

Overgeared 1291

[Chapter 1291](#)

[Title: The Yatan Church is selling experience potions?

Contents: The Yatan Church is selling experience potions for cash. The Tier 1 potions can be taken by players below level 100, and the Tier 2 potions can be taken between levels 100 to 199. Tier 3 potions can be taken from levels 200 to 299. All of them had 700% additional experience and they can be stacked with other experience increase buffs. The price is 85,000 won for each, plus tax. There are no installment payments.]

A post in a well-known community caught people's attention. Naturally, there were some scornful responses.

-Selling experience potions? It is even in cash?

-Ah~ I see. You have started talking nonsense early in the morning.

-What messy dream did you get this from?

-Stupid idiot.

In order to play Satisfy, a capsule and flat monthly fee were required. The capsule cost ranged from 10 million won to hundreds of millions of won. The monthly cost was also over 300,000 won so it was a very expensive game. Now paid items were being released? There was no way.

The S.A Group wouldn't be sucking out money from players unless they went crazy. In the first place, there were no paid items in games these days. It was because, due to Satisfy's influence, online and mobile games had their positions weakened. They had to stop selling paid items in order to survive. In this situation, the S.A Group that monopolized the market started releasing paid items? Would the S.A Group be able to handle it once criticism was directed at them and the stock price plummeted?

[Title: Is it really released (screenshot)

Contents: 'Growth Potion for Beginner Adventurers', Growth Potion for Intermediate Adventurers', Growth Potion for Advanced Adventurers.]

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-.....The S.A Group jerks are finally crossing the line.

- Don't ㅋㅋㅋ. The guys who are raking in cash with the capsules and National Competition advertisements are selling paid items as well? ㅋㅋㅋ Their desire for money is beyond imagination.

-We should boycott. Everyone has experienced it with mobile games. Once paid items start to appear, it will go out of control later. If this continues, even the enhancement stones will be sold for cash.

-The price of the enhancement stones has been rising crazily for many years. I would be very grateful if it becomes a cash item.

-There are many dogs and pigs. You will be grateful for cash items? ≡ ≡ Have you forgotten that we are already spending money on this game? ≡ ≡ ≡ Why should we give extra money after paying a monthly fee?

-Can the S.A Group force you to buy it? Just buy it if you want to buy it.

-Yes~ don't buy it ≡ ≡ Then I will buy it and use it myself.

-Let's not become pushovers! We are customers who are paying the amount required by the S.A Group to play the game. Customers! We have the right to criticize the S.A Group who suddenly released experience potions without any notice, causing direct or indirect damage to those who have played the game seriously until now! Let's boycott them together!

-The moment that cash items comes out, we will be completely eliminated from the competition by the credit card warriors! Firmly against cash items!

-Players are already doing a lot of personal transactions, but they're still in the competition. They are only selling experience potions in the range of 1-299. What does it have to do with the credit card warriors? Rather, it is an update for light users like us.

-Right!

-No, this... if sales for the cash items this time are high, they will continue to add cash items in the future. You don't understand the seriousness of the situation...

-We can't stop the S.A Group even if we argue for 100 days. What can we do? Are you going to quit the game? Can you sit in front of the computer and watch the monitor while playing games? Huh? ≡ ≡ ≡

You can't stop playing Satisfy. Congratulations on being caught by the S.A Group. ≡ ≡ ≡

The S.A Group was able to handle the public criticism. Rather than falling, the stock price rose. People also knew that those who played virtual reality games could no longer return to online games or mobile games. Furthermore, the experience potions released by the S.A Group were expected to attract new users so it was natural for their stock prices to rise.

In the midst of the turmoil. Chairman Lim Cheolho held a press conference. He gradually answered the questions of 800 reporters from around the world. "First of all, I've said many times that we aren't involved in the content of the game. The developers just created Satisfy's system and worldview. All the changes that have occurred since the opening are the result of the players and Morpheus."

"Do you mean this is true for the experience items incident? It wasn't the S.A Group that updated the paid items. It was the players and Morpheus?"

"That's right. The choices and actions of the players have greatly weakened the Yatan Church and the influx of new players to the Yatan Church is decreasing day by day." To be exact, it was the result of Grid's choices and actions, but Chairman Lim Cheolho didn't say this. "Furthermore, the Rebecca Church is the biggest rival of the Yatan Church and they are getting stronger every day. There are signs that the destruction of the Yatan Church is coming."

This was also the result of Grid's choices and actions, but Chairman Lim Cheolho remained silent.

"However, there is still a role for the Yatan Church. There is no balance problem since it largely enriches the setting of a religion that serves Yatan, one of the absolute gods."

Chairman Lim Cheolho called up the data on the screen. Images and details of the experience potions released at this time floated on the holographic screen.

"As you can see, the conditions for taking the experience potions are limited to 'Yatan Followers.' It is evidence of an update to attract new and mid-level users to the Yatan Church. Morpheus has done this update purely to protect the balance of Satisfy."

"Then why sell it in cash? The reason why people suspect that the S.A Group intervened in this situation is because the item is a paid item. The profit that will be obtained by the S.A Group is too big just to say it is an item released to restore the balance of the Yatan Church in the game."

"Satisfy operates as a single server with an open field system. The server costs are astronomical. In order to cover the cost, our sales must be maintained above a certain level. Morpheus seems to have taken this into account."

"The care of an artificial intelligence... it is a touching story..."

Some reporters were sarcastic, but no one openly bit at Chairman Lim Cheolho. It was because most reporters were looking at the update in a positive light. The recent weakness of the Yatan Church, who was hostile to all the forces on the West Continent, became one of the reasons for reducing interest in the game. The resurgence and success of the Yatan Church was urgent.

"However, can the Yatan Church revive just because new and mid-level users are introduced? It is a game that has repeatedly proven that one strong person is much more valuable than thousands or tens of thousands of ordinary people. I wonder if the Yatan Church will be able to regain its former position just by increasing the numbers."

A senior reporter from the largest media in the United States raised this question and Chairman Lim Cheolho smiled.

"Change won't come in the near future. We are first sowing the seeds. Additionally, the sale of growth potions isn't the only part of the Yatan Church's revival update. The Yatan Church will surely be revived."

The way that the Yatan Church grew was to kidnap virgins and sacrifice them to strengthen the power of their believers or to summon a great demon. Since it was an organization that kidnapped so-called NPC villagers 1 and 2, it was more efficient when it came to quantity than quality. The large scale joining of new users would speed up the development.

Additionally, many people didn't know it, but the great demon of conflict, Amoract, was behind the Yatan Church. He was one of the few great demons qualified to fight against Baal, the 1st great demon. The Yatan Church was indeed a force with explosive potential.

"I am looking forward to the future after hearing Chairman-nim's words. That's it."

The senior reporter, who had been listening with interest while tapping on the holographic keyboard, removed his hand from the keyboard and made a meaningful expression.

“If the update proceeds due to Morpheus’ choice and judgment, will the same thing happen again in the future? If the forces of the Yatan Church grow out of control, will the Rebecca Church sell growth potions?”

It was definitely an important question to be raised. Players didn’t want sudden updates. It would be difficult for things to go well if the same thing happened again without prior notice. Chairman Lim Cheolho nodded. “That’s right. However, I don’t think they will sell the same products. Considering Morpheus’ nature, specialized items for each faction will be sold.”

Chairman Lim Cheolho didn’t know what new products would appear in the future and how the balance between forces would be maintained. The average person would be puzzled, but he had a speculation based on Morpheus’ ‘personality.’

‘After the Yatan Church, the Judar Church and Dominion Church will also revive.’

The Rebecca Church had gathered too many believers. 80% of religious players belonged to the Rebecca Church. Additionally, there were too many players without a religion who had friendly relations with the Rebecca Church. Grid was one of them. Chairman Lim Cheolho predicted that the balance of religions might change the pattern of power.

‘Sooner or later, gods with a strong authority will appear.’

Divinity came from faith. In the near future, there would be more gods presenting quests or certain episodes. For example, Rebecca, the goddess of light.

“...Hrmm.”

Chairman Lim Cheolho became troubled as he was thinking. It was because he remembered the statue of Grid in the Behen Archipelago.

‘No way, a religion...? That’s impossible.’

At the same time, at Shin Youngwoo’s house...

“Everything is going well when using Morpheus as an excuse. The profit will really shoot up. Tsk tsk.”

Shin Youngwoo was resting after logging out. He clicked his tongue as he watched the press conference being broadcasted live on TV. It was criticism that focused purely on ‘paid items’ and not the growth potions that were the content of the paid items.

That’s right. Despite working hard himself, he didn’t care about others being able to comfortably raise their level.

It wasn’t just him. The other rankers also didn’t feel any sense of deprivation. So what if they could comfortably raise their level to 300? The real leveling up started from the second half of the 300s anyway. Furthermore, the rapid growth of new users was welcome. The more users there were, the more prosperous the game and the more powerful the authority of the rankers.

“In any case, it will be interesting.”

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Ten thousand, hundred thousand, one million, three million, ten million...

There was no change despite the backlash from existing users. Since the new update, Satisfy gained a large number of new users in just a few days. The once deserted starting villages of each kingdom were crowded with people. It was the same for the Overgeared Kingdom.

At Selena Village, in the Overgeared Kingdom...

Soldier clicked his tongue when he saw the procession of novices outside the window. "Many of them are prospective believers of the Yatan Church..."

The reason why new users started Satisfy at a later time was due to the emergence of the growth potions that boosted experience gain by 700%. Soldier was troubled when he thought they would grow quickly and benefit the Yatan Church in the future.

'Security will quickly deteriorate if a Yatan Temple is built near the village.'

4,986th in the unified ranking—Soldier's ranking hadn't changed significantly compared to before he joined the Overgeared Kingdom. It was because he had relatively little time to focus on hunting when he was in charge of the lord's office. He was worried that he wouldn't be able to hunt if the Yatan Church gained power again.

'If the residents are in a hard spot then tax revenue will decrease...'

The starter village was, as the name suggested, a village. The population didn't reach the size of a city. However, the total area of the territory was quite large. It was natural since it was a place where new users were introduced every day. The quest achievement rate was very high and the market was active, so the tax revenue was quite good.

It was why Soldier, who made great achievements in the battle for Cork Island and trained soldiers under Asmosphel, chose to become the lord of a starter village while refusing to be the lord of a small or medium sized village. However, there was too much work once he became the lord and it was very tiring. Now he sighed when he saw the number of prospective Yatan Followers increasing.

'Should I cut off the buds...?'

It was around the time when Soldier was staring at the new users with murderous eyes...

"My Lord!" a knight rushed in and shouted urgently, "The prime minister...! The prime minister has come!"

".....?!"

The territory of the Overgeared Kingdom was huge. Of course, it was dozens of times smaller than the Saharan Empire, but compared to other kingdoms on the West Continent, it was two or three times larger in size and its population was also big.

Soldier's heart was uneasy when Lauel came to visit the starter village because Lauel was in charge of the politics of this huge kingdom.

'Did I do something wrong in the meantime?'

He was confident that he was running the village well, but he might've been mistaken. He was a soldier to his bones, but he was a stranger to politics.

Lauel smiled at Soldier who was standing upright. "Please relax. Why are you doing something so embarrassing?"

"Since ancient times, one should be nervous in front of your boss. I am more comfortable with this posture."

"Haha. I understand. Then I'll get straight to the point."

Lauel's face was tired because he had been unable to sleep properly for the last few days. There was a large influx of new users, but it was a very dangerous situation because most of them were likely to become Yatan Followers. The current Yatan Church might be weakened, but it showed its potential by periodically summoning the great demon. It was obvious that it would be difficult to deal with if they rose back to their prime.

'The biggest problem is that it is meaningless to hit the main base.'

Rebecca's influence was greatly weakened the moment the Vatican was gone.

It was because the role of the pope and elders who stayed in the Vatican to do business was very important. All of the Rebecca Temples were under the control of the Vatican. The absence of the Vatican would cause chaos in all the Rebecca Church temples.

On the other hand, Yatan's Servants weren't the type to sit at the desk to do business. They committed evil deeds in real time as they wandered around the continent. They didn't manage the Yatan Temples. In the first place, the Yatan Temples were focused on offering sacrifices and conducting rituals. it worked well even if there was no command system.

"Soldier."

