

Overgeared 1451

Chapter 1451

“At first, it was unclear, but... your nature has changed.”

The training ground in the inner courtyard of the Overgeared Palace. In the past, Lord liked to use it very much. Recently, it was a place Irene liked to use and now Grid and Braham were facing each other here.

“Your energy is a bit more suited to using magic.”

Braham’s words were meaningful. He transcended the level of just feeling the magic of all things. He could read and intervene. This was why many of his magics had an extremely fast casting speed. When using simple magic (from his perspective), there was no need to accumulate and express magic power. He was able to intervene and transform the magic power floating in the atmosphere, creating magic entirely from it. Braham’s world was completely different from the world that ordinary people saw. His perspective when observing people was naturally different and he could instantly see the changes in Grid.

‘Is it suitable for using magic?’

Grid speculated what was going on. Overgeared God Grid’s Techniques—he thought that the skill that made it possible to give magic to items had raised his magical temperament itself.

“Two.” Braham opened the door to his mental world and pulled out two books from there. They were magic books. “Now you can learn these two magics.”

“Finally, Meteor...?!”

“.....?”

“...I’m just speaking.”

Grid had just been joking in anticipation, but he hadn’t expected Braham to look at him with this type of gaze. Two magic books flew to the embarrassed Grid.

[The ‘Braham Enhanced Support Magic Book: Magic Power Cohesion’ has been acquired.]

[The ‘Braham Enhanced Support Magic Book: Magic Spray’ has been acquired.]

“...Is this a joke?” Grid’s eyes had been shining so brightly that it gave the illusion of starlight. Now it quickly turned into rotten fish eyes. The black eyes lost their light and what was expressed was ‘nothingness.’ Even the Sword Saint wouldn’t be able to fight and win against the current Grid because he wouldn’t be able to read the intentions and predict the moves.

Braham had this thought before clicking his tongue.

‘Even if I covered my eyes with a bean pod, I covered it too firmly.’ [1]

At this point, no matter what Grid did, it would be meaningful and great. Of course, he deserved to be treated like that, but...

Braham made his expression cold and asked Grid, “Which part makes you think it is a joke?”

“They are two support magics.”

He had to kill the demonic creatures and great demons in hell, clear his class quest, etc.

Over the past six months, Grid’s level had risen so fast that it was comparable to his prime. Grid was now level 455. Ever since breaking through level 399, which was called the Wailing Wall, there had been no great change in the amount of experience needed to level up and this played a big role in it.

In any case, Grid’s intelligence was 5,303 points. It was 2,000 points higher than Zednos who was constantly 1st or 2nd place on the magician rankings. Of course, it wasn’t intentionally raised. The impact of Duke of Wisdom was great. Grid received 18 stat points every time he leveled up and 8 points were forcibly invested in the intelligence stat due to Duke of Wisdom. Additionally, there were the effects from his titles that added up to 50, effects from his items, bonus stats obtained whenever making myth rated items, stats he earned from the Black Tortoise’s Shell, and so on. It all added up to 5,303. If it was simply based on the intelligence stat, Grid would be the 1st ranked magician and also have the status of great magician.

To be honest, Grid had been looking forward to learning pretty good magic. Braham thought that Grid’s energy had become suitable for learning magic. Didn’t he just say it? So how could Grid not feel expectant?

“I thought I would at least learn Giga Lightning or Explosion...”

Grid revealed his thoughts. Now that he could give magic to the items he made, he didn’t hide his desire to learn attack magic. However, Braham’s attitude didn’t change.

“Is it possible to attach magic without extra materials? It is an incredible development. It might be the result of the knowledge of Duke of Wisdom combined with Pagma’s techniques.”

“So I want to learn as much magic as possible. I need to optimize the effect of the magic enchantment.”

“No, it is even more reason to learn these magics.”

Rumble.

Braham used Stone Wall to set up a rock barrier 10 meters ahead of them. It was a distance where the power of Magic Missile was fully preserved.

“I know that your intelligence is considerable. It might be a bit better than that Patrian novice.”

He was speaking of Great Magician Ashur. One of the 10 great magicians of the continent was still a novice to Braham.

“It is just that intelligence isn’t proportional to magic skills. Think of how you are different from Reinhardt’s blacksmith craftsmen. Are your skills superior to them just because of dexterity?”

“...That isn’t the case.”

“Magic is the same. Intelligence isn’t the only factor that determines magic power, speed, hit rate, and form. It has to be backed up by technique.”

Certainly, Grid lacked the passive skills and titles that enhanced the power of magic. Even if he learned and used the same magic as Zednos, the overall power or utility was likely to be inferior. The intelligence stat only affected the magic attack power. The overall completeness of the magic required assistance from other passive skills.

“Ah...!” Grid realized it. This was why Braham was emphasizing the importance of support magic. Braham had accurately seen and figured out how to supplement what Grid was lacking. It meant he was always watching Grid.

“Look.”

White magic power gathered at the end of Braham’s hand that was aiming at the rock barrier. It was the precursor to Enhanced Magic Missile that Grid was familiar with. There was nothing special about it. Soon, the change began. Two seconds after the light gathered, the color of the light became subtly thicker. By the third second, the volume had expanded.

“This is Cohesion. During the magic casting time, the magic power in the atmosphere is gathered to the magic and the power is increased. That is why your Magic Missile is like dog poop while mine is like Meteor.”

“.....”

Dog poop...? Did he lose his affinity? The reason why Braham didn’t teach him good magic was actually to bully him. Grid doubted it, but it was only for a moment. It was because he saw the hidden affinity in Braham’s red eyes that shone as coldly as jewels.

“Normal Magic Power Cohesion slows magic casting time by up to two times and amplifies the power of the magic by 1.5 times. Meanwhile, my enhanced Cohesion can delay casting time by up to three times and amplifies the power by four times.”

For example, the casting time of Magic Missile (Enhanced) was one second. If he increased casting time to three seconds using Cohesion, the power would quadruple. Magic Missile flew to the rock wall and struck, causing cracks to form on the rock wall. It was Magic Missile used by Braham and it was Braham who made the rock barrier. The rock barrier was the superior magic. Originally, Magic Missile shouldn’t have scratched the barrier, but the power was significantly enhanced by Cohesion.

“Next is Spray.”

Braham once again used Magic Missile. Once again, there was the three seconds casting process and the power of Magic Missile was maximized. Then it split into 10 shots and fired. It was like watching raindrops shooting along a straight line. If targeted, a transcendent might be forced to use their world of transcendence. 10 scratches formed on the rock wall that was hit.

“Spray spreads attack magic by up to 10. It increases the hit rate and range, but this isn’t universal. It splits up the magic so the power is weakened. Still, the utility is very high.”

“...It is like this.”

A skill that changed a single target magic into wide area magic. The higher the intelligence, the more likely it could kill the target. Fortunately, Grid had high intelligence. Braham had a reason for presenting

these two magics to Grid. Braham was looking at Grid's future, not his present. Rather than teaching magic with strong attack power right now, he aimed to teach magic that could strengthen weak magic first before growing it step by step.

'I especially like the Cohesion one.'

If he attached Magic Missile with its power quadrupled to items... it would fall short of the Giga Lightning and Explosion he had been looking forward to, but it would still be useful. It might be more efficient. It was because the cooldown time was dozens of times shorter than Giga Lightning or Explosion.

"Thank you and I'll learn well."

Grid was touched by Braham's teachings and opened the magic books to acquire two new magics. Then he pulled out a portable furnace, made an item and attached Magic Missile that was affected by Cohesion. In just eight minutes, a one-handed sword with a level limit of 400 was created. If he created a dagger with a level limit of 300, then it would've taken less than five minutes.

[Sword Hiding Its Teeth]

[Rating: Unique

Attack Power: 1,830 Durability: 890/890

* One of the Overgeared God's magics has been granted to the weapon. The weapon's attack power is increased by an additional 10.6%.

* Fires a powerful Magic Missile when attacking. Cooldown Time: 5 seconds. Mana Consumption: 600. Can be activated and disabled.

A sword created by the Overgeared God.

Every time the sword is full of pure white magic, it will launch the Magic Missile enhanced by Magic Power Cohesion.

Conditions of Use: Advanced Sword Mastery, Level: 400]

'The cooldown time is the same as Magic Missile.'

Cohesion increased the power by four times, but the cooldown was no different. The mana consumption was only 200 higher than normal Magic Missiles. It was because the mana cost of Magic Cohesion was 200.

'Overgeared God's Techniques is really a scam.'

Grid noticed the effect of increasing the weapon's attack power rather than the power of Magic Missile.

Granting magic. The logic of 'the Overgeared God's magic power has been injected' increased the potential of the sword. It was a very fundamental element that strengthened the intrinsic performance of the item.

'My intelligence is currently 5,300 and I get an extra 10.6% attack power from granting magic... will 10,000 intelligence increase it by 20%? This is also based on the standard of Magic Missile. The higher the quality of the magic granted, the more likely it is that the intelligence-based attack power will increase.'

Additionally, there was room for this attack power to jump if magic could be stacked two or three times. He had often been annoyed by his stat points being forcibly invested in intelligence, but now it wasn't a waste. Braham delivered more good news to the delighted Grid.

"You just need to raise your intelligence a little bit and you can learn one more new magic. I think it is good to focus on growth for the time being."

"Yes, I understand."

Just a little bit more. He probably needed to raise his intelligence to 5,500. Grid left his spot with anticipation while inwardly shouting 'Meteor.'

He wanted to leave for hell immediately but he first thought about securing Galgunos' remains. The loot brought by Jishuka and Euphemina—he planned to buy it and try to strengthen the Overgeared Skeletons.

'Additionally, Galgunos' core.'

Maybe it would be the beginning of the Overgeared Skeletons' evolution into liches.

'Communication is possible once they become a lich. Hopefully, I can read Madra's diary.'

It was a diary written by Madra who had lost his reason in his later years as a death knight. Thinking about it rationally, it was unlikely that the swordsmanship teachings would be left behind. However, the growth of the Overgeared Skeletons was essential in many ways.

1. Based on the idiom about putting on/covering your eyes with a bean pod where the meaning = being blinded by love.

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The Overgeared Skeletons were very different from general undead. The increase in level and stats meant they could change classes and learn skills. They were able to grow just like players. Additionally, their bones could be replaced. It was a complete transformation. It meant they could strengthen the fundamental power of the body independently of their stats.

Grid's dream of growing the Overgeared Skeletons into a death knight and lich wasn't a pipe dream. Grid was willing to invest hundreds of millions of gold in the Overgeared Skeletons. The utility shown by Agnus' deceased had left a strong impression in his mind. The stronger the undead who didn't die and didn't know fear, the more harshly they pressured their opponent... he had felt it again in the battle at the principality.

'Money can be saved anyway.'

The speed of the automatic production of items was affected by the size, shape, structure, material, and level limit of the items. The larger the item, the more complex the shape and structure, the higher the material and the higher the level limit, the slower the production speed.

Among them, the biggest influences were the materials and level restrictions, but the level of items required by the market wasn't as high as one might think. The level limit of the most sought out items was only around 300. Due to people's limited financial resources, they preferred moderately excellent materials rather than special. Most items required by the market could be made in 10 minutes by Grid's auto production. If he took a day to make more than 100 items, he would be able to sit on a cushion of money in just one day.

'If I am lucky enough to obtain a legendary or myth rated item, I can spread it to the Overgeared members.'

This... it was thrilling no matter how he thought about it.

Grid's mood had been the best it had been in recent years. He was very excited about the completion of his blacksmithing technique. He had been liberated from the oppressive burden of the past few years of needing to make underwear whenever he had time to raise his skill level. His heart was as light as a feather and he couldn't help being happy. Of course, he wasn't so excited that he made the mistake of making a wrong judgment. It was because he didn't want all the efforts he had done to reach this moment be destroyed like a sand castle.

'No matter how anxious I am to make money, I shouldn't release too many items on the market at once. If the price of the item goes down, I'll be the only one who loses. I should take Lauel's advice and carefully adjust the distribution quantity.'

Moments later, Grid arrived at the appointment place, found Euphemina, and waved. It was the training room underneath the magic tower. Euphemina, who had been aiming rainbow-colored magic power at the level 450 training golem inside, ended the training mode and approached Grid. Euphemina asked, "Did you learn the magic well?"

"Yes, why don't you come and take a look? Aren't you interested in Braham's magic?"

Euphemina still retained some of the characteristics of a Duplicator. As long as the target's technique was in the category of 'magic,' it could sometimes be duplicated with several times the power of the original. After gaining the knowledge and skills of Mumud, the most talented magician in history, she delved into other people's magic and dyed it with her own color.

The lich, Galgunos—this was the biggest reason why the super named boss Grid couldn't easily challenge had fallen in her hands. The synergy between Mumud's Successor and the Duplicator as a magician counter went beyond Grid and Braham's Duke of Wisdom. The moment Jishuka's Breaking Evil Arrow was added to Mumud's magic that interfered with the 'combination' of magic and destroyed it from the inside, Galgunos encountered a disaster.

"It would be rude to Sir Braham," Euphemina answered Grid's question.

Braham's favor toward Euphemina stemmed from his past regrets. Braham wasn't thinking about Euphemina. He cared about Mumud's power and will. Euphemina knew this fact and kept a clear line with Braham. She maintained a sense of distance without relying on his care and kindness.

"Braham will see you one day, not Mumud."

Grid smiled bitterly when he accurately learned about the relationship between Braham and Euphemina. Then he stroked Euphemina's hair like he did once before. She was an adult unlike her young looks as a middle or high school student. Still, Grid felt like she was a younger sibling.

