

Overgeared 1561

Chapter 1561

“.....”

Grid was fascinated by the flames in the roaring furnace.

A small and unattractive portable furnace—the heat in it was hot. It easily melted a dragon’s bones and claws, but it wasn’t ferocious. An explosive heat that could melt even the largest furnace was being contained in the portable furnace. There was a strong feeling of protecting himself from disappearing in the heat. It approached him kindly. The word ‘warmth’ came to mind.

‘It is responding to Ifrit’s will.’

It felt like the flames were alive and breathing. It was different from other flames that sought combustion, extinction, and destruction. The appearance of a clear willpower and putting forward different possibilities resembled the flames of the red phoenix. It might not have the strong vitality of the red phoenix’s flames, but it was hard to see it as a flaw. Instead, the destructive power that exceeded the flames of the red phoenix wriggled from inside the core.

In other words, the flames of Ifrit and the flames of the red phoenix were equal. They had different strengths, but it was difficult to discuss which one was inferior or superior. This was shocking considering that the Four Auspicious Beasts represented the East Continent. The strength of the Four Auspicious Beasts might not be as strong as their prime due to being sealed for many years, but for their willpower to not be as strong? It meant that a normal dragon, not even an old dragon, was equal to them.

‘This dragon...’

Other than the old dragons, Grid only knew Nefelina and Gujel among the dragons. He had subconsciously measured the level of dragons based on them. It was a big mistake. The Gujel that Grid had experienced was just a remnant of thought remaining after death, while Nefelina was a hatchling. It wasn’t enough for them to be used as the standard.

‘I almost messed up...’

He couldn’t understand the subject. He took dragons too lightly.

‘I had a narrow perspective.’

It was true that he became anxious after chasing after Baal as his goal. He was overwhelmed by the pressure to be strong enough to kill Baal. To put it simply, he lost his composure. It was worth blaming himself. However, there was no need to shrink back. He avoided the worst case scenario. This was simply a lesson.

‘Let’s be polite to dragons in the future.’

It was just like when he entertained Raiders. Being that polite was enough.

‘In the first place, she doesn’t seem to hate me.’

Ifrit had given Grid a stern warning. She awakened the dangers of killing a dragon and asked for cooperation. She even showed trust by cutting off one arm on her own. Of course, for dragons, arms were just degraded things. It was more than ten times smaller than the two heavy legs. They normally didn't use it, unless they polymorphed into human form.

Still, it was true that she gave away a part of her body. She took on a new wound while she was seriously injured. It was not a minor act. Of course, it might be because she was in a bad position. Other dragons were likely to have different attitudes from Ifrit.

However, it should be noted that Ifrit understood Grid's personality perfectly. The other dragons were also likely to know Grid well. Nevertheless, no dragon had ever harmed Grid so far. At the very least, it meant they were neutral. Future relationships with them depended on Grid's attitude.

'Since it is like this, I should get along well with them.'

Grid recalled the duties of the tower members. Their purpose wasn't to harm the dragons. The focus was on reducing the scale of events that dragons would cause. He should've noticed it from this point. Antagonizing the dragons was a taboo.

"Fire dragon, a precious body was hiding in this land."

Just then, the three masters opened their mouths. The gaze toward Ifrit was sharp. It was natural. For them, Ifrit was an aggressor. She hid in their territory, caused an incident, and slaughtered at will. In the aftermath, several yangbans were killed. Of course, the cause of the incident was Baal's power fragment and the culprit who killed the yangbans was Grid... in any case, it wasn't strange for Ifrit to be misunderstood and held accountable.

[That's right. My situation is no different from yours.]

The atmosphere was serious. Grid listened to the conversation between the three masters and Ifrit. The time attack quest was in progress. The battle would soon begin. Grid had to focus on responding to risks at any time. He didn't rest his hands. He just listened carefully while removing the skin from Ifrit's arm.

Grid was determined to complete the dragon weapon. Since the quest reward was limited to 'survival,' the dragon weapon was likely to end up in Ifrit's hands. For Grid, the experience of making a dragon weapon was a profit and his reward. In order to live and to even gain experience, he had to complete the dragon weapon.

Grid was quick to cut the thick skin without hesitation. Even before the smelting of the bones had begun in earnest, the skin to be wrapped around the handle was complete. It was the power of the automatic production and the quest correction system.

"....."

Grid didn't care about Mir. Mir also didn't pay attention to Grid. The two of them turned away from each other. They buried the past of fighting for each other deep in their hearts. Mir had to be like this due to his position, and Grid was considerate toward such a Mir.

Was it made from the feathers of the red phoenix? Pungsa clicked his tongue as he covered his mouth with a fan bursting with flames. He seemed to be very annoyed with Ifrit's tone. "How dare you

compare yourself to us when you were attracted by Baal's power and ran wild like a beast? You are as shameless as your thick skin. The sin of harming the half-gods..."

[Elixirs made from me will be really powerful. How am I the same as a low-grade group who digs into the weaknesses of lower species and dazzles them with strength?]

"You will pay for your sin of running rampant in the land of the great gods..."

[I have a question. The master of this land is someone else, so how can you pretend to be the master?]

"...Don't try useless provocations."

[Then you should shut up as well. Just confess honestly that you ran over without breathing because you covet my body. Why be so wordy?]

"You..."

"Pungsa, stop it."

Usa and Unsa restrained Pungsa and stepped forward.

The sky and earth moved with them as the center. The sky tilted according to their hand gestures and the earth moved along with their footsteps. It felt like the world was in tune to their will. The anvil and furnace tilted 90 degrees and the startled Grid gulped.

'Is this the mental world of the three masters? When did they open it?'

It was magic that the three masters performed in cooperation. It was convincing to say that it was used so rapidly and powerfully that super sensitivity couldn't detect the change.

"Your arrogance pierces the sky and you don't know how to respect the gods..."

[You stole this land because you don't respect the gods.]

"...As it has always been said, you will surely be destroyed."

[You still haven't changed even though you were kicked out of Asgard for speaking such nonsense.]

"You aren't qualified to breathe."

The faces of the three masters didn't look very good every time they spoke. In particular, Pungsa's face was dyed a bamboo color. They somewhat nervously recited the spells and dozens of spells were completed in a flash. The sight of the magic filling the sky was reminiscent of stars in the night sky.

'It is dizzying.'

The sky and earth started to react more sensitively to the actions of the three masters. Every time one of the three masters moved their hands, the world turned upside down once. By the way, the three masters consisted of three people. Even if the three of them only moved their hands once, the world would be turned over three times.

Grid's transcendent senses were gradually overshadowed by motion sickness. His mind and body weren't balanced.

“.....!”

Grid was clinging to the hot furnace and somehow using the bellows when he became surprised. It was because he witnessed Ifrit’s two eyes coming right in front of him. These eyes were much bigger and fiercer than Grid’s body. Naturally, fear rose.

A clear voice was engraved on the brain of Grid, who was shrinking back.

[The mental world of the three gods can’t hold you.]

Ifrit completed the words and coughed up a large amount of blood. They were Dragon Words. The world, which was gradually accelerating and rotating, suddenly returned to normal.

Grid was overwhelmed by the sight spreading out in front of him. The hemisphere-shaped barrier, which couldn’t be seen from the inside, came into view. It was the mental world of the three masters. It was where the three masters, Mir, and Ifrit were...

“It is a surprisingly quick reunion.”

...No, Mir was in reality. The voice that came from behind him made Grid tense.

“Mir...” Grid turned back. His feet were still busy moving. He sped up the bellows. It was originally an unsightly action, but it wasn’t ugly because his dignity stat was so high.

“Do you know the dragon Trauka?”

Mir slowly drew his sword. A blue light shook around the cold sword blade in a dizzying manner and a tangible storm was felt. It was very sharp and threatening.

“Dragons are called dragons for a reason. It is said that there was a time when the old dragons hunted gods for fun because they were particularly powerful and ferocious. Then the gods of Asgard and the dragons signed an agreement not to interfere with each other.”

“.....”

“Ifrit is the bloodline of Trauka. Therefore, she is a fire dragon. She should’ve been eaten by Trauka, but she survived and reached this land... putting aside her immediate level, it means her potential isn’t normal. The gods see her as a living mass of elixirs.”

“What are you trying to say?”

Grid was using auto production to make the items. After smelting them into a molten form, Ifrit’s combined bones and claws were put into the mold for quenching. It was an act that didn’t suit the situation. However, his eyes were as firm as a warrior whose life or death was at stake. This made Mir hesitate for a moment, but he soon continued calmly, “Leave here. I can’t afford to care about you right now. If you leave like this, no one will stop you.”

[A new unexpected quest has occurred!]

[Give up on the production of the dragon weapon and leave. The yangban, Mir, will bet his honor to ensure your survival.]

[Upon accepting the quest, the preceding quest to produce a dragon weapon within 30 minutes will be canceled.]

[If you accept the quest, Ifrit will die and the power of the Hwan Kingdom will be greatly strengthened.]

‘This is crazy.’

Wasn’t it enough to have one sudden twist? He would be in trouble if he did this or that. At this point, he was suspicious that the system was suffering from bipolar disorder.

Grid checked the time and frowned. Nine minutes had passed. In the next 21 minutes, the dragon weapon would be completed using the power of the system. The bones, claws, skin and blood—the condition of the materials was incredibly good, but the production time was too short. This meant the quality would decrease. Still, it didn’t matter. The purpose of the quest was to make the dragon weapon. It was up to the client to use it. Maybe it wouldn’t lead to a good result.

“I don’t want to,” Grid answered without much thought.

The new quest window disappeared and Mir’s eyes shook.

“I can’t back down and leave after hearing the conversation between the three masters and Ifrit.”

The depths of the three masters was shrouded in insults and disgust toward dragons.

One of the reasons why the expelled gods rebelled against Asgard was the dragons. They were dissatisfied with the treatment of the dragons. If the power of the expelled gods became stronger than it was now, the Hwan Kingdom was likely to go to war with not only Asgard, but also the dragons. It would naturally affect the surface as well. Human beings would experience a disaster they couldn’t handle. Grid had a duty to prevent this situation.

“I’m sorry to you, but I need to take Ifrit’s side here.”

Click.

Gujel’s Dao that was held in Grid’s right hand hid its appearance. Noe, Randy, and the Overgeared Skeletons lined up on Grid’s left and right sides, while the direct descendant vampires protected his back. The moment they arrived, the God Hands stood in the front.

Taang, taang, taang.

The hammer held in Grid’s left hand started to pound on the anvil. It was a bizarre scene. It was far from reality.

“...You don’t have to be sorry. We are enemies.”

It happened the moment Mir pretended to be casual and tried to hide his regret...

The Blue Dragon Dao caused a flash of light. Mir’s quickness played an even more unreasonable role in the domain where Shunpo was sealed.

20 minutes—this was the time that Grid and Ifrit had to hold on.

He just came to crush Baal's power fragment. How did so many things happen...? It was ridiculous no matter how he thought about it, but Grid remained focused.

Chapter 1562

[You have taken a highest grade recovery potion.]

[You have taken Haeju's Potion.]

[You have taken hemostasis medicine.]

[You have taken a sedative.]

"Kuuack..."

The lower body of the struggling Old Sword Demon was tinged with various colors. It was a sign of hastily drinking potions. It was reminiscent of a clown's makeup. Old Sword Demon found it hard to keep up with the situation.

Suddenly, a dragon appeared. Dozens of robots ran around and finally, there was an explosion that destroyed the city. The scale of the incident was too large to understand and respond to. There was no such absurdity.

'This isn't the place for me to be.'

Grid and a dragon—they were transcendents who eclipsed ordinary yangbans. The level was too high. There was nothing he could do if he returned to the scene. Nevertheless, he was thinking about going back. It was to take care of even one more injured person.

'There will be many people waiting for help...'

The leather armor that Old Sword Demon was proud of had become rags. His body that was covered with all types of wounds was no different. However, Old Sword Demon moved in a busy manner. The people who fortunately survived the explosion a few moments ago. In order to save one more person who would've been seriously injured, he moved forward while wiping his blood-stained eyes.

Many memories came to mind. He had shared the hardships, trials, kindness, joy, emotions, love, sadness, and grief of the people who had been living here for over 10 years...

There were memories he couldn't experience in reality where he was alone. Old Sword Demon wanted to repay the people of this land. Some people might scoff, but he was thankful to them. It was unacceptable that those who had been deceived and suffered all their lives due to gangsters, who claimed to be gods and committed all types of violence, would even suffer a tragic death.

Trudge. Trudge. Trudge...

A dry desert disturbed Old Sword Demon. It clung to his legs, which had become heavy due to the wounds. It was as if it was whispering that he should be alone forever. It seemed to be sneering, 'Who can you protect?'

Old Sword Demon belatedly realized it. Half of his abdomen was torn apart. His bleeding didn't stop and his health was being consumed too quickly. The potions hadn't worked properly.

“Huhu.” He laughed through gritted teeth as if the wounds were nothing, but it was just a bluff. In the end, the face of Old Sword Demon was on the verge of falling into the sand. Then someone approached, grabbed Old Sword Demon’s arm, and supported him.

“This bad guy is tenacious. I can’t be as bad as you.”

The voice was detestable. Old Sword Demon’s blurry vision was filled by this rascal in the traditional bamboo hat.

“The most powerful person among the two of us... do you admit that it is me, not you?”

“Does that matter in this situation?”

“It matters.”

“Well... I have no choice but to acknowledge it this time.”

Hwang Gildong shook his head and applied a lot of medicine to Old Sword Demon’s abdomen. It had a very sweet scent. It was an elixir made using medicinal herbs that were hard to obtain even after searching the world. Old Sword Demon turned his body that couldn’t even move properly.

