washed away from the faces of those who learnt the identity of the red light shrouding the capital. The red energy was a symbol of the imperial family. From the standpoint of those who served the royal Basara, the red energy was an auspicious power.

“The red energy could be this widespread? His Majesty’s power is much greater than I thought.”

People believed that the owner of this red energy was naturally the emperor. The emperor’s red energy was the strongest in this era. However, Basara knew...

The emperor’s red energy wasn’t this great. This was at a level that broke even the common sense of the imperial family.

‘Who is it?’

The main characteristic of red energy was the 'influence on matter.' In normal cases, the royalty raised their power by infusing red energy into certain substances and distributing it to their subordinates. The emperor's power was also unique due to his monopoly of red energy and the black mithril.

Yet there was a fact that couldn't be overlooked. The red energy could strengthen the material it was injected into, but it could also absorb the strength of the material. It was very inefficient to absorb the strength of the material while consuming red energy, so the existing royalty didn't operate the red energy this way.

'A person with so much red energy can absorb the strength of all things and exert transcendental power.'

Basara's expression turned cold. She sensed that the emperor was in a great crisis. Her retainers were also agitated.

"Why is His Majesty personally using the red energy? Don't tell me...?"

"Is the 4th imperial prince attacking His Majesty?"

The speculation of the retainers shocked the 10,000 cavalymen. Everyone looked at Basara nervously. Basara was forced to make a bold decision, "Enter the capital in an armed state. We must immediately march to the imperial palace to help His Majesty."

Some of her retainers made objections once Basara gave the order. They were all opinions that came from their loyalty.

"The soldiers of the imperial family will block the gates. No matter our intentions, we can be regarded as traitors the moment there is an armed conflict. We can save His Majesty and lose everything."

"Your Highness, this is now an opportunity from Heaven. You can't help His Majesty."

"That's right! First, contact the estate and ask for the army! The moment we hear that His Majesty is in trouble, we can march and occupy the capital!"

Basara was fifth in the line of succession. She was ranked second highest after the princes, and as long as she maintained her duke rank and territory, her actual force went beyond the princes'. Basara was the right person to be next to the throne. Of course, Basara herself didn't intend to refuse the throne. However, she judged that it was too premature.

'It is too dangerous until I know what the grandmaster is doing.'

Unlike the other emperors through the ages, Basara had no intention of ruling by force. It wasn't because she was a nonviolent person or that she was weak. She was just an extremely reasonable person. By coexisting with non-imperial countries and ethnic minorities, it would enrich them, and she would receive more tributes that would help the empire's future. Her ancestors had already demonstrated how inefficient it was to trample and dominate with unconditional force. It was doubtful if the grandmaster, who had been with the emperors of the past, would agree with Basara's ideas.

'The grandmaster is also a person who pursues hegemony, which is why he is on the empire's side.'

It was clear that her position would be troubling if she opposed the grandmaster. The power of the grandmaster, who had been with the imperial family for a long time, would easily surpass the new emperor. Unless she wanted to live as the grandmaster's puppet, Basara believed it would be better not to aim at the throne until she read his intentions. Therefore...

"No. We have to help His Majesty. His Majesty still needs to be in place."

Basara ignored the opinions of her loyalists, and the 10,000 horsemen started their march. The land became turbulent when 10,000 horses started running at once. The birds staying in the small mountains all over the place were startled and flew into the sky.

During the raucous march, Basara called out to Grid, "Overgeared King!"

Having witnessed the white-haired Grid at the Ruins of the War God, she interpreted that Grid was a master comparable to the grandmaster and made a request.

"It will take a while for our army to reach the imperial palace. Can you help His Majesty by going to the imperial palace first?" Basara's request had sufficient grounds.

Grid's wish was the unity of the Overgeared Kingdom and the empire. Grid running over first and helping the emperor was a shortcut to achieve Grid's wish. It was as expected.

"Okay," Grid happily accepted Basara's request. It seemed as if he had been waiting for it.

A somewhat bitter smile spread on Basara's face. "You have to go alone to a place where the enemies are unknown... Yet you don't even hesitate."