Euphemina also accepted his hand. A Duplicator who peeked at and stole the power of others—Euphemina deceived others using the class characteristics of a Duplicator and often felt the condemnation of her conscience. She instinctively kept a distance from others.

However, this wasn't the case with Grid. Perhaps it was because she hadn't stolen Grid's skills or because of her pride that she always did her best in her relationship with him, but she didn't feel any guilt toward Grid. She was able to be confident and relaxed. Grid was like a real brother.

"Here, this is what you wanted." Euphemina handed Galgunos' remains and core to Grid. "Sister Jishuka said that you needed it, so I didn't touch them."

"Jishuka..."

"I saw it before. The relationship between the two of you seems very awkward. Is it true that the relationship broke up before it even started?"

"....."

Was there such a rumor? Grid was flustered, but he soon honestly expressed his position, "I... am trash. That's why I like both Yura and Jishuka. Still, I know that the world won't tolerate my heart and it is also very impolite to both people. In the end, only one person can be chosen. Between them, Jishuka is very bright. I think she will be happy without me."

"Wow... Trash..." Euphemina's eyes were filled with condemnation. She even expressed disgust on her face. "Yura and Jishuka both knew your heart and liked you, yet you used that heart as an excuse to break the relationship? Isn't that a ridiculous reason? You have no consideration at all."

"Rather, this is consideration. What do you mean? We can't keep an ambiguous relationship forever. The wounds will just become bigger."

"What is ambiguous about it? You like both of them and they both like you, even though they know how you feel. Will the world blame you? What's wrong with that? The three of you like each other. If they want to curse, then let them. It's enough if all the parties involved are happy. Besides—what? Is it rude to my sisters? That is just your delusion. If a person likes someone, it doesn't matter what form or situation it is. Even if you like both of them, they will be happy that their love has paid off. Anyway, people who have never been in love can be delusional and do useless things alone."

"...I see what you mean. Let's stop talking about this."

In the end, it was just Euphemina's thoughts. It was just a handful of comments and was lacking to break the ethics and common sense Grid had been learning all his life. Grid thought it was meaningless to have

a further conversation about it. He analyzed the remains of Galgunos with Pagma's Eyes from his Baal's Contractor days. The knowledge of Duke of Wisdom helped to understand it. Grid found that the unknown formulas and patterns engraved on the white bones were artificial magic power circuits.

'Magic power cohesion, conversation, assistance with runaway magic power. Assistance with catalyst generation. Assistance with mind enhancement...'

The flood of information resulted in one outcome. Galgunos' bones showed that in order to become a lich, he had studied and modified himself to amplify a lich's power. Grid could almost feel how strong Galgunos' longing for power had been.

'Did he dream of conquering the world?'

The amount of energy accumulated in the core was huge. It was hard to calculate since there would be a significant amount of loss after death. Grid even grasped Galgunos' personality.

'He had this power, but he didn't rush into the world. He kept hiding in the dungeon and gathering troops... he should have a very careful personality.'

Grid wondered if Galgunos was anxious about the former generation legends. There were Pagma, Braham, and the other former generation legends. Galgunos knew the power of humanity and he couldn't easily believe in his strength.

"There was a reason why Braham was surprised."

Grid couldn't hide his admiration. He thought about the possibility that he might've suffered a major disaster one day if the Galgunos raid kept being postponed and realized how great the value of Jishuka and Euphemina's activity was. How much should he pay for this? Did she read Grid's expression after he couldn't easily price Galgunos' remains?

"I won't charge money~ I will just be very grateful if you make an item for me when you have time."

"...I'll make 10 things."

From a very long time ago, the Overgeared members had collected many production materials and designs for Grid. Yet when asked if the value was equivalent to the value of Grid's produced item, no member answered yes. The Overgeared members were always in debt to Grid.

Now that relationship was slowly changing. The relationship between Grid and the Overgeared members was no longer one-sided. The value of the help that the members provided to Grid had increased. From Grid's standpoint, it was precious regardless of whether his colleagues' help was small or large.

"Can you Become the King of the Dead?"

Grid summoned Overgeared Skeleton Two.

Clack, clack clack clack!

Overgeared Skeleton Two appeared while dancing the tango. He bowed politely to Grid only to open his eyes in amazement. Galgunos' white bones and core attracted his attention.

Clack clack!Clack clack clack!

Was he excited? The appearance of Overgeared Skeleton 2 stomping his feet made Grid laugh. He had a bit of understanding about Mercedes' taste in finding the Overgeared Skeletons cute.

"Let's get started."

The evolution of Overgeared Skeleton Two began. Overgeared Skeleton Two still tended to have a larger skull compared to his body. Now he combined with Galgunos' elongated limbs and achieved a well-proportioned figure. (The saying used here is actually eight heads which refers to a body that is eight times the length of the face. This is considered an ideal body figure.) The ribs and pelvis became thicker, adding a sense of stability.

Every time the patterns and rituals engraved on Galgunos' white bones were connected and combined, light was regained. The violent black magic power surrounded Overgeared Skeleton Two's entire body.

"....."

Overgeared Skeleton Two was performing a pious waltz like a sacred ritual when he suddenly stopped. The black magic power surrounding him grew more and more violent, burning like flames. It was a reaction that seemed like it wouldn't acknowledge its new master. It seemed like it would burn up Overgeared Skeleton Two.

'A failure?'

Grid's brow furrowed. Euphemina was also nervous. Even if the Overgeared Skeletons were the work of Beriache, was it too greedy to absorb the power of a super named lich like Galgunos? It happened the moment when their thoughts reached this far...

Overgeared Skeleton Two suddenly raised his head and roared. The eyes that were almost smiling at Grid became sharp and emitted light. Every time Overgeared Skeleton Two forced the limbs that defied his will to move, there was the sound of bones breaking in the room. If this continued, it seemed like Overgeared Skeleton Two was going to shatter and collapse.

Nevertheless, Grid didn't take any hasty actions. It was impossible to hit the Overgeared Skeleton to stop the magic power that was running while and it was impossible to estimate what side effects would occur when Grid released the summoning. Unfortunately, Grid was an outsider in the field of necromancy. There was little knowledge and no related skills. In other words, the Overgeared Skeletons met the wrong master.

"I should've brought Bullet!"

Euphemina grabbed the collar of the restless Grid. "Do you think that Bullet will know how to deal with this? The Overgeared Skeletons are completely different from normal undead. You can only wait and believe in the Overgeared Skeleton right now."

At this moment—

[Combining with a new body! It is the complete body I dreamed of! I'm truly satisfied!]

Galgunos' core that was in Grid's hands shouted and flew freely.

“What?” Euphemina was startled. She thought Galgunos’ ego had been extinguished. She never thought he would be hiding in the core, pretending to be dead while waiting for a chance. Even Braham didn’t notice, so how could she?

“No!” Euphemina exclaimed as she reached out toward Galgunos’ core that was rushing at Overgeared Skeleton Two. She was a person who directly experienced Galgunos’ terrible power. She realized that combining Beriache’ legacy—one of the Overgeared Skeletons—with Galgunos would create an enemy they couldn’t afford to go against.

However, it was too late. Galgunos’ core was sucked into Overgeared Skeleton Two and Overgeared Skeleton Two’s roaring became even greater. It was like a scream. However, Grid’s expression was calm. It was because he now knew how to help the Overgeared Skeleton.

“Granting an Ego.”

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[Galgunos’ Soul has detected your call. He has ignored it.]

‘That’s it.’

Galgunos had just taken over Overgeared Skeleton Two’s body. Grid confirmed that he could be designated as a target of Granting an Ego. That was enough. Grid moved rapidly. He couldn’t help Overgeared Skeleton Two, who was suffering from being unable to control the magic power in Galgunos’ remains, but he could help Overgeared Skeleton Two, whose body was taken away by Galgunos. He could just squeeze this person out.

Grid planned to inflict enough pain that Galgunos wished he was dead and give up the body of Overgeared Skeleton Two. It would also assist with the use of Granting an Ego, pushing Galgunos thoroughly to the point that it was tempting.

[Galgunos]

The name that rose brightly above the head of Overgeared Skeleton Two filled Grid’s vision. Before he knew it, he arrived in front of Galgunos and used Kill at the same time. Euphemina missed some of the process. In her eyes, Grid’s movements seemed to be suddenly interrupted.

‘Very fast...!’

Mumud’s Successor was a magician after all. Euphemina had less agility. Still, the insight that she had trained and accumulated since the days of being a Duplicator was one of the best in the world. This meant she received considerable correction to her body’s dynamic vision. It was one of her greatest strengths.

The fact that she missed Grid’s movement was quite a big shock. Yet the real surprise was something else.

“.....?!”

Galgunos’ thick, dark shield was something that could only be analyzed and disassembled by the characteristics of a Duplicator and Mumud’s magic, or pierced by Jishuka’s Breaking Evil Arrows. The

shield that absorbed all normal magic and physical attacks broke instantly at Grid's attack and scattered fragments of magic power?

'How high is the attack power required to do this?'

Euphemina laughed bitterly when she recalled the moments she struggled with Jishuka to destroy Galgunos' shield. She had a lot of feelings, but her mind and body didn't stop. She used three magics simultaneously. She used the characteristics of a Duplicator to observe Galgunos and analyze his weaknesses. Then she used her rainbow colored magic power to induce decomposition and destruction.

Triple casting. It had reached the point of a genius.

Galgunos' body emitted dark magic power from the wound Grid created and twisted in the reverse direction of the joints. The body grotesquely bent and due to the lighting in the underground training room, it was reminiscent of the shadow of a dried, old tree.

Mumud's magic reversed the flow of magic power and caused the body to malfunction. This was the result.

[Again... this girl...] Galgunos stopped as he tried to counterattack Grid with the fog of magic power and his eyes were attracted to Euphemina. The red light of the eyes was full of anger and killing intent. He seemed to have a deep grudge against her.

It was natural. Lich Galgunos had already lost to her once. He was pulled out of the temple where he reigned as a god. Everything returned to nothing just before he achieved the dream of becoming a god using a lich's body. Galgunos would resent and curse Euphemina forever and ever.

However, it shouldn't happen now. The one second where Galgunos and Euphemina's eyes met. In that second, Grid moved his sword dozens of times. The combination of the Formless Sword and Link was destructive. Dozens of sword trajectories appeared, each with their own spiral while a 'hard to recognize blind spot attack' was also launched. The swordsmanship was completed in just one second. It was more like a phenomenon. A phenomenon that caused a disaster.

".....?!" Grid's expression hardened as he was cutting Galgunos. It was because around 80% of the attacks scattered like a mirage without touching Galgunos' body.

'Spatial distortion!'

The ultimate in space magic. It was a great magic that transferred any object, phenomenon, or even concept to another space. It was similar to Lantier's Shadow Movement, but it was one level higher. Shadow Movement was a technique that moved the body to another shadow, while the usage of a spatial distortion was endless. Of course, it was a magic that couldn't be easily used, even for Braham. It was because every time the magic was used, catalysts made with 'horandia' were needed and were consumed. It wasn't something that could be obtained just because of money.

A chill went down Grid's spine as he retrieved the Formless Sword that had entered and left the unknown space.

'It turns out that this guy...'

He had the catalyst formulas engraved on his bones. It was unexpected that they could create a catalyst that could distort space.

‘...Good.’

Astonishment turned into joy. The scene of Overgeared Skeleton Two using space distortion magic unfolded in Grid’s head, increasing his motivation.

[You... are quite strong.] Galgunos, who hadn’t been very interested in Grid, spoke to Grid for the first time.

“You too.” The moment Grid answered, Galgunos used Blink. His destination was behind Euphemina. Grid immediately followed with Shunpo and stabbed at Galgunos, but it was shortly after Galgunos’ magic had already struck Euphemina’s back. Shunpo wasn’t an all-rounder in all situations. If the other person moved through space first, then it was natural for him to be a step later.

[You are nothing without that woman who can use the power of breaking evil.] Galgunos looked ecstatic when he saw Euphemina coughing up blood. There was little change in the expression, unlike the Overgeared Skeletons, but his joy was clearly revealed.

‘This jerk doesn’t care about it.’

Grid realized he was being ignored, but he wasn’t agitated. His side would be very comfortable if Euphemina was pulling the aggro. He calmly used Pinnacle Kill. There were two tricky things about Galgunos. First, the power of a lich’s Mana Shield that was always activated would absorb a significant amount of damage. Second, many of the attacks that penetrated through the Mana Shield were affected by ‘Spatial Distortion.’

Once again, the Kill part of Pinnacle Kill was sucked into the distorted space. It wasn’t known where it had been, but the Formless Sword was soaked in muddy water. During the time when Grid retrieved the sword, Galgunos and Euphemina were engaged in a first exchange of attacks and defenses. Wounds appeared all over Euphemina’s body.

Grid protected Euphemina with the God Hands while taking off Lee Jeong’s training tools set. In that short period of time, Euphemina suffered a new wound. “Ugh!”

The situation was funny. The magic she fired into the air was blocked by the God Hands, causing the God Hands to stiffen. Then Galgunos easily pierced through the gaps that Euphemina showed. The God Hands were proof that this was a fight they couldn’t read. Euphemina predicted Galgunos’ route while the God Hands were more likely to sabotage Euphemina.

“Sorry!”

Grid accumulated fighting energy because he had taken off the training tools and regained his original stats. His speed was like an instantaneous flash of lightning.

“Huh? You don’t have to apologize for this much.”

Euphemina was flustered because she didn’t know when Grid had come to her side. The shield in his hand was blocking Galgunos’ magic bombardment that was pouring in from the side.