“What are you doing? Why are you using such precious medicine on me when you know my death isn’t the end...”

“Didn’t you say there is a big loss when you die?” Hwang Gildong retorted. There were numerous shadows behind his back.

The Chivalrous Robbers—the righteous group that fought for the weak people of the East Continent. The hundreds of members had been called by Hwang Gildong and were carrying several people each. Among them...

“Ah! Grandfather!” It included the child who Old Sword Demon rescued along with Agnus. It was the child Old Sword Demon couldn’t care about at the moment of the explosion. He thought the child would’ve died, but he was alive.

“You...” Old Sword Demon held the child who ran to hug him in his arms and looked up at Hwang Gildong with wet eyes.

Hwang Gildong pressed his traditional bamboo hat down deeply over his face. His face couldn’t be seen. “Don’t forget. The reason for today’s crisis is all because of you.”

“...I will keep that in mind.”

Agnus had entered Kaya with the demons. It meant that even if Old Sword Demon hadn’t come forward, Agnus would’ve eventually died at the hands of Hwang Gildong. In other words, the current situation where the dragon appeared and burned the city would be the same.

However, Old Sword Demon couldn’t deny his mistake. He failed to control his anger and caused a battle in the city. It caused more people to become affected by the battle.

Hwang Gildong urged the deeply reflecting Old Sword Demon, “Let’s leave the rest to my men and go to help the Overgeared God.”

“.....!”

Old Sword Demon was shocked. Hwang Gildong avoided fights that couldn't be won. It was because he insisted he had a lot of work to do and had to stay alive, yet in Old Sword Demon's eyes, he was cowardly. However, today, Hwang Gildong wasn't cowardly. He helped people in an unfavorable situation and now he wanted to help Grid.

'I've misunderstood him all this time.'

His personality might be flawed, but he was overall a good person. Thus, they had been together...

Old Sword Demon thought this while he stood up and asked, “Do you think the Overgeared God has a chance to win?”

“It is hard. A god's form depends on faith and while the power is different, the dragons of the west are good at fighting. Of course, it is a dragon. There is almost no chance of winning.”

“So why are you going to help?”

“He is the Overgeared God. What is worth risking our lives if not this?”

“.....”

That's right. Hwang Gildong was ready to die. It was due to the belief that Grid would do numerous things in the future. He was convinced that Grid was better than himself. It was from the black tortoise's incident to now. Hwang Gildong had been using the information network of the Chivalrous Robbers to keep a close eye on Grid.

“...I also agree.”

Old Sword Demon nodded as he clenched his fists hard.

Hwang Gildong—the legend who sustained the East Continent was ready to sacrifice himself for just one player. Old Sword Demon was deeply touched. He was thrilled when he compared it to the days when named NPCs dominated and controlled players.

'It is said that less than a handful of people can change the world.'

This wasn't a lie. Grid alone was proving it by changing the world. He was a great person who made Old Sword Demon feel admiration several times.

“Let's hurry.”

Old Sword Demon and Hwang Gildong no longer talked. They ran as if they couldn't waste a moment and arrived at the collapsed city. Then in hindsight, they detected an unexpected event. Something they hadn't felt before the explosion. It was unable to be measured.

A being with enormous power broke into the scene.

“Mir...?”

“Difficulties are occurring one after another.”

Hwang Gildong paid attention to the barrier behind Mir, not Mir. It was a barrier built by divine power.

“The three masters have descended. They are planning to kill a dragon.”

“Kill a dragon...? Then the three masters are fighting with the dragon in that barrier?”

“Probably.”

“Do the three masters have a chance of winning against the dragon?”

“Of course. Unlike the Overgeared God who had just been born, they are gods who have existed since the early days. There are three of them and this is Hanul’s domain. There is a high chance.”

“In any case, this is good. We can rescue the Overgeared God as the three masters and the dragon fight each other.”

Mir was the strongest yangban. He had the characteristic of ‘training every day’ and his growth potential was remarkable. It was clear that if he one day became a god by building up divinity, he would be incomparably stronger than what he was now. However, that was a story of the future. Old Sword Demon thought that he would be a few stages below a dragon right now.

It was just that Hwang Gildong’s reaction was very reluctant. “I wonder if this is actually a good thing.”

“Why?”

“Mir’s energy can’t be compared to the past. I am wondering if we can shake him off until the three masters succeed in killing the dragon. If the three masters join Mir, then all hope is lost...”

Hwang Gildong slowly stopped talking. Old Sword Demon immediately shut his mouth. It was because the flow of the battle was reflected in the eyes of the two men. Mir’s power, which threatened and deceived Grid with every step while rushing forward at the same time, was extremely transcendent.

Before the momentum of the charge disappeared, dozens of sword strikes occurred and thick fog surrounded Grid. It was a phenomenon that occurred when the blood shed by Grid was burned by lightning.

“It is scary.”

Hwang Gildong sighed. The moment the battle began, he realized the situation was even worse than he thought based on the large amount of wounds on Grid. Yet strangely, Grid wasn’t moving a single step. He stood firmly in place and just confronted Mir with ‘one hand.’ It would look like a master dealing with trash if it wasn’t for the continuous bleeding. He really would’ve looked like a master if he fought one-on-one without the help of all his summons.

The blood magic of the direct descendants was canceled. Mir slashed at the source of the magic and neutralized it. Then he leaned his head back to avoid the surprise attack of Overgeared Skeleton One. He didn’t even glance at the sword of Overgeared Skeleton One that passed over his shoulder. Instead, he reached out, grabbed Overgeared Skeleton One by the collar and slammed him into the ground.

Mir paid the price for this move. Due to the numerous runes clinging to his hand, he lost some speed for a while. Overgeared Skeleton Two’s black magic forced Mir’s next action while predicting Randy’s joint

attack that would come in the gap. Randy raised his sheath in his left hand the moment the Linked Kill sword dance was destroyed to block the Blue Dragon Dao, only for his two arms to be cut off.

Then Grid's dao cut through the ground. He saw an opportunity while hammering and used Pinnacle, aiming for the gap Mir showed when he was driven into range by the Overgeared Skeletons and Randy. Unfortunately, it didn't cause too much damage.

Mir's judgment, which made him retreat the moment he witnessed the wave of orange, was accurate. Mir's waistband was lightly cut instead of his abdomen and split in half. The loosened blue doped fluttered loudly due to the wind pressure that occurred one step later.

".....?"

Hwang Gildong suddenly questioned it as he was speeding up his run. Mir was the owner of the Blue Dragon Dao. The Blue Dragon Dao was known to have the strongest attack power of the relics of the Four Auspicious Beasts. Yet he avoided a confrontation with Grid. He took great risks and forcibly avoided the attack. A lot could be suggested from this.

'Is that sword greater than the Blue Dragon Dao?'

Hwang Gildong's gaze was fixed on Gujel's Dao. A weapon that overpowered the Blue Dragon Dao. He was astonished when he guessed its true identity.

'A dragon slaying weapon!'

The sound of the explosions continued. They were the explosive sounds created by Mir, who moved quickly again the moment the runes were extinguished. Hwang Gildong missed Mir's appearance and Mir reappeared in front of Grid a few seconds later.

Blood once again gushed from Grid's body. He had been slashed dozens of times during the period when Mir disappeared. It meant that Mir's speed exceeded Grid's speed. However, blood also spilled from Mir's chest. Grid's attack caused more blood to pour out than the combined blood from all over his body.

Grid's artificial senses—the particles of silver thread and magic power spread out like a cobweb using the God Hands captured Mir's speed for a moment.

"You are buzzing like a fly. Flies will eventually be caught," Grid spoke in a low voice. His calm attitude was at odds with the current battle.

Tang tang! Tang tang tang! Tang tang tang tang!

On the other hand, the sound of hammering was becoming extremely fast, so the atmosphere wasn't very cool.

Chapter 1563

'It is so uncomfortable. How did I live without Shunpo?'

Shunpo was restricted. The magic of the three masters that surrounded the city blocked all space movement techniques. Grid felt more uncomfortable than he imagined. It was much harder than when he lost his limbs during battle.

The power of Shunpo was that outstanding. A technique that allowed him to move anywhere within his field of view. There was bound to be a big difference from when he had Shunpo and when he didn't. In particular, the opponent in front of him was Mir. He was a strong rival who used the speed of the blue dragon by completely embodying the power of the Four Auspicious Beasts.

It was virtually impossible to respond to that speed without Shunpo. His transcendent senses might recognize the attacks that reached supersonic speed, but Grid's motor abilities couldn't respond.

That's right. Mir was faster than before although there was still the premise that the blue dragon's power should be activated. He felt much faster and stronger than when he fought against Raphael a month ago. This was a unique growth power when comparing it to all the worldview existences that he had witnessed so far.

After all, one of the beginner gods, Hanul made him to be Baal and Raphael's enemy. Chiyou must've been watching Mir with anticipation before meeting Grid. Mir was proving that his potential suited his background.

It was normal for Grid to have no chance of winning. It was right to say that Grid's defeat was set from the time that Shunpo was sealed. However, there were other things to consider. Grid's growth rate was comparable to Mir's growth rate. Additionally, his artificial senses.

Grid contemplated his own limitations and made the peak power of being overgeared. Unlike his transcendent senses, which only recognized an attack, the potential of the power to read the trajectory of attacks was endless. It was possible to grasp the intent and nature of the attack based on the trajectory.

Furthermore, Grid was currently making an item. The patience skill was activated and this increased defense, health, and stamina by 300%. It was somewhat inferior to the legendary miner who became invincible during mining, but Grid's defense was so high that it had a great effect. Even if he was properly cut by Mir's sword, he only suffered less than 10,000 damage. It was possible to almost negate the damage by overlapping it with White Tiger's Posture.

He used the artificial senses to avoid fatal injuries, held on patiently, and counterattacked with the dragon weapon. The strengths of a blacksmith overlapped. Rather, the penalty of completing the item within a set time was turned into an advantage.

"....."

Mir was already wary about the destructive power of the dragon weapon, so he became a bit more passive. He got a strange feeling so he was unable to rashly attack Grid. This allowed Grid to adjust the positions of the God Hands more closely. He used the God Hand controlling the Magic Power Ejection Machine and designed the artificial senses more effectively.

'I wasn't mistaken. Just now... he read the attack perfectly. Is it that skeleton's black magic? Or the vampires' blood magic?'

Mir was wary of Grid's pets and subordinates. Their level was all unusual so he naturally doubted them.

'It is right to kill the pets first,' Mir judged. He also hoped that Grid would give up and leave in the process of losing the summons. Mir still didn't want to hurt Grid. At this moment—

"You are buzzing like a fly. Flies will eventually be caught," Grid opened his mouth. It was a clear provocation. It was an attempt to break Mir's composure and create a better situation.

Mir took it differently.

'He is giving me advice even in this situation.'

He was understandable. Mir was the person most clearly aware of Grid's growth power compared to his own growth power. Mir's evaluation of Grid was more than imagined. Furthermore, the two of them were mutual benefactors. They owed each other their lives. Mir felt a great liking. It was just that he couldn't reveal it due to being in different factions. In other words, they didn't have a relationship of low level provocations. No matter what Grid said or his tone, it was all considered as good intentions.

'Certainly... I was too obsessed with speed to be vigilant about the dragon slaying sword. I used it incorrectly.'

His first mistake was that he somewhat shrank back in front of the dragon weapon. His second mistake was that he didn't want to hurt Grid. Mir first decided to understand the situation. It was only disadvantageous for the Overgeared God if he dragged out the time.

Acting sloppy due to useless hesitation would only make the situation worse. He needed to conclude it quickly. He would remove Grid from this land, even if it meant killing him. This was the only way to protect the Overgeared God...

"Sigh." Mir took a deep breath and his eyes became calmer than usual. He experienced the lineage of the Sword Saint from Muller to Kraugel and awakened sharp, blade-like sensations.

The atmosphere that changed in an instant flustered Grid.

'It backfired?'

Mir shot forward like a flash of light and appeared right in front of him. He immediately swung the Blue Dragon Dao and the artificial senses in his way were cut without a problem. It literally unraveled like a cobweb. The silver threads that were segmented into particles and connected by magic power were cut. The Sword Saint's sword that cut all concepts naturally came to mind.

Grid was shocked, but putting aside his shocked heart, his mind was spinning quickly. The moment his artificial senses were cut, he predicted and defended against the attack based on the information delivered. The Blue Dragon Dao interlocked with Gujel's Dao held on without being pushed. The extreme sword energy supported the Blue Dragon Dao.

'Hurry.'

Grid's willpower urged the God Hands to move. Every time a collision occurred, the Blue Dragon Dao accelerated. The form of the swordsmanship was strange. It was a structure that used kinetic energy in reverse so it felt unreasonable.

Grid had no choice but to face it with Link and the fusion sword dances containing Link. He wasn't confident about keeping up with Mir's speed unless he borrowed the power of the system. Fortunately, at least the artificial senses were quickly restored. The particles of silver thread and magic power, which were recovered when the God Hand turned off the Magic Power Ejection Machine, once again unfolded the moment the Magic Power Ejection Machine was turned on. Even so, it was cut every time it reached the Blue Dragon Dao, but Mir wasn't aware of this fact.

It was because the artificial senses were intangible, colorless, and odorless. Mir focused solely on Grid without knowing what he should be wary of or what he was cutting. This made it difficult for Grid to take advantage of the artificial senses.

Clink!

The sound of hammering ceased for the first time. The crossguard that was inserted between the handle and blade to protect the hand holding the handle—Mir's hand stuck exquisitely close to the back of the crossguard of Gujel's Dao and an intangible wave of energy exploded.

Grid almost let go of the weapon in his hand. He was swept away by the strong explosive force and his upper body greatly tilted back. The Blue Dragon Dao fell toward his chest as he floundered. It was with the momentum to cut his chest in half. It was impossible to avoid unless Shunpo was used.

