

Overgeared 781

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The Overgeared Kingdom started as an agricultural kingdom. Thanks to the agriculture developed by Piaro, the kingdom's finances were stabilized and the foundations of commerce could be established. The reason why Grid was able to train blacksmiths with Khan and to build a smithy complex was thanks to the money earned from agriculture.

"So much?"

Grid felt reluctant when he saw the mountain of wheat and potatoes transported from Bairan. The wheat and rainbow potatoes had become special products of the Overgeared Kingdom and were the most important export items for the nation's economy. He didn't want to give 100 tons to the empire.

"Why do we have to give an offering in the first place? We aren't even a tributary of the empire."

Lauel explained to the grim Grid. "It isn't an offering, it's a gift. Your Majesty asked to visit the empire first and the empire accepted the request. Isn't it basic courtesy to give a small gift in return for that?"

It was a meeting between the leaders of both kingdoms. It was a notable official event for the entire continent. The empire would entertain Grid for their own sake, but Grid and the Overgeared Kingdom's image would be tarnished if they came with empty hands.

"Don't think of it as a loss. The empire has prepared many events for Your Highness. Maybe they have even prepared small gifts. Simply with physical value, they will spend more money than us. It won't be a loss. And there is one more thing you can expect..."

Kukukuk. A demon like laugh emerged from Lauel.

"It's the reactions of the empire as they taste our wheat and potatoes. It might be completely to their tastes and they'll import large amounts."

The wheat grown by a legendary farmer was an improved species. The quality was excellent compared to the wheat of any kingdom. Hadn't rumors spread that the bread and noodles of the Overgeared Kingdom were delicious? The empire couldn't be immune to the taste. It was highly likely that trade with the empire, which had been firmly closed, would be opened thanks to this opportunity.

"Is this why you prepared agricultural products as gifts?"

Grid was forced to admire Lauel's extraordinary head to pursue profit no matter the circumstances. He always felt it, but Lauel was truly a great blessing to Grid and the Overgeared Kingdom.

"This was Administrator Rabbit's idea, not mine. I can't match him when it comes to making money."

It was Rabbit who paid only 73 silver to Piaro when he was still a great swordsman. From the time he was recruited to now, Rabbit had been properly managing the finances of the kingdom. Without Rabbit, the growth rate of the Overgeared Kingdom would be two or three times slower than it was now.

Grid was the one who recruited Rabbit as the administrator.

"It's amazing when thinking about it now. Wasn't Your Majesty still a fool when you met Rabbit? How did Your Majesty manage to select and recruit talented people like Sir Rabbit? Are you a natural talent?"

"..."

At the very least, he wanted to be true to the person he was serving. This was Lauel's true heart. After several incidents, Lauel always tried to be honest with Grid. Sometimes his words were too much. Grid occasionally felt angry, but his gratefulness was bigger. Lauel's honesty gave Grid many opportunities to reflect on himself.

"The ability to select and recruit talents..."

Grid was reminded of all the people he recruited, including Khan, Piaro, Asmophel, and Sticks. It was amazing when thinking about it now. Weren't they all half-dead when they first met Grid? Grid had made a positive connection with them. Of course, the Character Observation skill attached to the Lord's Sword helped, but now Grid started to realize it. It wasn't easy for anyone to unconditionally make a person their own just by looking at the stats.

'Can I take pride in it? Khan. For me who captivated your heart.'

"Your Majesty?"

"Ah."

Grid woke up from his thoughts and wiped his eyes. He had shed tears without knowing.

Lauel saw his sad expression and asked carefully, "Khan's funeral... You really don't want a state funeral?"

Grid nodded. "Yes. This isn't the place where his soul should be buried."

Three days before he was scheduled to visit the empire. He headed somewhere else before that.

Winston. Khan's home.

The concept of a corpse in Satisfy was small. Both players and NPCs turned to grey and dispersed into ash when they died. Bodies weren't seen unless they were in the middle of a specific quest or they were a necromancer. Grid was extremely grumpy due to this fact. He felt sorrow at not being able to take care of his precious person's remains.

But Grid was reminded of something. Satisfy had the concept of a soul. Braham's soul, Iyarugt's soul, and the souls of Khan's ancestors and son witnessed at the cemetery proved this fact. Grid believed it. Right now, Khan's soul was by his side. He thought about attaching Khan's soul to an item using the 'Granting an Ego' skill he obtained from the Behen Archipelago.

'I can't cause Khan suffering because of my greed.'

Grid saw it. The sorrows of the former legends after they were resurrected as death knights by Pagma. They wanted rest. Grid couldn't tie Khan's soul to him.

“Khan.”

A small cemetery outside Winston. Grid stood alone where Khan’s son, his wife, and his ancestors were buried. He kept wiping at the falling tears and took an item out of his inventory. It was a memorial stone he made in conjunction with the sculptors of the Overgeared Kingdom. It was the memorial stone where Khan’s soul would stay.

“Please stay in heaven. You should only occasionally come down to the ground to play. I’ll take good care of the cemetery. Ruby and Lord will come to visit often. The children...”

Grid placed the memorial stone in the center of the cemetery and couldn’t resist anymore. He burst out sobbing.

After a while.

In the remote cemetery where no one was present, Grid fought with his grief alone.

Thank you.

Thank you.

A familiar voice haunted his ears.

Overgeared King Grid. He received the legendary Pagma’s abilities and was the hero of the former Eternal Kingdom. He beat the 32nd great demon, Belial, with his capable subordinates. Later, he overthrew the Eternal Kingdom, built the Overgeared Kingdom, and contributed greatly to the establishment of Valhalla.

"He cleaned up the Behen Archipelago and restored the Hall of Fame?"

"He even has a statue built there."

"Yohohoho... I feel like he’s a new man of this era."

"It’s safe to say he has completely stepped out of the shadows of the past."

"Yohoho...he also has a deep relationship with the pope of the Rebecca Church?"

"Yes. He also seems to have interactions with Sword Saint Kraugel."

"Yoho...that friend knows how to use his abilities well."

"I think so as well. Grid uses Pagma’s techniques as bait to expand his network."

"Even Braham was involved with him?"

The Tower of Eternity. It was a group that studied magic under the aegis of the empire and violated numerous taboos in the name of developing magic.

"Yohoho, I want to see him soon."

The master of the magic tower, Goldhit. One of the 10 great magicians on the continent, she was a great power compared to Ashur. They were on completely different dimensions since birth. She was the fourth disciple of the legendary great magician Braham.

“Uwaaaack!”

The capital of the Saharan Empire, Titan. On the way back from hunting, a necromancer from Immortal stopped by a grocery store and screamed. It was because a knife and axe pierced his body the moment he exited the store.

"Stop it now!"

The soldiers on patrol ran when they heard the fuss, but it was already too late.