Basara's affinity with Grid was already reaching the peak. The moment she received a proposal from Grid, she had enough affinity to plan their honeymoon.

She gave genuine advice to Grid, who started to manipulate something, "I am well aware of your strength. Still, be careful. There are many strong people in the imperial palace who can threaten you. When you arrive, read the situation first and only act when you can ensure your safety, rather than unconditionally help His Majesty."

"Of course," Grid answered while putting on a skin mask.

[Berith's Skin Mask]

[Rating: Legendary (Transcendent)]

Durability: 10/10 (can't be repaired)

A mask made by Berith processing human skin.

It boasts a perfect degree of completion because it contains Berith's magic of lies and distortion. It isn't only the face that is disguised but the body shape and voice as well. Thus, it transcends a simple mask.

* You can disguise yourself as anyone you have a reasonable understanding of.

* You must've communicated at least 100 words with the target in order to gain the understanding needed for the disguise.

* The higher the affinity of the target, the better the understanding.

* The duration of the disguise depends on your understanding of the target.

★ You can only copy the appearance and voice of the target. Be extra careful about your words and actions after the disguise.

Cooldown Time: 12 hours.

User Restriction: Level 380 or higher.

Weight: 2]

"I'll be going," Grid said through the skin mask. His tone was exactly like Basara's. That's right. In order to freely move through the imperial palace, he disguised himself as Basara, a member of the imperial family and a duke.

Basara's face reddened. "This..."

"...?"

"M-My chest has swelled. Did you put cotton in? Surely the magic of a great demon isn't omnipotent enough to replicate all parts of the human body?"

The embarrassed Grid forgot to act as he replied, "O-Of course."

He couldn't answer honestly.

The capital Titan was the heart of the empire. It was a magnificent and splendid city that gave a glimpse into the wealth and power of the empire. However, the red-colored Titan was a completely different city from what Grid had seen before. Knights riding horses raced down the roads, and soldiers with swords were seen in every alley. Signs of battle were found, and some aristocratic mansions were burning. The people, who lost their place in this turmoil, crouched in a corner and cried.

It was simply pandemonium.

'It's like a war.'

As Basara feared, this was an unusual situation. Grid had to hurry. This was a great opportunity to help the emperor and raise affinity. He was also worried about the dukes who had left to meet the emperor first.

"Isn't that Duke Basara?" The knights carefully searching the area found Grid disguised as Basara and got off their horses.

Grid asked them, "Are you searching for the rebel Edan?"

"Yes, that's right!"

"Don't you know what is going on right now in the imperial palace?"

“I’m sorry. We don’t know what’s going on in the imperial palace. We are worried because a red light suddenly burst out but two duke and the Five Pillars are there. We dare not question or worry about it.”

“I see. Continue with what you were doing.”

“Yes!”

The knights hurriedly opened the way and Grid ran past them to the imperial palace. Grid thought about it, ‘No matter how I look, that son of a bitch Edan is fooling around.’

Edan shook off the soldiers’ search and infiltrated the imperial palace to attack the emperor. The emperor exploded his red energy during the confrontation, and this influence turned the capital red. Grid could guess up to here.

The one question was if Edan could do any harm to the emperor. As the knights said a while ago, the emperor was protected by the Five Pillars while Grenhal and Morse were visiting the emperor. Above all, the emperor himself was the strongest. Even if Edan was buffed by the obvious cliché in his role as a villain, it seemed impossible for him to break through these forces and harm the emperor.

‘Thus, I need to hurry up.’

He didn’t think the situation would already be finished, but he had to go quickly or he wouldn’t be able to get the emperor’s favor. Grid increased his speed. Unfortunately, this female body was unfamiliar and uncomfortable. His limbs were long, but his hips were too big and his chest shook when he ran. He couldn’t maintain his balance. Grid could grab them every time he jumped, but he was worried about eyes and felt guilty toward Basara.

‘Eh.’

Should he care about these small problems in such a desperate situation? Grid just grabbed his chest and started to run. The texture that was conveyed was... Omitted.

‘How terrible.’