'Really... It is on a different level. Is it too much to be a support?'

Euphemina had missed a chance to fight back due to being hindered by the God Hands. Nevertheless, she maintained her composure and smiled widely, unable to suppress her excitement. It wasn't a bright smile. Her eyes were blazing with fighting spirit.

This fighting spirit was her essence. She was a bigshot who had reigned as an unofficial ranker since the launch of Satisfy until now. She might be a 'conditional' powerhouse, but this made her sharpen her temperament of a winner and her senses were sharp.

"Feel free to run wild. I'll support you as much as I can."

Euphemina had a hunch. The current partnership with Grid was a chance that would never happen again. Galgunos was too strong an enemy and Grid's movements were one level higher than her own. The moment she succeeded in identifying Grid's intentions and worked together with him to take down Galgunos, her skills would increase one step further.

"Yes."

Grid nodded without saying much. It meant he was highly focused. He was also aware of it. Galgunos was impossible to defeat in a normal way. The Spatial Distortion magic that had a 80% chance of invalidating any form of attack and the lich's unique infinite Mana Shield...

The key was to break the flow of Spatial Distortion and Mana Shield. Then what could be done against the magic that was always activated?

'Jishuka's Breaking Evil Arrows must've played a really big role.'

There were too many tricky prerequisites for overpowering Galgunos. It was a super named boss with a terrible level of difficulty. He thought it was a good choice not to challenge Galgunos prematurely. Even if he challenged it, the probability of the raid failure was high.

Of course, this was a story before he made 'this.' Grid placed the Formless Sword in the inventory and pulled out the Fire Dragon Sword and Falling Moon Sword at the same time. The items were combined like flowing water and the long sword with flames that were like moonlight was held in his right hand.

The Transcend sword dance generated intense air waves. Fenrir's cloak fluttered and the hard ground of the training room was torn off, the debris floating in the air. Unlike the turbulent space, Grid's gaze was calm as he held the sword in the center. No emotions could be read on his face. This was why it was hard to figure out his intentions. Even Euphemina, who was preparing to keep pace with Grid, was flustered because she couldn't predict his next move.

[You...?]

Galgunos' reaction was extraordinary. Grid noticed something from Galgunos' reaction, who was distracted the moment the Falling Moon Sword was pulled out.

'It is an ancient existence.'

Galgunos could create a catalyst for space distortion through ancient secret techniques and knowledge. Why couldn't he recognize the moon night iron?

[.....!]

“.....!”

Galgunos and Euphemina had wide eyes. The storm centered around Grid still stayed with Euphemina, but Grid, who caused the storm, was right in front of Galgunos. The two of them were aware of the concept of Shunpo, but the triggering of Shunpo combined with the brilliant effect of Transcend displayed a ripple effect that took away the souls of the two people.

The great thing was that in the meantime, Euphemina’s magic was pouring out from behind Grid. It would’ve been the perfect support if she activated it one second earlier.

[Galgunos’ Soul has detected your call.]

Galgunos’ astonished expression overlapped with the notification window on Grid’s retina. The Fire Dragon Sword, wrapped in the cold flames, was already about to reach Galgunos’ core.

[Galgunos has answered your call.]

“.....”

“.....”

The sword that was roaring as if to tear the world apart stopped. Galgunos, who was staring fiercely at Grid, suddenly smiled. The name that appeared above his head was Overgeared Skeleton Two. It was the name Grid gave so the more he saw it, the more wonderful he felt the name was.

“...What is this vain end?” Euphemina’s words resonated through the call room.

Chapter 1454

Galgunos might be a lich with divinity, but his world was just a small temple. He was even defeated in the temple. As a handful of believers watched, he was trampled on by the new legends, Jishuka and Euphemina. His power couldn’t be intact even if he borrowed the body of Overgeared Skeleton Two to be revived.

It would’ve been meaningless even if it was intact. He was nothing more than a humble and shabby existence in this huge world called Grid. In conclusion, Grid’s victory was set from the start.

Euphemina was also well aware of this fact, but she never imagined it would end so easily. She knew Galgunos’ strength better than anyone else. She had speculated that there would be a more intense crisis and reversal. Then what was this...

“...What is this vain end?”

The words that represented Euphemina’s feelings unknowingly popped out. She was a genius, but she didn’t understand Grid’s fight even with the wisdom and senses of a genius. The reason was simple. Overwhelming Galgunos was impossible even in the realm of a genius.

In fact, Grid didn’t think he had overwhelmed Galgunos. It might feel meaningless from Euphemina’s perspective, but it was a fierce battle for Grid.

'He was a tougher opponent than I thought.'

There was a reason why he hadn't taken off Lee Jeong's training tools set in the beginning. Grid recognized Lich Galgunos as a strong opponent, but was convinced Galgunos was worse than himself. However, there was a variable called Spatial Distortion.

'Spatial Distortion... it didn't seem all that good when I just heard about it, but it is really powerful.'

Not only was Galgunos damaged, but he was downgraded because he borrowed the body of Overgeared Skeleton Two. The 'quality' of the body itself might've improved, but the growth rate had decreased. Additionally, all the equipment he would've used during the time as Lich Galgunos was lost.

It was only after linking the Falling Moon Sword with Item Combination that it was possible to knock Galgunos down. As expected, it was much easier to destroy Galgunos, but it wasn't overwhelming compared with the various favorable conditions.

'Spatial Distortion is fraudulent...'

Grid analyzed the cause and frowned. Then he soon smiled like the frown had been a lie. Overgeared Skeleton Two grew and developed a well-proportioned figure. Grid's mood was relieved when he saw the smile of the one who was at the same eye level as Grid. The expectations were great. To what extent had Overgeared Skeleton Two absorbed Galgunos' power?

[I... I didn't lose... I just stepped back for a while because the timing isn't right...]

A somber voice was heard from Galgunos' core that was now Overgeared Skeleton Two's core. It was the voice of Galgunos, who had been affected by Granting an Ego. Grid ignored the excuses entering his ears and brought up the details of Overgeared Skeleton Two.

[Name: Overgeared Skeleton Two

Level: 430]

The level was good.

Due to the aftermath of absorbing the lich who had built up his status, Overgeared Skeleton Two achieved the fourth class advancement at once and gained 30 additional levels. The growth was beyond expectations, but the class name was deeply disappointing.

[Class: Dancing Lich Who Distorts Space]

"....."

It was a pleasing and wonderful thing since it proved that the power of space distortion was absorbed, but what was the dancing lich? Of course, the Overgeared Skeletons' love of dancing meant they were a genius of provocation and were capable of doing the sword dances.

'...It doesn't seem that good.'

In fact, he thought Overgeared Skeleton Two would become the lich king.

'Maybe it is like this before the fifth advancement.'

Well, what did the class name have to do with it? Grid's smile became deeper after checking Overgeared Skeleton's stats and skills list. There was a change in the stat values.

Strength and agility was still low and the proportion of the stamina stat was lower than before. Instead, it gained 4,800 intelligence and 2,000 insight. Once 2,000 insight was gained, it would develop dynamic vision and the ability to grasp situations, so it wouldn't be pushed back in a fairly rapid battle.

No, this wasn't the best way to put it. An NPC's intellectual power was proportional to intelligence. The synergy of high intellectual power (intelligence) and insight might lead to ideas that went beyond tactics and strategy.

'Does Overgeared Skeleton Two need to open the leadership stat to make it more brilliant?'

A discerning eye. The insights through this were being added to Grid. Beyond accepting the change in Overgeared Skeleton Two at face value, he inferred the reason for the change. He should research ways to use Overgeared Skeleton Two as a commander or strategist, rather than just a lich.

'Additionally, it gets 12 stats per level... it feels a bit low compared to the status, but it is still reasonable.'

If Grid had to pick a part that was disappointing, it was the low stamina stat. Still, this didn't have to be a problem. The undead didn't get tired and a lich's magic power was infinite. In fact, Overgeared Skeleton Two now had the characteristic of 'mana won't be depleted.' As a result, the value of Mana Shield rose sharply. The lack of health was replaced by the Mana Shield.

Surprisingly, the fraudulent characteristic of mana not being depleted was a 'basic talent' of the lich. The biggest strength of Overgeared Skeleton Two after absorbing the remains and core of Galgunos was the possibility of 'catalyst generation' and 'spatial distortion.'

[Catalyst Generation Lv. 2 (proficiency can't be accumulated)]

[Passive skill.]

Automatically generates a catalyst for space magic consumption.

Automatically generates a catalyst for attribute magic consumption.

Magic Resource Consumption: 2,000~26,000 mana

Magic Casting Time: None.

Cooldown Time: None.]

[Spatial Distortion (Mastered)]

[Used to distort the space at a specified point.

Magic Resource Consumption: 20,000 mana, horandia, celtirove.

Magic Casting Time: 2 seconds.

Cooldown Time: 3 seconds.]

'The resource consumption is ridiculously large.'

The casting time and cooldown time of Spatial Distortion was very surprising. He didn't expect the series of extremes to have such free and easy restrictions. The downside that hadn't applied to the lich was that it consumed a lot of resources.

'Since Galgunos engraved Spatial Distortion on his body...'

Grid confirmed the information of another one of Overgeared Skeleton Two's magic.

[Magic Formula Engraving Lv. 5 (proficiency can't be accumulated)]

[Passive skill.

If the magic expressed hasn't worked yet, the magic configuration will be maintained.

Up to 20 magics can be engraved.]

The magic formulas engraved on Galgunos' bones. It had the best compatibility with Alarm magic. Alarm magic needed the advance selection and casting of magic before setting the activation time. Meanwhile, there was much more freedom when it came to activating magic that was cast in advance and then engraved.

'No, it isn't appropriate to think of it as a superior version of the Alarm magic. There is no limit to the number of Alarms cast.'

Additionally, Alarm could be triggered in the right place depending on the capabilities of the user. The higher the capability of the users, the bigger it might be than Magic Formula Engraving. Of course, this was a far cry from Grid. Grid checked and organized the information of Overgeared Skeleton Two for a long time before finally opening his mouth, "Skeleton."

Clack!Clack clack clack!

"Don't hit your chin. Speak, speak."

[Yes... Master...]

'Ohh...!'

The one that had been clacking for years was finally able to speak. Grid had a strange feeling. It was like seeing his child grow.

[I'm happy to be able to talk to Master.]

Overgeared Skeleton Two also seemed deeply moved. There was a type of warmth in the originally colorful expressions.

"Your voice is cool."

[This is a gift from Master. I am very grateful.]

A deep, low voice spread through the space. It was serious and powerful. It was a voice that put weight in the voice. It reminded him of a dragon's False Dragon Words.

“There will often be times when Galgunos’ ego resists. Let’s aim for perfect control of him. It is true that you need his help to adapt to the magic and Space Distortion in your body.”

[Yes, Master.]

[Hmph, who can control me at will...]

[Shut up.]

[This cheeky...]

[If you say one more word, I will destroy you.]

[.....]

Galgunos’ core was classified as an item. It was why Jishuka and Euphemina earned it as loot and it entered Grid’s hands. Galgunos was obsessed with life and rather than having an honorable death, he chose to live. From the moment he was sealed in the core, power over his life or death completely fell into Grid’s hands. No matter his innermost thoughts, he could only be Grid’s puppet. However, it would take a lot of trouble for him to have a slightly cooperative attitude. Grid was relieved that Overgeared Skeleton Two could control him on its own.

‘It has leveled up, so I should make new equipment. If Overgeared Skeleton Two fully adapts to its body and newly acquired magic, I can transfer Galgunos’ ego to the equipment and... Ah, come to think of it?’

Grid was lost in thought for a moment before coming up with a good idea. “Why don’t you go to the temple during the adaptation period?”

[Do you mean Galgunos’ temple?]

“Yes, his legacy might remain there. Additionally, the believers who serve him might follow you.”

[Great advice. There seems to be plenty of possibilities.]

“...Why are you suddenly doing the tango?”

Objectively, Overgeared Skeleton Two was very cool. The black magic power wrapped around the large, sturdy white bones like a cloak. The red light of the eyes was accompanied by the voice full of weight, making the atmosphere lively. There was no messy posture. There was the feeling of breaking this atmosphere once it started dancing the tango.

[I was so amazed and delighted with Master’s insight that I showed some ugly behavior. If Master tells me not to dance, I will dance only when I need to...]

“Yes...”

“Ah!”

The time for Grid and Overgeared Skeleton Two to check the situation wasn’t that short. It was 30 minutes. During this time, Euphemina had been standing like a piece of stone. Now she cocked her head and sighed.

Grid turned his gaze toward her. A light that was brighter than the light in the training room was reflected in her big eyes. She said, "Now I know it for sure."

"What?"

"You aren't a genius."

"....."

Wasn't this something that everyone knew? Even the party involved, Grid knew it best. There were often people who packaged Grid with the words 'genius of effort,' but it was more of a forced fit because they couldn't deny that Grid was the supreme one.

In fact, Grid didn't agree. Of course, he didn't deny his efforts. It was just that the world genius still felt unfamiliar. So what was this...

Grid was showing a small response when Euphemina grabbed both of his hands. She stared directly at him and said, "Great expert. You are a great expert."

Genius relied on innate talent. In a way, it was easier to understand than others and most of the inspiration came from oneself. They were often inspired by phenomena and concepts, but rarely by other people. Thus, Euphemina had doubts. Why was she inspired by Grid despite not understanding his field?

Now she knew the reason. He was a person who trained relatively ordinary talents to the limit with passion and effort. Grid was a great expert. He was different from a genius. She couldn't understand it (because she wasn't a great expert yet), but she still got inspired by it.

"This is probably why Kraugel is special to you... I admire you."