“This is one member!”

The necromancer died and the hunters ran away smiling. They didn’t care about the penalty for killing someone in a city. Why? The penalty was nothing compared to the reward they would gain.

"Did you film it properly?"

“Of course! One of Grid’s items has been secured!”

“Yes! Puhahahat!”

The group of people laughed as they were chased by the guards. The players who saw them were impressed.

‘I’m envious!’

They needed to quickly find Immortal! The eyes of the players lit up as they roamed all over the place. Once they saw a necromancer, they tracked them, monitored them and figured out their identity. Some impatient people killed just because the other person was a necromancer. It was a hellish time for Immortal.

“Dammit!”

Kwang!

A village located in a remote part of the empress’ palace. The 347 members of Immortal were raging. They were nervous about not being able to step out of the palace due to Grid. At a time when they should be steadily hunting and gaining items, they had to hide like rats?

“That damn Veradin. He pretended to be smart, but fell completely.”

"Let’s turn in Veradin’s group. All of us don’t need to receive damage.”

"No matter how angry, is it okay to sell out our colleagues?"

"Then what should we do? Should we die together?"

The bonds of the Immortal members started to twist. Fear was deeply rooted in their hearts. It was fear of Grid who moved billions of players. They felt regret that they touched a sleeping lion who was now raining hell down on them. One of Immortal's executives, Bullet, tried to calm the guild members. "Let's wait and see. This atmosphere can't be maintained forever. Their interest will wilt once they can't find us."

"Umm..."

Hunters who couldn't find their game were bound to lose motivation. Immortal felt like they would be able to breathe if they hid like this for a while. At least until they heard the following news.

"G-Grid! Grid is going to visit the empire!!"

"What...?"

All of the Immortal members became deathly pale.

"He's the devil! The devil!"

He made them sinners just because he lost some blacksmith NPCs. Now he was going to the empire to hunt them directly? Wasn't he almost crazy at this point? The moment everyone was making a fuss.

"What is everyone afraid of? Isn't this something to be happy about?" Veradin appeared and said, "It's a chance to show our strength to Grid. Let's reverse the situation and hunt the man who came here for us."

Of course, they couldn't strike recklessly. According to the information obtained by Veradin, Grid would have an official schedule set by the empire. If the attack on Grid ruined the emperor's schedule, Immortal could be abandoned by the empire.

"We need to pick the right timing."

A mouse would bite back when cornered by a cat. Veradin felt that Grid should be pushed. At the same time, a group of merchants entered Empress Marie's palace.

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"Hello Muto. Thank you for answering the invitation."

"The number two of the Overgeared Kingdom called me? I had to come running."

The 3rd ranked merchant, Muto. He was shaken when he received an invitation from the Overgeared Kingdom. The first player to become a king. He thought that if he was able to trade with the Overgeared Kingdom, which was progressive due to modern ideas, he could make great deals.

"Muto has already exchanged with the empire for several years?"

"It has been exactly four years. I was fortunate to encounter Duke Guardian during a quest and I started to sell things to the empire through the duke."

"Four years ago...? Isn't it faster than Kir?"

"Haha, that's right. I pioneered the empire's market first."

The 1st ranked merchant Kir was a big guy who had several merchant rankers under him and ran a huge trading company. He used his enormous wealth to equip himself with military power and recently purchased a whole city. This could be a stepping stone to building a kingdom. There were already many people calling Kir a king.

Lauel felt disbelief.

"You pioneered the empire's market first, so why are you ranked lower than Kir?"

The merchant rankings were determined not just by level, but through the trading volume and number of trades. Muto pioneered the continent's largest market first, but was ranked lower than Kir. It frankly made him seem incompetent. Muto revealed the truth. "I was beaten by Kir's trick and lost several accounts. His political power is several times higher than me."

Muto was a type of merchant to do everything directly. He conducted lucrative business by investigating the market and gaining information ahead of others. It was why he took a risk and went to the East Continent. On the other hand, Kir was a master of slander. His specialty was taking away the businesses built by others. Muto had been hit several times.

"In the end, I'm not a vessel for the first rank. But isn't the vessel for the 3rd rank big enough? I'm confident that I can do enough."

Muto knew. The merchant that the Overgeared Kingdom wanted now wasn't the best merchant. If they wanted the best merchant, they would've called Kir instead of Muto.

"Please tell me what you called me for. I will do well and pay back your expectations."

'Not bad.'

He was a quick merchant without any bragging. It was good to believe in him.

"You accompanied King Grid on the East Continent for a few days? I can see why His Majesty liked you. Okay. I have a suggestion. Become a scammer."

"Huh...? A scammer?"

"Sell a defective item to the imperial palace. It means you will have to stop trading with the empire in the future."

"W-What is this?"

Despite the fact that Kir had deprived him of most of his business in the empire, he still had some dealings left. A lot of Muto's wealth came from the empire. Now Lauel was telling him to scam the imperial palace and give up on dealings in the future. As Muto thought the suggestion was absurd...

"The prize is the Overgeared Kingdom. We will leave one-third of our trade to the Muto Company."

"One-third of a kingdom's trade..."

The development of the Overgeared Kingdom was ongoing. Numerous players flocked to the Overgeared Kingdom based on Grid's absolute item production ability and Lauel's resourcefulness. In

the future, the Overgeared market was likely to become the second largest after the empire. He was being given one-third of this market. It was an unbelievable proposal.

"The first rank, shouldn't you take it?"

"Sigh."

Muto was visiting the empress' palace. He recalled the meeting with Lauel two days ago and took a deep breath, calming his mind.

'This is the sky...an opportunity from the sky Grid. Do well Muto.'

Daring to scam the empire. He was crossing a river that he couldn't turn back from. Muto's hands shook from the tension and he swallowed cold water several times.

But.

"Did the sun rise in the west today? Sir Muto is coming to see me first, not His Majesty?"

After a 30 minute wait, Muto's trembling stopped with Empress Marie appeared. It was thanks to the passive skill Merchant's Fortitude. He would never shake when facing a trading partner.

"You're more beautiful every time I see you. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to meet the star of the empire. It will be the glory of my family for generations."

"How can natural beauty fade? Okay. I'm especially excited about the things you have brought today."

The merchants who traded with the imperial family always went to the emperor first. It was natural courtesy to give the highest priority over goods to the highest ranking person. Yet today Muto found the empress first, not the emperor. There was clearly a reason, but Marie couldn't help feeling good about it. It felt like she was being treated as superior to the emperor.

'The atmosphere isn't bad.'

Unlike her mild appearance, Empress Marie was a fickle and violent woman. Muto was relieved that she was in a good mood and signalled to his subordinates.

"Isn't the material amazing?"

Empress Marie checked the items on display and was interested in two ornaments. They were a splendid chandelier and mobile made of a matte black metal.