"Yes."

"The Yatan Church can't be allowed to become as big as Morpheus intended. We have already experienced the prime of the Yatan Church in the past, so you know that we can't control it once the believers of the Yatan Church become active."

The targets of the Yatan Church were always the weak. It was very difficult to protect an unspecified number of weak people. As the number of victims increased, the population decreased. There were side effects such as the decline in security and the economy.

"I agree. No matter how thoroughly we defend ourselves, it is hard to stop them. If they number in the tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands... it is horrible just imagining it."

In the past, many of Yatan's Servants were killed by Grid. Even then, the nations of the West Continent didn't want the Yatan Church to grow. Due to fewer players wanting to enter the Yatan Church, their power had greatly weakened, but they weren't completely eradicated.

The Yatan Church boasted more vitality than a cockroach. Then what if they had tens of millions or hundreds of millions of players on their back? Punishing them could be impossible for eternity.

“Therefore, I have decided to open the treasury.”

“...Huh?”

The context was broken. Soldier cocked his head at the strange conclusion.

“Look at this.” Lael opened the inventory and pulled out several items. Swords, spears, staffs, bows, orbs, etc. Seemingly low level weapons were on display on the desk. “Over the past few days, I’ve instructed the blacksmiths of the Overgeared Kingdom to make novice weapons. We used high quality materials that aren’t normally used for beginner weapons so it boasts power that is several times higher than weapons of the same level.”

“.....?”

“Soldier, you will award these items to new users.”

“...Huh?”

“However, there are conditions. Give these items only to those who join the Rebecca Church.”

“Ah!”

Soldier finally understood the situation and felt admiration. Seeing this reaction, Lael made a grin that revealed his sparking teeth.

“From this moment on, we will offer top-notch equipment to those who start in the Overgeared Kingdom and join the Rebecca Church. It will be in intervals of level 10, 50, 100, 150, and 200.”

Changing religions wasn’t an easy task. Once a player belonged to a religion, it took a waiting period of one year after withdrawal to join another religion. This meant they could suppress the growth of the Yatan Church for at least one year. In Satisfy, one year was an invincible time since so many strategies had been published to the public. Those who played hard could aim to reach the mid-200s.

“There is only one reason why the Yatan Church is so attractive to new users. It is due to the fast growth rate. It is inevitable to say that you can reach level 400 several times faster than before. However, that is only but one of the ways to level up quickly.”

Compared to the experience buff, it was more advantageous to increase hunting speed. It was items that made fast hunting possible.

“If Morpheus dazzles people with growth potions, then we’ll dazzle people with items. It is even for free.”

This method would absolutely work. It would be a serious financial blow, but in the long run, it would not be a loss. An increase in the number of players belonging to the Overgeared Kingdom meant the tax revenue would increase. An increase in the number of players belonging to the Rebecca Church meant its alliance with the Overgeared Kingdom would become stronger.

Lael was convinced and his conviction always had a high probability of coming true.

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“Me! I’d like it!”

“When I can sit down after handing out all of this...”

Two days later, at Selena’s square...

The sight of people filling the square made Soldier flustered. More than half of Satisfy’s new players chose Selena as the starting village. Even at this moment, the procession to Selena was continuing all over the kingdom. Due to staffing restrictions, new users from other kingdoms were using every means to move to Selena. It was one of the few cases where a player beat a game company. The number of players entering the Yatan Church fell well below the S.A Group’s expectations and sales of the growth potion were also short of expectations.

“Godgeared Kingdom! Godgeared Kingdom!”

New users praised the Overgeared Kingdom. They were happy to grow quickly without having to do anything thanks to the weapons distributed for free at every level range in the Overgeared Kingdom. There were articles talking about how Grid and the Overgeared Kingdom punished the game company that tried to use artificial intelligence as a shield to avoid criticism. This was considered an example of using power in a good direction.

Of course, Grid’s heart was torn apart.

‘I will have to go back for a few days to work hard...’

Grid confirmed his finances and let out a deep sigh. No matter how well Grid earned money, he would have to make dozens of items to refill the treasury of the Overgeared Kingdom.

‘Well... It is okay because the damage can be recovered by all means. Let’s control my heart.’

At this moment, Lauel and Rabbit were in the same state. They were doing their best to recover from the damage somehow. No, the word damage wasn’t appropriate in the first place. This was only an investment.

“Um...”

Grid turned his gaze in the direction of the golden walnut forest. Piaro had already been in the forest for four days and Grid hoped he would come back with good news. It felt like his empty heart would fill again if they could grow the golden walnuts.

“Your Majesty the Queen.” Time was precious. A nobleman came to Grid, who was slaughtering monsters in a hunting ground near Yangzhou while waiting for Piaro. The nobleman was amazed by the bloody smell around him and bowed politely. “A person called Zikfrector has come to see you.”

“Oh my, really?” Grid was now naturally a shy person after dealing with the Xing King and nobles in Irene’s form for a few days. He placed his weapon back in his inventory and returned to the palace.

'He seems to have taken my advice seriously.'

This was what Grid thought...

"Go to the Hwan Kingdom with me."

"???"

Soon after, he met the grandmaster who put forward this absurd proposal.

"No, didn't I recommend not meeting them?"

The grandmaster reassured the flustered Grid, "I don't mean to ignore your warning. I just want to check it with my own eyes. I have heard your warning and don't plan to get on the same boat as them."

"....."

Grid had only been dealing with the yangbans. He had never visited the Hwan Kingdom in person. There was a moment of contemplation before Grid nodded.

"...There are many things I want to ask you, such as why you trust me so much and why you are so favorable to me. Still, first things first, I understand. Okay, I will accompany you."

This was a great opportunity to explore the enemy camp. It was an opportunity that could only be achieved with the grandmaster and must never be missed.

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Grandmaster Zikfrector, called the 6th evil, Zik, in his previous life—his goal was to punish the heavenly gods and great demons who colluded with them. His long-cherished wish is to pull down the gods who stained the seven good men with sin and to spread the truth to the world.

It was the most vain dream in the world. It was enough to be ridiculed by everyone, but Zikfrector was looking at the possibilities. He endured for a thousand years and hope sprang up. A person who was favored by the gods and could avoid their doubts, and a person who had the power to overpower the top great demons—the two keys essential to victory in the war against the gods were all in the present day.

The former was Grid and the latter was Marie Rose.

".....?"

Zibal became wide eyed when the grandmaster, who went to meet with Grid, came back with Queen Irene of the Overgeared Kingdom.

"Then, Grid..."

Zikfrector's words to introduce Grid were interrupted in the middle. Grid smiled brightly and lightly greeted Zibal, "I am Irene, queen of the Overgeared Kingdom. It is nice to meet you, Sir Zibal. No, should I call you Zik's apostle?"

"Ah. Yes... please call me as you please."

After all, Satisfy's artificial intelligence was truly great. It wasn't easy to distinguish between NPCs and players. Zibal felt it once again and nodded. On behalf of the Neo Red Knights who were wary of Irene, Zibal asked the grandmaster, "Why did the queen come instead of Grid?"

"....."

The grandmaster's mouth was shut. It was difficult to explain because he didn't know what Grid was doing. He thought about it for a while, but chose silence due to the annoyance that came.

'In any case, this is a noble.'

The conversation stopped and Zibal frowned. He never dreamt that the Irene in front of his eyes would be Grid and sent a whisper to Grid.

-Hey, Grid. Are you crazy? Why would you send your wife to the Hwan Kingdom after saying that we shouldn't trust the expelled gods? What if she dies?

NPCs only had one life. They couldn't be resurrected after death unlike a player. It was why the world couldn't blame Grid after he started a furious retribution when Khan died. Now he wanted to send Irene to the Hwan Kingdom...

Zibal couldn't understand Grid and didn't want to understand him. Grid, who received the whispered criticism, smiled at it and replied.

-It's fine. They won't be able to touch Irene as long as she is accompanied by the grandmaster.

The Five Seniors would definitely covet the grandmaster and be cautious. Besides...

-Additionally, Irene is strong and can save her own life.

Grid was very proud of his skills. He didn't arrogantly believe he was the strongest like when he first defeated Kraugel and rose to the throne of the supreme one. Rather, he set up objective indicators by grasping the balance of power in the world outlook. Even if the Five Seniors were hostile to him, he judged that he could survive by focusing on escaping under the grandmaster's protection.

-Really...? I won't worry too much if you say that.

Zibal glanced at Irene with a new expression. If this delicate woman was strong, how strong would she be? If she was really so strong, what had she been doing in this period of time? There were many things that weren't convincing, but he didn't intend to doubt and distrust them.

-Are you worried? Isn't it really touching?

-Don't misunderstand. I only sympathized with Irene because I thought you were playing tricks to change your wife. By the way, how did you find out the location of the Hwan Kingdom? I've been searching for the last few months, but there seems to be no way other than asking the Xing King directly.

-You're right, that was indeed the only way. I know because I asked the Xing King.

-The Xing King gave you the answer?

Zibal was truly amazed. What means did Grid use to open the Xing King's mouth, when the king wouldn't even speak with a sword pointed at his neck?

-Cruel bastard... what type of torture did you do?

With a tired look, Grid explained to Zibal, who had a misunderstanding.

-The Xing King and its people insist on keeping quiet about the Hwan Kingdom to outsiders because those who don't know the myth and hear about the Five Seniors will weaken the power of God Black Tortoise. Currently, Xing is being protected by the black tortoise. The moment the black tortoise is weakened, the invasion of the yangbans will begin. Thus, they can only desperately shut their mouths.

-There was such a thing... then why doesn't that rule apply to you?

-I know the true myths of the East Continent.

Grid was the one who knocked down the yangban and resurrected the black tortoise. In front of him, who penetrated the truth and denied the Five Seniors, talking about the Five Seniors wouldn't raise their divinity at all.

-Um... I see. By the way, what are you doing?

Zibal nodded in a convinced manner before frowning again.

-Why aren't you going to the Hwan Kingdom? Why should your wife visit the Hwan Kingdom instead of you?

-I'm busy making money.

-...I heard the Overgeared Kingdom has been busy scattering items lately. It is a useless thing.

-.....

-Well, I think you're doing a good job.

Zibal smiled and ended the whisper. He followed after the grandmaster walking in front and thought about it. Zibal used to be the head of the seven guilds. What was he obsessed with at that time when the world revolved around him? Personal fame, money, and power. He was in a hurry to fulfill his own interests and desires.

On the other hand, Grid...

'...There is no comparison.'

The reason why Zibal failed to occupy the position of the supreme one that he desired was because he was never qualified in the first place. Even if he took the position, he would've been pulled down before long. Zibal's expression became even firmer and stronger than before.

The residence of the gods was in the sky. They never stayed on the ground, even if they were defeated gods. Familiarity breeds contempt, thus divinity was weakened the moment gods lived together with

humans. The red phoenix, the black tortoise, the blue dragon, and the white tiger—it was the reason why the old and forgotten gods were defeated by the expelled gods.

At the center of the East Continent, there was a huge peach forest where four rivers met—under Grid’s guidance, the grandmaster arrived there and saw a rare phenomenon.

“It is hard to believe this is the ground.”

It seemed like the gods were in front of them. It was a land of spiritual energy that reminded him of the heavens he visited over a thousand years ago. The grandmaster used the ancient rune language and let it fly into the air. The procession of runes shone like the Milky Way. His body that had lost strength after losing divine power became slightly stronger.

The grandmaster’s clenched fists were full of strength. His tired face was filled with life.

“Wow...”

Grid exclaimed with admiration and Zibal and the Neo Red Knights couldn’t close their open mouths. Their impression of the grandmaster completely changed. The serene eyes that could be seen through the hair combed to both sides, the pale skin, and dry body...

Previously, the grandmaster gave off a gloomy and decadent impression, but now he looked clear and clean. He emanated so much goodness that people couldn’t help but trust him. The expressionless face was full of life and the quiet eyes made him feel like a completely different person.

“Can I go through this place?”

Step, step.

Even the way he moved forward had changed. The footsteps that was hesitant like he was anxious or a shameful sinner became strong and confident. A towering peach tree in the center of the forest—the grandmaster approached the giant tree where the branches spread out from left to right and his vision captured the blue sky at the top of the tree. The runes that revolved around the grandmaster started to aim at the sky.