"....."

Euphemina was giving him an enthusiastic look while saying something embarrassing. If it had been a while ago, Grid would've blushed due to embarrassment. Now he calmly accepted it. It was because he knew how she felt toward him and what she wanted to say. He didn't know why, but...

The very same type of bond he shared with Kraugel was being shared by Faker and now Euphemina.

'Everyone has changed.'

Grid had been leading alone so far due to meeting and forging good relationships with people such as Khan and Braham. Now he finally felt the growth of others. His intuition told him that the people who would stand shoulder to shoulder with him would appear.

The days when heaven and hell would feel fear weren't far away.

Chapter 1455

"Director Yoon, you look terrible~"

"You came? Sigh, I'm going to die. I haven't been able to get off work after the emergency."

“Morpheus was really angry this time. I thought that the operations team would struggle to keep an eye on the situation. I didn’t think that even the operations director would be helpless.”

“There is a high possibility that they can’t make judgments without my authority, so I always have to be on standby. Well, the comforting thing is that you’re in the same boat as me.”

“Aha, I’m sure the security side is in a state of emergency.”

“...President Amy, are you talking to another company now? I don’t think it is time to smile.”

“Sorry~ sorry. Nelson, take it easy~”

Named NPCs usually played an important role in the worldview. Force or power was an indispensable factor for them to defend their rights and maintain their roles. The reason why the power (level, etc.) of the named beings rose in proportion to the player’s growth was to protect the worldview. It was right to interpret it as Morpheus’ defense mechanism.

This game episode of the great human and demon war was the largest of Morpheus’ defense mechanisms so far.

For the S.A Group, it was an emergency. The world might describe the S.A Group as a vicious company that tormented players using reasons such as balance, but in fact, the S.A Group was one of the most user-friendly companies in the history of the industry. The name was Satisfy because it meant ‘I want to satisfy people’s hopes and dreams.’

Chairman Lim Cheolho wanted the players to be happy. As an extreme example, it was touching and rewarding to see a person who couldn’t walk around in reality due to a disability now running and flying freely around in Satisfy. Of course, the minds of the executives weren’t as open as his. They were businessmen. Nevertheless, they also wanted people to play Satisfy more easily and happily. They wanted people to be immersed in Satisfy, produce their own content, and make Satisfy an eternal world.

Then what about this human and demon war? It was like opening the door to the apocalypse worldview. It would dramatically shorten the lifespan of Satisfy. The world where ‘everyone can dream of happiness’ would turn into a ‘game for the chosen few.’

“I will start.”

The tumultuous atmosphere in the executives meeting room at the S.A Group’s headquarters quickly subsided. The reason was because Chairman Lim Cheolho entered. He seemed exhausted, as usual. As he sat down, the video started to play on the monitor.

It was a video recording of the past month (real time) of Chepardea and Agnus, who were planning a human and demon war. Only the highlights were collected, but the length of the video was quite long. They were the moments when they met with Sword Demon Zepar and King of Souls Gamigin in order to set up the human and demon war. Agnus suffered several deaths before being acknowledged by Zepar.

After Zepar and Gamigin joined, the great demons started to gather around them.

1st Great Demon, Baal, watched the situation like it was someone else’s business.

Amoract, who had a weaker authority than Baal in many ways...

The main scenes of hell played quickly. Most demons were aiming at the surface so they were very cooperative in this situation. It was a difficult development for Chairman Lim Cheolho and the executives who hoped that Satisfy would become a 'world made by players.'

Still, what could they do? The time when Grid threatened the existing worldview was too early. The world still had many arrangements and Morpheus didn't want it to collapse. Thus, it caused this incident.

Morpheus was insistent. Hell needed to stay strong for the next 20 years. It was believed that the world would be able to handle the Asgard-related episodes that would occur after the fall of hell only when most players had their fifth class advancement.

However, Grid and the Overgeared Guild alone caused the possibility of hell being conquered. The probability was only less than 2%, but Morpheus had witnessed several unforeseen consequences caused by the variables made by Grid and was extremely wary. This wariness was expressed in the present great human and demon war.

Morpheus couldn't watch the possibility of Grid conquering hell with the help of Demon Slayer Yura and moved the battlefield to the human world. Rather than giving Grid any room to pursue hell, it tried to devastate the human world that had become the home of Grid and the Overgeared members. It was a special measure to slow down the period of hell's destruction.

"It judged that this is better in the long run..."

"There are different types of demons and demonic creatures that players can handle. In the great human and demon war, players can somehow grow, but it won't be that easy when it comes to Asgard..."

"The enemies in the Asgard-related episodes will unconditionally be angels and sacred creatures. It is too much for current players to attack and defend against the sacred trinity."

"That isn't a guarantee. The moment players hold the weapons created by Grid, the flow will change."

"Grid has very little history of leaking his weapons to the outside world. Morpheus must've set the player's level with that in mind."

"Isn't it disadvantageous to the demons if the demon army comes to the surface? If Grid and the Overgeared Guild work together to stop the invasion, will the time of hell's destruction be advanced?"

"If the Abyss collapses, parts of the worlds will 'mix' together and the penalties that demons will get in the human world will be somewhat mitigated. Due to the structural nature of hell, it is easy for the great demons to fight each other. This is less likely in the human world with Gamigin at the forefront."

"What? Are you talking about the seven souls of the former generation legends in hell? If Gamigin gets the authority to use them, isn't it adding seven great demon-grade strategic weapons? How are the players supposed to handle that? For once, Morpheus seems to have misjudged..."

As the executives were feeling agitated, the stage on the monitor changed from hell to the surface. To be precise, it was the other side of the world rather than the surface.

No Offspring Tomb. As the name implied, it was a tomb that no one took care of because all the descendants were wiped out. However, the scale was contrary to the lonely atmosphere.

“Is it based on the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor?”

The appreciation of Agnus on the monitor gave an idea of the huge scale of No Offspring Tomb. It was a maze of endless passageways. Agnus had been wandering in it for as long as a week. There weren't any traps or monsters. In fact, he felt that there was nothing here.

Was it easy to wander around aimlessly without a fixed appointment? An ordinary person would've thought about giving up a few times. Nevertheless, Agnus continued without a break. Even if he was blocked by a wall, he was unperturbed as he went back the way he came and started again.

He had been trapped in a maze all his life so a week of wandering was nothing to him. His mental strength, regardless of his will, had been driven and trained to the limit.

“.....”

Four days later, Agnus finally entered a huge empty cave. It was an empty cave lined with hundreds of tombstones. What laid buried beneath the tombstones?

Agnus launched 'Raise Corpses.' The unidentified skeletons buried under the tombstones struggled to make their way through the ground.

Agnus' expression stiffened. It was because the white bones already had a master.

This wasn't a problem. The battle began immediately.

The native soldiers and undead army were fighting together.

Agnus' deceased and death knights took the lead, but the situation didn't reverse. The advancement of the undamaged natives was like a huge mountain moving as they mercilessly trampled on the skeleton soldiers before returning to their old homes.

The natives were incomparably stronger than the undead encountered in the first empty cave a fortnight ago. Still, Agnus was persistent. Despite dozens of defeats and loss of resources over the past two weeks, he continued to challenge the natives without giving up. He used all means and methods to discover the weaknesses of the natives. There was also some luck involved.

After 24 days, he finally broke through the native army and set foot inside the tomb they guarded.

“.....!”

A rare emotion appeared on Agnus' face that had been filled with joy.

Fear. It was something he had never shown before. It was natural. It was due to the hundreds of natives inside the tomb he expected the childless specter to be. This time, they were on horses. They were all general-grade.

Agnus belatedly realized the huge size of the tomb and burst out laughing. He realized that his plan to get his hands on the childless specter ahead of the great human and demon war had come to nothing. In other ways, 34 days that were more precious than gold had been wasted.

This was happening in real time.

“...Sigh.”

Perhaps Agnus would meet the childless specter and persuade him or succeed in dominating him. The executives watching the screen with great nervousness let out sighs of relief.

“This will make the great human and demon war a bit longer.”

“It is thanks to Agnus’ poor pre-investigation. The moment he heard the childless specter was an undead, he believed it would be an advantage. However, this was a complete misjudgment. The childless specter is the peak of the myth predators...”

“He doesn’t stand a chance challenging other predators. Of course, it might be different if he cooperates with the great demons.”

“Cooperate with the great demons... Sigh, it is awful just imagining it. There would be no answer if Agnus’ tendencies resembled Grid.

“That’s right. He would’ve taken this opportunity to turn the great demon into allies. Maybe all the myth predators would be in his hands... it would’ve been possible if it was Grid...”

“Grid’s list of messengers is ridiculous. Not only does he have the present legends and a former generation legend, but there is an archangel, one of the seven malicious saints, and a hatchling...”

“This is why Morpheus is so wary and this crisis occurred. Well, in any case, we’ve confirmed that Agnus’ next move has become twisted, so we can move onto the next thing.”

It was time to get to the main point. Should they sit on the sidelines or intervene? The S.A Group had to choose. The eyes of the executives turned to the silent Chairman Lim Cheolho. The chairman was lost in thought for a while before speaking with his eyes half open.

“I think it is right to help users.”

The default policy was that the S.A Group didn’t intervene in the flow and system of the game. It was a policy that had to be constant.

However, Chairman Lim Cheolho wanted to make an exception this time. If the great human and demon war broke out, players would lose their homes, especially non-combat classes. They didn’t have the power to handle the demonic creatures and demons flooding the continent. It was likely to be the trigger for many people to leave Satisfy.

“Of course... I’m not suggesting we break the policy.”

Chairman Lim Cheolho barely maintained his composure. He finally swallowed down his intention to intervene in the situation and directly help users. Nevertheless, his will was fully conveyed to the executives. President Amy noticed how to implement the chairman’s will.

“Are you saying we should announce that there will be a great human and demon war soon?”

The great human and demon war that Chepardea envisioned would begin with a surprise attack. One day, the world would be greeted by the sudden collapse of the Abyss and the large army of demons that would emerge from it. In particular, the empire that was built on the Abyss might perish overnight. If that happened, the functioning of the Saharan Empire would be paralyzed for a while and humanity would be helpless. Even if humanity won the war a few months later, most of the civilization on the ground would be destroyed.

“That’s right. We aren’t going to tell them where and when it will start. That is too blatant an intervention. Still, isn’t it okay to announce that a great human and demon war is going to begin?”

Satisfy ultimately belonged to the service industry. If this point was raised, then Morpheus would be convinced. A few days later, the possibility of the large-scale episode ‘Great Human and Demon War’ occupied the headlines of media outlets around the world. People’s reactions... it was surprisingly favorable.

They never dreamed that the cause of the great war was Grid. People believed that this episode occurred naturally as they grew. They treated the great human and demon war as a large-scale event and were excited.

-If demons and demonic creatures crawl up to the ground at my feet, then they are just experience.

-At this point, the great demons aren’t a problem. The average level of players is so high.

-Right ㄹ ㄹ God Grid raided the great demons in the 20s in hell a few months ago. They might be great demons, but they are real dogs on the surface.

-By the human world’s standards...a single small or medium-sized guild can raid the great demons in the 30s.

-The fight for them will be fierce. Oh, I’m so excited that I can’t sleep these days. How much will I gain during this event? ㅎ ㅎ

“People’s reactions are a lot different than expected.”

“Cough...”

Chairman Lim Cheolho was somber. He wanted the players to be alert and thoroughly prepared, but only a few of them were like that. Most were just excited like there was going to be a festival. It wasn’t worth telling them in advance...

The sighs of the S.A Group deepened.

Chapter 1456

Sooner or later, there would be a great human and demon war. The news from a senior official of the S.A Group caused a stir in the media. The whole world was in a festive mood. Finally, Satisfy was holding a big event for players. Now they understood the truth of the world. There was a series of speculations that it would start in time for the upcoming school holidays for students.

There was an emergency in the Overgeared Kingdom. The Overgeared members were afraid and prepared for it because they knew the power of the demons better than anyone else. It seemed as if it was about to be a long winter.

“This event is bullshit. Why doesn’t anyone know when there are death portraits all over? How many times will it take for people to realize that the S.A Group is an evil company in the world and we should be alert?”

“It is hard for ordinary users to think badly of the S.A Group. It is always the top guilds and rankers who fall victim to balance. You still haven’t figured out when the great human and demon war will take place?”

“I’m investigating inside and outside, but there are no clues. At this point, it seems like the S.A Group released the information on purpose to let us be careful? It is torture, torture. By the way... what’s wrong with these soldiers? Aren’t the level of the soldiers in the 3rd Corps too low?”

“It isn’t about training, it is about talent. The stats limit is too low. All the talented soldiers were sent to the 1st and 2nd Corps. It is too greedy to ask for a high level of the other corps.”

“Have they all grown to the stats limit?”

“That’s not it...”

“Then isn’t the problem training rather than talent? If you’re going to complain, grow them to the limit first before doing it!”

Toban was shouting this but he knew it wasn’t easy. The lower the talent of the NPC (stats limit), the slower the growth rate. Still, they should do it even if it was hard. This was the way things were now.

“I’ll talk to Royman and get some senior officers to take over as instructors. Hugo, you can run the training schedule with the knights in charge.”

“Yes.”

Hugo was an Overgeared member who had been with the members of the Tzedakah Guild since L.T.S. He was a monster who was ranked 3rd in his class rankings and had a unified ranking of 120. He also had the power of the Overgeared Kingdom and Grid’s items.

He was a big shot who could dominate everywhere he went. Yet he was still polite to Toban. It was Toban who stopped him and guided him when he was about to retire because he couldn’t handle the inferiority complex he felt when he saw geniuses like Jishuka, Regas, and Faker.