"The place where the candles will be set are made to resemble the imperial chrysanthemum? When it's lit up, you can see the red-colored tulip."

"The light penetrates evenly into the matte frame."

"I like this. It feels elegant."

"Indeed, the empress has a discerning vision."

It wasn't a false compliment. Muto sincerely admired her. Before listening to the description of the product, the empress recognized them as special products.

"I don't know. What material is it made of?"

Marie was one of the world's leading authorities on gold and silver valuables. Due to her high position, the best items on the continent were gathered near her. Therefore, she had high insight and a lot of knowledge. But this was the first time she saw the matte black metal that made up the chandelier and mobile. She couldn't understand no matter how many times she touched it.

Now it was time to drive in the wedge. Muto gave a meaningful smile and explained, "It is a mineral from a dragon lair."

"What? D-Dragon lair?"

Marie doubted her ears. Humans managed to enter the nest of a dragon and obtain minerals? Her common sense told her it was impossible.

Muto gave her confidence. "It's a mineral from the lair of the insane dragon Nevartan."

"Nevartan..."

Nevartan went completely crazy for some reason and was wandering around the world. Nevartan's lair would be empty. It would be a big hit for the person who found it.

"Check it out."

The convinced Empress Marie ordered the various experts standing behind her and they started to look closely at the chandelier and mobile. They came up with an answer in minutes.

"I don't know if it is a mineral from a dragon lair, but it's definitely a mineral I have never seen before."

"The workmanship of the mineral is also excellent. It's at least a craftsman level. However, the biggest flaw is the craftsmanship. It isn't a masterpiece because it isn't in harmony."

"But it's sufficient to be worth a lot."

"Okay. I like this. I'll buy two of them."

"Ah..."

Marie decided after hearing the opinions of the experts, only for Muto to become embarrassed. Marie frowned.

"What is it?"

"T-That...with all due respect, I was going to show one of these to His Majesty. It is polite to show the emperor such a special thing..."

"Look Sir Muto."

"Yes."

"Get rid of the unnecessary acting. Didn't you bring these things to me first because you knew I would pay a higher price? I'll buy them. Don't worry. I will give one of them to His Majesty as a gift."

"You're truly amazing."

"Huhuhut."

There were few rare objects in the world. The emperor would be greatly pleased when the empress gave him one of these item as a gift.

'Sometimes I need to be charming to make him shed some suspicions.'

The empire was currently divided into two factions between the emperor and the empress. But the relationship between the emperor and Marie was good. The emperor tried to believe in Marie. The emperor recognized Marie's faction as the faction of 4th Prince Edan. Marie didn't make her own faction, but the people who wanted to put her son Edan on the throne were gathering by Marie's side. Empress Marie had been acting as a naive woman towards the emperor for decades.

"Now, this price should be enough?"

[You have received 580,000 gold as the transaction price for the Insane Dragon Iron Chandelier.]

[You have received 190,000 gold as the transaction price for the Insane Dragon Iron Mobile.]

Thanks to the merchant's passive skills Advanced Trading and Bargaining, as well as the products made from the insane dragon iron, Muto earned a huge amount of money. It was a huge benefit even if he had to return half of the profit to the Overgeared Kingdom according to the contract.

Muto smiled and bowed to the empress.

"I am thankful every time Your Majesty deals with a poor merchant like me."

A huge chandelier and a mobile with sharp leaves. They would be placed on the ceiling of the office and in the bedroom of the emperor and empress. The moment they failed to hold the weight and crashed down one month later, the empire would be in great turmoil.

Merchant Muto perfectly fulfilled his mission.

"It's huge."

The convoy transporting 100 tons of wheat and potatoes and Overgeared King Grid arrived at Titan. His spirit disappeared as he gazed at the endless walls in front of him. He lost motivation when he witnessed the overwhelming scale of Titan, which made Reinhardt look shabby.

Grid weakly thought that it would be better if he avoided fighting with the empire forever. But he quickly got rid of this thought.

'I will be swallowed up if I shrink back.'

The growth rate of the empire was much faster than the growth rate of the Overgeared Kingdom. He had to fight and take things away from them, otherwise he would end up losing.

'I have to swallow them first before I lose.'

Surururuk!

Grid and the convoy moved along the shadows of the huge walls hanging over them. Kasim's shadow soldiers were putting needles in the walls. Not a single one of the soldiers watching Grid's procession noticed anything suspicious.

'There is only one chance.'

Grid calculated that it would be in one month. The chandelier crashing would threaten the emperor and empress, while Titan's walls, which stood for hundreds of years, would collapse. This would confuse the entire empire. That was his chance. Grid and the elites of the Overgeared Guild would infiltrate the imperial palace and kill all members of Immortal.

They would tell Immortal that nowhere in the world was safe. This was the goal of his long-term plan.

'I will make them feel fear and regret every night.'

Grid's eyes blazed as he thought about Veradin and Agnus. After a while, he entered through the gates.

"Overgeared King Grid is entering!"

"Waaahhhhhhhh!"

"King Grid, welcome!"

"Welcome to the Saharan Empire!"

Baam baam!Baambabababa!

The empire's soldiers and people warmly welcomed him. Flowers bloomed all over Titan and the cheerful music helped the atmosphere. The reporters from various stations relayed the situation in a loud voice.

『 In history, the Saharan Empire has only received one formal guest. The first and last time was when they welcomed Prince Rajandra of the Lubana Kingdom. 』

『 The empire is more accustomed to domination than diplomatic relationships. From the point of view of the empire that controls all kingdoms on the continent, they don't recognize anyone as a VIP guest. 』

『 I now have respect for Grid who is treated as an honored guest by the empire. 』

Grid was treated as a honored guest of the empire for the first time since Prince Rajandra handed Undefeated King Hamad's head over to the empire. The people of the world were thrilled to realize that Grid was a much greater person than they thought. The same was true for Grid.

'These formalities are for me.'

He really would've been shamed if he came with bare hands. Grid waved to the people with a dignified expression. It wasn't just due to his high dignity stat. Grid was familiar with big events so he could look natural. This was the power of experience.

'Your Majesty, I have been looking through the palace with shadow movements and I think you should be nervous.' He heard Kasim's voice. 'It seems that most of the powers of the empire are gathered here in Titan. I have detected at least 10 people in the palace who are more powerful than me.'

"Can they read you?"

'Probably.'

Kasim had previously been detected by Duke Steim's knight, Laden. It was highly likely that his stealth wouldn't work against real geniuses or high-ranking officials.

"Don't enter the imperial palace."

It would be bad if he was caught bringing an assassin into the place where the emperor was. Especially if Kasim's appearance was exposed. Kasim was the last survivor of the Nero, which had been destroyed by the empire. His appearance was very noticeable.

'But...'

Grid laughed at Kasim's hesitation.