“That’s right... it is here.”

Grid confirmed it. He stood beside the grandmaster and attached the amulet he received from the Xing King to the tree.

“Open the door.”

Thunder started to ring everywhere. A blue veil covering the vast peach forest could be seen. It happened the moment the group felt disconnected from the world...

A golden light poured down from the darkened sky and wrapped around the bodies of Grid, the grandmaster, and the rest of the group.

[You are qualified to visit the world of the gods of the east.]

“.....!”

The rising notification window made a chill shoot down Zibal's spine. The world of the gods—how many out of two billion players could see that place? Zibal was thrilled and frightened that a place he dismissed as fantasies actually existed and that he was going to visit it.

"This area is a bit shabby," Grid, who had already visited the world of the gods on the West Continent, murmured with a disinterested expression.

Grid, the grandmaster, and the rest of the group started to rise while surrounded by light and then a voice was heard. It was a voice directed at the grandmaster.

「I welcome you, poor apostle who was exploited and betrayed by the fallen gods.」

The vision of Grid, the grandmaster, and the rest of the group reversed. Soon, the world rose and when they opened their eyes again, a long road paved with trees could be seen.

"Ahh..."

Zibal and the Neo Red Knights sighed at the beautiful and mysterious scenery. Grid saw the same peach trees he had seen in the Peach Blossom Spring and approached it to grab a white peach. Unfortunately, before he could pick the white peach, yangbans wearing dopos showed up to guide the group.

"All humans apart from Apostle Zik, don't look at us. How dare you look?"

"Follow me. The Five Seniors are waiting."

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At a palace surrounded by peach trees and clouds...

The clothes of the court ladies as they walked through the corridors looked like they were alive.

"Didn't I tell you to shift your gaze?"

"Do I have to burn your eyes for you to listen?"

The yangbans warned Zibal who kept looking around. Zibal wanted to capture all the scenery of the divine world he would never see again. Thus, a strong resentment filled him.

'Who the hell do they think they are?'

Zibal's boss was the grandmaster. The other party had no right to command Zibal even if they were gods. Zibal felt great displeasure at the attitude of the nobles who threatened them. He wanted to raise his eyes and shout at the yangbans. However, he barely suppressed his anger and endured it.

'I will do as they say—when in Rome, do as the Romans do.'

It would damage the grandmaster if he made a disturbance. Zibal controlled his mind and looked like any other Neo Red Knights. He walked silently as he stared at the heels of the yangbans walking in front. The yangbans clicked their tongues.

"In any case, they won't understand our words."

“Cattle and humans are curious and difficult to control. That’s why they have to starve from time to time.”

“.....”

The grandmaster’s expression stiffened as he walked through the shabby Hwan Kingdom that was unlike Asgard. The thoughts of the yangbans were uncomfortable.

‘Why do they despise humans?’

Not all gods cared for human beings. A prime example was Hexetia, the blacksmithing god. He was jealous of human beings and even attempted to annihilate humanity. However, there were few gods who loathed or despised humans. In order for a god to gain divinity, human faith was necessary. Thus, it wasn’t good to be disinterested in the humans who believed in them. Some gods felt grateful to humans.

If there were humans who believed in him and served him in the past, Hexetia wouldn’t have implemented such an unreasonable plan of annihilation. In that sense, the attitude of the yangbans was really hard to understand. The reason why the gods regained their divinity after being defeated and expelled during the war of the gods was because the humans of the east believed in them and served them. Why were the humans treated so badly?

‘It isn’t enough that they aren’t grateful to humans. It is hard to understand them being compared to livestock.’

The grandmaster questioned it before he realized something.

‘...Do they take human service for granted rather than being thankful?’

In retrospect, there is one such person among the Western gods—Martial God Zeratul, who argued that it was natural for humans to worship his strength. The grandmaster thought of the cut from Zeratul and felt a great pain from his chest. It was a pain in his memories.

The grandmaster’s chest was clean without a single injury. That’s right. The grandmaster’s current body had no encounter with Zeratul. The body of the grandmaster that had been cut by Zeratul and suffered a deep wound was sealed in a pit. It was like the seven malignant, no, the seven good people.

‘Zikfrector?’

Grid had already experienced the ignorance and contempt of the yangbans several times. Grid just thought of it as a dog barking and the yangbans’ bullshit entered one ear and went out the other. Then he saw the grandmaster’s stiff expression. He was worried because the grandmaster’s bright face was gray and looked worse than before.

‘Is the Curse of Sloth affecting him again?’ [1]

In fact, the Curse of Sloth was a very rare curse. In Satisfy’s worldview, the only ones affected by the Curse of Sloth were the vampires and Grandmaster Zikfrector. Grid had a long association with the vampires and was tired of the Curse of Sloth.

“Steady your mind,” Grid whispered to him. He was concerned that things would become twisted if the grandmaster became tired and was unable to make a normal judgment.

“How many times do I have to tell you?!” One of the yangbans kicked at Grid’s shin. She was angry because a human woman dared to raise her head when she was warned to walk by looking at the ground.

‘These XX guys.’

Grid’s expression distorted. He had been keeping his head low the entire time and he only looked at the grandmaster for a moment, yet violence was committed?

‘If you want to hit someone then hit Zibal.’

It was unfair. He felt bitter like he was sitting next to a noisy person in class.

“.....???” Zibal was flustered. He wasn’t sure why Overgeared Queen Irene stared at him after she was kicked in the shin by a yangban called Haejin.

“In any case, human beings don’t understand how good they have it. It would be easier to just pull out their eyeballs from the beginning,” Haejin complained after she confirmed that the human woman had lowered her head again after looking at Zibal.

At this moment...

‘You want to pull out these pretty eyes?’

Grid’s anger rose as he was trying to calm his heart. He clearly engraved the name of Haejin in his mind.

‘I’ll pull out your eyes later.’

Grid and the grandmaster’s group walked for quite a long time. It took two hours to arrive at the palace after arriving in the Hwan Kingdom and an hour or more to walk through the corridors inside the palace. It happened when Grid was bored and feeling impatient...

“You look deep in thought.”

A new person’s voice was heard. Grid and Zibal reflexively wanted to raise their heads, but they suppressed their instincts and bowed more deeply. The yangbans guiding the party were spurred into action. These arrogant guys started to bow deeply.

“I greet the god who controls the wind.”

The god who controls the wind?

Zibal had no information on the Hwan Kingdom and was unable to identify this person. He was just guessing that it was one of the gods who had been expelled. On the other hand, Grid knew the theme of the Hwan Kingdom and knew exactly who had appeared in front of them.

‘Pungsa.’

One of the three masters who ruled the weather along with Usa and Unsa, Pungsa was the one who caught a glimpse of Grid as he stood over Hangeol’s body. Dante gained the deity stat because Grid was

using Dante's appearance at that time. Grid's heart thumped. He was excited as he anticipated the moment when Irene would gain divinity.

The grandmaster stared at Pungsa and opened his mouth, "Did Hanul agree to meet me?"

".....!"

The expressions of the yangbans distorted. Even the others were stunned. The Five Seniors were gods. Moreover, the grandmaster's wish was to cooperate with the Five Seniors to drive out the gods of the west. They thought the grandmaster would be respectful to Pungsa, so it was natural to be shocked.

"This crazy...!"

The yangbans almost started a fight. The grandmaster used to be the messenger of the gods, so he was on the level of the yangbans and angels at most. It was blasphemy that he would dare to treat a god like this. The yangbans had unwrapped the swords tied around their waists like belts and were surrounding the grandmaster when Pungsa yelled at them, "Go away!"

".....!"

There was a sudden storm and apart from Pungsa and the grandmaster, the rest of them struggled against the wind trying to sweep them away. They were unable to withstand the violent wind and soon fell to the ground. Finally, Grid and Zibal were able to look up at Pungsa.

Pungsa was surprisingly young. He was a man in his early 30s who gave off a rather nervous impression. However, the long eyebrows under the combed hair stretched down to the cheekbones and made it difficult to guess his years. Pungsa didn't say many words. He stared at the yangbans with a serene gaze and ordered them, "Withdraw."

"...I understand."

The confused yangbans lowered their heads. They clicked their tongues as they passed the grandmaster and soon disappeared into the corridor.

Pungsa glanced at the entrance of the great hall. "Go in. Hanul is waiting for you."

Pungsa's gaze was only directed at the grandmaster. He treated Grid, Zibal, and the Neo Red Knights as air.

The grandmaster stated, "They are people attempting to help me revive the seven good people."

It meant he would take them into the great hall.

"The apostles who will help you resurrect the seven good people... I understand. They are your strongest subordinates, so they can face Hanul."

Pungsa nodded and let Grid and the grandmaster's group inside the great hall.

".....!"

".....!"

The group entered the great hall and their eyes shook with amazement. This place was the interior of the palace but there was a garden and lotus pool so it didn't feel like it.

"Gasp."

Zibal sucked in a breath. It was because as he approached the unusually clear lotus pond, he could see down to the ground. The territories of the Pa Kingdom and the Kaya Kingdom could be seen at a glance. By zooming in, it was possible to observe a specific area in detail. It was also possible to peek at the facial expressions of people going back and forth. He could even hear the contents of the conversation. It was a creepy, perfect observation. It was correct to say that the entire East Continent was being monitored. However, the territories of the Cho Kingdom and the Xing Kingdom were covered in flames and fog, respectively, making it impossible to peek at them.

'Grid's words were true.'

Zibal shook off the goosebumps on his arms and hurriedly joined the rest of the group. He walked along the stone path with Pungsa and found a pavilion floating in the center of the lake in the distance.

"Over there."

Pungsa waved his hand. The wind blew and the lake was cut in half. It was the moment the bottom of the lake that was as deep as the river was revealed, making a path. Thanks to this, the group was able to move to the pavilion on foot.

".....?"

In front of the pavilion, the grandmaster stopped from where he had been walking alongside Pungsa. Grid and Zibal also stopped walking. For the first time, the grandmaster bowed down. "I greet the god."

".....!"

Grid's eyes widened. A man was sitting at an angle on the stairs leading up to the pavilion. It was because the name of the god who made the grandmaster bow was 'Chiyou.' Unlike Pungsa, who solely focused on the grandmaster, Chiyou alternated looking between the grandmaster and Grid. Then he nodded with a satisfied expression.

"It is nice to see you."

This was the end. Chiyou disappeared without a trace from his seat.

"Go up."

Pungsa shook his head and moved up the stairs. Grid followed the group and could see Sobyel, Usa, and Unsa sitting around a small table.

The grandmaster also greeted Sobyel, "You are Hanul's child."

Sobyel smiled brightly. "It is nice to meet you, Zik."

Unlike the actual Dangun myth, Satisfy labelled Pungbaek as Pungsa by using 'sa' instead of 'baek.' [2]

It indirectly exposed that the three gods—Pungsa, Unsa, and Usa—had the same authority and the reason was revealed. Satisfy placed Sobyel over the three Sas. (Sa since all three have sa at the end of their name)

Then the being on top of all the gods...

“Welcome.”

It was Hanul, the absolute god on the same level as Rebecca and Yatan.

[Chapter 1295](#)

Grid wasn't surprised when he saw the way the grandmaster treated Pungsa. Rather than questioning it, he thought it was natural. It was because the grandmaster loathed the existence of a god itself. It would be funny if he was polite to a god. However...

“I greet the god.”

The grandmaster's attitude when meeting Chiyou was undeniably polite. His greeting was respectful and he bowed deeply and solemnly without anyone making him do it. It was a completely different attitude from when he dealt with others. Chiyou—the most powerful god of the east and the one who educated the yangbans. The grandmaster was afraid of his power?

Grid thought about it but soon realized this wasn't the case.

‘...It is different. Completely different.’

Rebecca, the goddess of light; Hexetia, the god of blacksmiths; Zeratul, the god of war; and Pungsa, the god of wind. So far, Grid had faced quite a few gods. He felt kindness and complicated emotions toward Rebecca, sympathy toward Hexetia, and fear and disgust toward Zeratul and Pungsa.

However, Chiyou was too vague. This person wasn't a subject of sentimentality or emotions. He couldn't judge Chiyou at all.

“It is nice to meet you.”

Chiyou's gaze shifted from the grandmaster to him and Grid's body became stiff. It was a shock similar to when he first met Mercedes.