The scenery of the imperial palace was more serious than the capital’s. Every corridor and pillar was sprayed with red blood, and the groans of the dying soldiers echoed like a long song.

“D-Duke Basara...”

“The Red Knights... The Red Knights betrayed...”

“His Majesty is in danger...”

The soldiers who discovered Grid coughed up blood. Grid, who learned of the situation, equipped the Ideal Dagger and used Quick Movements.

‘The emperor failed to kill the Red Knights and was hit.’

The skills of the Red Knights weren't ordinary. Once the single digit knights joined forces, they could compete with the dukes. Additionally, the Red Knights themselves had many people. Edan also had the magic machines unit, so the Five Pillars and the dukes couldn't easily stop his momentum.

This was an opportunity for Grid. Grid accelerated through the corridors. His transcendent senses were guiding him. As he got closer to the audience hall, he could hear the sound of friction, explosions, and metal colliding. Grid checked his condition after confirming that the duration of Quick Movements had ended.

'It is perfect.'

The only skill on cooldown was Quick Movements. All skills were available, his health and mana were maintained at the maximum, and only a small amount of stamina was consumed.

'Before the Five Pillars wipe out the Red Knights, I will break through the Red Knights and give the emperor a vivid impression.'

Grid made a plan and took off the skin mask. There was no need to expose the skin mask to the emperor or the Five Pillars. Moreover, it was necessary to reveal his identity. If they asked how he came to the imperial palace, he would have to speak with the dukes and answer in the most positive way possible. He finally got closer to the scene of combat.

At the end of the long corridor, knights in red armor could be seen. So far, it was as Grid had expected. Then he saw Grandmaster Zikrefector and Chensler fighting each other. The members of the Five Pillars that Grid were familiar with were fighting each other.

'What?'

One of them was on Edan's side? Or was there some type of disagreement and they were just fighting for a moment? Grid's confused gaze turned reflexively into the audience hall. Then he saw it. It was the sight of Edan's sword being pointed to the emperor. Grenhal and Morse were on the ground in a mess while Bain, another of the Five Pillars, was wounded.

'Did Edan do this?'

What mattered now wasn't grasping the situation. He had to save the emperor as soon as possible. In order to achieve harmony with the empire, the emperor who favored the dukes had to survive. How should he do this? Grid was daunted by the battle between the grandmaster and Chensler. The two monsters, who he didn't think he could win against even if he used Blackening, were fighting in the middle of the corridor. Grid couldn't break through them to reach the audience hall.

'Braham, do you intend to wake up?' He anxiously called out to Braham, but there was no answer. Braham, who had fallen asleep, seemed like he wouldn't wake up for a long time.

-Grid! Don't interfere! A whisper flew toward Grid.

The sender was Zibal. Grid turned his gaze and saw Zibal standing with the riders. Then Grid's face filled with frustration. He felt desperate because even if he broke through the Five Pillars and the Red Knights, there were still the magic machines.

"Knight Summoning!"

That's why he summoned Piaro. He was convinced that he had to pull out the strongest hand. He also remembered that Piaro was one of the people related to the empire.

"Piaro!"

[Your knight 'Piaro' has arrived by your side.]

It was a notification that came up without a pause. Grid affirmed it as he stared at the back of Piaro, who responded immediately to his call.

'Piaro won't die.'

He would make sure of it. The determined Grid gave an order in front of everyone. "Piaro, I'm sorry but let's save the emperor."

He surely wouldn't be willing. He would surely be hesitant. This was what Grid thought.

"Yes, Your Majesty."

To Grid's surprise, Piaro immediately agreed to the order. He pulled out a hand plow from among various farming equipment hanging from his waist and broke through the corridor.

"Piaro...!" The Red Knights cried out. None of them dared to block the path ahead of Piaro. Only one person was different.

"Damn! Don't interfere!" Only the player Zibal summoned his magic machine and stood in front of the entrance to the audience hall. A giant and majestic magic machine came in contact with the high ceiling of the imperial palace as it stabbed at Piaro with a pillar-like spear.

"Free Farming 2nd Style.Super Growth."