"It's fine because I have the Knights Summoning."

He could summon any of the elites of Overgeared, as well as Kasim, Piaro, and Asmophel. He had already put them on standby just in case.

"Sigh. Then let's go."

What would the owner of the strongest forces and his nearest aides be like? Grid hung the Great Lord's Sword at his waist and entered the palace. At that moment.

[You have discovered a strong person of this era!]

The effect of the Hero King that responded to Sword Saint Kraugel was activated, causing Grid's fighting energy to rise. It was because he encountered Mercedes, the 1st Knight guarding the entrance. Mercedes nodded slightly as she discovered Grid.

[Mercedes' deep eyes have looked at you.]

[Some of your stats and skills are forcibly revealed to Mercedes.]

[You can't resist.]

[Mercedes' sharp sword energy threatens you. The strong pressure makes your mind and body shrink. All speeds are reduced by 30% and skill casting speed is reduced by 20%.]

[You have resisted.]

[Reflecting the status has failed.]

Grid had experienced this in the past. But Mercedes was the one feeling surprised, not Grid.

“You...?”

“I don’t know what you saw.”

Tak.

Grid placed a hand on the stunned Mercedes’ shoulder and gripped hard.

"Next time, please bow your head a bit deeper. How can a knight dare to look a king in the eyes?"

“Kuk...!”

This was the person who had been kneeling in front of her a few months ago? Mercedes’ beautiful faced wrinkled while Grid entered the hall behind her.

At the same time.

[You have discovered a strong person of this era!]

[You have discovered a strong person of this era!]

[You have discovered a strong person...]

[You have discovered a strong...]

...

...

The notification windows kept rising.

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Chill.

‘What?’

There were 30 pillars on each side in intervals of four meters. Grid was overwhelmed because the size of the great hall, which was just the tip of the palace, was bigger than he imagined. He felt helpless since the kingdom he and his colleagues worked so hard to build was just a speck of dust in front of the empire.

But the source of the alienation and fear that Grid currently felt wasn’t the great hall. Grid gulped and cautiously moved. At the far end of the hall, a person on the throne was watching Grid.

Step, step, step...

As he stepped forward, Grid’s fighting energy responded to this ‘era’s powerhouse’ and the color deepened. Some people observed the purple red glow with interest, some people looked upset, and some people didn’t notice.

In the silence.

"Overgeared King Grid greets Your Majesty the Emperor."

Grid reached the stairs of the stage where the throne stood and bowed his head. He knelt on one knee and bowed politely. Emperor Juander. The greatest power of this age. Numerous people and a huge army that covered the land followed him. Grid didn't disagree that he was the master of the continent. Juander might be a present and future enemy, but Grid couldn't skip the courtesies. The bitter blades were hidden behind his back.

"You truly are the Hero King." He seemed to have natural white hair. The emperor's white hair was shining, unlike the usual hair that elderly people had. "King of the Overgeared Kingdom, I sincerely welcome you to the empire. I will greet you. I am the emperor."

Was a long introduction needed? The word emperor meant he was already the master of heaven and earth. Juander wasn't arrogant, but being the emperor was a huge position.

Chill.

'What is this?'

Grid knew immediately after entering the hall. Grid realized why there was a chill down his spine and realized why he felt fear. Was it due to the lines of strong people on the left and right? No. The direct source of this huge fear was the emperor.

'...The last boss?'

It was impossible to observe the emperor using the Legendary Blacksmith's Eyes or Character Observation. The difference in levels was too great. But Grid's high insight told him that the emperor was strong. Grid couldn't overlook him!

'Isn't this beyond expectations?'

As mentioned several times before, an NPC's strength was often proportional to their status. In particular, those representing a nation or clan were really great. The water clan and the evil eyes were good examples. How strong was the emperor, the master of the continent?

Grid expected that the emperor wouldn't be easy. But he didn't know it would be this much.

'Legendary level...'

The system might make the 'emperor' equivalent to a 'legend.' It was natural when thinking about it. Wouldn't the founder of the empire be a myth? The royal pedigree was special.

"Yes, did you like the welcome?"

"It's more than I deserve. I'm glad that you were willing to accept my sudden request for a visit."

"It might be temporary, but we are allies. It's only natural for me and my people to respect you. Just as you were just polite to me."

The words were full of hidden meaning. The emperor was smiling with a good face, but no favor could be found in the grey eyes that seemed like a beast.

"Yes, what's the reason that you came to find me right now?" The puzzled emperor watched Grid.

"I came to say thank you to Your Majesty, who gave us the mercy of a truce."

"Mercy of a truce..."

The emperor's eyes twitched. What was the reason for the empire first offering a truce to the Overgeared Kingdom? When the empire was about to invade Valhalla, the large army of the Overgeared Kingdom gathered on the border of the empire.

That's right. The emperor didn't want to admit it, but the empire had folded before the Overgeared Kingdom. The empire, which had always one-sidedly trampled on foreign countries, was forced to be diplomatic for the first time. This was a painful shame to the empire. If possible, Juander didn't want to be reminded of it again and hoped it would be erased from the empire's history.

Now this person brought up the empire's embarrassment. Grid didn't have such intentions, but the emperor misunderstood it.

'This son of a bitch dares?'

Punching King Rigal. One of the empire's seven dukes and captain of the air force. He lead a squad of 500 griffons and 300 wyverns. Rigal also led an army of 100,000 to 1,000,000 troops and had tremendous pride in himself and the empire. Rigal couldn't forgive Grid for ignoring the empire and suddenly claiming to be a king.

Rachel, another duke who had been looking at Grid's fighting energy from the beginning, calmed him down.

"The other person is an honored guest. Don't get caught by his provocation. Will you cause international embarrassment just because you can't suppress your anger? Well, I don't know if that was really a provocation. Kukuk!"

Rachel was a descendant of Dehaket, a meritorious retainer at the founding of the empire and a legendary spearman. She used a spear and was the competitor to Kirinus, the best spearman on the continent. The Twilight Spearsmanship that she raised in a war made her comparable to the Red Knights.

Grid felt the atmosphere and inwardly grumbled.

'They came here to greet me, only to not say hello.'

It was nasty. But what could he do? They were powerhouses and Grid was weak. He must endure any treatment that he received. For now.

[Rigal]

Level: 439

Occupation: Rider

Stats: ????

Skills: ????

[Rachel]

Level: 475

Occupation: Spearman

Stats: ????

Skills: ????

'Are they the Five Pillars?'

Grid was confirming the information of these strangers when a new voice was heard in his ears.

"Did you really come up this way just to say thank you?"

Even the emperor treated Grid as a king, yet the owner of the voice ignored all his titles. Grid and the emperor frowned at the rudeness.

"Reinhardt was recently attacked by the organization called Immortal?"