[The martial god of the east, Chiyou, is contemplating you.]

[All information about your level, combat related stats, and combat related skills will be disclosed to Chiyou.]

[100% of your weaknesses are exposed to Chiyou.]

[When attacking, hit rate will decrease by 80% and when attacked, you will receive three times more damage.]

[The transcendent status you have accumulated is still weak and it is being suppressed.]

[All the stats and skills generated by your transcendent status are sealed.]

It was different from Keen Insight. Mercedes' Keen Insight was the power to see through 'everything' while Chiyou's gaze was the power to see through the target's 'combat power.' Keen Insight was in the growth stage and could only see a few things while Chiyou's gaze was fully developed and completely overwhelmed Grid. In the present time, Chiyou's gaze was much stronger and superior than Keen Insight.

However, there was an important fact here. The reason Grid shivered wasn't because he was overwhelmed by Chiyou's gaze. To Grid, Chiyou's existence itself was enormous. He seemed to know why the grandmaster bowed his head.

'This is a real god.'

Hexetia and Zeratul were made by Rebecca, while Pungsa was created by Hanul. On the other hand, Chiyou was born naturally from the desires of humans. It was no wonder why there was a difference. How did it feel when seeing Rebecca, the goddess of light and one of the absolute gods? Grid had been thrilled just by seeing Rebecca's 'image' that descended to the ground. He was already curious and expectant about what he would feel when meeting Rebecca. Additionally, he became nervous about how terrifying Hanul would be.

"Go up."

Gulp.

The staircase that was revealed when Chiyou left. Grid gulped several times as he climbed the stairs. The yangbans despised humans. Hanul was the one who made them. Hanul even uses quests to lure players to be killed. It happened at least three times that Grid knew of.

'Hanul is evil.'

Hanul was a sneaky god who didn't threaten humanity outright like the evil god Yatan, who made the great demons. Hanul slowly corroded, deceived, and enslaved humans. The image of Hanul in Grid's mind was the devil itself. It reminded him of a venomous snake who secretly exhaled poison that decayed the human lungs. However, reality was completely different.

"Welcome."

[You are the first player to witness the Absolute, Hanul.]

[You have witnessed one of the sources of the world and your base has expanded.]

[You won't be afraid when encountering absolute beings such as gods, dragons, and great demons in the future.]

A warm voice and gentle eyes—the feeling that Hanul gave off resembled Rebecca, the goddess of light. He even provided the members of Grid's group a chair made of clouds. He sealed the Four Gods and tricked all the humans on the East Continent into believing false myths. A person who created massive quests many times to kill thousands of players...

Hanul's appearance was the opposite of Grid's imagination. Even so, Grid was alert. He tried to peek at the brutal and sinister nature lurking behind Hanul's warm exterior. Then he felt confused. He stared at

Hanul, but he couldn't see what Hanul looked like. This person felt like a gentle and warm being, but Grid couldn't fathom Hanul in front of him.

Hanul's gaze fell on Grid after greeting the grandmaster. "It is greedy to judge something using the simple dichotomy of good and evil. You would've been considered evil by many people."

".....!!"

Hanul's remarks seemed to pierce through Grid's intentions. Unlike Rebecca, who represented good, and Yatan, who represented evil, Hanul expressed himself in this way.

"I am the closest of the three gods to humans. It is pointless to look at only one aspect of me and be vigilant and hostile."

The seven malignant saints had said that Rebecca and Yatan were nothing more than emotionless systems. The two gods periodically repeated the process of destroying and restoring the world and they felt neither affection nor resentment toward humanity.

On the other hand, Hanul was completely different from them. He had feelings. Sometimes he fought for someone and inevitably, he had to sacrifice someone. This was why he sealed the Four Gods of the east and made the yangbans to strengthen the Five Seniors.

"I..."

Hanul's hazy face became firm. It was the face of a mighty warrior.

"I fight for those who serve me."

Hanul's face changed again. It was the face of the serpent that Grid had imagined.

"I punish those who doubt and go against me."

This time, it was the face of a crying woman.

"I can mourn the dead."

In the end, it was the face of a benevolent old man.

"I am the only god who gives the right advice for the future of humanity."

Hanul was trying to dispel the doubts in Grid's gaze. In other words, he was speaking to persuade the grandmaster.

"Then what about Rebecca and Yatan? They separated each other into good and evil and made the world fight. I just watched it. In particular, Rebecca didn't care about the seven people who fought for her and gave them the stigma of the seven evils."

"....."

The grandmaster's eyes were bloodshot. It was due to his hatred of Rebecca. The grandmaster couldn't coexist with Rebecca and was persuaded by Hanul, who didn't belong to good or evil. He thought Hanul was a true god who would understand humanity and lead them in the right direction.

However, Grid intervened in the conversation. "Have you ever given us the right advice for the future of humanity?"

It was a blunt question. Sobyool and the three Sas stared at Grid. It was a gaze that didn't contain anger or killing intent, but Grid could feel the hostility.

Hanul replied, "Serve us as your gods."

"Does that 'us' include the yangbans?"

"Yes."

"Is the right advice to treat humans as livestock and serve the yangbans who easily hurt them?"

"First of all, the claim that yangbans easily hurt them is wrong. Apart from the children who couldn't control their emotions, none of the yangbans committed any killings."

In fact, this was right. Surprisingly, the yangbans didn't exercise much violence. A short example was the Cho King wasn't punished for losing the Red Phoenix Bow, an important key to sealing the red phoenix. The yangban who committed the killing spree was Garam and he was blinded by his anger at Grid. It would be cruel to judge all yangbans based on Garam.

"It is also inevitable that the yangbans can't treat humans correctly. They might look the same, but their lifespans and abilities are different. It is natural to feel a sense of distance. The reason why humans are ridiculed instead of receiving gratitude is because they haven't yet become gods. Once the yangbans become gods, their thinking will expand and they will feel grateful to the people and reward them."

"Isn't that too consequential? Can those who treat people like livestock and do harm according to their mood really cherish people after becoming gods?"

Why did it feel like there was no progress in the conversation?

Hanul asked Grid in reverse, "How many people have you killed?"

".....!"

"It seems that the killings committed by you alone are hundreds or thousands times more than those killed by hundreds of yangbans.

"T-That..."

"Of course, a lot of the killings would be to protect someone or practice justice. However, can you say that your justice is correct? Wouldn't you be the devil from the perspective of those who were killed by you?"

"....."

Grid became speechless. It wasn't because he agreed with Hanul's opinion, who protected the yangbans. It was because he couldn't refute it. Grid became quiet while Hanul finally reached the grandmaster.

Hanul asked him, "Do you think this type of conversation would be possible with Rebecca?"

“...No, it would never be possible.”

The grandmaster shook his head and a faint smile appeared on Hanul’s face.

"I am the only god in the world who can understand and align with human beings through dialogue. To create the world you truly desire, the seven good people must be with me. In order to revive the seven good people, you need my strength.”

It was a voice full of conviction. Hanul believed that the grandmaster would be with him. The grandmaster was silent for a moment before slowly opening his mouth, “However, you aren’t apologizing.”

“.....?”

“A god who doesn’t apologize or provide solutions to the shortcomings of the yangbans who regard humans as inferior. He just accepts it because it is inevitable. It isn’t communication.”

“Every action comes with a price. As I said earlier, the yangbans will surely reward humanity.”

“.....”

The grandmaster noticed—all gods were the same. However, Hanul wasn’t so extreme compared to the other two gods. The grandmaster stood up from his seat with a bleak expression and Hanul called to him, “Poor apostle Zik, it is impossible for you to revive the seven good people on your own.”

“No.” The grandmaster stopped and placed a hand on Grid’s shoulder. “I’m not alone.”

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“It seems that the killings committed by you alone are hundreds or thousands times more than those killed by hundreds of yangbans.”

“.....!”

Hanul was completely different from the other gods.

The absolute gods Rebecca and Yatan were simply beings that moved like clockwork according to their instincts. The subordinate gods such as Hexetia and Zeratul were buried by their own desires and simple feelings. Meanwhile, Hanul understood and attacked humans. It was as if he was human.

‘This...’

Grid felt a chill as the sins of the heart he had been carrying for a long time were revealed. He was afraid of Hanul, who shut him up using human standards. It was creepy that a god who understood humans so well deceived humans and used them as tools to establish the yangbans as gods. Additionally, he created missions to kill people in large numbers. It would’ve been a disaster if he was only faithful to his instincts like Rebecca and Yatan, but Hanul felt like a psychopath with a weapon in his hand.

Were his thoughts read? Hanul looked at Grid like he was a child. Hanul’s gaze seemed to be mocking Grid and telling him that he was no different.

Grid had an instinctive feeling—Hanul was the god who should be avoided the most. As Grid was immersed in his thoughts, Hanul was concentrating on the conversation with the grandmaster. He was trying to woo the grandmaster. Grid wanted to shout. Grid wanted to warn the grandmaster that he shouldn't be deceived. However, he couldn't open his mouth.

[The absolute Hanul is asking about your sins.]

[Sinners aren't entitled to speak. This will last for 3 minutes.]

[All skills and magic are sealed.]

[The source of the myth ignores your status. Resistance has failed.]

[The sinner is filled with anxiety. All stats are reduced by 30% and your weak spots will be exposed for three minutes.]

[The source of the myth ignores your deity stat. Resistance has failed.]

'Shit! Dammit!'

There had been rumors floating in the community recently. It was said that there was a 'legend attack strategy.' It was said that hitting a target with six specific types of status abnormalities within one second would neutralize the legendary class' resistance to abnormal statuses. However, Grid had sneered at it. He thought that the resistance couldn't be neutralized in such a way, but he could no longer ignore it.

'Why did I fail to resist the abnormal state every time I do something?'

Abnormal status hits that disregarded resistance, abnormal status hits that ignored resistance, ignored status resistance, hits that ignored status resistance...

Every time Grid failed to resist an abnormal status, he felt that there was nothing absolute in Satisfy and became worried that the rumored legendary attack strategy was also true.

"Poor apostle Zik, it is impossible for you to revive the seven good people on your own."

The conversation between Hanul and the grandmaster was coming to an end. Hanul caught a glimpse of the grandmaster's resentment and desires and persistently persuaded the grandmaster, whose expression was subtle and difficult to read.

'No, don't think about it.'

The grandmaster shouldn't grab Hanul's hand. If he grabbed Hanul's hand then the stigma of the seven good people would never be removed. Grid wanted to cry out, but the words hovered in his mouth. The weight of Hanul's sin pressed shut his mouth. It was a moment of frustration for Grid who thought the grandmaster would be shaken.

"No."

A large, warm hand covered Grid's shoulders. It was the grandmaster's hand.

"I'm not alone."

The clear eyes that confronted Hanul turned to Grid.

“Here is a man who will help me along with my apostles.”

“.....”

Why? On what basis did he trust and rely on Grid so much? It was a big question for Grid who didn't know the grandmaster's thoughts. Still, he couldn't help smiling. He was relieved that the worst case scenario of the grandmaster holding hands with Hanul was avoided. He also felt joy that he was trusted for some reason.

“Why are you going to walk such a difficult road?” Hanul asked the grandmaster. His hard to recognize face still seemed to be smiling gently.

The grandmaster answered, “The moment I take Hanul's hand and choose the easy path, it feels like I will enter the wicked path.”

“Walking with me is the wicked path...”

The smile disappeared from Hanul's face. In an instant, a huge pressure burst out and Grid found it hard to breathe. Zibal and the Neo Red Knights instantly fell unconscious.

Flinch.

It was so overbearing that even the grandmaster had to take a step back.

“Do I look wicked in your eyes?”

“Not at all. I only had a brief conversation, but how can I use the standard of good and evil on a god?”

“Then why are you worried about going down the wicked path with me? I understand humans better than any other god, so I am the only god who can live with humans. I am the only one in the world who can meet the expectations and wishes of you, who has fought against the gods for humanity.”

It was a voice filled with confidence—Hanul sincerely seemed to think so. The grandmaster was attracted for a moment, but then he shook his head.

“I don't want a god who lives with humans. I want a god who can watch from a distance and protect humans when they encounter disasters that can't be confronted with their own strength.”