“You are a genius too. They are just monsters. I’m worse than you, so why would you give up? You can’t stand it because it is too hard? Nonsense. Then why hold on? Just enjoy it. Why are you playing the game? Wasn’t it because it is fun? This is still a rumor, but... I heard from an acquaintance in the industry that there is a high chance a virtual reality game will come out soon. Until then, let’s regain our initial commitment and improve our skills. We have to be rich. Don’t you think we should be world stars too?”

It was a memory he would probably never forget. Would he be as successful in Satisfy as he was now if Toban hadn’t held out his hand at that time? No, Hugo never would’ve made it up here on his own. Half

of his success was thanks to belonging to the Tzedakah Guild and the other half was due to meeting Grid.

Of course, this didn't mean Toban felt Hugo was indebted to him. Toban didn't use Hugo casually. Toban respected and cared for Hugo as a colleague and as a brother. Nevertheless, he didn't mind saying bitter things today. He wielded the authority of the second-in-command of the Overgeared military.

At present, the Overgeared Guild had decided they should provide military training to all the people of the Overgeared Kingdom. Hugo was one of the few commanders in the Overgeared Guild and he was forced to work hard during the preparations for the great human and demon war.

'Sigh, those S.A sons of a bitches.'

Soldiers with low growth potential—they were the ordinary NPCs who were the absolute majority in Satisfy. Originally, they would be deployed as guards. Now he was told to turn them into an elite army who would fight against demonic creatures. Of course, Grid would support him with items, but... nevertheless, it was dark in front of Hugo's eyes.

'This guy is more rubbish than I thought.'

In the meantime, he had listened to the Overgeared members. Galgunos' Temple was a demonic lair that lured travelers by pretending to be a sacred place, killing them and raising their bodies as the undead. Still, it was unexpected that he would even touch children.

"....."

Deep disgust filled Grid's face as he was surrounded by young skeletal soldiers. Did it see the hesitation in Grid's sigh?

Overgeared Skeleton Two stepped up instead. Like a lich, Overgeared Skeleton Two was able to use magic of all attributes. In particular, it could use the legendary great magic like space magic and dark magic. It raised black magic power and gave rest to the young skeleton soldiers.

[You...! What are you doing?!] Galgunos' soul shouted. The anger in the trembling voice was unusual. He wanted to pop out and grab the collars of Grid and Overgeared Skeleton Two. If he had actually done so, he would be prey. [Destroying the children with the engravings of growth!]

"Engravings of growth?"

[A secret technique that enables the dead to grow. It is still a half-completed secret technique that can only be applied to young people...! I've spent hundreds of years trying to make just three...!]

The Galgunos Temple. This was the inside of the temple. A secret location only accessible from behind the throne. It was a place that Overgeared Skeleton Two found after searching through Galgunos' memories. Jishuka and Euphemina hadn't known about it.

"Why did you make that?"

[Asking a stupid question. There are as many short-lived people in the world as there are stars in the universe. Some were involved in wars caused by kings like you, some were born weak, or some met a villain like me... are there no geniuses among those who died early in this way?]

"...Disgusting guy." He planned to find short-lived geniuses, excavate the remains (or kill them directly and recover the body), making them undead, raising them, and creating the strongest slaves.

Grid once again felt that the existences belonging to the 'demonic' side were mostly terrible beings. Those who walked their own paths like Marie Rose or Leraje were rare.

'I need to be vigilant about this guy to the end.'

The essence didn't change easily. Additionally, Galgunos was an old monster among old monsters. He had existed since the ancient days, only craving power and accumulated divinity at the expense of others. It was impossible to expect him to suddenly become good one day.

[Should I kill him?] Overgeared Skeleton Two asked seriously as it took into account Grid's feelings and Galgunos felt sullen.

Grid shook his head. There was no need to kill him. Grid would thoroughly take advantage of Galgunos while keeping a close eye on him. This was better than death.

"It's fine. Start."

[Yes.]

Overgeared Skeleton Two left the laboratory and stood in front of the half-collapsed throne. It chanted a spell and raised the dead who were sleeping in the temple where the master was lost.

[I... I am your new master.]

Those who served Galgunos like a god in their lifetime—one death knight, 30 skeleton warriors, and 20 skeleton mages, who deceived adventurers visiting the temple and killed them to train an army for Galgunos, knelt before Overgeared Skeleton Two. They all exuded an extraordinary energy. In particular, the death knight named 'Reiji' was worthy of being an intermediate boss of the temple. He had a very high level. He was a huge level 500. It was up to the fifth stats awakening.

[Overgeared Skeleton Two has become the protagonist of the myth 'In the Temple of the Dead...']

[The domination stat has increased by 20% and the performance of necromancer related magic has increased by 10%. Summoning and commanding the undead in Galgunos' Temple won't consume domination.]

[Overgeared Skeleton Two has opened the deity stat.]

'I never thought it would build up divinity.'

Of course, it was a myth only recognized in Galgunos' Temple. It was still weak. Still, it was a law that it would always be weak at the start.

A big smile spread on Grid's face. On the other hand, there was no change in Overgeared Skeleton Two's facial expression like it hadn't realized it properly.

[...Master.]

Overgeared Skeleton Two watched the army it would lead for a moment before kneeling in front of Grid.

[Can I request for you to call my sibling?]

‘This guy.’

It seemed to want to share this joy with Overgeared Skeleton One. Grid nodded willingly. At the same time...

Clack!Clack clack clack!

Overgeared Skeleton One emerged from the ground at Grid’s foot.

[.....]

Overgeared Skeleton Two was now tall enough to look down at Overgeared Skeleton One and it stared at its sibling. Overgeared Skeleton One’s expression was very uncomfortable but Grid knew the two would share a hug. He was so moved that he forgot for a while.

There were past scenes where Overgeared Skeleton One, who had the power of destruction, often pranked and smashed Overgeared Skeleton Two, who had the power of recovery. Overgeared Skeleton Two hit its sibling on the back of the head without hesitation and Overgeared Skeleton One’s skull fell off its body.

...Clack?

Overgeared Skeleton One’s eyes shook so violently that it was obvious it was bewildered. However, Overgeared Skeleton Two didn’t stop and hit Overgeared Skeleton One a few more times. Then before Overgeared Skeleton One was completely shattered, it was restored and destroyed again.

Clack...Clack clack clack...

Overgeared Skeleton One resisted at first, but it soon raised the white flag completely. It raised its eyes and turned its eyeballs down to make an X-shape. Only then did the grinning Overgeared Skeleton Two patted the large skull of Overgeared Skeleton One. Grid could see its feet moving like it wanted to dance right away.

[Thank you for agreeing to my request...]

“.....”

It wasn’t cool saying these words in this voice now...

Grid sighed and soothed Overgeared Skeleton One. Grid comforted by saying it would have a great body one day and Overgeared Skeleton One cried as if sadness belatedly overwhelmed it. If Mercedes saw this, she would’ve held it in her arms and comforted it.

“There is a lot of work to do so let’s go back. The moment I leave, go read the diary I gave you earlier, Skeleton Two.”

At this moment...

-Grid, what are you doing?Hahaha!

Grid received a whisper. It was unexpected, but his flustered feeling was brief. It was because he realized why the other person wanted to contact him. A person who clearly saw the essence of the great human and demon war and had the power to prepare for it—he was one of the few people in the world.

-It has been a while, Ares.

Grid's heart had been heavy since hearing the news of the great human and demon war. Now his mood became more relaxed. The cooperation between Overgeared God Grid and God of War Ares would show a ripple effect that was comparable to Pagma during his Baal's Contractor days.

Chapter 1457

There were still only two player kings—Overgeared God Grid and God of War Ares. The quality and quantity of talent, the size of the force, capital, technology, strength, etc.

On all indicators, the Overgeared Kingdom was superior to Valhalla and Grid was superior to Ares. It was rare for the world to easily see Ares. Yet even Grid recognized and respected Ares' skill and resourcefulness. He had to do so. Looking down on Ares meant looking down on most players except for Grid himself.

-I was impressed by your performance in the National Competition.

Grid's voice was full of joy. They had been interacting for quite a long time. In the few times the two people had met directly, their personal feelings were pretty good. There was a special rapport because they were in similar positions. Of course, it wasn't like that from the beginning. The military cooperation between the Overgeared Kingdom and Valhalla was still ongoing.

Most of the soldiers of the Overgeared Kingdom's 1st Corps returned from military training in Valhalla after gaining enlightenment and experiencing partial breakthroughs. Artificially improving the characteristics of soldiers and breaking through their stats limit—it was something that Piaro and Asmophel couldn't do despite training many soldiers so far.

It was originally a miracle that had a low probability of occurring when the soldiers received enlightenment or went beyond their limitations. There was only one person in the world who could artificially do it and it was God of War Ares. It was just like only Grid could exercise the miracle of creating myth rated items.

-My performance?Compared to your activity of recording a new history, it is just a small trick like a slug rolling over.By the way, it is good to hear your voice after a long time.There is a refreshing feeling like drinking Coke.Uhaha!

The military cooperation between the two kingdoms wasn't a unilateral, favorable agreement. The Overgeared Kingdom also helped Valhalla. Valhalla's elites were armed with the Overgeared Kingdom's items. Of course, the two kingdoms maintained appropriate boundaries. They didn't cooperate with each other wholeheartedly.

Valhalla trained the Overgeared soldiers in 'moderation' and the Overgeared Kingdom only sold a 'moderate' amount of battle gear to Valhalla's soldiers at a 'fair' price. At one time, Ares dreamed of

becoming a true ally of the Overgeared Kingdom, but the wall of reality wasn't so easy. There were many interests in diplomacy. The arbitrary decisions of his mind couldn't determine his political line.

Furthermore, Ares paid a great price for his effort in collecting NPCs as subordinates. Among the contents of the price paid was an agreement to achieve the 'dream' of the subordinate and this complicated things. Most of Ares' named NPCs held grudges against the Saharan Empire. It couldn't be helped. Most of the named NPCs were affiliated with the empire or lost something due to the empire.

-I often wanted to contact you...I refrained from it because I thought you might feel uncomfortable.

-Um, I've also been careful out of fear of your discomfort.

The Overgeared Kingdom and Valhalla cooperated, but they were wary of each other. There were two decisive occasions where the kingdoms didn't trust each other and the relationship started to crack. The Valhalla Kingdom found the 'blacksmith monopoly' of the Overgeared Kingdom annoying, while Valhalla's hostile relationship to the Saharan Empire was a problem for the Overgeared Kingdom.

It was just that both kingdoms didn't openly express their intentions. The reason why blacksmiths all over the continent flocked to the Overgeared Kingdom wasn't because the Overgeared deliberately lured them. The blacksmiths just wanted to join Grid. How could the Overgeared Kingdom be blamed for that? The Overgeared Kingdom who monopolized the blacksmiths manipulated item prices and ripped off other kingdoms, but they didn't do so for Valhalla. As mentioned earlier, they dealt fairly with Valhalla.

The Overgeared Kingdom also had no justification to deter Valhalla, who opposed the Saharan Empire and continued to wage war at the border. At the time of 4th Imperial Prince Edan's rebellion, Valhalla was used by Grandmaster Zikfrector to invade the empire. They failed and suffered massive damage. The grudge was deep. Additionally, Valhalla was a kingdom that developed by absorbing the forces hostile to the empire. By nature, it was inevitable that they would be on bad terms with the empire.

It was impossible to impose a relationship on Valhalla just because Basara, the new empress after Edan's rebellion, had formed a friendship.

-The reason I contacted you today...as you might have expected, it is because of the great human and demon war.

It was many years ago when the 22nd Great Demon, Berith invaded the human world. The Ares army dreamed of being the strongest and was full of confidence. They challenged Berith without shrinking back. They were qualified to do so. Yet they were defeated.

The Ares army only decreased the health of Berith—who they thought was delicious prey—by half, before being destroyed. It was a huge shock. The defeat in front of the entire world humiliated the Ares army and was enough to shake their foundation. An inevitable feeling of skepticism swept over them.

This was when Ares realized that he wasn't Grid. His colleagues might be as strong as the Overgeared members, but he couldn't be their pillar because he wasn't like Grid. He belatedly understood how Jishuka felt when she gave up the leader's position to Grid.

-I didn't want to say this directly, but Valhalla has grown quite strong. I have many talents under me.

It was ever since realizing how powerful the existence of the hell monarch was. No, Ares' enthusiasm reached the peak the moment he aimed at Grid and the Overgeared Guild. He gathered talent from all over the continent and worked with them to develop his organization.

-Grid, we won't drag you back. Lead us during the great human and demon war. I'll cooperate as much as I can.

The Ares army was competent. Like the Overgeared members, they learned from their valuable experiences without being frustrated by failure. Therefore, they noticed the seriousness of the great human and demon war. Ares felt it was time for all humanity to cooperate. Of course, he knew who the leader should be.

-I'll make peace with the empire. The new empress is a capable person and won't refuse to make peace.

-Ares...

Grid was no longer thirsty for recognition. Rather, he was getting used to being accepted. The reason why his heart trembled was probably because the Ares army was one of the most prestigious. They were a group of first-class people. As promising as they were, their pride was also extremely high. Beyond leaving their backs to him, they were now entrusting their fate to him.

-...I understand.

'Am I qualified to lead you?'

He didn't ask such a question. He didn't bother to be humble. Grid was aware that he was the Lantern of Humanity.

-I won't let you down.