The information of the person starting an argument appeared in Grid's eyes.

[Limit]

Level: 468

Occupation: Sword Duke

Stats: ???

Skills: ???

The master of the Red Knights and the best swordsman in the empire. Grid had also heard of Sword Duke Limit. Limit ignored the unhappy Grid and the emperor and kept on talking.

"The organization called Immortal is now here in Titan. The real reason you came to the empire is to hunt them... Can I say that?"

"Coming here to hunt Immortal?"

The empire might be a bigger nation than the Overgeared Kingdom, but Limit was a duke and Grid was a king. Whatever the truth, it was basic courtesy to at least outwardly treat him as a king. Yet Limit didn't show any manners towards Grid. It felt like the entire Overgeared Kingdom was being ignored. A smile appeared on Limit's face as he saw the fighting energy of the angry Grid.

'Yes, reveal it.'

There were few people who liked the exchange between the empire and the Overgeared Kingdom. Emperor Juander requested a truce with a small kingdom. He was called the most incompetent of all the emperors. What if at this time, Grid showed hostility to Limit, the representative of the nobles?

Limit's loyalty to the emperor would weaken and he could turn to the empress. That's right. Limit's provocation towards Grid had a clear purpose. At this moment, Grid was on the verge of being provoked.

Grid's agitation was an ideal situation. Juander would be a pathetic man ignored by the king of a small kingdom while Limit, the leader of the empress' faction, would suppress this king. As soon as such rumors spread, the position of the empress would become much bigger than before.

Limit was looking forward to it.

"...If I visited the empire's capital for such a reason, things would be much more enjoyable than they are now. I would be able to punish them with my own hand. But isn't it a pity? I didn't know that those villains were hiding here until now."

Grid didn't fall for Limit's provocations. Reaching the top spot among two billion users made him more prudent and wise.

"But it's strange. Duke Limit, how do you know about Immortal? Are you the one who sent Immortal to the Overgeared Kingdom?"

Grid wasn't just suppressing his anger. He returned the provocation to Limit in another form. Playing one side against the other.

"Are you dissatisfied with the armistice agreement that His Majesty made? That's why you attacked the Overgeared Kingdom while breaking the armistice agreement that His Majesty made himself?"

Grid highlighted 'His Majesty' several times. It was to push Limit as going against the will of the emperor.

'Of course, it won't work.'

Grid was the emperor's enemy and would be an enemy any time in the future. It wouldn't be hard for the emperor to see that Grid was playing one side against him. Grid was playing one side against the other and Limit was doing the same. But surprisingly, the emperor fell for it. He didn't think it was ridiculous. The problem was that Limit was in the empress' faction. In particular, the emperor had frequently disciplined Limit and the Red Knights recently. The emperor believed that it wouldn't be unusual for Limit to have a grudge against him and for Limit to be behind the Overgeared Kingdom's invasion.

But he didn't show it on the outside. It was impossible to doubt a servant in front of Grid.

"The situation has become noisy. Let's enjoy dinner."

The emperor tried to calm things down as much as possible.

After that.

'What can I do about the low level of the non-combat classes?'

Grid was floored when he confirmed the names and level of the supporters attending the dinner. The average level of the powerhouses of the empire was higher than Piaro. The problem was that Piaro had

a farmer class. The power of the empire was a huge pressure and Grid felt anxious about the uncertain future. But there was a person even more nervous than him.

'That Grid...'

It was the beautiful woman who gave off an icy feeling, Mercedes. The owner of this beauty, the First Knight couldn't take her eyes off Grid. It was obvious vigilance. Mercedes was afraid of Grid. It was because her inborn insight at understanding the talent and potential of the target couldn't measure Grid correctly. There was an unknown feeling in the shoulder that Grid had touched an hour before. It was the first time she felt like this, causing Mercedes to feel greater confusion.

"He isn't insignificant."

Sword Duke Limit came to her side and whispered, "Hit Grid."

"Yes...?"

"You don't have to kill him yourself. Just tell Grid that the empire ordered you to strike at him."

"You want to make it clear that the empire is attacking an honored guest? Can I ask why?"

"The intention is for Grid to break the armistice first. What would happen if the armistice agreement that His Majesty made was one-sidedly destroyed by the other party? It will be an absolute disgrace. His political position will fall to an extent that can't be imagined."

"..."

Limit was a person conflicted between the temptation of the empress and his loyalty to the emperor. Now he seemed to be firmly entrenched next to the empress. The emperor's actions of keeping the Red Knights in check had brought about the worst result.

Limit whispered to the sad Mercedes. "The empress will give troops to support you. They're good necromancers. Strike at Grid when he's returning to the Overgeared Kingdom."

"...I understand."

Was this right? Mercedes was certain that it wasn't right. All knights were loyal to their master. It was the knight's fate to remain faithful even if they didn't like what their master was doing. Mercedes felt like she was being denied her very existence.

Mercedes bit her lips until blood flowed as she looked between the emperor and Grid. At the same time, in Empress Marie's palace.

"This is a great opportunity. We'll show Grid."

Veradin, the mastermind between Limit joining with the empress, convened the elites of Immortal.

[Chapter 784](#)

"This is also okay."

Emperor Juander's face was satisfied as he tasted the food coming out in turn. The other officials were the same. The imperial cuisine, which reinterpreted the food culture throughout the continent, was

originally famous for its taste. But it tasted especially good today. The imperial chefs seemed to be at their best since an honored guest was visiting.

'Huhuhut, that hillbilly will be shocked by the taste.'

Punching King Rigal watched Grid's response. The specialty of the Overgeared Kingdom was potatoes? Rigal wanted to see what type of response the king of a country that ate only pig food would show to the food of the great empire. It was as he expected.

"The food tastes good. In particular, the food made from flour are excellent."

Grid's reaction was as Rigal expected. He admired and praised the food. The Saharan Empire was truly the best in every way. Grid's admiration made the emperor feel good. Rigal confirmed the smile on the emperor's face and quickly clapped his hands. The chef soon came running.

"Y-You called me."

Being called to the emperor's presence? The head chef was full of fear. He was worried he had made a mistake and angered the emperor.

Rigal spoke to the sweating chef. "Explain the food to our honored guest. I'm sure there are a lot of foods he doesn't know. Shouldn't you take care of this part?"

Every dish had history and background. Knowing it made eating the food more delicious. Rigal had this logic but in reality, he was treating Grid as a hillbilly. The contempt in his eyes was clear when he looked at Grid. But Grid didn't flinch back when facing him. He smiled calmly and enjoyed the situation.

"Thank you for the favor, Sir Rigal."

"Of course..."

Rigal was surprised by Grid's gratitude.

'You still haven't noticed.'

Grid didn't even know he was being made fun of. There was a teasing taste. Rachel shook her head at Rigal and made an insidious remark.