A soybean tree grew through the ground in an instant and blocked it. Not only did it block Raiders' spear, but it also grew vines that bound Raiders' arms and legs. Zibal became contemplative at the sight of Raiders who stopped moving for a while.

"This is crazy!"

In the past, Zibal had already been beaten by Piaro. For Zibal, 'Reidan's crazy farmer' was imprinted in him as the strongest. However, he had forgotten. It was caused by witnessing the battle between the grandmaster and Chensler. Shortly after witnessing their battle, Zibal became relatively relaxed and fearless as he faced Piaro for their long reunion.

This was the result. The operating time was so short that even one second was precious. Raiders was tied up for three seconds, and this allowed Piaro to break through. Moreover, Piaro had already entered the audience hall and stopped Edan from killing the emperor.

Saharan's sword and a sickle collided. Piaro's appearance, which hadn't changed since he left the empire, shocked Edan and the dukes.

"You have become a legend and broken the shackles..." A bitter voice filled with complex emotions—Emperor Juander's voice echoed in the hall.

On the other hand, Grid...

“Amazing. You infiltrated here so easily with your skills?”

He was confronted by the grandmaster. Unlike the tense Grid, the grandmaster was smiling. “There is a lot of talent. I’m becoming more and more excited.”

“What do you expect from me?” Grid was in a position where he couldn’t act.

Asmophel, Mercedes, Noll, Jude, and the 10 meritorious retainers were available, but he had to be cautious because he wasn’t in a position to bring them all out. First of all, Asmophel and Mercedes were escorting the previous generation of Red Knights and weren’t suitable to be called. Noll was another species, and Grid was afraid this would antagonize the emperor. Meanwhile, Jude was too weak. Most of all, Grid could only guarantee the life of one person. He only had one White Peach.

Grid decided to talk to the grandmaster, who was interested in him, and further explore the situation.

“Tell me. What are you expecting from me?” Grid asked again.

“Won’t you be the emperor?” The grandmaster returned with a question.

Grid suddenly knew that all of today’s events were caused by the grandmaster.

[Chapter 1080](#)

“Won’t you be the emperor?”

Cats became tigers after three years of military life. They could read the timing just looking at the movement of the soldiers. It wasn’t hard to know what was going on after Grid had been with Lael for a few years.

“Grandmaster, you betrayed the emperor and stood on Edan’s side.”

“The expression ‘betrayal’ isn’t appropriate. I’m just exercising my right.”

“Your right?”

The grandmaster was very kind to Grid. He told his story in great detail, “A long time ago, a man came to me and offered me a deal. He asked me to make him the emperor. He said that if he became emperor, he would surely fulfill my heart’s desire.”

“That person...”

“Yes, it was Saharan. I made him emperor, but coincidentally, he failed to keep his promise to me. The promise he failed to keep was to be fulfilled by his descendants. However, time passed, and the imperial family forgot about their promise to me, reaching the present point.” The grandmaster’s gaze turned to inside the audience hall.

In the aftermath of the free farming, the audience hall was gradually becoming farmland. Edan and Piaro could be seen fighting among the ripened rice.

The grandmaster pointed to Edan’s sword. “That sword is a token of the promise. Saharan gave me a sword that contained his red energy, which accelerated his death. Saharan told me. If the imperial

family breaks their agreement with me, I will prove my qualifications with this sword and ascend to the throne myself. Then he made policies to fulfill my desire in the long term.”

Grid listened to the friendly explanation and stabbed at the core, “Who are you?”

At this moment...

“...!” Everyone in the audience hall had wide eyes. All of them wondered about the grandmaster’s desire. Based on that desire, they could infer the grandmaster’s identity. However, Grid asked about the identity of the grandmaster. Asking for this person’s identity without even mentioning the contents of the desire...? It wasn’t prudent. The grandmaster wouldn’t answer. People expected Grid’s question to be ignored.

It was as expected.

“...” The grandmaster was also a bit baffled. The question of his desire was expected, but the question of his identity was unexpected.

Grid shrugged. “Won’t you ask me to fulfill your desire if I become the emperor? I can’t make a deal with someone I don’t know.”