The reason why Grid and the messengers were able to play an active part in hell was because hell was divided into 33 areas. The great demons who didn't cooperate with each other were isolated and easily defeated. The great human and demon war would be different. As seen in Pagma's past, they had a great probability of uniting as an army. It would obviously be a tough fight even when they received penalties in the human world. He had been feeling a great sense of crisis and the participation of the Ares army was as good as earning thousands of troops.

-Uhaha! How can you be so dependable? Soon, our army will arrive in Reinhardt. They left first, expecting that the conversation with you would go well. That resourceful guy is as helpful as Lael, so I hope you use him well.

-Ares, you're not coming?

-I have to go as well. It will just take a while because I'm marching with all the troops except the guards. I think I'll be a bit late. Please understand.

-Can you empty your kingdom? If the demons invade Valhalla, people will...

-My military advisor told me it will be fine. The gates of hell, where a large number of troops can enter through, will either be in the Behen Archipelago or the Abyss. I trust him. That guy, he is a very capable person who matures slowly.

Grid was surprised. Lauel and Sticks had said the same thing. It was unexpected that Ares' military advisor could compare with them.

Every time a man moved, the dirt surged. There was a huge plow that couldn't be moved even if 10 cows joined together. Now a man was gritting his teeth as he led it and plowed through the fields. The weight on his toes was reminiscent of the Heavenly Subjugation Pressure, the ultimate technique of the dancer martial artists.

A smile spread on the man's face every time sweat flowed down his clear thigh muscles and permeated into the soil dug by the plow. This man who overturned Morpheus' predictions over and over again as he gained the flesh of a farmer trained to the limit often felt a great pride when he plowed the field.

"Festival...? Is that right?"

The man had been putting down his plow and enjoyed the scenery of his own field. Now he frowned slightly and cocked his head. He saw the adventurers coming from afar who were excited about the great human and demon war and he questioned it.

'Are the great demons not a big deal these days?'

Aura Master and Steel Farmer Hurent—he was one of the Five Miracles who had 31 titles in addition to his second class. He was once famous as an American hero along with Zibal, but he had long left the world. He joined the Overgeared Guild a few years ago, but no one had ever assigned him a separate mission. Thanks to this, he enjoyed a free farmer's life, just as he did before joining the Overgeared Guild.

Hurent didn't know what was going on in the world. To be correct, he wasn't interested. Over the past few years, his biggest concern had been finding a 'rune' in the field.

'This place is also a failure.'

Hurent used aura to create a wind phenomenon and shook off the sweat on his body. The rain of aura, combined with the Steel Farmer's unique skill, 'Growth Enhancement,' strengthened the vast fields that were a wasteland 10 days ago. The used plow had already scattered into light and disappeared. The plow was also created with aura. The stronger the rain, the faster and more powerful the green buds grew.

There was no need to worry about the invasion of monsters ruining the field. The monsters that originally swarmed this land were afraid of Hurent's aura and farming energy.

"Why are there no monsters?"

Did we go the wrong way? The fields weren't originally in this place, right? He could feel the confusion of the adventurers, but... this wasn't a problem for Hurent to care about.

'Um... Where is the next place to move to?' It happened when Hurent was troubled over the rune he couldn't find today...

"Hey, Mister. Have you seen a monster? I obviously saw the devil children here before."

“The devil children aren’t just ordinary monsters, they are demonic creatures.”

Hurent recalled the snow-colored monsters he met on the first day he came here and answered the adventurers’ question with his eyes. He looked like he was asking them if they could fight the devil children with such ordinary equipment that didn’t contain any divine power.

“Who doesn’t know they are demonic creatures? I came here with the purpose of preparing for the upcoming great human and demon war.”

“Go 20 kilometers north to look. I’m sure there will still be devil children there.”

“Gasp, that far? Is my memory wrong? In any case, thank you.”

“What is with that uncle? Is he an NPC or a player?”

“How can a man who farms alone in a remote area like this be a player? He must be an NPC.”

“I thought so at first, but he understood the words great human and demon war. How can a farmer who likes alone in a remote area know about the great human and demon war?”

“The Overgeared Kingdom sent official letters to all nations on the continent about the great human and demon war. Since it is from the Overgeared Kingdom, the rulers wouldn’t have doubted it and they would’ve spread the news to the people.”

“Sigh... Don’t tell me that NPCs will interfere in the great human and demon war?”

“.....”

Hurent fell into thought as he looked at the backs of the adventurers gradually moving away. Based on the way that such beginners were looking forward to the great human and demon war, it seemed that the dignity of the great demons wasn’t as great as before.

For reference, the average level of the adventurers just now was 300. They were top rankers. Due to suffering thanks to Braham, Hurent had very high standards and they looked like novices to Hurent’s discerning eyes.

‘Let’s go a bit further this time... Master said there is a high probability of the rune being in remote areas. I should take this opportunity to challenge the forbidden areas.’

Hurent pushed down his straw hat deeper and disappeared like a gust of wind. He was becoming more of a monster thanks to his stats rising every time he made bigger and better fields. It was the secret weapon of the Overgeared Kingdom who was personally recognized by Grid, even though Hurent wasn’t aware of it himself.

Chapter 1458

Modern and convenient infrastructure, advanced technology, a stable economy, high security, quests to get the mass produced Grid set, etcetera—from a player’s point of view, the Overgeared Kingdom was a very attractive kingdom. The long history and abundant resources of the Saharan Empire wasn’t very attractive compared to the convenience of the Overgeared Kingdom, which was developed using the sense of modern people.

In fact, the number of people migrating to the Overgeared Kingdom was increasing every year. Still, it wasn't the case that every player coveted the nationality of the Overgeared Kingdom. The high security of the Overgeared Kingdom meant there was no work for mercenary users, the Overgeared Kingdom's policy of controlling the respawn area of the top bosses deterred high level users, and the economic market directly monitored by the Overgeared government and managed by the Muto Merchant Group was shunned by merchant users.

The safe and stable Overgeared Kingdom might be a 'good kingdom for people to live in,' but it wasn't a good environment to have a dream.

"The price of iron ore has soared to 5 gold? Should I buy some more?"

"The rising speed is much faster than expected... Um... I'll buy it for 9 gold, no, 13 gold."

"It is said the empire has started construction of a new fortress!"

"There is too much bidding going on there. Let's turn to the east. Since the competition for stone purchases intensified in the east first, those kingdoms will soon begin to build fortresses."

For merchants and engineers, the great human and demon war was an important occasion. It was especially true for the merchants and engineers who didn't belong to the Overgeared Kingdom. Most merchants and engineers in the Overgeared Kingdom were commissioned by the Overgeared government to produce goods or carry out construction. They had no choice but to be wary of the Overgeared Kingdom when setting prices. Meanwhile, merchants and engineers of other kingdoms were commissioned by various kingdoms and were free to set prices.

For example, the current metal and stone resources were in short supply. It was because demand increased rapidly ahead of the war. In just four days after the news of the great human and demon war broke out, the market price soared by nearly 20 times. The merchants and engineers of the Overgeared Kingdom delivered goods to the Overgeared Kingdom, regardless of the fluctuating market price.

It was because this was how the contract was signed in the first place. The Overgeared Kingdom gave merchants and engineers the right to use quarries and mines, guaranteeing stable sales. Instead, they offered to buy items at the 'fixed price.' The workers and merchants took it for granted. It was a great attraction to be able to collect resources reliably and deliver goods at the fixed price at any time without having to fear monsters, bandits, or mercenaries hired by competitors. Instead, they weren't able to enjoy this special event, but... who knew this would happen? They couldn't be disappointed considering the benefits they had already received.

"Make sure to stack up the purchased materials in the warehouse. Don't put items, especially those in high demand for blacksmiths, on the market until the market prices rise as much as possible."

Until now, the Overgeared Kingdom had the upper hand in the item market. This was natural as most blacksmiths belonged to the Overgeared Kingdom. Merchants who didn't belong to the Overgeared Kingdom used to sweat every time they tried to deliver resources to the Overgeared Kingdom.

Now the situation had reversed. Resources couldn't keep up with the overflowing manpower of the Overgeared Kingdom. The Overgeared Kingdom had reached a point where it couldn't make items even if it wanted to.

They took the initiative against the Overgeared Kingdom...

The merchants even felt some pleasure.

“Is this all the materials coming in today?”

“It is said that the mines are on cooldown.”

“If the amount for production isn’t enough, we should buy it on the exchange.”

“There is nothing else for sale on the exchange. The moment the news of the great human and demon war broke out, many individuals or merchant groups started buying goods...”

“Were we only sucking our fingers?”

“Of course not, Lauel was the first to start buying. Still, you know that there are people on the exchange who click fast. It is impossible to buy them all. In the meantime, some crazy rich person have sorted the items in ‘order of high price’ and swept the sales... rumor has it that he bought iron ore for 200 gold. At that price, I wonder if hoarding is meaningful at all...”

“Hah... Is this a game for chaebols? In any case, it won’t work today.”

Panmir, 1st in the blacksmith rankings and vice president of the Overgeared Blacksmiths Association (Grid was the president, but this didn’t mean much)—since four days ago, he failed to take one step out of the smithy. Currently, he put down his hammer for the first time. He couldn’t do his job because he couldn’t get the materials.

“Isn’t the quantity of the finest materials still very large?”

Most of the finest materials were pushed to Grid. It was natural since the items that Grid made were far better than the items made by other blacksmiths.

“Yes...”

“This... it must be left in Grid’s hands.”

“It is said that Valhalla will send 100,000 troops for support, right? Of those, 5,000 are the elite. At the very least, we have to supply top items for 5,000 people. It will be hard.”

“Lauel and Sir Rabbit must be troubled.”

At the Overgeared meeting hall...

Senior officials from all over the Overgeared Kingdom and Valhalla’s staff gathered in one place. Administrator Rabbit might be intimidated in front of such extraordinary figures, but he expressed his opinion in a dignified manner, “No, it isn’t possible.”

He completely opposed people’s insistence that war supplies in short supply should be purchased at a high price.

“Why do we have to pay a lot of money to buy supplies? I’m not in favor of it.”

“Didn’t you decide to supply the soldiers with new equipment? How can we make equipment and spread it without purchasing materials? Do you want to buy finished products?” a female military officer from Valhalla asked with a disbelieving expression. The corners of her mouth twitched like she was trying to hold back the ridicule.

It was bound to be ridiculous. Currently, most kingdoms on the continent were determined to unite to protect their homeland and the world. Apart from some small kingdoms, or ethnic groups in border areas, they had witnessed or experienced the fear of demons and realized the seriousness of the situation.

Meanwhile, the person in charge of administration in the Overgeared Kingdom, the center of the alliance, was speaking out of personal feelings. Not buying the materials necessary for a war because the market price had risen? The behavior of merchants who hoarded materials while coveting huge profits was abominable, but the change in price was a natural law of the economic market. He wanted to refuse due to this natural law? It was nothing more than a child’s whining.

The female military officer looked at him like he was pathetic and the glasses wearing Rabbit shot back, “If we buy finished products from outside, it will be useless because they are of lower quality than what we are used to being equipped with. Is the equipment that Valhalla soldiers wear inferior to the equipment on the market?”

“We are wearing mostly old equipment. As you know, our nation is short of blacksmiths.”

“Stop,” the senior military officer of Valhalla cut off the words of Valhalla’s female military officer. This was a public place. It was even a gathering of the key figures from both kingdoms. It was a disgrace to act like this. He sighed and spoke to the top military adviser, Sima Qian, who had been silent, “I’m sure that Administrator Rabbit insists that we don’t have to buy supplies because he hasn’t forgotten the nature of this incident. I am also thinking the same thing.”

“The... nature?” The female military officer showed an expression of surprise.

This was an officer of Valhalla. The senior military officer clicked his tongue and explained, “We are the heroes of this age gathered under the banner of protecting humanity from demons. It is a position to help humanity and merchants are also included in humanity. They should cooperate with us and don’t deserve to offer us a deal.”

“Of course, the logic is that they have to cooperate with us. Yet what can we do if they don’t want to? Do you think this persuasion will be accepted?”

“There is no need for persuasion. Once the disaster occurs in due time, they will want to cooperate with us. Isn’t this what Administrator Rabbit is thinking?”

“That’s right.”

‘It’s great.’ Lauel admired as he silently watched the meeting. Valhalla’s senior military officer—just like the top military adviser, Sima Qian, his name shone golden and his insight was excellent. He could immediately see the thought of Rabbit, who was the top two in political power in the Overgeared Kingdom.

'If he has the determination...'

The moment Lael thought this, the senior military officer continued, "However, it is too late to get supplies after the disaster has already begun. It might be a bit extreme, but I think it is necessary to inform the world of the omens of disaster."

"In what way?"

"Doesn't the Demon Slayer belong to the Overgeared Kingdom? If she travels around cities on the continent, opening the hell gate and letting demons flow out... those who have experienced the power of the demons will be alert enough to recognize that the great human and demon war is a disaster, not a festival."

Sticks looked serious. "Are you saying that we should deliberately release demonic creatures and harm people? The heavens and earth will be angry! I don't agree."

On the other hand, Lael's assessment was different. 'He has decisiveness... Ares had gathered a lot of talent.'

In Lael's view, the senior military officer's opinion was very reasonable. If the demonic creatures destroyed cities all over the continent, players would slowly realize that the great human and demon war was a disaster. They would also find that the power of the Overgeared Kingdom was necessary to prepare for the great human and demon war.

Then public opinion toward the merchants who tried to rip the Overgeared Kingdom off would deteriorate. The more famous a merchant, the more they would turn over supplies to the Overgeared Kingdom at a cheap price in order to protect their position.