"You're still a child. You're bothering a weak person."

"You are the one saying this? When I recall the memories of being bullied by you as a child, I still jump up in my sleep."

The two of them had been close since childhood due to the connection between their families. The friendly atmosphere caused by their memories didn't last long.

"As the Overgeared King may already know, all of today's dishes are cooked using the wheat of the Overgeared Kingdom."

"...!"

"...?"

The head chef's unexpected words caused the people watching the situation pleasantly to feel surprise and the emperor frowned. Grid was still smiling.

"Indeed, it was like this. Somehow the taste of the wheat dishes were particular good. It was because you used the wheat produced in the Overgeared Kingdom."

"You already know. Yes, that's right. I'm grateful for your gift of the best wheat on the continent."

The head chef was just a chef. He was ignorant about political things. He recognized Grid as a precious guest of the emperor and was able to purely praise the Overgeared Kingdom's wheat. It was unfortunate. The chef might lose his job today. Grid looked at Rigal's dark expression and wanted to sneer.

'This isn't it.'

A large-hearted person was better than an childish one. Grid acted wisely as he was reminded that he was representing the Overgeared Kingdom.

"You are surely the head chef of the imperial family if you can recognize the value of our wheat. I'm happy that a chef like you can make wonderful food for His Majesty the Emperor every day. I'm envious."

"Y-You're overpraising me."

The head chef was thrilled by the praise and bowed, while the unpleasant looking emperor ended up smiling. He liked Grid's consideration.

"The Overgeared King is right. I am happy because I have a chef who can make such wonderful food with good ingredients. Now is the time to bring out the 1,000 year old wine. Take a glass."

"Yes, Your Majesty!"

Thanks to Grid, the atmosphere of the dinner party became relaxed again. The emperor, Grid, and the officials enjoyed the moment as they drank from their glasses. The emperor was delighted and they all had to hide what they were feeling inside.

'Tsk.'

In a corner of the venue, Limit chewed his food with a sour expression and stood up. He was heading to the empress' palace.

"He has been through many hardships."

Limit evaluated Grid.

"His ability to read the situation is excellent. He's a wise man who knows how to control himself and isn't easily provoked. He also takes advantage of the opponent's provocation."

Marie showed interest as she listened to the story while staring at her nails.

"Isn't it surprising? I thought he was a simple and violent character who purely swallowed up a kingdom with force."

"I also thought the same but...it looks like he is a natural born politician."

The expression of 'natural born' wasn't suitable for Grid. Grid was originally a person lacking in every way. But Limit didn't know this. Like Limit said, the Grid who Limit met today was the Grid that had gone through countless hardships. It was a Grid who had already grown. Limit was forced to appreciate him.

"As Veradin said, he's a formidable opponent."

Veradin. One day, he suddenly appeared and got the favor of Empress Marie. Limit had been suspicious, but he was forced to acknowledge Veradin.

"Yes, that's right. We must strike Grid as planned today and make Grid go against the emperor. I will tell the Red Knights."

"Okay. I will send Immortal. Please finish it well."

A smile appeared on Marie's face as she nodded. The fact that she had just been the daughter of her family and could now give orders to the duke of the empire gave her great joy. What would she feel like when she placed her son on the highest position and held more power? She got goosebumps just imagining it.

-What type of person is the emperor?

The outskirts of Titan. As Grid moved away from the cheering crowds, Kasim asked from the shadows.

'Despite the fact that the emperor was known as a tyrant, he was surprisingly ordinary. He might be a good ruler.' Grid thought, but he remained silent. For Kasim, Emperor Juander was a hated person who he couldn't afford to kill.

In the end, Grid replied casually, "The emperor, well, he is the emperor. He was unbelievably arrogant. "

-...You are deepening.

"Huh?"

-Unlike the past, you are speaking very carefully.

Kasim had been observing Grid since before Lord was born. It meant he knew Grid when he was immature. Kasim watched Grid's growth in real time and he saw that the current Grid was reaching the end of his growth.

-You don't have to worry about me. I would like to hear your honest opinion. What type of person is the emperor?

Kasim repeated the question and Grid replied.

"He wasn't as selfish as I expected."

The master of the continent. It wasn't strange if the person who accomplished such a thing was violent, brutal, and selfish. However, the emperor that Grid met was more careful and respectful than expected. It was a shameful story but the current emperor was better than Grid when he was just grasping his power.

"He surprisingly has plenty of friends."

-...

"But that is the individual called Juander."

Grid knew.

"As the emperor, he's as ferocious and selfish as we thought."

History proved this fact. Wasn't he the emperor who conquered and wiped out many lives in the name of the emperor?

"Eventually, we will fight. The emperor will remain an object of hatred forever. You don't have to worry. Just dream of revenge."

The driving force behind Kasim was revenge on the empire. The more he dreamt of revenge, the more he developed. Grid naturally wanted Kasim to develop.

"Today I didn't see any of the Five Pillars. There were only seven dukes and the knights. But I mistook them for the Five Pillars."

It meant that everyone was strong. He could imagine how much stronger the Five Pillars were. He easily escaped Kyle the other day due to Braham and Mumud's pincer attack. But without Braham, both Grid and the Ares Army would be in danger.

"Become stronger, Kasim."

-Yes, Your Majesty.

Grid had already achieved his dream of being the best. The current Grid couldn't be ignored by anyone and was an object of envy. However, this was in reality. In the gigantic world of Satisfy, Grid was still weak and he had an obligation to protect his precious people. Strength, more strength was needed.

Clatter, clatter.

Grid's carriage slowly moved through the dark forest. It was a speed keeping in mind the soldiers and transport convoy followed them. It was also because of Grid's order. Overgeared King Grid was growing into a wise king.

"It's ridiculous."

Deep in the forest.

Veradin saw the carriage slowly approaching in the distance.

"Human choices and behavior are based on a desire for compensation. Humans do things because they want something. Let's take the example of libido. For what reason do people feel sexual desire? The pleasure is compensation for breeding. It's proof that compensation is the ultimate need."

There was a smile on Veradin's normally expressionless face.

"The compensation dominating Grid is a desire to be respected. As a person who has been despised for most of his life, he tends to be extremely obsessed with the evaluation of others. He dreams that everyone in the world will acknowledge and respect him. It's a desire to be acknowledged by the soldiers, not consideration for the soldiers, that is behind Grid's hypocritical act of slowing the carriage."

Grid was a lump of pretenses. He was a man who was always bluffing. Due to this, he became more attached to revenge. He was afraid that the world would ignore him again if he didn't get revenge for the damage inflicted on him. In fact, Grid was planning a revenge play that went beyond Veradin's expectations.

"A simple human."