Yatan, who used some pretext to destroy the world. Rebecca, who watched the world being destroyed by Yatan. Hexetia, the god of blacksmithing, who was jealous and envious of humans. Zeratul, who wanted to spread his greatness to humans. Dominion, who fell in love with a human and was thus betrayed. All the gods the grandmaster had witnessed were far from the ideal god he thought of.

Seeing the grandmaster firmly convey his will, Hanul opened his mouth, “In other words, do nothing and only come out to help when humans are in a crisis?”

“Yes.”

“Do you want a favor without a price? It doesn't seem worth it from a god's perspective.”

“That is benevolence.”

“It is like you are saying that a god’s duty is to show benevolence.”

“I think it is a natural duty. The reason why humans worship the gods is because they want benevolence.”

Hanul told the grandmaster, “I existed from the age of chaos before humans were born. Don’t you think it is too greedy to claim I have this duty to humans?”

“Don’t you think that it is only after humans were born that you could be worshipped and accumulate divinity to reach your current power?”

“Do it moderately.”

How dare he disregard Hanul’s words? In the end, the three Sas couldn’t stand it and rose from their seats. All of them had been in an unpleasant mood since hearing the grandmaster’s nonsense that gods existed only for humans.

“I think I know why the ugly gods of the west placed a sin on you.”

“Your argument is too one-sided. It is excessively greedy. The god you want doesn’t exist.”

“.....”

The grandmaster shut his mouth. It wasn’t because Hanul asked for his sin like he did with Grid. In fact, the Grandmaster wanted to ask.

‘A god exists due to human desires. Why deny doing anything for humans?’

The reason he didn’t ask was because there was no meaning. The grandmaster recalled the conversation he had with the gods of Asgard and bowed his head with a sorrowful expression.

“It is a wish beyond the subject. I’m sorry. I will leave.”

The ancient runes rose and wrapped around the bodies of Zibal and the Neo Red Knights. The group who lost consciousness from Hanul’s overbearing presences all woke up and rose. The grandmaster was trying to leave with the group when Hanul’s question struck his back, “Haven’t you just been watching humans? Have you been fighting for humans?”

“...No.”

In the distant past, he fought for the gods. Then in the past hundreds of years, he used humans in the name of resurrecting the seven good people. Sometimes he killed many people. It was a shameful past. The grandmaster knew that he already wasn’t a good person.

“Do you think you are qualified to wish for a god that exists only for humanity?”

“Yes.”

The grandmaster’s sunken eyes glowed proudly with confidence.

“That is why gods exist.”

Pungsa shouted loudly and a storm was created. The lake around the pavilion formed ripples and turned into a whirlpool.

Gulp.

Zik and the Neo Red Knights realized they would be swept away by the whirlpool and gulped.

“Let them go.”

Hanul restrained Pungsa and Pungsa stopped. The swirling lake became silent like everything previously was a lie. Subsequently, another wind split the lake in half and created a path for Grid and the grandmaster’s group. Hanul left some final words to the grandmaster who was stepping on the path, “The god you want doesn’t exist.”

“It seems so.”

“Get out of here.”

The yangbans neglected Grid and the grandmaster’s group after they left the place where the gods gathered and returned to the palace. The news that the grandmaster dared to reject Hanul’s hand had already spread. Some yangbans showed open hostility.

Grid, Zibal, and the Neo Red Knights looked down as they walked. It was because they knew something would happen if they were caught looking once. It happened as they were about to reach the entrance of the palace...

"I want to see your combat skills."

The group was passing through the gate when a voice was heard. The group knew who he was without even looking at his face.

Jingle.

It was due to the bell sound. A man whose hair was tied up with a string of bells—it was the martial god, Chiyou, who previously sat on the stairs of the pavilion. It was as if he knew the grandmaster would come back. He stared at Grid as he blocked the group’s path.

“I wonder if you can overcome the trials that I made.”

Chiyou’s Test—it was the first gateway the yangbans had to pass to become a god. Naturally, there was a strong resistance from around them. The yangbans who were staring at Grid’s group started to protest.

“You are going to give Chiyou’s Test to a mere human?! Are you mocking us yangbans?”

Chiyou lightly dismissed the screams of the yangbans.

“How about it? It isn’t a bad suggestion for you.”

Chiyou’s attention was focused only on Grid. In the end, some of the yangbans stepped forward.

“If you want to give the human a chance, then give us a chance as well.”

“Okay,” Chiyou accepted it surprisingly easily.

The flustered Grid also accepted with a serious expression, “I like it too.”

Not only was there no reason to refuse such a good opportunity, the yangban Haejin was included among the yangbans who would go through Chiyou’s Test.

[Chapter 1297](#)

For the yangbans, the Hwan Kingdom was their home, but at the same time, it was also their prison. It was a prison they had to escape from in order to spread their presence among the humans and build up a reputation. However, escaping it wasn’t easy. Only seven of the yangbans were eligible to move freely from the Hwan Kingdom. They were those who passed Chiyou’s Test with high grades. Excluding those few, the other yangbans needed permission from the Five Seniors to descend to the human world. A few of the yangbans, including Pagma, escaped the Hwan Kingdom at will, but their ending wasn’t good.

“If you want to give the human a chance, then give us a chance as well.”

The yangbans hated Chiyou. It was physiologically impossible to have good feelings for Chiyou, who despised the Five Seniors. However, Chiyou’s combat force was highly respected. The yangbans followed the rules made by Chiyou better than anyone else.

“Okay.”

Chiyou’s trials weren’t regular events. It was unknown what the standards were based on, but Chiyou held his test every few decades or even hundreds of years. Now he did it suddenly, without notice. The yangbans had to always be well prepared and now they were willing to jump into the test straight away.

‘The opportunity has finally come!’

Haejin’s expression brightened when Chiyou agreed to give the yangbans a chance to participate in the ordeal. She passed the most recent test in 22nd place and was convinced that this time, she would be in the top seven. Gru, Naeun, Hangeol, Harang, Saul, Maru, Garam, etc.—all the yangbans who were in the top seven or closer to the top seven were dead so Haejin believed that one of the vacant spots could be passed onto her.

A human woman also expressed her intention to participate in the trials, “I like it too.”

Haejin thought this woman would step back, so it was unexpected.

‘She doesn’t know anything about the world.’

The apostle was just like Zik, who refused to join the Five Seniors. She couldn’t understand the situation. It was unbelievable that she was really accepting Chiyou’s ordeal. At this point, she seemed to have decided to die.

‘Well, she is free to die.’

Haejin clicked her tongue. Her resentful gaze turned toward Chiyou. It was Chiyou’s problem in the first place. He suggested offering the trials to the human on a whim.

'It is too much to play a joke like this.'

Chiyou had been strange from the beginning. There was a time when he expressed favor to Pagma, who caused disgust with his incomprehensible deeds. It wasn't common sense.

'The moment that a human participates in the trial for the gods, the prestige of the trial will drop.'

The most important concept for a god was the status. The higher the status, the closer they were to a god and they could become a stronger god. Chiyou's Test was a type of grace that could elevate their status. It was grace from a god to another god. Wouldn't it be poisonous the moment that grace was shared with a human?

Haejin and the yangbans were concerned. Some of the yangbans thought they couldn't stay silent and complained.

"Do you really want to give a human the qualification to participate in Chiyou's Test?"

"It can't be. How can an inferior creature be brought into a test for yangbans?"

"You should say it correctly," Chiyou interrupted them.

Jingle jingle.

The bells on Chiyou's necklace and hair tie shook loudly. It was the aftermath of the movement he made as he smiled. The bells worn by Chiyou were sensitive enough to respond to the smallest changes.

"The reason I am holding this trial is to witness this human's combat power. You are just riding on this human's coat tails. Now you are asking about this human's qualifications? What is this shamelessness? Shouldn't you be grateful instead?"

"....."

The expressions of the yangbans distorted. It was ridiculous sophistry. A trial being held for a human...

Chiyou's Test was an ordeal to gain the qualifications of a god. How could a human be the chosen candidate? As usual, the yangbans were tired of the whimsical Chiyou and closed their mouths. Meanwhile, Haejin nodded happily.

"If you say this, then we have no choice but to follow."

Haejin thought this was better. She wanted to see the human, who dared to send a challenging gaze at her, going through the feeling of frustration, desperation, and death.

"You aren't sane based on the way you made eye contact with me. Someone like you will only know who you are up against after your eyeballs are pulled out."

Haejin faced Grid and smiled. It was a smile full of killing intent. The killing intent of a half-god. It was normal to feel a pressure that was difficult to handle. Surprisingly, Grid felt it was bearable.

'Did the yangbans always feel this way?'

Until just a few months ago, Grid's perception of the yangbans was only Garam. An absolutely strong man who couldn't be surpassed no matter how wicked he was. He was a subject of fear that caused Grid

to sweat the moment he recalled it. However, Haejin was completely different. She was a strong yangban, but she didn't give him too much pressure. The same was true for the other yangbans other than Garam.

Was it because Haejin was weak? That wasn't it. The average stats of the yangbans were similar. Haejin had passed the test in the 20s and she belonged to the skilled side. The reason Grid felt differently was because Grid had changed. Grid had fought enemies stronger than Haejin and won. Grid was too great to shrink before Haejin.

Grid, who always tried to copy Irene's speech and expressions, finally revealed his true nature as he spoke, "Let's see who will have their eyeballs pulled out."

He sent hostility and killing intent to Haejin with a ferocious gaze that didn't match Irene's soft eyes. The atmosphere suddenly changed 180 degrees and Haejin was amazed.

'Was she hiding her strength?'

A human deceiving the yangbans? She was ashamed of herself for briefly flinching and turned her gaze to Chiyou. It was a glance asking him to start the trials quickly.

Chiyou, who was watching Grid with an expression of interest, nodded. "Then I will start the trials."

Jingle, jingle.Jingle.

The loud bell sounds gradually faded. The minds of Grid and the yangbans seemed to fade and they were soon sucked into somewhere.

"This..."

The temporarily confused Grid regained his mind and found that the surrounding scenery had completely changed. The marble floor where the yangbans had been walking disappeared and a canyon took its place. The dozens of steep cliffs made his mind dizzy.

Jingle.

"This is the first trial. It will take courage to overcome this trial."

Chiyou's voice echoed in the canyon for a while and disappeared. Then the ordeal began. From the bottom of the dark canyon, an ear-tearing scream was heard and a huge being emerged.

The yangbans faced an absolute god while Grid faced the evil dragon Bunhelier. [1]

It was an encounter with their most feared target. This was the first trial for Grid and the yangbans. Chiyou's trials changed every time. The yangbans trembled when their parents glared at them with terrible expressions that were different from normal.

Grid's situation also wasn't very good.

'Why is it suddenly Bunhelier?'

An encounter with an object of fear—Grid already had a chance to experience a similar trial in the Behen Archipelago. However, Grid's challenge at the time was very easy. At that time, the difficulty of Grid's trial was only at the level of rabbits and deer.

But now, things had changed. The level one Grid who had been killed by a deer and rabbit had long since overcome the ordeal and disappeared. At this moment, Grid was the supreme one. The enemy he was afraid of wasn't deer or rabbits, it was one of the strongest beings in the worldview. The growth he made was grabbing at his ankles.

'Dammit, what should I do with this guy?'

The appearance of Bunhelier rising in the sky with his wings wide open was exactly the same as what he witnessed in the National Competition. Scales that rose and fell with his breathing, fierce eyes, a bulging nose, and wings that caused storms. It was so realistic that it was too much to treat it as an illusion.

It wasn't strange for the true Bunhelier to be reproduced since the one who created this phenomenon was a top god in the first place.

'Do I have to fight?'

Grid gulped and pulled out his sword. He took a look at Bunhelier, blocking the access to the highest canyon, and performed a five fusion sword dance. The space under Grid's control was filled with a thunderous momentum. The Fire Dragon Sword collected powerful energy and penetrated deep into Bunhelier's scales.

Kieeeeeeeek-!

Bunhelier screamed.

'Indeed!'

He thought that if it was a five fusion sword dance using the Fire Dragon Sword, it would be able to cause great damage to absolute beings. The confident Grid smiled once this idea became a reality. Then he kicked off Bunhelier's feet, knees, and belly in turn as he leapt and climbed onto Bunhelier's back.

'Shunpo!'

It was the moment when Grid stood on Bunhelier's back and moved to the tallest canyon in the distance...