'It is the most effective way since there are a lot of people who won't listen no matter how we try to persuade them, but... it will be hard to handle the aftermath once it is found out that Yura was the one who released the demonic creatures. The image that the Overgeared Kingdom and Overgeared Guild has accumulated with such hard work will fall at once.'

The biggest problem was that Grid was likely not to approve. Sacrifices would inevitably occur in the process of destroying cities and planting fear in people. Would Grid acquiesce to that? Lael was thinking with his hands on his chin when he suddenly met Sima Qian's gaze. He responded with a smile.

'Does he think that the senior military officer's opinion is the most reasonable? If there is a better way, this resourceful person will definitely know more than me...'

He was the superior of the senior military officer with a similar level of intelligence to Lael, so he should be better. Lael was somewhat wary when he thought about it, but he didn't show his innermost thoughts since he had been involved in politics for a long time. It happened at a time when the officials of the two kingdoms were continuing to exchange information...

"Sorry I'm late." The door of the tightly closed meeting hall opened without anyone's consent. It was the arrival of Grid.

Everyone immediately rose from their seats. It was the same with Valhalla's staff.

"I greet Your Majesty, the Overgeared King."

All of Valhalla's staff bowed deeply to Grid, including Sima Qian. The female military officer, who had shown a lack of emotions during the meeting, blushed and her mouth dropped open like she was a fool. It was the power of the charm and dignity stats.

The Overgeared members were so used to Grid that they often forgot it, but objectively, Grid was a very cool and likable person. Among actors and actresses who chose classes and focused on the charm stat, there were often people acting as femme fatales, yet even they would appear to be ugly next to Grid. It was a matter of aura, not of appearance.

"It is nice to meet you, Military Adviser Sima Qian. We will exchange greetings later. I will give you the news first. In the next three days, a large amount of war supplies will arrive here in Reinhardt. It is enough to prepare for war. As first discussed, we will buy the supplies. Then Valhalla will buy the equipment we produce at a reasonable price."

".....?"

".....?"

Most of the people gathered here were smart but none of them could understand Grid's words. Enough supplies to prepare for a war would arrive soon? In the confusion, Sima Qian opened his mouth, "Your Majesty, can I ask about the source of the supplies?"

"The Lion Merchant Group. It is a place where my side has infiltrated as a spy."

".....!"

The eyes of the members of both kingdoms were wide open and shook.

Sima Qian asked again, "What is the purchase price of the goods?"

"It is according to the original price. My people have done a really good job."

".....!!"

".....!!"

This time, even Sima Qian shook. He was so surprised that his face turned white. Everyone was expecting that the price of war supplies would rise. However, using spies to take control of a giant merchant group and buy as many supplies as needed before the market price rose... it wasn't something that could be done with ordinary foresight. It was hard to see it as the level of a human.

'Even his resourcefulness has reached the realm of a god...!'

[Affinity with Sima Qian, military adviser of the Valhalla Kingdom, has increased by 20.]

".....?"

Grid was flustered while Sima Qian looked at him with eyes filled with pure envy. In the midst of the uproar, Lael sent a whisper to Huroi. He was clearly aware that this situation wasn't the result of Grid's strategy.

-What is going on? Why is the Lion Merchant Group giving us such cheap supplies?

-I stole the seal of the merchant group and tampered with a few documents.

-.....?

Was Huroi so competent? No, this wasn't a matter of being competent. This couldn't be possible just by manipulating a few documents. No, how did he steal the seal of the merchant group in the first place? Weren't such important things always kept in the inventory?

Lauel frowned out of confusion from the incomprehensible situation and thin blood flowed from his nose. His skin was being upgraded every day.

In any case... even Lauel couldn't understand the situation. It was because his premise for understanding the situation was wrong. Huroi didn't infiltrate as a spy. He was being entertained as a guest.

Chapter 1459

For the past three days, carriages after carriages, each filled to the brim with war supplies, constantly arrived in Reinhardt. The constant procession of carriages spread rumors that 'the identity of the wealthy person who swept through the exchange is actually Grid.'

Grid didn't deny it. Well, it was good to be seen as having a lot of money.

In fact, the effect of the rumors was great. The feet of the merchants who tried to rip off the Overgeared Kingdom were on fire. They used to act like masters every time they sat at the negotiating table. Now they fell flat like turtles. They didn't expect him to buy iron ore for 200 gold to cover the supplies... this... it was just crazy.

The merchants were afraid of Grid's violent power. They felt madness. They desperately realized that no matter how hard they struggled, they could never be able to best Grid. They didn't know how much Grid was trying to protect them. The truth would only be revealed after the great human and demon war.

"Excuse me...?"

At a smithy made by remodeling a whole palace...

Lauel visited Grid and was speechless for a moment. The immortal lich, or the king of the dead, stood in front of the anvil while hammering. A dwarf, a noble race sacred to blacksmiths, was busy running around and helping with chores. It was an unbelievable sight.

"You came?"

The lich and dwarf helping Grid was Overgeared Skeleton Two and Ke ong. This smithy was smaller than the one built in the center of the city, but the reason why Grid was working here was because people's attention was troublesome. If he got caught working with a lich, a lot of people would come in and make a fuss.

"It is unrealistic to see a lich working as a blacksmith. The reason for the coolness... is it because I have the black flame dragon?"

"What is all this nonsense? In any case, the Overgeared Skeleton has become cool."

The black magic power was like a cloak and left an afterimage of magic power in every action. Even a boss monster wouldn't be able to show this. Tap dancing while hammering was ridiculous.

"What is the book it is reading in the middle? A forbidden magic that drove me to death in my previous life...?!"

"...It is Madra's diary. The handwriting is strange, so it is taking it a while to interpret it. You are excited. Then the negotiations must've gone well?"

"Huhu, it is good overall, but they seem obsessed with supplies that blacksmiths have a high demand for. They said they can't give up iron ore for less than 2 gold. Then I said I would stop."

"Isn't it a reasonable enough price at this point? I think the merchants have given in a lot?"

"It isn't giving up, it is almost at the level of a plea. From their point of view, they would've sold it for several times or dozens of times cheaper than the purchase price, so they must've been in tears. However, we already have enough supplies. There is no need to be obsessed with high-priced items."

"We need to be prepared for the worst. If we make a mistake or fail to make an item, it is common to consume more materials than indicated in the design. It also isn't just us. The other kingdoms, including the empire, are trying to secure as much supplies as possible. Shouldn't we buy a bit more before the market goes up?"

"It's okay. I got a fixed price contract for the allies."

"Are you part of the Communist Party?"

"Haha, there can be no completely free market. It is the role of the nation to guide the greedy people correctly when trying to damage the market economy. By the way... can the Overgeared Skeleton make a finished product?"

Lauel showed a somewhat surprised expression. He noticed that the items used by magicians, such as the staff, orb, and robes were being made by Overgeared Skeleton Two, not Grid. He was well aware that Overgeared Skeleton Two had the skills of a blacksmith, but was it qualified to make things used by the magicians of the Overgeared Kingdom? Even if Overgeared Skeleton Two had a blacksmithing ability, it wouldn't reach the actual strength of blacksmiths, right?

Grid eased Lauel's anxiety, "It's fine. The items made by Overgeared Skeleton Two are almost the same as that of a craftsman blacksmith."

As the lich's understanding of magic improved, the technique of making magic items naturally developed. Similarly, it made progress in blacksmithing when Grid developed his blacksmithing skill. Currently, Overgeared Skeleton Two was responsible for making magic items while Overgeared Skeleton One, Ke ong, and the God Hands were responsible for chores and making the items for soldiers. Thanks to them, Grid had time to spare and was able to repair his items.

'I'm going to make my old equipment new... the equipment containing the breaths and the divine swords can go in the direction of modification.'

[Overgeared Grid's Innovation]

It was originally a skill called Legendary Blacksmith's Reconstruction. It was a technique that reinterpreted items with a 100% understanding, changing or strengthening them. However, it was only available 10 times at the master level. Additionally, only one modification per item was possible.

This was why he wanted to use it during the second half of the game depending on circumstances. He had sealed it for a long time with the intention of using it only for the best items. Then, after gaining the Overgeared God's Techniques, he lost the need. It was because the limit on the number of modifications was removed. Even the limit of only one modification per item had been eased to three times. In the future, it would be possible to use it freely.

'If I knew this would happen, I would've used it earlier...'

The Legendary Blacksmith's Reconstruction skill that disappeared with the opening of Overgeared God Grid's Innovation... it was nothing more than a skill that reminded him of the old saying 'it becomes dog poop after cherishing it.' It was very regretful, but Grid quickly controlled his mind.

'It is meaningless to regret what has already been done.'

It was the best choice at the time and as a result, it worked out well. Lauel left because he had something to discuss with Sima Qian. Grid saw him off and started the full-fledged work.

"Innovation."

[Please select an item to innovate.]

Thanks to the evolution of his blacksmithing skill to Overgeared God Grid's Techniques, the performance of his produced items had increased significantly. Additionally, the word 'innovate' itself implied a 'change for the better.' From now on, the power to innovate items was opened... it would be much more powerful than before.

"Huroi infiltrated as a spy and manipulated documents? A merchant group with the power to secure enough supplies isn't a small neighborhood store. Is this possible? I don't think even Faker can do this?"

"Due to this, Faker is completely in low spirits. If Huroi walked the path of an assassin, he would've been 1st in the rankings, not Faker.

"Puhaha! Come to think of it, Faker has a strong desire to win. In any case, Huroi did something really big."

"What a hero. Whether it is sneaking in as a spy or cheating a merchant group, it is all done by using his mouth... I think that later on, he will be able to brainwash people with his words."

"Hey, that is too much. It is giving me the creeps."

Most of the Overgeared members gathered in Reinhardt. It was to participate in the upcoming hell expedition. In addition to the Overgeared members, many top rankers from other organizations applied for this expedition. There were also many independent rankers who came after hearing about the news through personal connections.

They intended to go to hell to experience the level of hell and build up practical training for the great human and demon war. It was just that the penalty in hell was bigger than they could imagine. There were many powerful demons and the abilities of the demonic creatures were also colorful. In the worst case, they might encounter a great demon. In other words, there was a very high chance of death.

The Overgeared Kingdom repeatedly warned them of this. Nevertheless, thousands of applicants showed up. The thing they had in common was that they were aware of the dangers of the great human and demon war. Just because they were players didn't mean they were fools. There were many people who recognized the dangers of the great human and demon war and they applied at this time.

Of course, they couldn't be purely trusted. There were all types of villains in the world. Lael created guidelines to select among those who applied. He claimed that it was the 'process of finding souls embroidered on the constellation of fate.' It was simply nonsense. In any case, only 27% of those who applied were able to join the hell expedition.

"Once you enter hell and the penalty occurs,.. there will be many who can't breathe or use mana due to the debuffs. It is part of the demonic energy addiction that occurs when stats fall below the qualified level. If you experience that phenomenon, don't be shy and tell me straight away. Saintess Ruby can take action."

"Ah... Yes!"

The rankers, who had half lost their souls from seeing the real Yura up close, came to their senses after hearing the terrible words. How severe was the penalty that it reached the extent of being unable to breathe or operate mana? They thought that this was truly hell, the area known as the final content. The Demon Slayer's characteristic of becoming powerful in such a place was great and enviable.

"Toban, Miss Ruby, are you ready?"

"Yes!"

"Wait a minute."

Saintess Ruby responded vigorously while Toban made a final check of his equipment and waved his hand. He was extremely nervous as he had the heavy responsibility of being the first to cross the hell gate.

"What if I go first?"

"No."

Regas suggested this because he was worried about Toban's poor condition, but Yura firmly refused him. Yura got the black crystal castle in the last expedition and got fixed coordinates for the hell gate. The skill level was still low, but it allowed her to specify the coordinates of the hell gate, which had previously been set randomly. Thanks to the system's acknowledgement of the stability of the black crystal castle... the location of the coordinates was ambiguous. It was the 'entrance' of the black crystal castle, not the inside.

To be exact, it was in front of the gate. Strictly speaking, it wasn't a safe zone. It was impossible to predict what would happen the moment they crossed the hell gate. It would be hard to handle unless it was the combination of the 1st ranked Guardian Knight, Toban, and Saintess Ruby.

If Damian was still the pope, then Damian and Ruby would've been an ideal combination. Unfortunately, Damian changed to the Overgeared God Church and had lost most of his divine power. Additionally, Yura couldn't go first. She had to stay in the human world for days and open the hell gates until all of the expedition members reached hell.

"This expedition can only take place if Toban and Miss Ruby move through first and build a sanctuary."

The cooldown time of the hell gate was 30 minutes and only two people could go through at one time. There was a high probability that the level of the skill would rise during this expedition, decreasing the cooldown time and increasing the capacity. However, it was expected that the skill would only increase after 10 more uses. Until then, only two people could be set.

First of all, the role of the people crossing the gate first was the most important thing. The key was Ruby—a child who had been stimulated by not being included in the hell expedition led by Grid and worked hard to grow. Yura observed that her power would be able to ease the hell penalties the expedition would experience to some extent.

"....." Regas stepped back and glanced at Toban. Toban was trying not to show his nervousness, but his fingers were slightly shaking. It was natural to feel pressured. He had to be the first to enter the place where it wasn't known what might happen and protect Ruby for at least 25 minutes. They couldn't simply enter the black crystal castle and wait. They had to install a sanctuary for those who came later, but the installation took at least 25 minutes.

A 25 minute mission to protect the Saintess in the middle of hell...

Even the best players would find it hard to succeed.

'Still, I have to do it. There are many people stronger than me, but I am the only tank who can maintain my power in hell.'