Veradin's face showed no motivation as he looked at Grid's gradually approaching carriage. People like Grid were so prevalent in the world that Veradin couldn't become interested in Grid. Then what about Agnus? Agnus was filled with a desire to compensate for his 'loss.' He was a very unusual case. Veradin wanted to observe him longer. In order to stay near Agnus, it was necessary to restore their relationship.

"The means of recovery..."

Veradin held the Ghost's Necklace in his hand and started to infuse magic power into it.

"Grid, you are holding it. Now die. And burn with a stronger vengeance."

Direct the grudge towards Agnus and stir up Agnus' madness. Once Agnus was in a stage of oblivion, he would be forced to rely on Veradin again.

"Summon, Death Knight."

Kuwaaah...

Kyleo, the one who drove Khan to death, responded to Veradin's command and raised his body from the ground. Hundreds of skeleton knights and skeleton mages had already surrounded Grid's carriage.

'It isn't right.'

The First Knight watching the scene, Mercedes' eyes shook.

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Screech.Screech.Screech...

Clatter.Clatter.

Screech...

As the carriage containing Grid entered deep into the forest, the cries of the beasts subsided. The only sounds that could be heard in the silent forest were the wheels of the carriage and the footsteps of the soldiers.

“Monster?”

The birds and beasts hiding was a sign that monsters would appear. Grid naturally knew such common sense.

Kasim replied to Grid.

-Monsters can't pop up on a forest that the people of Titan often use.

-It's people.

-There are many people hiding in the area.

Kasim's shadows spread out in the forest that was filled with darkness. Kasim reported back.

-The enemy. There are more than 300 of them.

“Thieves?”

-No. They're the people who attacked Khan.

“...!!”

Immortal! The nonchalant looking Grid rose from his seat. His face distorted like a demon as he opened the door of the carriage.

Kuweeeeeeh!

Kwaaaaah!

Clack!Clack clack!

The ground shook as hundreds of red lights appeared in the bushes. As the dark clouds covering the full moon were lifted, the blue moonlight shone onto the forest and revealed hundreds of unsightly skeletons. It was a large undead army. The vanguard contained skeleton knights while the skeleton mages were in the rear.

"Build up a stronger sense of revenge."

From far away, a sweet voice was heard in the rear of the undead army. Grid jumped out of the carriage and saw the white-haired young man.

“Veradin...!”

The person who made Khan's last moments filled with pain. The target of hatred that Grid killed dozens or even hundreds of times in his head!

“Die!”

Kuwaaaaang!

Kasim had no time to stop him. Grid pulled out the Ideal Dagger, used Quick Movements and immediately rushed towards Veradin. He put away the Ideal Dagger and pulled out a weapon.

“Grid! Get him!”

“Kill that bastard!”

Kwaaaaah!

The necromancers shouted excitedly as they discovered Grid and dozens of skeleton knights blocked Grid’s way. They wielded huge swords and spears, completely focused on only killing Grid.

Kwa kwang!

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The four God Hands transformed into Lifael’s Spear, inflicting catastrophic damage to evil beings and opening the way for Grid.

“Heok...!”

“T-This is ridiculous...!”

Dozens of skeleton knights over level 250 were turned to ashes at once? The spears also moved without Grid touching them? The astonished necromancers simultaneously thought.

‘The best...!’

The necromancers were reminded. The opponent they were currently trying to hunt was the one who broke the sky. Grid stormed into the middle of enemy camp and pressed the button of the Pulling Device.

Hwiririk!

Red and black swords appeared in the moonlight, rotating before joining together.

Seokeok!

Puhahahak!

The skeleton knights and necromancers standing in the direction of the rotation were hit. The Pulling Device combined the two swords into one. The Enlightenment Sword.

“Veradinnnnnn!”

Kwa kwang!Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

The earth shook. It felt like the forest would fly away. Grid rushed through the undead army as four spears rotated around him, reminiscent of someone breaking through the sea.

‘Now he’s just a monster.’

Grid’s presence rose to the rank of deities. Veradin wasn’t surprised because he already knew this, but Grid’s presence was beyond the scope that he observed. Veradin’s tension soared to the peak as Grid

narrowed the distance with a fearsome expression. His legs were shaking. But Veradin had a smile on his face. It was a smile of satisfaction.

Kwaaaaah!

Did he believe in the four spears around him? Or was it because he lost his mind in front of his enemies. Grid was so focused on Veradin that he was unable to respond to the attack of the death knight that suddenly appeared.

Puok!

The poisonous dagger of Kyleo pierced Grid's heart. It was an attack filled with the poison master's killing power. It gave a paralysis that couldn't be resisted to the target and simultaneously reduced the target's health by 50%. It was Kyleo's ultimate ability that had a very low chance of causing instantaneous death.

"Now!"

A perfect opportunity to defeat the crazy beast! After confirming that Grid was trapped, Veradin shouted and the skeleton mages simultaneously chanted a prepared spell.

'I got him!'

47 skeleton mages used magic at the same time. Veradin was convinced when he saw the explosive magic power. He had no doubt that Grid would receive huge damage from the magic bombardment and enter the immortality state. That's right. In the midst of the urgent situation, Veradin hadn't confirmed it yet.

[Death Knight Kyleo has returned to an inactive state.]

[The target didn't receive any damage.]

[The target has resisted the absolute paralysis and poison.]

These notification windows!

"What?"

Veradin's face was dismayed as he belatedly checked the notification windows. Veradin couldn't understand it. Kyleo's dagger had clearly stabbed Grid's heart. Veradin had seen it with his own eyes. Yet the attack was for nothing? Grid didn't receive any damage?

"What is this...? Stop!"

Veradin was upset that things went differently than planned and hurriedly shouted. But it was too late. The necromancers commanded their summoned skeleton mages to activate the magic.

Huuuuuung!

Gravity Boom. It was advanced black magic available to skeleton mages over level 300. It was commonly used as the ultimate spell of a skeleton mage. It modified the gravity of the specified area and slowed down the target, while causing an explosion. The spell was powerful but the scope was too narrow and

the casting time was very long. It was even slower to deploy. It was almost impossible to hit a moving target with Gravity Boom.

That's why...

"M-Moving?"

Grid resisted Kyleo's paralysis and poison with Khan's posthumous work Valhalla and avoided Gravity Boom. Grid took one step towards Veradin.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Two steps.

Peng!Pepepepeong!

Three steps. Every time he got closer, a senseless explosion occurred behind him. As the forest became a wasteland, Grid used Pagma's Swordsmanship, Link, to get rid of the skeleton mages as he reached Veradin.

"This is the first time." Grid's voice, full of killing intent, reached Veradin's eyes. "You're going to die for me."

This death was just the beginning, not the end.

Grid declared, "You will keep dying because of me over and over. I will make you suffer more pain than Khan felt."

Puk!

Puk puk!