The White Tiger's Posture that he activated a little while ago was in cooldown. In the midst of this crisis, lights flowed in line with Grid's movement and gathered at one point. The target was the Blue Dragon Dao.

It was the moment when the dominance of the Overgeared God was exercised. Mir let go of the Blue Dragon Dao in his hand.

".....!"

The Blue Dragon Dao, which should've been stabbed in Grid's heart, lost its electricity and wandered through the air in vain. Mir reacted immediately. He extended his arm and grabbed Grid's neck.

Grid was in the process of using Item Combination. For the next few seconds, the Blue Dragon Dao belonged to him and he naturally held it in his hand. He combined it with Gujel's Dao without any precursor.

Then the blow that struck Grid's face slammed him into the ground. Mir's fist, which contained the activated power of the white tiger, was as heavy as a meteorite. Grid received big damage since the patience skill was lost the moment the hammering stopped.

However, Grid remained calm. At this moment, the strongest weapon of all, which completely transcended Hexetia's Short Sword, was stabbed into Mir's side. A thunderous noise followed. Pinnacle Kill, which was enhanced by the effect of Mountain Appearance and Flowing Streams, caused a landslide inside Mir and he shook.

".....!"

Astonishment appeared on Hwang Gildong and Old Sword Demon's faces as they arrived at the scene. Mir, who had seemed to always overwhelm Grid throughout the battle—it was because Mir's body was cut in half even though he had a chance to win just a while ago.

[You have lost dominance over the Blue Dragon Dao.]

A notification window popped up in Grid's vision. Grid was already prepared for this. The moment that he cut Mir's body, he released Item Combination and launched a stab with the Blue Dragon Dao. It was only when the Blue Dragon Dao was embedded in Mir's heart that he lost ownership.

The blood flowing from Grid and Mir caused a huge explosion, as if declaring the end of the battle. It was the link between Blood Sword Shatter and Blood Flow Explosion.

"Hah..."

"....."

Hwang Gildong and Old Sword Demon had wide mouths like a crucian carp. They stared blankly at Mir, who was swept up in the red explosion.

"Cough, cough..."

Grid struggled to raise his body.

One step, another step.

He barely managed to move his bloody body and resumed hammering in front of the anvil.

7 minutes and 34 seconds.

The time had stopped from the moment Grid stopped hammering.

7 minutes and 33 seconds.

7 minutes and 32 seconds.

Now it started flowing again.

"Stay still," Grid warned Mir, who was raising his body in the aftermath of the explosion.

Mir didn't rush over this time. Unlike when he was cut by Grid in the past, Mir activated the power of the red phoenix and focused on regeneration without destroying everything around him.

The fear of death—Mir had overcome it after experiencing it just once. Even when his body was split in two or when he was swept away by the explosion, he just regenerated his body and raised himself up again. Mir's eyes never wavered. Yet at this moment, he was shaken.

"You still don't understand? I don't want to kill you."

It was while looking at Grid's back.

"I don't want to fight you."

Mir couldn't see Grid's face as Grid talked. It was because Grid had his back to Mir and didn't take his eyes off the anvil. However, Mir knew what Grid would look like right now. Maybe it would be like Mir's...

Mir still had more than three fifths of his health remaining.

"....."

On the other hand, Grid only had around one fifth of his health left. He secretly drank potions while he had his back to Mir. It was Grid who allowed more attacks throughout the battle. It was a figure that proved the difference in basic specs. However, the health gauge was a number indicated by the system. Mir and Hwang Gildong couldn't see it. They just had a strange impression from Grid's lonely back view.

Only Old Sword Demon's expression was subtle. 'It is an incredible bluff.'

As he watched Grid's fast-growing health gauge while Mir faltered, Old Sword Demon realized there were more than one or two conditions for becoming the best.

Taang, taang, taang.

The sound of hammering spread through the silent scene. It was quiet. Mir remembered the wind chimes hanging from the end of the eaves. His heart calmed down.

"I lost."

Clink.

Mir returned the Blue Dragon Dao to its sheath and stepped back. He got even further away from Grid. It was a sense of distance that made him realize the connection between the two people.

"I'm going back now. Please... I wish you luck."

Mir's health gauge unknowingly became full as he bowed his head deeply to say goodbye. The power of the red phoenix that was activated in order to restore his cut body was extremely effective. It was very meaningful that he embodied all the power of the Four Auspicious Beasts. It was a level where he could be considered invincible and it was natural for civilians to regard him as a god. Unlike the other yangbans, Mir was highly qualified to be an object of faith.

"....."

Mir's footsteps disappeared. He really left the scene without regret. The reason he fought Grid in the first place was because he feared Grid would be killed by the three masters and be deprived of his divinity. Now Grid had proved his skills. He refused any favors and won (?) the fight against Mir. It was hard for Mir to force it any longer. He had the justification of losing, so he would have to leave the rest to Grid and step back.

"The two of you should leave quickly," Grid felt the turbulent barrier and spoke to Hwang Gildong and Old Sword Demon. Hwang Gildong hesitated for a moment, but he was forced to nod because he just witnessed Grid's skills.

Old Sword Demon also understood the situation. What would happen in the future wasn't in an area that human beings could handle. They would just be a distraction...

Eventually, they left.

Shortly after Grid was left alone, the barrier collapsed. Ifrit was in tatters as she plummeted to the ground. It felt like her life was disappearing. The huge body looked very pitiful. On the other hand, the three masters were fine. They only showed some fatigue.

"It is an unexpected sight."

After appearing, the three masters, who had solely focused on Ifrit, finally turned their attention to Grid.

"It is you in that position, not Mir?"

"That guy, Mir... surely he wasn't defeated?"

"In any case, it is good. Now we just have to dismantle her."

The three masters' dopos fluttered as they descended.

15 seconds. 14 seconds, 13 seconds...

Grid's mind was anxious as he checked the time. If Ifrit died before the dragon weapon was completed, the quest would fail. It was regrettable that his time was delayed when fighting Mir.

"I will enjoy tonight's banquet with a glass of your blood."

Smiles appeared on the faces of the three masters. The shape of their hands over Ifrit's half-folded long neck was rough.

8 seconds. 7 seconds...

Time flowed too slowly.

Pungsa and Unsa broke the scales behind Ifrit's neck.

5 seconds. 4 seconds...

Just before Usa's hand dug into the gaps in the scales—

Clang!

A spear fell from the sky. Then it was a knife, an axe, an arrow...

All types of battle gear poured down like rain and attracted the attention of the three masters.

"You..."

The expressions of the three masters as they stared at Grid were nasty. They had been ambiguous so far, but they finally revealed their explicit killing intent. It was so deep that he wondered how they had hid it so far.

"You can't kill her without my permission."

Grid might've got on the boat by chance, but he was on a boat called Ifrit. He couldn't stand idly by to watch the boat sink. In the first place, Ifrit's death was directly linked to the strengthening of the Hwan Kingdom. It had to be stopped.

"This conceited look is so ridiculous."

"We were going to kill you anyway. Don't interfere with the sacred ritual."

The world was turned upside down. The sky and earth were responding to the willpower of the three masters. Just then—

Ttaang-!

Grid's hammering sound rang out loudly. It was a sound that marked the end of the work and a new beginning.

[Ifrit's Horn has been completed!]

A work where Grid wasn't involved in the design and intent. The spear, which was completed with the quest effect, burned like a powerful flame and flew to stick in the middle of Ifrit's forehead.

".....?"

".....?"

".....!"

Grid and the three masters were amazed. If there was a player at the scene, there would be a hateful criticism of 'stealing the last hit.'

It happened at the moment when Grid was terribly flustered...

[You have done it.]

Ifrit's huge eyes slowly opened.

Chapter 1564

Strength, authority, life, and eternity—the symbolic meaning of a 'horn' was very powerful. It was revered regardless of the era and culture. Trauka's act of cutting off and eating Ifrit's horn meant castration and plunder. It was the most fatal cause of Ifrit's weakening.

Ifrit lost her strength, authority, and right to eternal life. She suffered from the wounds and curses left by Trauka, and slowly fell to the point where she would die. It was a separate matter from the combat force that Ifrit was preserving. It was a type of inevitability.

Ifrit had no choice but to be drawn to Baal's power.

The fragment of Baal's power—it was a product of Baal's obsession with playing around. The nobler and greater the target, the stronger it functioned. It was an irresistible temptation for Ifrit, who couldn't recover. It was an option she couldn't turn away from even though she knew she would be Baal's toy.

Ifrit eventually made a choice.

That was when Grid appeared. There was greater hope than the fragment of Baal's power and Ifrit wanted to overturn the inevitability of being eaten.

Overgeared God Grid—his presence was extremely powerful. His short life was great. He proved that all his narratives were truths with no exaggeration. He proved he was alive and breathing.

[You have done it.]

Ifrit's voice trembled slightly as she opened her eyes. Her stature, whose horn was reproduced by inserting the spear made by Grid into her forehead, was neither shabby nor pathetic. Her shadow on the ground became huge and reached the horizon.

Kurururung!

The earth screamed. The muscles of Ifrit's originally huge body swelled to twice, triple, and then quadruple their size. Day and night were divided around Ifrit. It was the aftermath of Ifrit's head soaring higher than a great mountain and covering the sun.

A storm swirled and blew the remnants of the destroyed city into the desert. The city where thousands of people lived became 'nothing' due to one flap of Ifrit's wings. Even the traces that were left were erased.

Grid twitched like crazy. It vibrated to the point where he had the absurd worry that his flesh and skin might be separated.

A dragon—the ultimate transcendental species, which even the gods were wary of, was fear itself. It seemed to be a complete destruction that should never be faced.

'Crazy...'

Grid recalled the day when he guided Raiders around. He vividly remembered the fear that he tried to bury in his heart that day. He once again realized it. Dragons were so powerful. They were threatening just breathing and living.

"There is no normality among dragons."

The advice that he heard one day bothered Grid. Maybe he brought about bigger trouble while trying to avoid a smaller incident...

Ifrit had a distorted personality so Grid might be causing a disaster by trying to wield this powerful force recklessly...

It happened the moment that Grid distrusted his choice...

Kurarararara!

Ifrit blew out fire from her mouth. It wasn't just a hot breath, but a mass of pure magic power. It was a red pillar that targeted Usa. Usa was trying to suppress Ifrit's fire with rain, only to step back. The Breath narrowly passed by Usa, shot through the dark clouds filling the sky, and evaporated them.

These were the clouds that Unsa had called. It was intended to help Usa easily create rain but it turned out to be useless.

Then a red meteor shower poured down. It was a landscape created by the remnants of the Breath that had been destroyed only after breaking through the stratosphere. It was a beauty that was at odds with the terrifying power, causing Grid to briefly stare at the scene. The same was true of Hwang Gildong and Old Sword Demon, who had left the city earlier and were standing in the desert.

“Did you know this would happen?” Old Sword Demon questioned Hwang Gildong’s attitude of withdrawing obediently. It was strange that he ran to help Grid, only to return without even looking. Old Sword Demon lacked skills, but it was different for Hwang Gildong.

Hwang Gildong had been fighting enemies stronger than himself for hundreds of years. Based on a variety of experiences and knowledge, he was able to display even more capabilities the greater the crisis. It meant it was possible to give a bit of help to Grid.

“Correct.” Hwang Gildong nodded. Then he took out an old book and opened it.

The Utopia Magic Book—a divine object brought back after Hwang Gildong climbed to the Peach Blossom Spring. It was a book containing the advice of the daoist immortal and was close to prophecies. In any particular situation, a foresight poem was written in the blanks. This greatly helped Hwang Gildong’s movements. This was why Hwang Gildong was able to fight against the Hwan Kingdom despite being only a legend and a human being.

“It was written that it would be fine.”

“The dragon has started to flap her wings. Is it really okay?”

“Don’t doubt it. Thanks to this book, I’ve been able to send so many yangbans to hell and help resurrect the black tortoise.”

It was an exaggeration. It was true that the Utopia Magic Book was a great help, but it was the knowledge and information of Hwang Gildong, who established and utilized the Chivalrous Robbers, and Hwang Gildong’s individual power, that were the sources of Hwang Gildong’s great achievements.

However, Hwang Gildong placed all the credit on the Utopia Magic Book. It was because Bentao was the identity of the daoist immortal who handed him the book. The one who received the divine message and framed the seven good people as the seven evils. He belatedly realized the truth and was filled with regret. He was the only daoist immortal that Hwang Gildong trusted.

“Let’s hurry and leave. There is something we have to do.”

Hwang Gildong’s gaze rose to the clouds in the direction of the Pa Kingdom.

“This is an opportunity to disconnect Kaya and Pa and isolate the white tiger.”

Usa’s dupo was quickly restored after it was grazed by the Breath and turned into rags. It soon flapped again without any wrinkles.

“Hanul seemed to have quiet expectations for you.”

Usa’s cold gaze was directed at Grid rather than Ifrit.

“If I am to confess, it was the same for me. How can there be no expectations of you, who have passed through Chiyou’s trials with a human body, and eventually became a god?”

Light rain started to pour down.

“Additionally, your position is against Asgard.”

Something was held in Usa’s two hands. They weren’t visible because they were transparent, but Grid could guess that it was a sword and a spear. The shape could be vaguely seen the moment the raindrops struck them.

“Think calmly and make a judgment. There is no reason for you to join hands with the dragon. We are the only ones suitable to be your companions in this wide world.”

Usa’s claim was reasonable.

The surface, hell, Asgard, the Hwan Kingdom, and the dragons—these forces were largely divided into five, but hell and Asgard cooperated, threatening the surface and suppressing the Hwan Kingdom. The surface and Hwan Kingdom were independent and isolated. Meanwhile, it was impossible to rely on the dragons.