“Kukuk...” The grandmaster burst out laughing. It was extremely rare for him to express his emotions, and this was the first time the emperor had ever seen the grandmaster laughing, despite having spent decades with him. “...The only sinner of the seven.” Sorrow permeated his bored eyes. The grandmaster’s clear eyes stared straight at Grid. “The incarnation of the betrayer, who was blinded by the light and turned a blind eye to the crisis of his companions who couldn’t see the darkness. That is who I am.”

“...?!”

It was like lightning striking Grid’s head. Grid knew the identity of those who were ‘blinded by the light and couldn’t see the darkness’.

‘The seven malignant saints...!’

It couldn’t be... The grandmaster’s identity was the incarnation of the seven malignant saints? It was unimaginable for Grid, who had long known that they were sealed between the ‘ground and hell.’ Grid had stiffened completely while the other people were scrambling. It was the sound of their thoughts trying to catch up. It was rare for anyone to know the truth of the seven malignant saints, even if they searched the entire world. None of the people in the room could understand the conversation between Grid and the grandmaster.

In the midst of the turmoil, the grandmaster said, “I wanted to remove my guilt, so I did a great deal of work. In an attempt to overcome the terrible boredom, I gained time by pushing this present body into the ranks of a transcendent. I studied how to save the incarnations of my colleagues who confronted the gods and lost the ‘past life qualifications,’ unlike me. The reason why so many other races on the continent were captured and experimented with, why I needed by-products of a great demon and my desire for the evil eye... It was all part of this research. No matter how long I spent on it, I couldn’t make a difference. It was impossible to fully overcome the boredom, so I made mistakes at every critical

moment. However, I know the cause of my colleagues' failure. The biggest reason for the failure was that they didn't rely on the 'expelled' gods."

"...?"

Who were the expelled gods? The chaos inside Grid increased. The other people's unrest was also growing. No one directly linked the grandmaster to the seven malignant saints, but an increasing number of people noticed that the grandmaster had been 'something other than human from the beginning.'

The grandmaster read the situation and lowered his voice. As he whispered into Grid's ears, his voice contained a deep annoyance. It was troublesome. The grandmaster wanted to beat everything. These desires started to dominate him.

"I felt great hope when I found out that you have the power of Taren."

"..."

"The answer lies in the Abyss. Become the emperor. Become the emperor, explore the Abyss, and trace the whereabouts of the expelled gods. The Second Seven Evils War will save the world from the fallen gods."

[★Hidden Quest★ The Sixth Evil's Proposal has occurred!]

[The Sixth Evil's Proposal]

[★ Hidden Quest ★

The sixth evil Zik, who has the sin of sloth, is suggesting that you become the emperor.

If you accept the offer, you will become the new master of the Saharan Empire!

Quest Clear Condition: Accept Zikfrector's offer.

Quest Clear Rewards: The Saharan Empire.]

[Would you like to accept the quest?]

Grid had experienced countless hidden quests, but he had never seen a hidden quest on such a scale. This was a quest to devour the whole empire. Grid naturally...

"I don't want to." He refused it.

"...?" The grandmaster was shocked. He had spoken honestly and hadn't expected Grid to reject the offer.

Grid explained, "If I become the emperor, won't there be rebellions all over the empire? How can I handle it? In the first place, I can't lead such a big country, and I don't have the manpower."

If Grid—who wasn't of Saharan's blood—was crowned the emperor, many nobles would revolt and an era of war would begin. Grid and the Overgeared Kingdom would be swept up in the war on a daily basis. By the end, the empire would be divided into dozens of pieces, and the security of the Overgeared Kingdom couldn't be guaranteed. It meant that he was more likely to lose everything and suffer.

The grandmaster shook his head. "The thing you should pay attention to is the exploration of the Abyss, not the management of the empire. The empire isn't a matter of concern at all."

"What on earth are you saying? Rather, it is none of my business what you do."

It was true that Grid respected the seven malignant saints who fought the gods for humanity. This didn't mean he intended to sacrifice himself for them. In the first place, Grid didn't want to be tied to the seven malignant saints. He could lose everything overnight if he drew the anger of the gods to himself. Grid had already resolved to be neutral after going through the Crossroad of Good and Evil quest and the Hexetia incident.