Bunhelier's mighty body disappeared like a mirage, an illusion. At this time, the other yangban's pulled out their weapons.

"Ahh! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

"Making us aim our swords at a god...! Chiyou is crazy!"

The yangbans also seemed to notice that Hanul in front of them was just an illusion. Even so, they hadn't dared to attack. Eventually, the yangbans apologized with tears in their eyes, attacked Hanu,l and overcame the trial.

The yangbans arrived by Grid's side and stomped their feet. "Rude human! You are afraid of dragons, not Hanul! It is blasphemy!"

"....."

The point of their anger was very strange. Grid was looking at the yangbans like they were crazy when the surrounding landscape changed again.

Jingle.

"The second trial will be difficult."

The sound of butterfly wings reminiscent of the sound of falling water was heard. Grid was stunned by the sight of thousands, no, tens of thousands of butterflies, heading toward him. His transcendent senses that had been silent when Bunhelier's illusion appeared were now warning him.

[Death is coming!]

".....!"

Grid woke up and focused. The wings of the butterflies were as sharp as saw blades. It felt like his flesh would be torn just by the wings passing by him.

"I finally know why Chiyou gave you this test." He heard Haejin's ridicule. "It was intended to sacrifice you as a warning to Zik."

The yangbans didn't trust Chiyou because they didn't know his inner workings. However, they couldn't ignore the years they had been together. They believed in Chiyou and relied on him more than outsiders. They thought Chiyou was punishing Zik, who had rebelled against Hanul's will. Wasn't the evidence the butterflies that were filling the world? It was an ordeal that could never be handled by technique and momentum. Only those who had divinity could face this ordeal.

The yangbans instantly activated the Blue Dragon's Breath. Blue lightning bolts surrounded them and all the butterflies approaching them were destroyed.

The spirited Haejin and the yangbans turned to Grid.

".....!"

The yangbans' eyes widened. They had expected the human woman to die while struggling against a swarm of butterflies. However, a storm of flames was surrounding her body. It was a much more powerful and enormous energy than the lightning bolts worn by the yangbans.

'This...!'

The yangbans noticed the source of the flames instantly. It wasn't possible. They had lost it currently, but it was one of the powers they originally possessed.

'The Red Phoenix's Breath!'

No, it wasn't at the level of a breath. It was closer to the origin of the red phoenix. It was a sight that reminded them of Mir, the yangban closest to being a god.

[Chapter 1298](#)

The tear open butterflies were spirits. They were terrible evil spirits that tore at the target until they died. It was impossible to soothe or command these evil spirits. The only way to destroy these butterflies was to burn them using divinity.

“.....!”

The yangbans had thought that Zik’s apostle would foolishly die trying to stab the butterflies, thus their hearts sank at the sight in front of them. Flames that completely overwhelmed the Red Phoenix’s Breath they had used until recently—Zik’s apostle created huge, sacred flames reminiscent of the descent of the red phoenix or Mir’s power. The thousands of butterflies turned to ashes and disappeared, and the yangbans couldn’t close their open mouths.

Jingle, jingle.

The bells on Chiyou’s necklace and hair tie shook loudly. It was a reaction to his muscles moving when he smiled. “It is worthy of the human who possesses the Red Phoenix’s Ninth Heart.”

“The Ninth Heart!?”

The yangbans doubted their ears. One of the 10 hearts that contained the source of the red phoenix’s power. A human had it when even the Five Seniors couldn’t take it away?

Haejin gritted her teeth. She wanted to erase her past self who had been thrilled to receive the red phoenix’s 9,857th heart from Hanul. She wanted to reproach herself for missing the heart that had disappeared when the red phoenix was resurrected.

‘Dammit! Dammit!!’

Haejin’s face turned red like she would explode. She was ashamed of herself, who was pleased with receiving something inferior to what a human received, and who struggled not to miss something that was received by a human. It was the first time in her life that she felt such a great sense of shame. The feelings of the other yangbans were similar. Those who had lost their hearts because of the red phoenix’s resurrection, or those who still had the hearts, but knew it would soon disappear, glared at Zik’s apostle with bitter eyes.

Grid didn’t respond to their killing intent. To be exact, he couldn’t afford to respond.

‘Did he know that I have the red phoenix’s heart?’

Grid was terrified as he looked at Chiyou standing in the distance with crossed arms. He noticed that he couldn’t have survived unless he revealed himself as the one who resurrected the red phoenix.

‘The trial itself is a trap.’

It was over. He had hoped to gain something from Chiyou’s Test. However, instead of gaining something, it seemed he was going to die.

‘I won’t be able to recover it if I drop an item here.’

The butterflies had already burned, but Grid didn't get rid of the Storm of the Fire God. It was a choice he made to protect himself. Isolated in the midst of Chiyou and dozens of yangbans, Grid couldn't glimpse a way out except for relying on Storm of the Fire God.

'I need to find a way out of here while maintaining Storm of the Fire God.'

This was a space Grid was moved to when Chiyou's Test began. In other words, the current land he was standing on was completely separated from the existing world. It was the mental world of Chiyou that reflected Chiyou's will.

'Has Braham ever told me about the weaknesses of the mental world?'

"I've seen your passion well. Then the third trial will begin."

Jingle.

".....!"

Grid's nervous expression as he maintained Storm of the Fire God completely collapsed. It was because the moment Chiyou's bells rang, the Storm of the Fire God disappeared regardless of Grid's will. Grid realized it—he was already dancing on the palm of Chiyou's hand. The frustrated Grid's vision darkened.

* * *

"....."

What was making such a sad and painful sound?

Grid was awakened by the cries of a young beast and felt the texture of soft carpet. He was like a person waking from a long sleep as he looked around blankly and his eyes slowly widened. He could see the scenery of the area lit with soft lighting.

It was a large and colorful space. The light reflected on the red wallpaper and made the expensive furniture and ornaments look even more luxurious. A few flaws were the wine bottles with a peach aroma scattered everywhere, and the huge iron bars that didn't match the atmosphere of the great hall. The worst thing was the behavior of the young people in blue dopos.

"Hahahat! Look at this young beast crying! It is so pitiful! Poor thing!"

"Isn't it time to be thirsty? How about feeding it another bottle of alcohol?"

"Why alcohol when there isn't even enough alcohol for us to drink? It isn't enough if we don't urinate."

The young men removed their dopos and started to pee on the iron bars. It was unknown how much alcohol they drank, but the smell of alcohol was coming from the pee stream that continued like a waterfall.

".....?"

What was this situation? Grid was blank at the unknown situation only to suddenly frown. He spotted the crying cat crouching in the iron cage that the yangbans were peeing on. It was a mysterious blue-

furred cat.No, the head and feet were too big for a cat. Seeing the pattern on the forehead, it was a tiger.

“...Ah!” Grid realized the identity of the tiger—it was Blue Tiger. This was the childhood of the blue tiger, hundreds of years ago.

“These damn XX...!”

Grid didn’t know what was going on, but he had come to the past. He roughly grasped the situation and focused on the scene in front of him. In order to help Blue Tiger, he ran to the iron cage and pushed the yangbans away.

“Eh?”

The yangbans were unable to control their drunken bodies and staggered like reeds before falling to the ground. They tangled together and peed on each other. Their eyes widened and they screamed.

“Pagma! You have finally gone crazy!”

‘Pagma?’

Was he called Pagma just now? The flustered Grid found a mirror next to him and looked into it. He was stunned and stepped back. In the mirror, a face that was beautiful even for a woman was staring at himself. It was far younger than the image of Pagma that Randy reproduced, or the Pagma witnessed in Chreshler’s recollection. It was Pagma in the time when he was just reaching his 20s.

‘What?’

Am I possessing Pagma in the past? Why? Chiyou’s voice was heard in the midst of the chaos.

“Then the third trial will start.”

...That’s right. He was currently in the process of going through Chiyou’s Test. Grid finally grasped the situation while a yangban strode closer to Grid.

“This crazy guy!”

Numbness. Tears filled Grid’s eyes as he was hit hard by the yangban. It meant that the yangban was strong, but it was also evidence of the decrease in Grid’s defense. Grid held his hot cheeks and opened his status window.

[Name: Pagma

Level: 256

Species: Yangban

Class: Beginner Swordsman, Beginner Blacksmith

.....

.....

.....]

All of Grid's stats were corrected to Pagma's stats from hundreds of years ago. The same was true for his equipment and skills.

'Isn't this bullshit?'

No matter how long ago this was, he couldn't help wondering if these were really yangbans. The man who slapped Grid's cheeks followed by grabbing his collar.

"This guy, you are even protecting beasts now. I hate the fact that a crazy person like you is the same as me. It is disgusting and my nausea is rising."

Grid was familiar with these eyes full of disgust and anger. He stared at the man holding him by the collar and shouted with surprise, "G-Garam!"

"Hah! Why? Do you want to say that you don't know who I am?"

Garam scoffed and pushed Grid away. He spat on the ground and left the great hall with the group.

Garung...

A young blue tiger inside the iron cage stared at Grid. The bright, round eyes were pure, the breathing sounded sad and made being trapped in the iron cage look even more pitiful.

"Are you okay?"

Grid finally stood up and used the Red Phoenix's Breath seen in the skills list. The warm flames covered the wet Blue Tiger and energized her body.

'They are real XX guys.'

Grid trembled as he looked closely at Blue Tiger. There were ugly whip marks and bright red blood on the blue tiger's small body.

"I'm sorry I didn't help you quickly. I'm sorry."

Grid's expression was dark as he stroked the body of the blue tiger. He should've stopped it before the yangbans pissed. He resented himself for being dull and not being able to quickly grasp the situation. Blue Tiger barely pushed her head through the iron bars and rubbed her head against the crouching Grid's legs. She seemed to be saying it was okay and was thanking him.

'Shit...'

This was just a reproduction of a scene from the past. The things he did here didn't affect the future, which was reality. He was in a position where he had to focus on the contents of the third trial. He had to prepare for the trial that could take place at any time in an unknown form.

Grid obviously knew all of this. Even so, he pulled out the soft sword hanging from his waist. It was classified as a sword mastery skill, but his Yangban's Swordsmanship skill was only at the beginner level.

"Pagma's Swordsmanship."

The only sword dances he knew were Link and Wave.

“Wave Link.”

Grid did his best to cut the padlock off the iron cage. The door opened and he reached out to the blue tiger, who was frightened and retreated.

“It’s okay. I won’t hurt you.”

How much violence did she experience every time the yangbans opened the cage for her to tremble so? Grid hid Blue Tiger in his arms and immediately ran out of the great hall.

“You! What did you do? Stop!”

Garam and the yangbans ran out of the tiled houses. Grid had hit the lock dozens of times so it seemed they were attracted by the loud noise.

“Stand still!”

‘Would you stand still if you were me?’

The yangbans’ preparations were late and they were still putting on their dopos, hats, and silk shoes while Grid was hurrying to escape. Some of the yangbans were even carrying smoking pipes. Thanks to this, Grid managed to escape pursuit for a while and reached the entrance of the Hwan Kingdom. The long river entered his view. It was a river that was so big that it was hard to tell the end.

“Gasp... gasp...”

There was a large ship waiting at the dock, but Grid wasn’t confident about getting on it. The people on the ship were more likely to be enemies, and he had neither experience in steering a ship nor moving one. Eventually, Grid started paddling a small boat.

“Don’t worry, I will take you to Mount Bukdu.”

Grid mentioned the place where he met Blue Tiger in the future and reassured the young blue tiger. Unfortunately, Grid’s heart was also beating fast. Grid himself was trembling with fear and other physical reactions. It couldn’t be helped.

Tremble tremble.

It was because Pagma’s physical strength was inferior from Grid’s current perspective and it had reached its limit. His rowing hands started to slow and his trembling arms and legs were out of control.

Tung!Tutong!Tuong!

Drumming sounds rang at the dock and a huge ship departed. The ship was several times faster than Grid rowing alone and caught in an instant.

“Disgraceful guy!”Garam’s angry cry echoed through the mountains and river.

Dozens of arrows filled the sky.

‘Shit!’

Grid naturally didn't give up. He intercepted the flying arrows using Link and Wave. Then the subsequent arrows were blocked by the fusion skill, Wave Link. However, he didn't have any sword techniques left that could directly deal with Garam.