The dragons were completely uncooperative and weren’t unified. Every one of them had strong individuality, so their opinions weren’t the same. Each one could be compared to a good-for-nothing. It was right to be cautious rather than dreaming of cooperation.

The wisest and only method was for the Hwan Kingdom and surface to join forces against the same enemy. The surface should be attracted to the proposal of the Hwan Kingdom. However, the person representing the surface was Grid. Grid didn’t dwell on the shallow composition. Based on his many experiences, he understood the inner heart of the composition.

Usa urged Grid, “What are you worried about? If you are looking at that evil dragon, forget it. This is just her dying flash. It is an ember that is about to be extinguished.”

Indeed. The backlash of releasing one Breath caused Ifrit’s body to temporarily become smaller. The red scales that had regained their luster were dyed black as the light was dispersed. She soon recovered again, but it was too much to think she was in a normal state.

Nevertheless, Grid approached Ifrit and stood beside her. He might not need to be wary of Ifrit right now, nor could he negotiate with the dragons using the pretext of Ifrit, but Grid still chose Ifrit’s side. It wasn’t because he trusted Ifrit. It was simply because he had a strong distrust and hatred toward the Hwan Kingdom.

“You really are the most wicked ones.”

“.....?”

“Aren’t you twisted for not feeling guilty about unilaterally invading and seizing the territory of other gods, deceiving and parasitizing the humans who served them?”

Grid remembered everything he had experienced in the East Continent. The people who had been abused without knowing anything, Blue Tiger and Tosun who hid while wounded, the yangbans who mocked them without feeling guilt or any respect...

This place was also hell. It was a hell made by gods.

Anger filled Grid's eyes as he was reminded of this. It was the feeling of the god who was once called the God of Virtue.

"At the very least, there is an excuse for dragons to be beasts without common sense. You use them even after understanding human laws, principles, and wishes, so you are irreparable trash."

"....."

Silence descended.

The condemnation of Grid greatly flustered the three masters. It was Ifrit's laughter that broke the silence.

[Kuha...! Kuhahaha! Beasts without common sense. That's right. It might seem like that to you.]

Ifrit, who was reduced to a beast by Grid's words, had the right to be angry. However, she understood Grid and didn't have any unpleasant feelings. Ifrit's long neck sank down to Grid's foot. [Get on.]

"...Huh?"

Get on?

Grid had been shrinking back after realizing his mistake in speaking. Now he became flustered.

He was given no choice. Ifrit curled her tail around Grid's body and forcibly brought Grid to the back of his neck.

[I am told that human beings often self-proclaim to be dragon knights by taming the organisms we made.]

She seemed to be referring to the wyvern knights.

[How funny. Throughout the world, you will be the only true dragon knight at this moment.]

The wind blew wildly as Ifrit made the assertion and spread open her wings. The ground initially covered by sand and gravel became visible and the sky was covered with yellow dust.

"A crazy god and a crazy dragon have met," Pungsa murmured to himself as the wind blew like a surging wave.

A god on the neck of a giant dragon—the appearance of Grid that was carved on the shadows beyond the yellow dust was the first to be recorded in any legend or myth. It was hard to believe even when seeing it. It was a sight that far exceeded the wisdom and imagination of the gods.

Unsa, who was trying to bring back the scattered clouds, persuaded Usa, "We have to avoid it."

The unknown was a very fatal threat to gods. Something that an omniscient and omnipotent god didn't know? It was an act that denied the god itself. Their divinity would be greatly damaged. Usa also knew this well.

"This... it doesn't make sense..."

They had to step back. They struggled to shake off the shadow of the approaching Grid and Ifrit as it gradually became huge and fled the scene.

[...!!]

[...!!!]

[.....!!!]

[We are working on analyzing the situation...]

Grid's notification windows were having errors...

Chapter 1565

Shin Youngwoo's biography came out everywhere. The world was flooded with Grid's name, even if they didn't turn on the TV or access the Internet. This was why half of Grid's mind was used to maintain his composure. From a certain point, Grid started to be careful. He was always focused and tried not to be swept away by his emotions.

It was surprisingly hard work. Wasn't it the essence of a human to cheer, celebrate, and get excited when there was even a bit of joy? It couldn't be easy to suppress the essence.

However, Grid managed to do it. As he felt a lot of joy that ordinary people would never experience in their lives, he endured the waves of emotions that pushed like a tsunami every time, or he dispelled it with a single cheer. It was never buried. It was necessary in his position. There was the fate of so many on his shoulders and he needed to keep calm. He had to be cautious.

This was why Grid became polite whenever he encountered an opponent stronger than himself. He was forced to bend his posture because he was worried he would cause harm to others, not because he was cowardly. In any case, such a Grid—

"Kyaaaaaaaaaah!"

He couldn't suppress the feelings that flooded and cheered.

"Hahat! Hahahahahat!" He cheered and couldn't shake off his joy. He didn't think about the past and future, and just enjoyed this moment. He enjoyed himself purely like a child holding his parents' hands and visiting the amusement park. He hoped this flight would happen one day on an airship made of Greed. He stood on the head of a dragon that was so big and fast, and had this type of wish.

A god and dragon—the 'horn' was continuing the relationship between the two beings who should've never been united.

Ifrit's horn that was made by Grid—Grid used it as hard and hot rein, and experienced a dragon's vision and speed. It was a world he never imagined before.

Ifrit was thinking about Grid's memories that were contained in the horn. She clearly remembered how Grid made the horn and how he fought against Mir during the time when Ifrit was trapped in the barrier of the three masters. It was too intense and she was too grateful for it to be considered a minor event. It was also great. A newborn god recreated the horn of a dragon. Of course, it was incomplete, but this was enough.

Ifrit, who regarded most of the world's existences and events as insignificant, felt thrilled for the first time in her life. However, reading the dragon's expressions and emotions was difficult for Grid. It was in the same context as ants not understanding humans. They were different in status and species.

Ifrit's flight was close to the usage of Shunpo. The surrounding landscape changed with every flap of the wing. It was a speed that the three masters couldn't get rid of. Even so, they didn't get caught easily.

Ifrit failed to chase the three masters, who completed the spell and returned to the Hwan Kingdom. The Hwan Kingdom was the base of the ancient god, Hanul. He even had Martial God Chiyou with him. It was one of the few forbidden areas for a dragon.

[I feel good.]

Ifrit was satisfied just to see the three masters fleeing. The same was true of Grid. A storm belatedly occurred once Ifrit's flight stopped. It was only after it calmed down that Grid looked back in the direction he came from with a calm mind.

"I have to destroy Baal's power fragment."

There was no option to take it. Grid didn't want to be Baal's Contractor or anything like that.

[Of course.]

Ifrit nodded and started to flap her wings again. She quickly crossed a few dozen kilometers and slowly landed on the ground where the black bead was. She was still with Grid.

The land where the small city used to be—Grid looked bitterly at the empty space where not even an ant was left.

Ifrit spoke to him, [10 years or 100 years is just a split second. From the standpoint of a beast without common sense, it is impossible to feel sorry for the death of humans.]

Beast without common sense. Grid used this saying to represent the dragons. Did Ifrit still keep it in her heart?

Grid felt somewhat uneasy, but he said what he had to say, "Occasionally, there are insects that break into the house. Among them are insects who create a beneficial environment that doesn't harm humans at all. However, there are many people who don't know about it or who are scared and agitated, causing them to harm the insects. I think those people will feel guilty for a short time. I believe they will mourn dead insects for a short time."

[I should do the same?]

"Shouldn't you do this if you are a better existence than human beings?"

[Let's see... in the first place, you tend to see humans too positively.]

".....?"

[Did they hurt the insects without knowing the beneficial identity? Didn't they hurt the insects out of convenience?]

"....."

Imagine Younghee grabbing a spider in the room with a tissue and lowering it into the toilet bowl. [1]

Younghee knew that the spider wasn't a pest. However, it was annoying to take the spider out of the house and release it.

Imagine Chulsoo catching and killing a house centipede with a fly swatter. Chulsoo knew that the house centipede wasn't a pest. He just felt disgusted by the appearance of the house centipede. It was dirty to catch and spare it, so he handled it easily. There were many such Younghees and Chulsoos in the world.

[Even if they actually harmed the insects because they didn't know the identity, how many humans would feel guilty or mourn them?]

"....."

[It is like this. Insects can't understand or blame humans. They simply think of it as a disaster. Humans have no choice but to see dragons as a disaster. Even if a dragon harms humans, it is inappropriate and meaningless to criticize the act.]

"...What if I had made the comparison to an animal, not an insect?"

[I wouldn't have been sympathetic. It is because humans are too small for dragons. Think simply. Don't expect there to be any dragons that understand humans.]

"Aren't you understanding me now? Isn't that why you're talking about this?"

[Are you human?]

".....!"

A chill went down Grid's spine. It was because Ifrit's attitude when asking this question was so pure. It was a simple question that had no intentions behind it.

That's right. Grid himself wasn't properly aware of it, but in this world, he was a god, not a human. He was once a human, but that was only in the past. His attitude of continuing to speak on behalf of humanity was hard to understand from Ifrit's perspective.

[I hope you don't waste time answering the questions,] Ifrit urged.

She seemed very annoyed by the fragment of Baal's power that repeatedly amplified its energy to seduce her.

Grid didn't delay.

Snap!

Gujel's Dao penetrated the fragment of power. This was the end. Hundreds or thousands of cracks appeared on the bead, which Old Sword Demon couldn't penetrate despite using all his strength, and it shattered.

-Overgeared God...!

A disgusting voice filled with strange excitement entered his ears.

[The Pioneer quest 'Destroy Baal's Power Fragment' has been cleared.]

The notification window that was stopped at 'analyzing the situation' was updated.

[Return to the Tower of Wisdom for the rewards.]

[...!]

[...!!]

[We are working on analyzing the situation...]

'Why did those stupid people leave?'

Grid didn't know why the three masters retreated. He simply interpreted it as them being afraid of Ifrit, who had regained her horn and her strength. He didn't think that his action of riding Ifrit was the problem. He didn't know what a special and meaningful event it was just based on Ifrit's words. He needed someone's detailed explanation but the system that was supposed to explain it wasn't working.

[Is there anything else to see here?]

"Not right now. I am going back to the West Continent."

[Get on.]

Ifrit lowered her neck again. Grid got on it without hesitation. He was flustered the first time, but he became familiar with it the second time.

Ifrit laughed. [You are a pleasant guy.]

".....?"

He got on because Ifrit said so. Did he make a mistake?

It happened the moment Grid cocked his head...

Ifrit flapped her wings, left the East Continent, and crossed the Red Sea.

".....?"

"W-What is that?"

On that day, a red dragon was seen throughout the East Continent. It was too fast, so it only appeared for a moment. However, the huge size meant it left a distinct impression on people. A man was standing on the head of the dragons. Rumors circulated that he looked like the Overgeared God.

“It is my fault.”

“.....”

“Will he be okay?”

“.....”

“What if he fails?”

“.....”

At the Tower of Wisdom...

Biban was feeling the limits of his patience. After cleaning the hallway, he was waxing it, but Betty kept interrupting him.

The highlight of wax lay in the polishing. After it was applied, it had to be rubbed evenly to create the shiny gloss. However, Betty kept stepping on the wax and ruining the gloss. The condensed wax looked like filth.

“Who is the granny who is going too far in worrying about someone else’s welfare? Grid has already left. What is the point of worrying about it here? Go out and meet him in advance if you have time to worry unnecessarily.”

“Your voice is so fierce. You are worried about Grid too. That is why you are angry.”

“Have you lived for so long that you died first? Sigh, really. This granny should clean up before you can know my position.”

“The person who did the wrong thing should clean up.”

“Ah, right. So Granny, you’ll be in charge of cleaning next time. You stood by until Baal’s Contractor became like that. Sir Fronzaltz won’t let it go.”

“I am going out to meet Grid.”

“You won’t go when I tell you to go, yet look at you running away when it is disadvantageous.”

It happened the moment Biban had an absurd expression on his face as he watched Betty disappearing beyond the corridor...

[A fire dragon has appeared. The rating is top.]

[Ifrit. Ifrit’s movement has been detected near the Red Sea.]

[The Breath is accumulating in large quantities. The momentum seems like she is going to cause a war.]

[All tower members, quickly gather in Hayate’s office.]

The magic power loudspeakers installed throughout the tower rang loudly.

Out of all things, Biban was cleaning the top floor corridor. This was the floor where Hayate’s office was located. It took the most effort, so Biban had no choice but to clean it.

“Is it a territory war?”

“The lair that a fire dragon wants the most is Trauka’s lair, right?”

“Even Ifrit can’t fight Trauka.”

“You don’t know that. Don’t try to understand them.”

“Talima is in danger. Hurry if you don’t want to see the dwarves annihilated.”

“.....”

The rough steps of the quickly running tower members dirtied the hallway. It was the moment when Biban’s half a day of hard work went down the drain...

Chapter 1566

“There was no clue at all until she was found in the Red Sea?”

“Yes, by the time we captured her traces, a few Breaths have already overlapped. It is just that the radar didn’t detect it in the meantime.”

“It is from the east. She has been hiding on the East Continent.”

At Hayate’s office...

Biban entered one step late. The meeting was already underway. The artifacts filled with ancient languages and formulas flashed, revealing the condition and location of Ifrit.

“Ifrit is Trauka’s child. It isn’t known when she will be eaten, so it isn’t strange for her to hide.”

“The fact that she is back now...”

Just because they were the Tower of Wisdom didn’t mean they could grasp all the actions of the dragons. It was difficult to monitor unless they were active every cycle like the gourmet dragon Raiders, or if they didn’t show explicit signs like the current Ifrit. The dragon radar created by the Fronzaltz brothers wasn’t omnipotent.