"Your Majesty the Emperor! I'm on your side!" Grid shouted.

"...Turning away even after knowing the truth." The grandmaster was furious.

Grid hurriedly cried out as the grandmaster's face distorted like a demon, "No, I don't want to be hostile to you. I'm just going to stop Edan's treason."

"It is just sophistry. Edan is my agent unless you accept my offer. Don't you know that going against him is going against me?"

"Ah..."

This was really upsetting. Harmony with the empire was really important, but was it right to be hostile to an incarnation of the seven malignant saints? He might just be an incarnation, but the seven malignant saints were the seven malignant saints. The grandmaster's power was likely to be far beyond what Grid expected. It was terrible to imagine what would happen if they fought.

Then it happened while Grid was feeling restless.

"Shut up, Zikfrector!" Edan yelled after easily defeating Piaro. The prince stared at the grandmaster with red eyes. "Weren't you trying to throw me away as soon as an opportunity came? I'm your agent...? Then you should consult me! I'm not a pushover!"

"...!"

In response to Edan's wrath, Saharan's sword started to exert a stronger force than before. The power was so great that it cracked Piaro's sickle which was made from Belial's by-products. The strength that had been absorbed from materials all over the capital finally started to manifest. It was great enough to overwhelm Piaro, who had yet to achieve a new ground in Natural State. At this moment, Edan was strong enough to threaten the grandmaster with his extreme temper.

"Zikfrector! I'll kill you first!"

"Eh?"

It was an unexpected development. Grid's eyes lit up when he witnessed Edan rushing to the grandmaster, and he hurriedly left his position. The grandmaster's sword and Saharan's sword collided, blowing up the imperial palace. The imperial guards and Red Knights were thrown into confusion by the powerful shockwave.

“Shit!”

This luck was truly dirty. The moment that Grid was going to spit out the shards of a stone that had flown through the corridor...

“Grab on!” Chensler rushed to the emperor in the turmoil and reached out to Grid. Grid hurriedly grabbed his hand. He was distracted by Edan going crazy in the area and couldn’t control his dexterity.

“Huuung,” Chensler groaned, but he didn’t blush. He barely resisted the rush of pleasure. “People have different orientations... I will respect it...”

“...?” Grid was wronged by Chensler who misunderstood, but now wasn’t the time to pay attention to such trivial (?) things.

Grid, who entered the side chamber with Chensler, immediately supported Piaro and stood by the emperor. The emperor bowed to Grid, causing doubts if this was really the emperor.

“Thank you...”

“Y-Your Majesty?!”

The emperor of the Saharan Empire, the ruler of the West Continent, was bowing to the king of a small country? It wasn’t only Chensler. Even the dukes who had maximum affinity with Grid were astonished. Of course, Grid was also surprised.

The emperor’s gaze was directed at Piaro, who was right behind Grid. “Overgeared King, you wouldn’t know it, but I have been thankful to you for a long time. I felt guilty every day for not stopping the war against the Overgeared Kingdom.”

“...”

Being in harmony with the empire wasn’t a vain wish. Grid’s heart became comfortable once he learned this.

Grenhal shouted, “We don’t know how long Edan will run wild! If he wakes up, then the first thing he will do is aim at Your Majesty. Your Majesty should leave!”

It was a great opportunity to do so while Edan was tying up the grandmaster’s feet. Grenhal insisted on it, but the emperor was hesitant.

“Throwing away my throne and running away... The entire world will laugh at me.”

There was no point in dying, but even now, he cared about his image. While Grid burned with frustration, Chensler persuaded the emperor, “Edan won’t be able to handle that power forever, and he will soon collapse. Before that, we need to suppress the grandmaster as much as possible. If our eyes are scattered, we won’t be able to save up our physical strength.”

“Nevertheless...”

“Your Majesty, please don’t miss this chance to wipe out the traitors.”

“...Okay.”

In the end, the emperor's stubbornness was defeated. The emperor, the two dukes, Bain, Chensler, and finally Grid and Piaro began their journey in a secret passage that had only been passed down through generations of emperors.