"How can this unqualified guy dare to leave? You betrayed us to save a young beast!"

It was a reasonable accusation from Garam's point of view. Garam's sword aimed at Grid was filled with real killing intent.

'Danger...!'

It was the moment when Grid's gaze followed the sword that was going to pierce his heart...

The world turned black and white and stopped. No, it was more accurate to say that time had stopped. Garam was frozen just like this and the sound of bells was heard from behind Grid, who was too scared to breathe.

"Why did you save it?" In a world where everything had stopped and even the sound disappeared, only Grid and Chiyou's voices were heard.

"Then should I just watch?" Grid replied.

"You don't have the power to save it."

"I had to fight to know that."

"You would've died in one second."

"You don't know that."

The breaths of the blue dragon, white tiger, and black tortoise. Grid had three skills that hadn't been used yet. He had planned to stop Garam's strike with the White Tiger's Breath then shock the river with the Blue Dragon's Breath to make him faint. He would use this opportunity to move the boat and try to explore new possibilities by using a single dance with the Black Tortoise's Breath. Well, there was no guarantee this would work.

A smile appeared on Chiyou's indifferent face. "I like the tenacity and spirit used to develop the sword dances so far when it was just a means of directing the ritual."

[Chapter 1299](#)

"I like the tenacity and spirit used to develop the sword dances so far when it was just a means of directing the ritual."

"Did you recognize the identity of my swordsmanship?"

Grid used Open Potential in the first trial and showed his five fusion sword dance. However, none of the yangbans recognized the identity of the sword dance. It was natural. Grid's sword dance might be based on Pagma's Swordsmanship, but it had too many changes and developments. Unlike Pagma's Swordsmanship, Grid's sword dance maximized actions and power, so it took a different form that was much more combat efficient.

Of course, some common points remained, but Pagma's Swordsmanship remembered by the yangbans was just a single sword dance. It was virtually impossible to find common characteristics between the two sword dances. However, it was different for Chiyou.

Jingle.

"The fusion sword dances are what I presented to Pagma so I have to recognize it."

".....!"

"However, Pagma didn't struggle. He overlooked the need for force. Experience the results."

The black and white world was overlaid with all types of colors. The blue sky, clear river water, and autumn leaves beside the river gained a picturesque harmony. Was the world so beautiful? Grid was admiring it when he woke up from his thoughts.

"...Pagma!"

Time started again and peace ended. Garam's sword was just about to reach Grid's heart. Grid had drawn simulations in his mind several times and quickly activated the White Tiger's Breath.

[The protection of the White Tiger safeguards you.]

[Once attacked, fatal damage can be avoided a minimum of one time and a maximum of three times. The target who attacked you will also be repelled.]

[Health and stamina are slightly restored.]

A silver-white energy surrounded Grid's body as he blocked Garam's sword. Garam's sword shook. It was unable to withstand the repulsion and soared into the air.

'Now!'

Grid tilted his upper body and pushed Garam's chest with his shoulders. It was intended to drop Garam into the river. He was determined to stun all the fish and Garam in the huge river using the Blue Dragon's Breath. However, Garam didn't step back. Despite his imperfect posture, he endured Grid's push and grabbed Grid's neck in reverse.

"A man with no ability is hoping for good luck. Reading the narratives written by human beings in order to understand humans. Becoming a potter in order to help humans. Wanting to become a priest to become a bridgehead between the gods and humans... what power do you have when you use all types of excuses to neglect training?"

"Keok...! Cough cough!"

It was physically impossible to crush Garam with Pagma's body when Garam's level and stats were clearly much higher. It happened as Garam was staring at Grid, who couldn't breathe after being grabbed by the neck... Blue Tiger, who had been trembling with fear the moment Garam appeared, rushed forward with her eyes closed. Although she was still small, she had sharp fangs and she bit hard on Garam's calf.

Garam just scoffed. "Bah, you are a good pair."

Grid's neck was gripped tighter and he gradually lost consciousness.

Garong... garoong...

Garam once said that Pagma was the shame of the Hwan Kingdom. Based on his many comments, Grid was able to discover that Pagma was isolated in the Hwan Kingdom. However, he didn't expect it to be this much.

"....."

Grid was suffocated and fainted. By the time he opened his eyes again, he was in a large iron cage. There was something heavy. He looked back and found the blue tiger hanging from his forearm. She was looking over here with eyes so wet that it wouldn't be strange if she shed tears straight away. The moment she met his gaze, she licked his cheek with her tongue.

"I spared your life. Even so, you have a long life because you are a yangban." There was ridiculing laughter from outside the iron cage. It was Garam. The man pulled over a chair covered with tiger skin and sat there laughing. "I'm glad you didn't die. I was in trouble because I thought it would be boring if you died too easily."

"....."

"How is your place to sleep? Don't you like it because living with beasts is your wish?"

"....."

Grid was deeply aware of what Pagma was feeling at this time. It was because he had been in a similar position.

Grrung! The blue tiger on the floor roared. She would claw at Garam right away if there weren't the iron bars. Garam shrugged. He was too relaxed to respond to the beast's attitude. "Your betrayal by trying to release the white tiger's cub will be known to the Five Seniors sooner or later. You are going to be punished. Until then, hang out with the beast for a while."

"...You know?"

It wasn't Grid asking, but Pagma of the past. Grid didn't say anything, but his mouth opened. It was a reenactment of the past.

"You know that this is the child of the white tiger. Why treat her like this?"

"What if I didn't know? If she was an ordinary tiger then I would've killed her, skinned her, and cooked her meat."

"How... why..."

His heart trembled with anger. Pagma's feelings were conveyed to Grid.

"What are you trying to blame? Are you trying to condemn the behavior of locking up and harassing the white tiger's child? Or do you want to condemn me for saying that I'll easily kill a young beast?"

“Of course, all of it. Don’t you know that all life is equal? Why do you only think about harming creatures weaker than you?”

“Even the humans you love so much abuse, hunt, and eat beasts lower than themselves. You need to be aware that your standards are out of order.”

"The reason most humans hunt animals is for survival. Very few humans abuse animals just for fun and they are also condemned by fellow human beings. On the other hand, we are perfect because we are created by God himself. Why do we need to follow the bad things about humans? Why should we use the excuse of human sin to also commit sins?"

Pagma fiercely denounced Garam and Garam scoffed.

“Humans hunt animals purely for survival? That is sophistry. Humans also hunt for the pursuit of pleasure. Pleasure is God’s grace that is applied equally to all beings. I am just pursuing pleasure and using inferior creatures to pursue pleasure. Isn’t it too much to blame me for this? I’m not killing humans, right?”

“.....”

Pagma shut his mouth. He realized it wasn’t meaningful to talk any longer. After that, the abuse of Garam and the yangbans continued. Every day, new wounds appeared on Blue Tiger’s small body. Every time it happened, Pagma’s heart and mind suffered greater pain.

Yiip!Yiipp...

One day, the blue tiger’s small body trembled like a quaking aspen tree. Blue Tiger suffered from nightmares every night, but today’s situation was particularly serious.

“.....!”

Pagma tried to hug the blue tiger to comfort her only to stiffen with fright. It was because Blue Tiger’s body was as hot as a fireball.

“W-What is wrong?”

Yiip...

Pagma realized that Blue Tiger was in danger and used the Red Phoenix’s Breath. He prayed that the warm breath of the red phoenix would energize the dying Blue Tiger. However, Pagma had already consumed the Red Phoenix’s Breath. It had a cooldown just like players. He had used it every day for the past fortnight. Tonight, he had previously used the Red Phoenix’s Breath to help the blue tiger sleep comfortably.

“Oh god! God Red Phoenix!”

In the end, Pagma prayed. It was just that no matter how much he prayed, there was no response. The sealed gods couldn’t respond to his prayers.

“No! Wake up!”

Pagma became even more anxious once Blue Tiger lost consciousness.

“Five Seniors! Hanul! Please....! Please have mercy to this poor child who is in need!”

Deep in the night, a hollow cry echoed through the empty great hall. Garam and the yangbans were gone and only empty wine bottles were left. There was no answer. The Five Seniors ignored Pagma’s prayer despite clearly hearing it. The child of the white tiger—the Five Seniors judged that it was better to extinguish any variables that might cause anger if the white tiger returned to the world.

“Ah! Wake up! Be strong!”

A crumpled and stained dupo—the only thing Pagma had been relying on in the past fortnight was wound around Blue Tiger’s body. As a result, cold air stabbed Pagma’s lungs, but he was unaware of it. He was only committed to saving Blue Tiger.

“Endure it. The world is too beautiful to leave after suffering. Please... please survive and enjoy happiness. I will help,” Pagma whispered to the blue tiger held in his arms.

No matter his efforts, Blue Tiger’s body started to cool down. Pagma was desperate. He blamed himself for being weak and unable to do anything. He realized that in order to persuade or stop someone, he needed strength rather than appealing to reason and emotions.

Jingle.

The sound of bells echoed in the cold, empty hall.

“Do you now understand why I told you to hone your strength?” The martial god appeared—Chiyou, a god born from the aspirations of human beings, not the will of the gods. “I understand why you wanted to become a priest, not a god, and why you wanted to be a potter. Perhaps the same is true of Hanul.”

“.....”

“At the very least, I think your heart is commendable.”

“.....”

“This is why I told you to arm yourself.”

The martial god was the ideal of human beings. Humanity had been enlightened since ancient times that they needed strength to survive in this troubled world. They gave birth to the martial god, worshipped him, and prayed they would be stronger. Chiyou wanted Pagma to be aware of the need for strength. It was the only attachment he had to the child with a deep sense of affection among the yangbans.

“Look.” Chiyou pulled out the sword from his waist. It was the first time in a thousand years.

“Remember this moment.”

Two halves with a single cut. No other expression was needed. Chiyou just swung his sword and the iron bars locking up Pagma and Blue Tiger were cut. However, Pagma ushered in a new understanding.

[The new sword dance Transcend has been learnt.]

[The new sword dance Restraint has been learnt.]

[The new sword dance Pinnacle has been learnt.]

“To protect something, you need to be prepared to fight. To carry out your beliefs, you need strength. In a struggle, it is right to take a life.”

[The new sword dance Kill has been learnt.]

“Definitely... I will definitely repay your grace!” Pagma exclaimed.

“If your pledge is true, escape the eyes of the Five Seniors and leave for the western land. Then return with the qualifications of a God Killer.”

Pagma picked up Blue Tiger and nodded. He bowed deeply to Chiyou and hurriedly left.

“You! It is you again!”

By the time Pagma arrived at the dock and was searching for the path among the peach trees, Garam and the yangbans caught up to him. There were no particular problems. Grid, who had been in an observer position for the past fortnight, was finally back in possession of Pagma’s body. His power exceeded the standards of the old yangbans.

“Transcend.”

“...?”

“Linked Kill Wave.”

Was it possible to predict that a cat could exert the power of a tiger? It was absolutely impossible. Garam and the yangbans were amazed by Pagma’s different skills. They weren’t able to cope and were seriously injured.

“Cough, cough...! What did you do?”

The reason why Garam and the yangbans hated Pagma was that firstly, he had different ideas and secondly, he was weak because he didn’t try hard. He was someone who only knew how to talk theory and rattle public opinion. He didn’t even have decent basic skills. The man who didn’t have the basics suddenly became stronger in a day.

He also showed excellent combat skills like he was one of the best among the yangbans. Grid originally wanted to deal the final blows to the flustered Garam and the yangbans, but he immediately stopped acting and boarded the ship. The urgent priority was to save Blue Tiger. Grid ignored the frightened captain as he chewed on the white peach and fed it to the blue tiger.

Yiip...

Blue Tiger painfully opened her eyes. The body that cooled down started to warm up again. It was a moment of reassurance for Grid.

“.....”

Silence fell in a world that once again turned black and white.

Jingle, jingle. The sound of bells could be heard from the deck covered in fog. The Chiyou of the present, not the Chiyou of the past who helped Pagma, approached Grid.

“Unlike you, Pagma barely survived. It was no different from a miracle.”

“.....”

“Many things would’ve been different if that child had been determined from the moment he was born.”

“...Do you think the Five Seniors and the yangbans are wrong?”

Chiyou didn’t answer. He watched Grid with an indifferent expression and changed the subject. “Now there is only the fifth trial left.”