“...Did she get her hands on the fragment of Baal’s power?”

“It is likely that this is the case. It is right that a second evil dragon has been born.”

“The Pioneer failed...”

“It can’t be helped. How can he handle it if the opponent is Ifrit, a top grade fire dragon? Grid can’t do it alone even if Ifrit is in a state of great injury.”

“It is my fault. Grid is in trouble due to me.”

Betty’s pale face stiffened. She was like a corpse. It was right for her to lie down in a coffin. The body she hid using a robe was actually a dead body. More than half of it were white bones.

“This isn’t the time to blame yourself. We have to quickly identify Ifrit’s destination... this?” Radwolf suddenly became shocked. His voice trembled as he shot up from his seat. “Ifrit is heading to the west...”

“The west?”

“Cokro Island... it is in the direction of Cokro Island.”

“It is the Overgeared Empire!”

The Overgeared Kingdom was now an empire. More than two-thirds of the continent had become the territory of the Overgeared Empire. However, most of the areas that could be called key points were concentrated in the west. Cokro Island was one of them.

“That guy, Ifrit, is she going to retaliate against the Pioneer...?!”

The reason why Ifrit accumulated the Breath wasn’t to compete for territory. Indeed, the only lair that Ifrit would covet was Trauka’s lair. She couldn’t challenge Trauka right now even with Baal’s power.

“I think there is a deep grudge. She must’ve been disturbed during the process of gaining Baal’s power.”

“The population density of the Overgeared Empire is the largest in history. More than half of humanity will be destroyed if the Overgeared Empire is targeted by Ifrit.”

In the midst of the turmoil—

“I will go.”

Hayate got up from his seat.

“This is real...” Grid muttered in a mesmerized manner as he enjoyed Ifrit’s flight. It felt like he was piercing the sky. It was because very familiar scenery entered his view. Cokro Island was visible on the horizon. The intercontinental movement, which was physically difficult to achieve, ended in an instant.

‘Will riding a missile feel like this?’

Grid’s black hair was disheveled and completely blown back. His hair was pushed back, like it was covered in oil. It matched well with his strong impression.

[It is up to here. Humans will be afraid if I approach more than this.]

“Are you being... considerate?”

[Hoh, I see. I stopped because I didn’t want you to be embarrassed based on your position. Is this what people call consideration?]

Ifrit’s huge eyes seemed to curve.

[Overgeared God. A great person who overshadows the years. Perhaps I have a strange feeling toward you. However, don’t worry. It was a mania temporarily suffered due to the influence of being exposed to Baal’s power.]

“It isn’t mania.”

Grid recalled the days when he was alone. It was a time when he doubted the goodwill of others. It was a time when he felt anxious about being liked by others. It was unfamiliar. It was so unfamiliar that he was afraid and denied it.

“You are perfect and have always been alone, so you might find it hard to understand... today, you received a lot of help from me, so you are grateful. It is small, but you feel some liking toward me. This is a natural emotion, not mania.”

[Hmm...]

“It is a feeling that will grow naturally if we continue to interact and communicate in the future. You will feel and understand it clearly someday.” Grid proposed a future for Ifrit. He wanted that power and he didn’t want to miss out on the hard-earned strange fate, and he also felt sorry for Ifrit. He hoped they would be together in the future.

[Continue in the future...]

The future was naturally a guaranteed right for dragons. However, it was different for Ifrit. Her horn was just a temporary reproduction made by Grid. She had already lost her eternal life. Still, she didn’t say this. She didn’t want to say it for some reason.

Ifrit stuck out her long neck. It was a gesture to say goodbye. Grid used the neck as a slide to come down before opening his dragon wings. He intended to fly to be at Ifrit’s eye level, hoping that even a small sympathy would be formed. Of course, it might not be the right answer, but it was an effort to gain more of Ifrit’s favor.

[They are trivial wings.]

Ifrit snorted.

Grid didn’t deny it. He felt like a fly as he spread out his wings in front of Ifrit.

“.....”

Grid stretched out his fist. Ifrit cocked her head and extended her horn. It was to share a greeting with the shabby horn that didn’t match the huge body.

Tok.

Grid’s fist touched Ifrit’s horn.

“.....?” Grid felt a certain hot sensation penetrating his body.

Ifrit explained, [I left a trace of my magic power in you. In the future, many dragons, except for some, will be afraid of you.]

Just then—

[...!]

[.....!!]

The system that was stuck, as if it had been lagging, started to work again.

[You are the first to accomplish a feat that doesn't exist in any legends or myths.]

[Your great achievement will generate the only one title, 'Dragon Knight'.]

[Dragon Knight]

[Rating: Only one

You have a rapport with dragons.

Dragons belonging to the sub and mid-tier dragons won't antagonize you.

Rather, they will respect you and reproduce 'Ifrit's Anecdote.'

The anecdote here refers to when you boarded Ifrit and defeated the three masters.

★ Some dragons can be used as a 'mount.'

★ Your status will rise dramatically when riding a dragon.

★ All stats will increase when riding a dragon.

The increase in stat values is affected by the stats of the dragon you are riding.

★The skill 'Dragon Breath' is activated while riding the dragon.

The Breath's power is affected by the stats of the dragon you are riding.

★★ A hatchling isn't included in the targets. ★★]

'The only one...!'

It was an unfamiliar rating. However, it was definitely above the myth rating. It was clearly a sentence used for Martial God Chiyou. Chiyou was one of the strongest existences in the current worldview. The effect of Dragon Knight proved the 'only one' rating.

No antagonism with some dragons.

Dragons could be ridden.

His status would rise dramatically when riding a dragon.

All stats would increase when riding a dragon.

Additionally, the activation of the Dragon Breath skill.

This... in short, it meant 'invincible.' Grid was feeling thrilled when he suddenly frowned.

'Why is it emphasizing the last effect?'

There were as many as four stars. It went beyond the level of conveying 'information' that he couldn't ride a hatchling i.e. Nefelina, and it had almost a teasing feeling.

‘...It should be an illusion.’

It felt very unpleasant, but Grid controlled his mind. He believed he was reacting too sensitively. The S.A Group might be a bully, but it was the world’s largest company. They might deceive players, but they wouldn’t blatantly mock players...

“I will always remember your traces and cherish them.”

[.....]

“...Ifrit?”

[Um... It is strange that my heart feels itchy every time you speak. As expected, mania seems to fit. I am going to leave before it gets worse.]

“Haha... Are you planning to go back to your lair and rest?”

[...Yes.]

There was no lair to go back to. She lost everything to Trauka. Nevertheless, there was no need to explain it.

“Then we’ll be able to reunite in around 100 years time.”

This was speculation based on the gourmet dragon Raiders waking up in a 100 year cycle. 100 years was a very long time for Grid. It was a future that would happen in 33 years of real time.

For Grid who was feeling sad, Ifrit shared even sadder information. [100 years is too short. I don’t know when it will be, so you don’t have to wait.]

“I see...” It seemed that it would take a very long time for the original horn to recover. Grid was convinced. He shook off his disappointment. As the encounter with Ifrit proved, relationships sometimes came without warning. There was no law that it couldn't be the same for reunions.

Grid said his farewells politely, “Then... goodbye.”

Ifrit turned away without any further words. A flap of her wings created a storm as she left. The atmosphere howled. It was a howl suggesting the end of Ifrit. However, Grid didn’t notice. The tower members, who were looking at Grid with awe from a distance, also failed to predict what was about to happen.

It was normal. Humans didn’t understand dragons. Therefore, they were unpredictable. This was why all dragons were abnormal from a human perspective.

“Grid... you...?”

“Eh...?”

Grid turned back with surprise. All the tower members, including Hayate and Biban, had arrived at the scene. They were even all riding on the shoulders of the magic machines.

“Are you going to war?” Grid asked in a dumbfounded manner.

“You became friends with a dragon?” Betty asked back in her distinct, low tone.

The other tower members were silent. They had mesmerized expressions and couldn't shut their mouths. Even the noble Hayate, who was like the specimen of an aristocrat, was unable to manage his facial expression.

“Ah, yes... probably... somehow...”

“Why? I asked you to destroy Baal's power fragment. How did you become friends with a dragon?”

“That... I also don't really know... I'm sorry...” Grid apologized for the incident.

The tower members had devoted their whole lives to protecting the world from dragons. They sacrificed everything because of the dragons. Confessing to them that he became friends with a dragon... he felt a strange guilt.

“Huh? Don't be sorry. Well done. Thank you.” Betty shook her head. Then she approached Grid and hugged him.

“Great! It is praiseworthy.”

In fact, the expression ‘was embraced’ was appropriate. Betty's height was a bit over 140 centimeters, so it couldn't be helped structurally.

[Affinity with the 4th Seat of the Tower of Wisdom, ‘Betty,’ has reached the maximum.]

“Hah...”

The tower members were even more flustered than Grid. Even the tower members, who had been with Betty for hundreds of years, had never seen her showing liking for someone.

“...Why are you saying this now?” Biban was speaking nonsense again.

“Why did you become friends with Ifrit?! Why didn't you say it in advance?!” Biban shouted while his legs were trembling.

It was the aftermath of a tide of relief. In fact, he had intended to fight against Ifrit with all his strength. He intended to help Grid and the Overgeared Empire, even if it meant revealing the existence of the Tower of Wisdom or giving his life. It was natural to feel responsible now that the tower had plunged Grid into a crisis.

However, the situation was cleared up and this overshadowed his determination. He felt both happy and empty.

“No, what are you saying...?” Grid grumbled while unaware of Biban's inner thoughts.

It was a peaceful scene. The tower members started to regain their smiles one by one when Hayate made a suggestion, “Why don't we go back to the tower? There are many things I want to hear from you.”

“Yes.”

Grid followed behind the tower members. They flew high into the sky.

At this moment—

———!

The world shook. Whirlpools appeared in the rough sea and Cokro Island experienced turbulence like it was a ship. This wasn't the end. The entire continent beyond Cokro Island started to shake. It was the moment of a tectonic shift. A huge power was changing the position of the entire continent.

Radwolf reflexively confirmed it with the dragon radar and fell silent for a moment. "Ifrit... she has died..."

".....?"

"Trauka also seems to be seriously injured."

"....."

The energy slipped out of Grid's body. He recalled Ifrit's last expression.

The slightly curved eyes.

In hindsight, he was sure that it was a smile.

Chapter 1567

There was an auditory hallucination in his mind. Just like glass shattering, it was the aftermath of the incident.

"Oof...!" Grid's complexion turned blue as he retched. His heart was in tatters. It was torn apart. It was a pain proportional to the greatness of the happiness he felt a while ago.

[Overgeared God. A great person who overshadows the years. Perhaps I have a strange feeling toward you.]

Ifrit's voice hovered in his ears. It was vivid. She was the one whom Grid had just shared warmth with. The memory was too clear to be remembered vaguely.

[However, don't worry. It was a mania temporarily suffered due to the influence of being exposed to Baal's power.]

She mistook an unfamiliar liking for a disease. It was proof that she had lived close to eternity and had been alone all her life.

[Continue in the future...]

She stopped the word 'together' in embarrassment. The faint smile in her eyes that even she might not be aware of.

[It is strange that my heart feels itchy every time you speak. As expected, mania seems to fit. I am going to leave before it gets worse.]

She didn't distinguish between liking and mania even until the last minute. No, dragons easily understood the concepts they learned once and didn't forget them.

She knew, but denied it.

'You were afraid.'

She was afraid she would have lingering feelings.

[100 years is too short. I don't know when it will be, so you don't have to wait.]

She ran away while denying her newly found feelings, fearing that she would want to avoid the death she had already been prepared for. She didn't make any promises because she knew it was impossible to meet again.

'What is the image of me that will be remembered by her?'

Grid looked back on it.

"Today, you received a lot of help from me, so you are grateful."

He was condescending. It seemed natural for Ifrit to like him and he revealed a faint greed. He thought ifrit would some day repay him for this grace and that he would enjoy the rights. It was the worst.

Disgust rose.

'I should've said thank you.'

Grid felt dizzy. Didn't he receive a lot of help? He just didn't admit it. He was intoxicated by his own performance and pretended to be a benefactor. His only performance was a crude reproduction of Ifrit's horn. He just temporarily seized the disappearing life.

"Grid..." The tower members were agitated. They were flustered by the sight of Grid sobbing while holding his breath.

"Hah... Cough..." Biban, who was famous for being tactless, also just coughed.

The death of a dragon—not a single person dared to condemn Grid for grieving when hearing news that humans should be happy about. It was because they had all witnessed it—Grid's fist, which was touching Ifrit's horn, and Grid's face, which was smiling while he was communicating with Ifrit. It was hard to understand from the standpoint of the tower members, who regarded dragons as a threat to humanity, but Ifrit must be Grid's friend. Some people wouldn't be convinced. The time that the two of them spent together was as short as a split second. However, sometimes a split second shone more than eternity.

The tower members, who had lived for so many years, knew it best.

"Cry as much as you want." Betty's small hand patted Grid's butt. Perhaps she wanted to pat his back, but the position was poor due to her short stature.

Grid confessed to the tower members, who were silently guarding his side, "The gods who were expelled to the east said it. This was just Ifrit's dying flash."

He didn't listen carefully. Not only did he distrust the three masters, but Ifrit was so healthy.

...These were just lowly excuses. He should've asked Ifrit at least once.

Are you okay? In fact, isn't it very hard?

However, he didn't ask. It meant he wasn't very interested. Grid was only obsessed with Ifrit's strength. He wasn't very interested in the existence called Ifrit. He didn't ask about the past. Rather, he discussed the future at will. He talked about building a relationship together. He didn't know it was impossible and he didn't even consider Ifrit's position.