...Yet what if he failed? If he couldn't protect Ruby and they both died, the schedule of the expedition would become twisted. It would be a disgrace to the Overgeared Guild as well as a nuisance to the hundreds of participants.

"Can you give the vanguard position to me?"

".....?"

Toban was trying to control his heart and the rankers were staring at him. Now they all focused their gazes in one direction. A low and beautiful voice—it was the direction that this voice was heard in.

".....!"

There was a reason for their hazy impression. It was a voice they hadn't heard in a long time.

Step.Step.Step.

A long black dōpō embroidered with a yellow dragon fluttered with the man's steps. There was long, flowing black hair that created transparent waves in the sunlight. The hand placed on the sword sheath hanging from his waist could be described as a slender and delicate jade white hand. It was a beautiful man.

He approached through the falling autumn leaves with the scent of autumn and was as deep and beautiful as an Oriental painting. However, most people didn't judge him by his appearance. They discussed his achievements and skills and hardly ever mentioned his appearance.

"K-Kraugel...!"

The Sword Saint—a man who made the title of sky above the sky fit even better.

"I want to protect this child."

His always calm eyes showed a rare warmth. A friend's flesh and blood. It was natural to treat this person preciously.

"Ah..." Ruby blushed lightly as she faced Kraugel.

Chapter 1460

"Sure enough, Kraugel is also preparing for the great human and demon war."

"It feels like there are 1,000 people."

How many players didn't envy the sky above the sky?

After the National Competition the year before last, he had been absent in the East Continent and finally appeared after a long time, causing admiration. It was despite the fact that most of those present were some of the top high rankers. Those who could set up a guild or lead a number of talents at any time were humble in front of Kraugel. It was the person with the second highest official standing after Grid.

"T-This is real..." Toban murmured blankly while the elites of the Ares army shifted their gazes away in an awkward manner. The smile on Toban's face represented how he felt.

Kraugel—he might not be part of the Overgeared Guild, but he was a trustworthy figure. It wasn't just skill, but also personality. It was Kraugel who had no bad rumors even when he was 1st in the ranking and had no choice but to be gossiped about no matter what he did. Once he became an ally, he could truly be called one of the most reliable people.

Just in time, Lauel's message appeared in the guild chat.

-Kraugel applied for the hell expedition and I accepted it at my discretion. I will leave the subsequent judgment to Yura.

"....."

"....."

Kraugel left Ruby behind and approached Yura. They stood side by the side and naturally reminded people of words like fate, relationship, lovers. They were at a level that was well-matched just looking at their appearance.

'Oppa is pitiful.' Ruby belatedly came to her senses and couldn't help having this thought.

Gulp!

Gulps were heard from all around them. Just as everyone knew that Kraugel's relationship with Grid was deep, they all knew that Kraugel and Yura had an uncomfortable relationship. One of the top rankers that Yura was hostile to during her time as a Yatan Servant was Kraugel and Kraugel had grabbed Yura's ankles many times in the National Competition. There were hardly any good feelings between the two of them, apart from the relationship between Kraugel and the Overgeared Guild. People wondered if Yura would give Kraugel a chance to play.

"You will take the vanguard," Yura opened her mouth one beat late. Unlike people's worries, she easily nodded. "It is reassuring. Ruby, what do you think?"

"Huh? O-Of course I would like that," Ruby replied to the question. It wasn't a selfish answer. Kraugel was the Sword Saint. Even if he couldn't use divine power at all, he could gain the upper hand against the demons as long as he was 'holding a sword.'

The concept of compatibility itself was meaningless to him. It was because the Sword Saint defied the laws and could cut anything. It was why Kraugel was evaluated as an irreplaceable power.

"I think I can complete my vanguard duty with Kraugel oppa." Ruby's opinion was the same as other people's thoughts.

Toban also thought it was a good thing.

'Then for some reason... why am I sad?' Toban, who was happier than anyone else, suddenly felt sad. However, his mood right now wasn't an important issue. Toban coughed and handed Kraugel his weapon. It was the 'Transcendent God's Holy Sword' that was once the divine object of the Judar Church. Just like the Holy Light Set that Grid got from the Rebecca Church, this had been left unattended in the church without anyone using it.

Toban was once the number one player in the Judar Church. He had many achievements and acquired the 'qualifications.' It was why Toban had to be the vanguard in this hell expedition.

"The usage condition might be set as 'me,' but... you can handle it as long as it is a sword, right? This weapon will help Ruby build the sanctuary."

Just as Grid could wear and use all items without restrictions, Kraugel could use all sword type weapons without restrictions. He could even handle it better than anyone else. It was because the Sword Saint's swordsmanship was based on insight and communication with the sword. Kraugel nodded and accepted the Transcendent God's Holy Sword.

"I will repay your trust."

"Okay. I'll be there soon to take it back, so take care of it."

Toban laughed. There was actually a day when he built up such great trust with Kraugel, who had been a vague object of fear when he was a competitor. It was the contribution of Grid, who communicated with Kraugel, and Lauel's efforts to help Kraugel's mother.

"Time is tight to move the expedition team to hell. I will get started right away."

There were nearly 300 participants in the expedition. Yura was pressed for time to transfer everyone to hell, so she urged them. She had heard from Grid what Kraugel had done in the East Continent and what he achieved. There was no more delay in opening the hell gate.

The space next to Yura distorted and a black passage was created. It was the hell gate. Kraugel had experience fighting with Yura and felt a certain emotion at the sight.

"I will go first."

Kraugel took the lead. Yura spoke to Ruby who was taking a deep breath one more time before following, "Miss Ruby, you have to lead the people until I arrive. Don't lose your composure under any circumstances."

"Yes! I will keep that in mind!" Ruby answered vigorously like a military recruit and headed through the hell gate.

"Sehee! Try and seduce them well!"

She ignored Yerin's absurd shout from behind her.

[You have entered hell.]

[A powerful demonic energy that wants to penetrate your lungs has scattered without encroaching on you.]

[The evil energy that blocks the spirit is receding before touching you.]

"Ah...!" Ruby was terrified. She could see a huge, transparent glass castle the moment she entered hell. A beautiful view was about to blossom, but then seven demonic creatures came into view. It was a group of huge and sinister demonic creatures. The Saintess could detect the target's demonic energy and predict their level, so from her perspective, they were elites.

"A-Avoid it!" Ruby shouted at Kraugel who was welcoming her. However, it was too late. The demons had already reached Kraugel's back. Kraugel had all his stats lowered due to the penalty of hell and had been caring so much about Ruby that he didn't seem to notice their approach.

Kraugel spoke naturally like nothing was happening, "This is okay."

Simultaneously, the bodies of the demonic creatures wielding their claws at Kraugel were split into dozens of pieces and blood flowed. They couldn't even scream as they turned to gray ash. Before Ruby could recognize them, they were already cut and died. It was different from drawing the sword, where the blade was rubbed against the sheath to gain acceleration. If the person in the current situation was Peak Sword, the friction sound would have occurred late.

On the other hand, Kraugel's swordsmanship was very quiet. There was no sound at all. The ideal body trained to give full play to swordsmanship and the strongest swordsmanship combined to form an extremely pure and powerful swordsmanship.

"I'll protect you so get started."

Kraugel stood between the scattering rays of light and sent her a warm look again. Ruby was familiar with this gaze. It was because her brother looked at her with a similar gaze. It felt like she had one more brother. It was the second best brother in the world.

"Yes!" Ruby answered with a brilliant smile and started chanting a spell. It was Sanctuary Declaration. It was the aura and concept of the Saintess that didn't allow anything to invade in the process of establishing the domain. Only Saintess Ruby became the law.

Kraugel drew the Transcendent God's Holy Sword. Then Kraugel's mana was consumed and the imprinting of the magic circle being drawn by Ruby's spell became noticeably faster. It was the effect of the Transcendent God's Holy Sword that helped 'strengthen external divine power to enhance divine magic or assist in divine events.' The construction of the sanctuary, which consumed a great amount of concentration and resources, became many times easier.

Kraugel watched the operation of the Transcendent God's Holy Sword in a daze. 'I was told that the gods are wary of the Saintess.'

As far as Kraugel knew, Ruby had never caused friction with the believers of the three gods. Additionally, the Transcendent God's Holy Sword was currently helping Ruby. He looked at the origin story contained in the information of the Transcendent God's Holy Sword and questioned it even more because there was a sentence that stated 'a sword made due to Judar's divine message.'

'Is Judar not particularly wary of the Saintess? Or is there a reason he is only watching at the present?'

...He didn't know.

Rankers weren't proficient in all the stories and settings of the world view. Just as the stories Grid were familiar with were hell and heaven, Pagma and Braham, the East Continent and the Saharan Empire, Talima and the Behen Archipelago, etcetera, Kraugel also had stories that he was familiar with. He didn't know much about the religions.

Just then, new demonic creatures swarmed. They were too quick to appear and attack after discovering Kraugel and Ruby. It seemed they had been wary of this place since the beginning.

'The enemies have grasped the opening point of the hell gate.'

It was speculated that the incessant bombardments would continue. Kraugel examined the status of the Transcendent God's Holy Sword. Most of the functions were stopped or weakened because it was helping Ruby. The damage had also been greatly reduced. All of the sword was only working for Ruby. This was why Toban had shrunk back. If Toban had been in this situation, he could only support himself with a shield.

Meanwhile, Kraugel was able to take the initiative. He held a new sword in his other hand. There were no restrictions on the Sword Saint when using two swords. Kraugel had complete control over the two swords.

Additionally...

'The hell penalty can be temporarily repelled with Poetry that Praises the Sword.'

Poetry that Praises the Sword assimilated Kraugel and the sword together. The durability and attack power of the target sword replaced Kraugel's health and defense, purifying and making him immune to all the weakening effects applied. Additionally, when using the next skill, the maximum power was increased by 14 times (11 times was previously the maximum, but the power rose due to the increase in the level of the sword poetry).

It was the most frequently used of Kraugel's ultimate skills. It made it possible to respond to multiple variables. The problem was that the number of variables was too big.

".....?"

Kraugel's actions as he slashed at the demonic creatures became unnatural. His sword resonated like it was responding to someone other than Kraugel.

[Your weapon has entered the dominance of the demon 'Boleron.']

[You have resisted.]

Kraugel was nervous. If it wasn't for the Sword Saint perfectly controlling the sword, he would've only noticed when his sword was stolen.

'It is a power on the level of a great demon. It must be a senior demon.'

Kraugel's gaze turned in the direction of powerful demonic energy. Then the ground where Kraugel was standing exploded. It seemed to be aimed at this timing.

"It is great to be able to avoid Lord Barbatos' sniping."

The rapidly moving black fog gradually formed a shape. It was the appearance of Boleron, the demon who had the modifier 'Barbatos' Household.' Additionally, Barbatos shared the vision of his household members. It was possible to secure his vision to 'snipe' even if he was hundreds or thousands of kilometers away. Of course, there were restrictions that the world should be the same. If there were no such restrictions, human beings in the human world would've been sniped by Barbatos.

The sniping occurred again. Kraugel barely managed to avoid the first sniping with his super sensitivity, but it was hard to avoid this time. It was because Boleron's large hand approached at a high speed and tried to wrap around his face. It was an attack that was accurately combined with the sniping.

It proved that Barbatos and Boleron had worked together a number of times. It was natural. Boleron was originally a household member, unlike Krucha who was Hell Gao's subordinate and attached to Barbatos. From the moment of birth, Boleron was Barbatos' subordinate.

'It is better to allow one of the two.'

Kraugel's high insight and intuition instantly grasped and judged the situation. He gave his face in exchange for avoiding the sniping. Kraugel's body slammed into the ground. Then the horns on Boleron's forehead pierced Kraugel's heart. At the same time, Kraugel's sword cut at both of Boleron's eyes. Kraugel was obediently caught in order to achieve this counterattack.

"Ugh?!"

Boleron was flustered by losing his sight and he was blown away by jainmori. Kraugel rose from the spot, drank a potion and said, "You lost your eyes so there is no support shooting for the time being."

Just as Kraugel provided a lot of information to Grid, Grid had also shared information with Kraugel. He said that the opponent they should be most wary of in the great human and demon war was the 8th Great Demon, Barbatos, and had explained the characteristics in detail. This meant that Kraugel was already familiar with Barbatos' method of shooting from 'a place unseen' and knew how to block it.

'I didn't expect Barbatos' household member to appear.'

Grid had said that Barbatos was obsessed with Grid. Apparently, he felt resentment for having part of his 'vision' taken away... perhaps due to this, he had been watching for the hell gate while waiting for Grid.

'By the way... she is really Grid's younger sister.'

Kraugel stared at the Holy Enchant that was wrapped around the White Tiger Sword. He hadn't expected her to cast a weapon enhancement spell rather than a defense spell or heals while her companion was being attacked. Ruby's way of playing that was different from a normal priest player made Kraugel laugh. He thought that the aggressive tendencies were very similar to Grid.

'It was a good choice.'

Boleron's eyes didn't regenerate after being cut by Holy Enchant. Of course, this wasn't a long-lasting effect, but as long as Holy Enchant was maintained, Kraugel was confident that he could cut Boleron's eyes again and again.

'It will take some time until the next team comes.'

If it was Yura, then the possibility of her sending Chris in the next team was very high. Chris' strength was so excellent that he was said to be 'next to Grid.' There was no better card to use for expanding the base they had already secured.

'The good odds start from then on.'

Step.

Kraugel approached Boleron. There were dozens of possibilities in one stride. Among those possibilities, there was no chance that Boleron's eyes would recover safely. As Ruby's sanctuary gradually became stronger, the penalties that Kraugel received in hell were weakening.