Grid was puzzled. “Wasn’t that the third trial?”

He had passed the third trial so it was right to go to the fourth trial. Yet the fifth?

Jingle.

“You have already gone through the third and fourth trials so there is only one left.”

“.....”

“Show your combat skills.”

Time once again moved. The faded world regained its color. Garam and the yangbans, who had fallen near the dock, stood up one by one. Then they gradually regained their original form. It was Haejin and the yangbans who participated in the test. Just as Grid had experienced the past as Pagma, Haejin and the yangban had experienced the roles of Garam and the yangbans.

“What’s going on?”

Haejin and the yangbans were making a fuss. Unlike Grid, they seemed to have been trapped in a world with stopped time. They hadn’t heard Chiyou’s words and couldn’t accurately grasp the progress of the trials.

Jingle. Chiyou stood on the deck and declared, “The final trial will now start.”

There was a roar as the river and mountains swirled before disappearing. Only the ships and the dock where the yangbans were located soared above the transformed world like drawing paper. It was the stage of the battlefield.

“Fight, win, defend, and win. This is why combat power exists.”

Jingle.

The bell sound fading was a signal. Haejin released the soft sword that was tied around her waist like a belt and leapt up onto the ship. “It is great that a human has reached the final trial, but it ends here!”

The sword stretched out like a snake and aimed at Grid’s waist. Then it bent sharply and aimed at his neck. It was an anomalous swordsmanship that maximized the characteristics of the soft sword. Those who saw it for the first time would only be beaten.

Unfortunately, Grid was familiar with the yangbans' swordsmanship. It was also the swordsmanship of Garam, one of the strongest.

".....?!"

Haejin's surprise attack was easily blocked by Grid. The Fire Dragon Sword that contained the essence of Pinnacle cut through one of her frightened eyes.

"How does it feel when your eyeball is pulled out?"

Grid's eyes in Irene's appearance were as cold as ice.

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Pulling out the eyeballs—it was the habit of the yangban Haejin. Humans should walk around with their eyes to the ground. Occasionally, someone would raise their heads and she would threaten them. She had actually done it several times. She didn't take into account the fear and suffering of her victims. The yangbans were the masters under the heavens and there was no reason to think from the perspective of a victim.

"Kuaaaaack!"

Haejin's sharp scream shook the ship as her left eye was cut. The shock wave that occurred caused the deck to become turbulent like they were riding on the waves. Grid stood on top of it and questioned Haejin, "How does it feel when your eyeball is pulled out? Does it hurt?"

"Ugh... Uuuuck!"

Half the world seemed to be gone.

Haejin barely saw the silver-haired woman in her narrower field of view and she cursed, "You...! You will be the human who dies in the most terrible way since Taejo! The moment I become a god, I'll have your blood and flesh! I'll find all those who have been in contact with you and kill them!"

Red paint was sharply sprinkled on the world dyed white that was just like blank drawing paper. Haejin's anger and killing intent exerted influence on Chiyou's mental world.

'Indeed...'

Jingle.

Chiyou acknowledged it. The yangbans were Hanul's masterpiece.

Pagma, who he had shown mercy to; Garam and Haejin, who tried to overcome their humiliation; and Mir, who wasn't buried by his talent—there were differences according to their inclination, but most of the yangbans had the potential to obtain a God Killer qualification if they got the chance.

"My children will bring you rest."

'If such children continue to appear and cooperate with Mir...'

It was around the time when Chiyou remembered Hanul's promise and felt anticipation for Haejin...

“I won’t allow your comfort.”

An uncomfortable energy was felt from Grid’s eye and it tried to exert some influence on Haejin. However, there were no changes. Haejin’s anger and killing intent didn’t fade at all. The mental world was influenced by her will and gave her a strong power.

‘What?’

The Castration Eye had no effect? Haejin’s combat power was amplified as Grid was feeling puzzled. The red paint sprinkled on the pure white world gathered together and took the form of a sword. The red sword filled with a murderous spirit was held in Haejin’s hand.

Just as Grid used Storm of the Fire God in the second trial, Haejin carved her own image in Chiyou’s mental world. Storm of the Fire God caused by Grid and the red sword held in Haejin’s hand were just fleeting mirages that disappeared the moment Chiyou denied them, but Chiyou watched silently. This world was just a space created for proof of combat ability. Chiyou had no intention of restricting the participants.

"I won’t allow your comfort!"

Grid felt a sense of crisis and once again triggered the Castration Eye. Once again, the Castration Eye had no effect. It was because the beneficial effect of the strengthening came from the mental world, not a physical force. The only method to weaken her was to break her heart, not the evil eye.

“Haaap!”

Haejin’s counterattack began. Her sword bent like paint on a brush. Her red-black sword spread out. The attack range was very wide and light, so it was difficult to avoid.

“Kuooock...!”

[You have suffered 12,310 damage.]

[You have suffered 13,900 damage.]

[You have suffered 12,850 damage.]

Grid felt a pain like his wrist was being torn every time he encountered Haejin’s sword. He was being pushed back in strength despite the myth-rated Fire Dragon Sword having over 4,000 attack power.

‘What is this strength?’

Grid also had buff skills. The fact that he was pushed back in pure strength from a basic attack was quite a shock. It was also absurd since his defense had been raised to the maximum amount possible for him. Every time a blow was exchanged, Grid stepped back. Eventually, he was pushed to the end of the deck.

“Hahahat! The moment the fluke ended, you are driven to the edge of the cliff! A human’s power is definitely trivial!”

“Keuk.”

He wanted to hit this person in the face. Should he take out the power of the Eccentric Duke to flatten this face? Grid contemplated it but soon rejected it. It was because one victory in a battle of strength against Haejin was meaningless. It was immature to take out Power of Not Knowing Defeat.

‘...Wait, basic attack?’

Kaaang!

[You have suffered 11,980 damage.]

Was this really a basic attack?

[A strong killing intent is coming toward you.]

[A strong killing intent is coming toward you.]

Grid questioned it and focused on the warning that his transcendent senses had been giving him from the beginning.

[A strong killing intent is coming toward you.]

The warning rose every time Haejin swung her sword. It was every time.

‘This damn monster.’

Grid grasped it. It was the reason why Haejin’s attack power surpassed the other yangbans he faced so far despite not using a breath. It was because every one of her attacks was a skill. It was a skill so powerful it reminded him of Kill.

‘Isn’t this infinite skills rampage too fraudulent?’

A skill with zero cooldown time...

It was a really rare and fraudulent trait, no, power.

‘She truly is a half-god.’

Due to the experience of killing the yangbans relatively easily with the help of the red phoenix and Braham, Grid had gradually forgotten the fear of the yangbans. He once again realized it—the yangbans were half-gods and they were really powerful. This was why he was even more determined...

Kang!Kang!Kaaang!

“Hahahat! You are weak! Seeing the way you’re bleeding, you will die soon! However, endure it! Survive like a villain! You have to taste as much pain as possible before death!”

.... Grid needed to get rid of her. These yangbans who didn’t sympathize with human problems and only cared for themselves couldn’t be allowed to achieve their dream of becoming a god. Grid took a deep breath as he remembered the resolution in his epics.

It was only half a step now. He would fall off the ship with one more half step. Additionally, this ship was the only stage in the white world. Grid expected that he would be eliminated from the trial the moment he died.

“Hahahat! A last ditch effort! Run away like a rat!”

The red sword stretched out. The stab that made the gap of three meters useless struck Grid with a power comparable to that of Kill. Should he hit it back with Revolve? No, this wouldn't work. Haejin's skill was similar to Kill and it was enough to overwhelm him with power. It was called compatible natures.

“Pinnacle Kill.”

“.....?”

The sound of Haejin's laughter stopped and she groaned.

“Ugh!”

She was pushed back by an opponent she had completely overwhelmed so far? Haejin's face cooled down as the hand and arm holding the sword shook and she temporarily lost any feeling in it. Then she shook her head and swung her sword again. She believed that she had only been pushed by chance.

“Haap!”

“Transcended Link Flower.”

“Kiyaaaaak!”

A waterfall of sword energy that fluttered like petals. Haejin was pushed back in the struggle, became a rag, and stumbled. She barely managed to stand up and wanted to fall down.

‘What?’

Her implementation of the ‘must kill’ desire in the mental world was successful. The moment she held the red sword in her hands, she felt power boiling over and felt invincible. It was absurd that their positions changed like it was a fleeting dream.

‘It wasn't a fluke.’

The small human woman in front of her suddenly became huge. The wary Haejin purely admired it. Was her name Irene? A human being had this much hidden strength.

‘...No, she isn't just a human.’

Haejin burst out laughing. It was a laugh that mocked herself. She blamed herself for realizing late that the human in front of her was a special being.

‘Zik's apostle.’

Yes, the human in front of her wasn't an ordinary human. He was chosen by the 6th Evil, Zik, who was said to be the most outstanding among the seven evils who had risen to the level of a half-god in the past. She couldn't be normal, even among humans. Perhaps it was correct to evaluate her as a daoist immortal aiming to be a half-god.

‘Okay... maintain my mind.’

It was no wonder why she couldn't win easily. It was natural to get hurt when fighting. She wasn't superior. Thus, even more... she should become even more aggressive. New red paint was sprinkled all over the white world. It felt like a thunderbolt and covered Haejin's red sword. It was like a swaying stream of blood.

Haejin's red sword became bigger and more gorgeous. It made the shaking of the ship stronger. Her mental image was enhanced. Now she would win. She couldn't lose even if she wanted to. The confident Haejin rushed toward Grid and swung her sword with all her might. The trajectory left by the red sword seemed to suggest that trajectory of blood that Grid would shed after a while. It happened when Haejin smiled...

"Linked Kill Flower Pinnacle."

Kwaaaaang!

"Transcended Link Kill Pinnacle."

".....?"

All of Haejin's attacks were smashed. In the meantime, Haejin was attacked in the gap that was revealed and suffered a deep wound to her chest and shoulders. Even so, she kept calm. This was the end. The end. This person had no more potential while she could still wield the sword. She would surely win if she just cut and stabbed...

Haejin accelerated in the tense fighting situation only to suddenly stop. It was because Zik's apostle moved forward with a brilliant sword dance and used the same swordsmanship again.

"Transcended Link Kill Pinnacle."

".....?"

This time, Haejin couldn't even defend. A question mark appeared above Haejin's head as the attack slammed into her.

'God's Command?'

How? The apostle of the 6th Evil, Zik, had the power of the 4th Evil, Taren?

Ku tang tang tang!

"Cough, cough! Keuk!"

The positions of Grid and Haejin had completely reversed. The one who was pushed to the end of the deck was Haejin, not Grid. She was even seriously injured as she vomited out black blood. Haejin wasn't too frightened as she dared to look down before glancing at the approaching apostle of Zik. Rather, she started laughing.

"Hahat!Hahahat! Stupid fool! In fact, this place is Chiyou's mental world! It isn't real. It is fake! I have clearly remembered all the sword techniques and power you used while struggling in order to survive! You will die once you return to reality after the test!"

"....."

Did this mean she couldn't be killed? It was regrettable, but it didn't matter. At least he prevented Haejin from passing the test. Furthermore...

"It's fine, there are many more things you haven't seen."

[The level of Grid's Swordsmanship has risen.]

[Physical attack power, critical hit probability, and critical hit attack power have increased by 10%. Five fusion sword dances can be created.]

Haejin judged that the only technique left to Grid was the Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle he used during the first trial, but the reality was completely different. Just as Haejin hadn't taken out the White Tiger's Breath and the Blue Dragon's Breath due to pride, Grid hadn't revealed everything.

"300,000 Army Swordsmanship Stealth Sword."

".....?!"

"100,000 Army Massacre Sword."

".....!!"

"200,000 Army Crushing Sword."

"Kiyaaaaaak!"

The red sword in Haejin's hand cracked before shattering and disappearing.

Fear...

She couldn't withstand the feeling she was experiencing for the first time in her life.

"I won't allow your comfort."

The Castration Eye entered through the gap. Haejin lost the last of the strength supporting her and fell down like a broken doll. Grid pushed her off the ship with a finger to her bloody forehead. Then he looked at the yangbans remaining on the ship. "Next."

The yangbans saw a silver-haired reaper. They remembered that talents such as Garam and Maru had also died in the human world.