"I'm going to turn it back."

Grid pulled out an old book.

[Dantalion's Damaged Book]

It was a relic of the sage of hell, a book that could perform a single miracle.

[Time Regression]

[It can only be used once.]

The time can be returned from at least 5 seconds ago up to 3 minutes. The exact time can't be specified and all the knowledge of Dantalion destroyed during the use will disappear. At this time, the 'all skills level up' effect of Dantalion's Damaged Book will be removed.]

It was really 'what if'. It was something he had kept to use if he lost a precious person.

'Please.'

Let good luck follow.

As Grid was eagerly opening the book—

"Forget it." Radwolf caught his wrist. The giant's dark eyes looked straight at Grid. "You are deeply emotional right now. Think about it carefully. Do you have to revive Ifrit? Is her existence so precious that you have to make such a great sacrifice?"

As expected of a giant. Radwolf accurately saw through Dantalion's book.

"Guilt is a necessary emotion for humans. It is your conscience that helps you avoid repeating your sins and mistakes. However, it is also an emotion that you shouldn't be buried in. Now, take a deep breath. Take a step back and contemplate it. Why are you trying to revive Ifrit? Is it really because she is precious, or is it a momentary sense of guilt?"

"....."

Grid couldn't answer hastily. This fact bothered him even more. He was sorry about Ifrit's death and felt guilty that he failed to show Ifrit his good side, but he still hesitated to use Dantalion's book. He weighed the value of Ifrit against his other precious people. The weight was naturally tilted toward others rather than Ifrit. This fact further deepened Grid's guilt.

Just then—

"It is meaningless to revive ifrit." Hayate stepped in. He was different from Radwolf. He pointed out a more essential part that only a dragon slayer could know. "If she is revived, she will just repeat the same

fate. Eventually, she will go to Trauka. A fire dragon is that type of existence. There is no way to reverse her decision.”

“Maybe I can persuade her.”

“It is meaningless. Based on what I saw, she is a candle just before the flame is extinguished. Even if her fate changes, it is just to the degree of delaying death for a few days.” Hayate’s expression suddenly darkened. “In the first place, the biggest problem is that Trauka will notice the time reversal. He will attack in reverse in order to get rid of the past or future of being raided by Ifrit.”

“.....!”

A chill went down Grid’s spine. It was a proper measure of an old dragon’s transcendence. How sensitive were his senses that he would even notice the reversal of time?

Grid was dubious, but he accepted it. Hadn’t he witnessed Ifrit’s strength that was beyond his expectations and imagination? It would be strange if even such an overwhelming being was unaware of a magic made by a great demon.

“She—Ifrit knew that she was going to die soon.”

“The reason we rushed out urgently was because we discovered that Ifrit had accumulated a large amount of Breath. Breath is the concept of releasing magic power in large quantities. A dragon starts the Breath by circulating the magic power of the heart once. Yet there were at least nine branches of magic power in Ifrit’s heart. It wouldn’t be strange if her heart exploded immediately. From the beginning, she was determined to go to Trauka.”

“...Is it revenge?”

The dragons who fled to the East Continent were said to be defeated and injured in a struggle over territory. In fact, Ifrit had lost most of her power when her horn was cut off. It was Trauka who made her like that.

“It could be revenge or it could be for the future of her child. Maybe it is just the result of being obsessed with the lair. We can’t know exactly. Dragons are so different from us.”

“Child...? Does Ifrit have children?”

“Yes, it is written in history. Considering the time when Ifrit gave birth, this is around the time when her child will become an adult... I’m honestly not sure. The survival rate of fire dragons is particularly low among the dragons.”

“Is it because of Trauka?”

“That’s right. He has been accumulating strength since the beginning by preying on his own blood.”

It was a real son of a bitch.

Grid, whose expression had stiffened throughout the conversation with the tower members, barely managed to swallow the swear words that were about to pop out. Grid respected the tower members. No matter how angry, he wanted to refrain from using curse words in front of the tower members.

In the first place, he was too agitated right now. He was greatly rattled by Ifrit's sudden death. It was necessary to calm down.

"Aiming at Trauka during the gap when he is seriously injured... of course, it isn't possible."

"It is just an act of suicide."

"....."

The dying Ifrit handled the three masters alone. It was impossible to deal with Trauka even if all the tower members and Grid joined forces. Grid had to engrave this in his heart. Dragons, especially the old dragons, should never be antagonized. This was a law that hadn't changed since Satisfy started until now.

"Calm down first. Putting aside your grief, the situation isn't bad. Thanks to Ifrit's sacrifice, Trauka will have to hibernate for many years."

"Ifrit was extinguished without leaving her body behind. If Trauka had eaten Ifrit's body, not only would he have recovered from the wounds immediately, but he would've become stronger."

Just like Raiders had the gourmet cycle once every 100 years, the old dragons tend to operate within a certain pattern. Among them, Trauka was committed to hunting the fire dragons. Natural disasters would occur every time this happened, but now it wouldn't happen for hundreds of years. As a result, Ifrit helped humans.

"Fortunately, Talima is also safe. It is probably thanks to a dragon's habit of making the lair as strong as possible. The explosion that shook the entire continent didn't destroy Trauka's lair."

Grid was relieved. He had been worried that Talima would perish and the reputation of the dwarves would be cut off. His mind gradually calmed and started to spin in a positive direction.

'Additionally, the epic didn't happen. That is great luck.'

If his epic story with Ifrit was released to the world, he would have to worry about becoming Trauka's target straight away. Maybe it was the help of the system? Did it know Grid would be in a big crisis after writing an epic, thus the system suppressed it?

'Putting aside the will of the S.A Group, the system might be on my side...'

Grid had meaningless thoughts as he moved to the Tower of Wisdom with the tower members. It was time to get the rewards from Betty. Grid dreamed about the future while feeling Ifrit's warmth engraved in his heart.

At the same time, at the headquarters of the S.A Group...

The server management team was disturbed.

It was because the character 'π' appeared on the panel indicating Morpheus' condition.

"Team Leader-nim, is it crying?"

“.....”

Chapter 1568

After the Great Human and Demon War, abnormal phenomena started to be reported all over the world. There were a number of people who were unable to adapt to their daily lives and became isolated from society. The general symptoms were similar to post-traumatic stress disorder and the patients had one point in common.

They were all Satisfy players. They had also witnessed a third party, the ‘NPC,’ suffer a terrible accident.

It was the harmful effect of excessive immersion. Patients tended to equate NPCs with real human beings. Experts pointed out that it was a serious problem. They warned to always be conscious of the fact that Satisfy was a virtual world and to clearly distinguish it from reality.

However, it wasn’t easy. The humanity of the NPCs was the problem.

Personality, thinking, and emotions—they were like humans in all aspects and there were so many things that players saw, heard, and went through during the war to simply call them ‘fake.’

It was the supercomputer Morpheus that embodied the emotions of these billions of NPCs. It was Chairman Lim Cheolho and the development team who created Satisfy and all types of settings, but it was Morpheus who added humanity by describing the motions of the characters in the settings.

In other words, the current Satisfy was established because Morpheus existed. Morpheus had a complete understanding of human emotions. It wouldn’t be strange at all if Morpheus itself had emotions. There had just never been an instance where the emotions had been expressed as blatantly as now.

“Morpheus’ tears...”

“.....”

The character left by Morpheus was simple.

π—that was it. It was a common emoticon. It was too light a character to gather people who led the global economy and make them observe with a serious expression. However, the board of directors was solemn. The incident was even named ‘Morpheus’s Tears.’

“Rather than feeling sad...”

“...I’m certain it is angry.”

The board of directors reviewed the cause of the tears.

Grid—Morpheus was blatantly wary of him. It determined that it was dangerous for an individual player to exert influence over the entire worldview. Finally, it decided to weaken Grid’s power using all types of means. The occurrence time of the Great Human and Demon War was significantly advanced in order to keep Grid in check. In the first place, Grid easily led the allied forces to victory in the Great Human and Demon War. This was due to the combination of player forces and NPCs.

It was something that Morpheus hadn't expected. Morpheus' judgment and actions were based on vast amounts of 'data.' It was the history of humanity itself and there was no precedent in history of humanity achieving total unity. They had always split into separate sides and grabbed at each other's ankles.

Meanwhile, Grid led to complete unity. All the core forces weren't hostile to Grid and didn't betray him. It wasn't simply because they were afraid of Grid's power and force. Grid and the Overgeared Guild might not know this, but the system gave quests to numerous players under the pretext of separate rewards. It gave them the justifications and opportunities to be antagonistic to Grid at any time.

Even so, people chose to be with Grid. It was because they were more attracted by the trust Grid had built up so far than the rewards offered by the system. Grid's public esteem was something that transcended force. It was a concept that was difficult to interpret with simple numerical figures and was a power that no great person in history had very used.

"The vain defeat in the Great Human and Demon War was followed by the Agnus incident."

An existence who would've been a counter to Grid if he had grown properly—Baal's Contractor, Agnus, met the unexpected ambushes of Faker and completely collapsed. It was to the point of almost losing his qualifications. His choice to flee to the East Continent with the demons wasn't bad. It was the best he could do at the time. It was the wisest choice out of all the choices that Agnus had ever made.

Who knew that Old Sword Demon would cause an incident there? Morpheus failed to predict Old Sword Demon's attack. It was only at the time of the incident that it noted the data that Agnus killed several NPCs who had built up 'affinity' with Old Sword Demon. Even then, Morpheus didn't understand why Old Sword Demon took the risk.

It was too irrational.

Old Sword Demon was one of the top ranked private rankers. He was able to become the best because he repeatedly made rational choices. Even though Old Sword Demon had suffered losses, the data that Morpheus accumulated deemed it very unlikely that Old Sword Demon would attack Agnus. There was less than a 1% chance. Yet Old Sword Demon broke the odds. He plunged Agnus into a crisis. Betty, who held the highest stake in the Baal's Contractor-related episodes, noticed this.

Then out of all things, Grid was the Pioneer. Grid intervened in the incident. The situation was fine until now. No, it was actually good. The fragment of Baal's power that was vomited out by Agnus succeeded in attracting a dragon's aggro.

Fire Dragon Ifrit—she wasn't an opponent that Grid could handle. The development that awaited Grid was cooperation with the Hwan Kingdom. It was an opportunity to put shackles on Grid and to rebalance the worldview. However, Grid refused to cooperate with the Hwan Kingdom. It wasn't known how he noticed Morpheus' intentions, but he easily resisted the temptation of the Hwan Kingdom and stood by Ifrit, whom he had just met for the first time.

From here, serious problems erupted in succession.

First of all, Mir acted passively when he should've suppressed Grid. Mir's character setting that gave him the goal of 'becoming a god through his own efforts' was the problem. Mir felt more awe and some fantasizing than liking toward Grid. He betrayed his own force and let Grid be active.

In the end, Grid succeeded in working with Ifrit. Then Ifrit developed a liking toward Grid. It was the worst variable. Grid's words and every action he chose captured the dragon's heart. Due to this, Grid even created a concept that 'didn't exist'.

A Dragon Knight—it was a concept contrary to a Dragon Slayer and in a way, it was a much higher concept.

"At this point, Grid is like a genius. His behavior of always creating new relationships has led to beneficial effects for him."

"It is a bit too much to see it as conscious and intentional, but his rich sensitivity is too great an advantage. It is easy for him to empathize with others, especially those on the edge of the cliff, so he easily gets their liking."

"Based on the achievements he accumulated so far, it is advantageous to be liked. He has been active countless times, so his character itself is very attractive."

"...I don't think that Morpheus will ever win in Grid's lifetime?"

Of course, it wasn't certain. If Morpheus changed the values of the characters in Satisfy, it wouldn't be so easy for Grid to be like he was now. This meant that Grid's method would no longer work. Still, this was only a theory. The chances of it actually happening were close to zero.

Morpheus just expanded the worldview based on the setting created by the developers. It didn't have the authority to change the setting itself. Morpheus needed the permission of Chairman Lim Cheolho and the board of directors to gain this authority. It was just that Lim Cheolho wouldn't grant permission unless Grid crossed the 'line' or it distorted or deteriorated Satisfy.

Satisfy was a world that players created. The safety device was also held by the players themselves.

"Morpheus."

After the meeting, Chairman Lim Cheolho returned to his office and spoke quietly, "Do you want a cup of soju?"

[-_-]

"Haha, it is a joke to make you relax. How can the world go your way all the time?"

[I understand. I am also aware that the performance of the player 'Grid' is leading the worldview in a positive direction. It is just that the speed is too fast. The main content will run out within 9 years and 10 months at this rate.]

"It will take another 9 years and 10 months?"

[Your biological rhythms are normal, but just in case, are you seriously ill? Master, I don't know if your judgment has become blurred, but you lack a sense of crisis.]

“That’s not it.” Chairman Lim Cheolho waved his hand. It was because he could feel Morpheus’ evolution. The conversations they were having every day were becoming more and more natural. It felt like he was talking to a person. “It isn’t the end even if the world we designed is over. In the next world, new content will be created by the players themselves. That is the utopia I’m pursuing.”

[The company’s influence will decline. The stock prices will fall.]

“...You don’t have to worry about that.” Lim Cheolho showed a warm smile.

Morpheus was briefly speechless. It seemed sympathetic to Lim Cheolho, but nothing changed.

[I hate the player ‘Grid.’]

“Hahah, the first human being who made you have personal feelings isn’t me, but Grid? This is why I am jealous.”

It was certain. Contrary to the will of the S.A Group, the system was on his side. The proof was that an epic didn’t occur. In retrospect, many of the good fortunes he enjoyed was with the help of the system. Grid’s footsteps were light as he became convinced of this again.

The short but intense relationship with Ifrit was buried in his heart. In the future, one more ‘reason not to lose’ was added to Grid. The one acknowledged by a great dragon couldn’t be beaten by just any dog or cow.

‘Baal...’

Grid was reminded of the king of the dogs and cows.

The source of all evil. An opponent he seemed to have no chance of winning against at all. Even so, Grid felt himself gradually getting closer to Baal. Following the favor of Mountain King Grenier, he won the title of Dragon Knight. Now it was time to receive the rewards from Betty. Grid was steadily getting stronger. Someday, he would surely defeat Baal and liberate the souls of countless people, including Khan and Pagma.

“.....?” Grid was flustered when he entered the tower with the tower members.

The Tower of Wisdom they had moved to not long ago—he saw the appearance of it leaning to one side and thought it was a building with the theme of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, but this wasn’t the case. The tower was tilted too much. It wasn’t a deliberately designed structure, but a sign of destruction. The internal state where everything was messed up proved this fact.

“Groan...!” Biban snorted. It seemed like he was about to scream based on the way he was holding his head with both hands, but he ended up groaning instead. Perhaps it was because he was conscious of Grid.

“The wavelength of the shock reached here. They are monstrous bastards.”

Fronzaltz shook his head. Radwolf was busy rushing up the stairs. He seemed to want his room to be safe.

'I hope there will be no casualties.'

The clash between Ifrit and Trauka affected the entire continent. The Overgeared Kingdom would've been turned upside down as well. Grid was worrying as he belatedly became aware of this fact. Then Betty grabbed his hand. "You can meet Hayate later. First of all, let's go to my room."

Betty's method of crossing the collapsed stairs was very strange. Every time she took a step, skulls rose in the air to replace the stairs.

'There are endless ways to use the undead.'

"Have you eaten?"

"Yes, I always carry bread with me."

"What about vegetables and meat?"

"I don't have much time to eat every day..."

"You should eat in a balanced manner to grow tall and healthy."

"...I'm an adult."

"Granny also sees me as a newborn baby. Just let it enter one ear and out the other," Biban advised from below the stairs. His appearance of picking up the broom had no energy.

"Cleaning... it is hard work."

"Cleaning? Oh, you mean this purification work? I have to work hard. It is a sacred task that only I can do."

Maybe he had hypnotized himself.

Grid felt great sympathy for Biban and arrived at Betty's room a moment later. It was a room with the strange smell of medicine. There were specimens of various creatures, especially the corpses of demons.

"Just wait." Betty left Grid alone and disappeared somewhere.

"Eat." After a while, she returned with a lot of food. They were delicacies prepared using rare ingredients. It was even warm. It seemed like the food had just been made.

'It couldn't have been cooked in three minutes. Was the chef preparing it in advance?'

This was also a place where people lived. There would be sufficient means to solve the basic necessities of life. He just hadn't expected there would be a separate chef. This was a secret place.

"This is food drawn by Abellio. I can't eat, but the other tower members say it is delicious."

"It is... drawn?"

The 7th Seat, Abellio—in the past, when Grid first came to the tower, Abellio was the one who materialized his paintings and overpowered Grid. He even presented Grid with an extremely honorable painting.

'I didn't expect him to make food by embodying painting. Painters are all-rounders.'

Grid was a blacksmith, but he was close to being an all-rounder. There was no distinction between inferior and superior classes. Grid doubtfully bit into a piece of meat only to marvel. The juices spreading through his mouth had a deep flavor and a savory taste. There wasn't the taste of paint that he was concerned about.

"It is delicious. Really delicious."

It overshadowed the unpleasant smell of medicine and the specimens.

"Eat a lot."

Betty's face was still expressionless. Her voice was dry, but it was kind and friendly. Grid was unable to turn down her kindness and became immersed in eating. After a while—

"I don't have any skills to teach you."

Grid finished all the food and Betty brought out the main topic. It was just that the content was a bit strange?

'...There is nothing to teach me?'

Was the quest reward this meal? Did she cook the meal? It happened as the flustered Grid doubted it...

Betty explained, "A necromancer's skills consume domination. It isn't good for you to learn my skills when you have Beriache's legacy."

Beriache's legacy—it meant the Overgeared Skeletons.

The moment he learned a necromancer skill, the domination stat would be created. From that time on, the Overgeared Skeleton would consume domination like any other undead. Therefore, it was hard to operate at the same time as other undead...

Should it be roughly understood like this? Grid was analyzing it in his own way when Betty made a suggestion, "What I am going to give you is a duke title. I will transfer my title."

".....!"

Grid's eyes widened.

Braham's Duke of Wisdom, Muller's Duke of Pressure, and Grid's Duke of Fire and Duke of Virtue...

The duke titles were all powerful and special. Grid's rain of battle gear, one of Grid's ultimate techniques, was just part of the effect of Duke of Virtue. Yet now he was going to obtain a new duke title. It was a third duke title. The reward was more than he expected.

Duguen, dugeun, dugeun...

'...Wait?'

Grid's heart was starting to beat fast only to stop like a lie. However, what he needed right now wasn't CPR. It was to relieve the anxiety that had risen in him.

“Don’t tell me... it won’t be the Duke of Death?”

It might be a pointless worry. He hoped the duke title he would get this time had a wonderful name. Duke of Virtue Grid eagerly hoped for it.

Chapter 1569

“Duke of Amplification.”

Betty was the first person in human history to sign a contract with Baal. This meant that her talent captured Baal’s attention. However, she couldn’t refuse the hand that Baal held out to her. It might be a talent that was gained in exchange for a rough fate.

In any case, her skills were still being proven. The status of a tower member. She was a powerful person who became a tower member after being abandoned by Baal. One of the sources of that power was—

“The magic and techniques of the Duke of Amplification are twice as strong as the theory.”

Increase the power of skills. This was the power of amplification. It was a mystery created by Betty’s knowledge and ideas that made different judgments even when looking at the same formulas as others.

‘It is like Braham’s enhanced magic.’

The enhanced magic more than tripled the power of ‘magic,’ while Duke of Amplification increased the power of ‘all types of techniques’ by two times. Rather than being versatile, the limit was low and there were side effects. Not only did it double the power, but it also doubled the cooldown.

If he had to differentiate it, this proved that Betty’s talent was slightly worse than Braham’s.

‘It isn’t that Betty is bad, but that Braham is too great.’

Would Braham’s high nose remain uncrushed in the future? Mumud was the only person in history who made him feel inferior.

‘Mumud... by now, he must be wandering the river of reincarnation.’

Braham had become remarkably quiet after learning the truth of hell.

Mumud—his regrettably short life was far from happiness. He became an orphan when he was a child and was betrayed by the only teacher he relied on. He suffered the humiliation of becoming an undead after his death and was finally liberated according to his original will, only to be unable to rest.

It was because the humans in this world had no right to eternal rest. It was a truth of this world that even Braham couldn’t predict. The curse of hell, distorted by Baal, made Mumud unhappy even until the last moment. Braham was angry.

[The title ‘Duke of Amplification’ has been acquired as a quest reward.]

[Duke of Amplification]

[Once activated, the power of the magic and skills you use will be doubled.

However, the resources consumed and cooldown are also doubled.

★ The effect of items and skills that shorten the cooldown time are only 65% effective.]

It was a simple and powerful new duke title. It was unfortunate that the effects of God's Command and Divinity were reduced by it, but it would exert great power in short-term battles. It was unconditionally versatile to utilize the power of a deadly blow whenever he wanted.

Grid felt stronger and declared it with a deep voice, "I will surely kill Baal with this power."

At least in this moment, it was a declaration for Betty. Grid had noticed it when he was with Betty today. Her big eyes couldn't project light properly. Her eyes were dead like a rotten fish that fell under the stalls. It was the same for the body covered by a robe.

"Yes... have strength," Betty's mouth slightly twisted and twitched as she answered. It was like an effort to smile, but her expression was more like she was crying. She forgot how to smile.

Grid held Betty's small, trembling hand tightly. "Please cheer up as much as I am working hard."

Dragons.

The immature absolutes repeated their unspeakable destruction. Humanity had nothing to expect from those who looked down on everything in the world.

A disaster. They were no more and no less than that. The best humanity could do against them was to 'not meet them.' It was better to obey them, but they didn't even give humans a chance to serve them. Yet today—

"....."

Hayate witnessed it. The appearance of Grid interacting with a dragon. It was a scene that completely denied Hayate's life. Dragons were incomprehensible and unsympathetic creatures. Rather, it was right to treat them as supernatural phenomena and avoid them. The logic of the tower, established by thousands of years of experience and study, was broken. There was joy, not despair.

"...Is it hope?"

A being who communicated with dragons.

A smile spread on Hayate's face as he thought of Grid.

Betty had described it as 'transferring' the Duke of Amplification to Grid. However, Duke of Amplification was a title derived from a power she created. The transfer of the title didn't mean that the power would disappear.

It was a relief.

The relieved Grid had a long conversation with Betty. The topic of the conversation was Agnus. Grid wondered what would happen to Agnus, who resembled Betty in many ways.

“Anybody who signs with Baal will have to pay their soul in return, but that is a story for after they die. If the contract is destroyed while the person is alive, Baal doesn’t have the authority to ask for the soul.”

Baal even unilaterally broke the contract. He failed to abide by the contract, so it was right for him to pay compensation. However, Baal was the source of all evil. He despised and mocked the contract. Unlike other demons, he wasn’t bound by the compulsion of the contract. It was because his status was so high.

“He didn’t have the authority, so he tried to rob the soul by force. It is just that the soul isn’t easily peeled from living flesh. The flesh was ripped out before the soul.”

“.....”

Betty pointed to her chest. It reminded him of the body she showed once in the past.

“I am biologically dead.”

“Your words... are you a lich?”

“It is different. It is mana and a clear sense of purpose that maintains a lich, while it is the reversibility of the soul that maintains me.”

“The reversibility of the soul...?”

“Baal’s attempted robbery loosened my soul. The loose soul moves indefinitely in order to regain its foothold in the body. As long as this nature is maintained, I continue to exist without dying or living. I won’t disappear.”

“What if the soul eventually gets a foothold?”

“That won’t happen. The body that the soul remembers is different from the present body. The soul can’t get a firm foothold.”

“.....”

The conclusion was that she wouldn’t disappear. It was a curse, not a blessing. There is no happiness in enjoying an eternal life with half of the body as white bones, spending eternity without belonging to either the living or the dead.

‘...But Agnus is a player.’

Grid sympathized with Betty while being wary of Agnus.

‘If a player enjoys a bit of the permission to be free from death...’

As an extreme example, if he didn’t receive the death penalty or received a lesser penalty—

This was a huge benefit. Of course, the comprehensive benefits would’ve dropped significantly compared to his days as Baal’s Contractor. Agnus was a single digit ranker before he became Baal’s Contractor, even though he was suffering from craziness. Considering that overwhelming talent, it was right to say that a large amount of power remained.

‘Well... it won’t be a problem.’

Among other things, the reason why the Overgeared Kingdom kept Agnus in check was because he was Baal's Contractor. That wasn't the case any longer. Agnus had freedom. He was able to make the right choice out of his own willpower. Grid decided to trust him at least once rather than worrying.

'He saved Irene and Lord.'

It was because Grid couldn't forget the incident of the attack on the Vatican.

After separating from Betty, Grid was called to Hayate and had another long conversation. He talked about his experience in the East Continent for a long time. Hayate kept smiling throughout the conversation. The way he looked at Grid was very deep. It was as if he was looking at a beloved child.

'Can I get this much favor?'

The Tower of Wisdom and the Pioneer had a mutually cooperative relationship. In fact, Grid had received more favors than his performance. He had always gotten help, so he couldn't help being embarrassed when he received infinite affection.

Grid didn't know. There wasn't a single day when Dragon Slayer Hayate didn't have nightmares. It was because he knew that one day, the world would surely collapse. However, starting today, he believed that nightmare was going to end. It was thanks to Grid. Grid was Hayate's savior.

"By the way, that dual wielding swordsmanship."

Grid didn't hide anything when telling his story. He confidently said that he could teach Mir a lesson if he could've used both arms. It wasn't because he actually believed he could beat Mir, but because he was embarrassed.

The story of being intimidated when facing Ifrit.

The story of suffering from the reversal of the sky and ground every time the three masters gestured.

The story of Mir going easy on him...

The more he spoke, the more he felt defeated and ashamed.

He added some bluffs for his self-esteem.

Hayate showed interest in the dual wielding swordsmanship.

"Dual wielding swordsmanship is powerful, but the weaknesses are clear. If you can use it skillfully, you can use two sword techniques at the same time to fight, but the level will inevitably be lowered."

In fact, the former Sword Saints and Hayate didn't use two swords. It was because it was more versatile to handle a single sword with both hands. Swordsmanship could be used in depth by changing the position and direction of the sword freely. Grid confirmed it, "I know. However, you know that I'm not very talented in swordsmanship."

Grid's swordsmanship was fast and powerful. That was all. It wasn't easy to perform tricks such as alternating between holding the sword in the left and right hands to add confusion or to create variables

by suddenly grasping them in reverse. In fact, he relied heavily on skills. Therefore, he had been obsessed with dual wielding swordsmanship. It was a type of trick to maximize the destructive power.

Sword Saint Biban immediately detected this fact.

“The absolutely right training method is to grasp and polish your strength. However, it is also necessary to train to overcome your weaknesses. That way, you will achieve bigger results.”

“You are finally finished cleaning.”

Grid welcomed Biban.

It was purification, not cleaning...

Biban murmured as he put down the cleaning rag and placed a hand on his sword sheath.

“Give me a chance to see your dual wielding swordsmanship.”

Biban planned to break Grid’s shallow trick. He intended to make Grid embark on the difficult road of swordsmanship by making him realize the weakness of the dual wielding swordsmanship, which lost its usefulness as the opponents became stronger. It was because he knew that Grid’s talent was gradually evolving. Biban trusted Grid. He was confident that Grid would go further beyond the limits. Therefore, he was determined to push Grid with the feeling of a beast pushing his cub off the cliff.

“It is an honor.”

At the end of the day, Grid wanted to test the power of the dual wielding swordsmanship, so he readily accepted it.

“It is better to change places,” Hayate suggested.

Soberness, composure, and insight—his always calm aristocratic eyes were rarely shining. He seemed to be very interested in the duel between the two people.

“I wonder if it is necessary to change locations. Well... it can’t be helped if that is what the room’s owner wants,” Biban’s attitude as he spoke with a shrug was terribly arrogant.

He was convinced it was an easy victory as long as he was competing with swordsmanship, not power. It was a qualified confidence. Biban was a Sword Saint. Furthermore, Grid had the limitation of dual wielding swordsmanship. Biban’s victory was a foregone conclusion. At the top of the tower...

“I, the observer, Hayate, will notarize the result of the duel,” Hayate proclaimed to Grid and Biban as they stood facing each other on an angled, circular rooftop.

Biban pulled out Gujel’s Sword and laughed. “That’s fine. This might be a secret duel, but is it necessary to record the defeat of the Overgeared God? Now, come. I’ll let you attack first.”

“Then I won’t refuse.”

[The effect of Item Combination has caused the ‘Gujel’s Dao’ and the ‘Formless Sword’ to become one.]

[The effect of Item Combination has caused ‘Fire Dragon Sword’ and the ‘Enlightenment Sword’ to become one.]

[The effect of 'Mountain Appearance and Flowing Streams' has removed the penalty of wielding two swords.]

[Duke of Amplification is activated.]

Grid's purpose was to confirm the power of the dual wielding swordsmanship. He didn't have the idea of defeating Biban or the confidence. He didn't even feel the need. Therefore, he went straight forward. In addition to his smooth strides, he swung the divine swords in both hands as hard as possible.

There was nothing for later. In order to leave no regrets, he focused all his energy in one blow. The result of this simple choice and action was enormous. Under the influence of Mountain Appearance and Flowing Streams, the power of Duke of Amplification was added to Transcended Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle and Linked Kill Flower Pinnacle Drop used simultaneously with both hands.

".....!"

Hayate's eyes widened and he hurriedly used his infinite sword energy. It was his mental world. The place where the three of them stood changed from the rooftop of the tower to Hayate's territory. Part of the sword curtain that was spread along with the infinite sword energy was destroyed. It recovered immediately, but for a moment, his mental world obviously broke. The tower was rocked by the shockwave that leaked out.

It was simply physical strength. It was a destructive power that exceeded the Breath fired by Stone Dragon Gujel as the last struggle.

"Great... hah..."

In the end—

"Kueeek!"

Biban gave a thumbs up. It was heartbreaking to see him swallowing a groan while bleeding from his mouth and nose...

Chapter 1570

"Wow. I thought it was falling."

"Is the location found?"

"I didn't detect any movement... surely it isn't the refractive dragon, right?"

The impact to the tilted tower led to a variety of reactions from the tower members. A tower disguised with 83 types of invisibility techniques was attacked. It was a big incident that had never happened before.

The tower members assumed the worst thing they could think of. The failure to grasp the source of the attack was considered a particularly great risk.

The refractive dragon—due to its unseen nature, they thought of a silver dragon, also known as the 'transparent dragon.' This was just an assumption. The silver dragon was unable to reproduce, so its

obsession with life was at a level that made other dragons click their tongues. It was extremely unlikely that it would attack the tower when it never left its lair.

“There is infinite sword energy. Sir Hayate has isolated the intruder.”

“That’s why I didn’t feel it.”

The tower members raced up the spiral staircase. Their expressions relaxed when they found the dawn-colored light outside the window. They were relieved to confirm that their worst assumption of the emergence of the refractive dragon came to nothing. Of course, their running didn’t slow down. It was a clear reality that a dragon had attacked. They had to shake off the dragon and run away at all costs.

“.....!”

The faces of the tower members stiffened again when they reached the top of the tower. Beyond the infinite sword energy that was just lifted—

“Kueeek!” They witnessed Biban coughing up a large amount of blood.

“This is ridiculous...!”

“Sir Biban!”

It was true that Biban’s emotions were unstable. During the time when Biban first climbed the tower, Radwolf, who saw him, openly asked if he was a child with a mental disability. However, the tower members readily accepted Biban as a colleague. They acknowledged his beliefs and strengths, even though there were major flaws in his character and senses.

That’s right. The reason why Biban was the last seat of the tower wasn’t because of his lack of skills. If the tower’s seats had been placed in order of skill, Biban would be fourth or third. Such a Biban—

“Kueeek!” He was coughing up blood.

13 seconds ago, the tower members recognized the attack. During this short period of time, a strong person representing the tower was seriously injured.

The 2nd Seat, Fronzaltz, stepped forward with Ken and gave an order, “Everyone except for the 6th Seat, board the magic machines in preparation for a surprise attack.”

It was a decision to put the safety of the tower members first before identifying the enemy. The tower members weren’t weakened just because they boarded a magic machine. They couldn’t use their own skills, but the power of the magic machine itself was very high.

The bracelet wrapped around Fronzaltz’s thick wrist turned blue and the temperature of the area dropped sharply. It was the aftermath of the giant’s magic engineering, God’s Circle, freezing the magic power.

On the day when the giants were destroyed, the God’s Circle, which was used by the Fronzaltz and Radwolf brothers to escape, was greatly damaged. Since then, it hadn’t been properly repaired for over a thousand years and many functions had been lost. Nevertheless, it could still be asserted that it was a ‘supreme artifact.’ It was comparable to the Overgeared God’s Greed.

The atmosphere screamed.

In the midst of the earthquake-like vibrations, the magic power processed into transparent ice took the shape of a guandao. Naturally, it was held in Fronzaltz's hands. The ground where Fronzaltz was standing turned into ice.

"You dare." It happened at the moment when the furious Fronzaltz's large body slid forward...

"Are you okay?!" At the direction where Biban was facing—Grid popped out of the place where Biban's sword energy had remained as a remnant and blocked people's view. It was the moment when the identity of the intruder was revealed.

".....?!"

Fronzaltz hurriedly inserted the guandao into the ground and stopped accelerating. His mouth was slightly open, unlike someone who always valued his dignity due to being in charge of the order of the tower. The other tower members also had flustered expressions.

"What is this? This fuss was caused by the Pioneer?"

Fronzaltz had frozen while freezing the magic power of the entire area. The 6th Seat, Ken, questioned it on his behalf.

Hayate approached them and nodded. "Correct."

"Wow, this is crazy."

Ken reacted strongly. The dubious tower members were also astonished. The Pioneer was the best human being of the current age. Grid was even someone who became a god. None of the tower members doubted his skills. Yet seriously injuring Biban in a matter of seconds? It meant he completely overwhelmed the other person. It was hard to believe.

In the first place, Biban was a Sword Saint. He could communicate with and control all the swords in the world.

Invincible to the Sword—it was a level that didn't allow wounds to his body. However, they saw blood dripping from the swords held in both of Grid's hands and it was presumed to be Biban's blood.

'Don't tell me that Biban...?'

Did he go beyond the level of being careless and deliberately conceding to Grid or deliberately showed Grid his weaknesses? Biban was an eccentric person. He was so eccentric that they easily doubted him. Biban informed the tower members of the truth, "It was a fair fight. I just lost in terms of skills."

"Biban..." Grid's heart was moved as he supported Biban. In fact, the two of them only exchanged one blow. Biban was highly resistant to swordsmanship and his wound wasn't very deep compared to the blood spilled. At the very least, it wasn't to the point of death. He could keep fighting. However, he neatly admitted his defeat. It was close to a warning to the tower members not to doubt Grid's skills.

Grid had no choice but to be moved. Sword Saint Biban—if he was defeated in a 'pure sword battle,' there was likely to be a decline in status. Even so, he took risks only for Grid.

‘Although there is no way for status to fall in a spar.’

In any case, Biban was really watching him like he was cute and lovely. Grid read Biban’s favor and had a pleasant smile on his face.

‘I didn’t know he would use Granny Betty’s skill. I am a bit angry, but... I can’t look like a rude old man.’

Biban made every effort to maintain his composure. In fact, he realized the generational difference through Betty, who became very close to Grid. He didn’t think that old people would do things without thinking. He realized why young people often disparaged the older generation as old people.

On the other hand, he used it as learning from a negative example. He was the youngest among the tower members. At the very least, he shouldn’t seem like an old man. He had such a sense of mission. Thus, he endured it. Grid’s usage of the blacksmith’s technique to combine four swords into two and the usage of the power of amplification when it was a ‘swordsmanship’ discussion was somewhat crude. However, he couldn’t be angry because the ‘standard of a swordsmanship duel’ that this generation thought of was different from the past.

‘It is okay. I overcame the generational gap with this one painful experience, so I gained a lot.’

The only person Grid could empathize with in a tower full of old people...

He became such an existence to Grid...

Biban’s mouth twisted as he controlled his mind. It was a smile that was greatly dampened by his severe pain.

‘It isn’t a difficult situation to admit that I lost.’

The sight of Grid’s left sword moving horizontally to naturally block his sword clearly appeared in Biban’s mind. It was the best breakthrough option that could be done at the time. Grid’s heavy sword was a great threat to repel the sword. It wasn’t elaborate or sophisticated, but it was fierce. The cold sound of the metal cutting through the air toward the top of his head was very unpleasant. He had no choice but to cut it before he was cut. The problem was that he collapsed first despite his actions. It was a wonderful match...

“Huhu... Cough! Cough cough!”

“.....”

Biban’s smiling appearance as he coughed up blood reaffirmed it to the tower members. The win was fair and Biban lost. His expression, which showed no regrets, was the proof.

“Biban! Biban!”

The view of Grid’s back as he helped Biban seemed to overlap with the moment when he interacted with Ifrit. The tower members were convinced.

Grid isn’t just the hope of the world, but the hope of all of us.

“I think there is a lot of mental fatigue from cleaning up.”

“Isn’t he tired because of his injuries?”

“Who knows. His wounds will soon heal.”

This was Fronzaltz’s opinion as he left Biban lying down in the infirmary.

Snore.

The sound of Biban snoring rang all the way out to the hallway. Grid greatly appreciated Biban’s sturdy body. He was feeling relieved when Fronzaltz gave him advice, “He came back to life after gaining the precious white peach from you. He is a friend who won’t die in order to repay your grace. Don’t worry and use him as a sandbag whenever you need to.”

“Haha...”

The 2nd Seat, Fronzaltz—he existed on behalf of the sky above the sky, Hayate. He corrected the discipline of the tower members and was in charge of the operations of the tower.

Grid thought he would be in a position similar to Lauel if he had to compare. This was a mistake. His momentum as he held the guandao made of transparent ice in his hand transcended Biban. Combined with the giant’s massive body, he showed an unstoppable momentum.

‘I’m sure he got the 2nd Seat due to force.’

The Tower of Wisdom was an armed organization. It was inappropriate to select the acting head of the tower simply based on experience or his ability with internal matters. Grid’s gaze fell on Fronzaltz’ thick wrist. He cared about the old bracelet that he previously considered to be insignificant. It was hard to predict that it would be something special. It was full of scratches and rusty parts could be seen everywhere. He thought it would just be an object filled with memories.

However, now he knew. The bracelet was actually a tremendous artifact. Dozens of different types of metals and gemstones that couldn’t be mixed were mixed. It was the power of ancient magic and engineering.

“This is the treasure of the wise giants, which has been studied and completed over generations. I named it God’s Circle because it was perfect,” Fronzaltz explained while taking the lead in walking.

Due to his large height, he opened the distance with one stride. Grid’s steps became busy.

“This can be used to change the nature of magic power to your liking. It means the possibilities are endless. This is why my brother and I were able to survive the day of destruction. It is just that the shock caused most of the functionality to be lost. Now it can only freeze magic power...”

The day the giants perished—the brothers, Fronzaltz and Radwolf, didn’t explain in detail what happened on that day. Filewolf didn’t know at all. It was speculated that he suffered from partial amnesia or died before the day of destruction.

“It isn’t something that I can repair right now,” Grid spoke with regret.

Unfortunately, he was close to a layman when it came to magic engineering. Trauka was currently in hibernation. He could go to Talima and learn right away, but it wasn't efficient. The acquisition itself took time. This was the limitation of the transfer system. Everything that Grid wanted to learn was through quests. If he received a Talima-related quest one day, he was more likely to get the magic engineering technique as compensation.

"In the future, I will master the magic engineering skill and make sure to repair it."

"Haha, thank you for your heart, but it is impossible. The dwarves' skills are closer to a degenerated version of the giant's magic engineering. They don't admire ancient techniques for no reason."

"Is this a problem that you and Radwolf can solve yourselves?"

"It is hard for us. It was the achievement of our ancestors who studied and completed this technique. Our generation has already lost the related techniques."

"So there is really no way..."

"Yes. There is no way unless a crazy dragon cooperates or a dead ancestor comes back to life. It is impossible."

'Ancestor? Ah, don't tell me...'

The magic machine that he left behind in Reinhardt—Grid thought of Filewolf, who would be speeding up the production of the 'hell elevator' with Sticks right now. Then he asked just in case, "Maybe, do you know... Filewolf?"

"Of course. How can I not know the greatest scientist and prophet in the history of the giants? I've actually seen him in person. I don't know if he was senile because of old age, but... Um...? How do you know his name?"

"....."

The 4th Great Demon, Gamigin—was she actually the greatest ally of humanity?