Kyleo kept attacking Grid to protect his master, but it was in vain. He attacked Grid with assassination skills, which were resisted by Khan's armor.

"You're crazily overgeared."

Veradin said with a silly expression.

"Shut your stinky mouth."

Grid didn't give him a chance to speak. He swung the Enlightenment Sword. But the sword never reached Veradin's neck.

Jjeejeeong!

All of a sudden, a sword flew and blocked the Enlightenment Sword.

"You...?"

Transparent blue hair faded into the moonlight and looked like it was shedding frost. Grid was puzzled as he grasped the identity of the woman who interfered.

"Mercedes?"

“...”

The First Knight. The strongest sword that exercised the will of the empire. In the end, she was just a tool. She said with a sad expression, “I’m sorry.”

“Kuk...!”

Jjeejeeong!

Grid’s body rose in the air. It was because he was hit by Mercedes’s shield that rose at an angle that couldn’t be seen. It was an overwhelming ‘charge.’ Grid flew through the air and showed a defenseless appearance.

“Your Majesty!”

Kasim’s voice was heard from behind him. Kasim and the soldiers were surrounded by several Red Knights. While Grid was blinded by Veradin, Kasim and the soldiers were also fighting.

“Shadow Move...!”

Kasim attempted to save Grid. However, his range of movements were greatly reduced due to the moonlight swallowing up the darkness. He couldn’t move long distances and was caught from behind by the Red Knights.

“Ugh!”

“Kasim...!”

Grid knew who Kasim was. Lord’s mentor, friend, and family. It was Kasim who filled the vacant position of ‘father’ for Lord. Yes, Kasim was like Khan to Lord.

“No...!!”

He couldn’t lose Kasim. Grid forgot the enemies in front of his eyes as he fully focused on Kasim. Grid used Fly and flew to Kasim to save him from the Red Knights. No, he tried to fly there. Mercedes was the problem.

Chaaeng!Chaeeeeeng!

She unleashed her sword at the fastest speed that matched Kraugel and pressed Grid. Mercedes avoided the God Hands swinging Mjolnir after the duration of Item Transformation ended and blocked Grid’s way. Grid’s confusion disappeared and was replaced with anger.

“You dog...! The emperor...! The emperor ordered you?!!”

The emperor sent Grid off with a smile only to hit him in the back of the head? Mercedes couldn’t carelessly reply to Grid.

Veradin’s voice filled the silence instead. “If you’re smart then you should’ve thought about it. Do you think I could attack you without any insurance?”

He believed in the strength of the Red Knights and the full moon. Veradin's plan was perfect. Now the only thing left was to kill Overgeared King Grid and announce it. The Overgeared Kingdom's wrath would grow bigger and Immortal's reputation would naturally rise. Agnus would no longer be able to stand by.

Veradin smiled with satisfaction. He knew that Grid had the three heavenly kings and the Overgeared members that he could summon. But he believed there was no way to stop the 10 Red Knights that included the First Knight, even if all of them were summoned.

'Please summon your knights.'

He would kill all the people Grid relied on. The moment that Veradin was rejoicing.

Puooook!

Mercedes' sword, which boasted a different strength from Lorex, pierced Grid's abdomen.

"Cough...!"

This woman was truly a monster. She was equal or much better than the seven dukes of the empire. Grid coughed up blood but he wasn't worried about his life right now. He cared about Kasim's finite life.

'It's over for Kasim if I die.'

Lord would be upset. Grid didn't want his child to feel such sadness and hatred. Grid could only make one choice.

"Knight... Cough! Summoning...!"

The strongest power that Grid relied on. The only one with the power to achieve Grid's desire!

"Piaro!"

"...?!"

The name buried deep in her chest. Mercedes became blank as she witnessed a man appearing in a pillar of light.

[Chapter 786](#)

The pillars supporting the country. The empire was eternal and the people would be at ease.

This was a verse of a song that was once popular throughout the empire. Great Swordsman Piaro and Splendid Swordsman Asmophel. The people of the empire gained great courage and hope when they listened to the song that praised the two heroes of the empire.

It was the same for the young Mercedes. She had dreams of becoming a knight and was raised humming the heroes' song. Mercedes overcame every hardship and trial in the hope that she could someday wear the same red armour as the two heroes. For her, the tragedy of 12 years ago was a huge shock.

"Piaro!"

"...?!"

The name buried deep in her chest. The moment when the name of the sinner flowed from Grid's mouth.

Flash!

The pillar of light fell and a man appeared inside. He was a middle-aged man dressed in shabby clothing and covered in dirt and sweat. He wore a straw hat on his head and he was holding a sickle and hand plow with hands covered in calluses. He looked like a farmer, but Mercedes wasn't deceived by the appearance. Despite the 12 years of misunderstanding, she recognized his identity with one glance.

"Piaro...!"

Great Swordsman, Hero, Pillar, Emperor's Sword, Head Teacher, Captain...

They were all the titles that Mercedes once used for Piaro in the past. Now the best courtesy she could give Piaro was to not speak the stigma of 'traitor.' Piaro defended Grid from her sword and made a bittersweet expression.

"That keen-eyed girl is now a beautiful knight."

No regrets could be found in Piaro's eyes as he recalled the past. This made Mercedes' beautiful face distort.

"You...!"

Why didn't he miss the past? How could he be so dignified? Why was he standing on the side of the Overgeared King? It couldn't be.

"Your Majesty, are you safe?"

"Thanks to you."

"I am here to serve."

"Don't tell me..."

The empire in Piaro's heart. It had completely disappeared?

"Ick...!"

Mercedes eyes became red without her knowing. There was a sense of struggle as she tried to hold back her tears.

"I...!"

"..."

"Do you know how much I have been looking for you in the past 12 years?"

It was hard to bear. In the end, Mercedes' tears emerged. It was because she realized that she was only an 'enemy' to Piaro as she watched Piaro hiding Grid behind his back.

"Every day... I was waiting every day. For the day when you would suddenly appear, telling me that the betrayal was a false accusation."

“...”

"But look at you now? My captain... Where did my captain go?!!!"

Mercedes' cry rang across the battlefield. Thanks to this, all the Red Knights saw Piaro.

"P-Piario...?"

"No way... Why is Piario here...?"

The chaos of battle stopped. Veradin and the Immortal members were baffled by this unexpected situation. Grid was also confused as he faced the Red Knights.

'Why are the Red Knights reacting like this?'

Grid knew that Piario was kicked out of the empire 10 years ago. At that time, he heard that most of the Red Knights who followed Piario were branded as traitors and killed. As a result, Grid regarded the current Red Knights as a group that had no relation to Piario. Everyone else in the world was the same. Yet looking at their reactions, it seemed this wasn't the case.

Why?

Grid's question was resolved by Mercedes.

"Many boys and girls dreamt of seeing you."

“...”

"The young knights who devoted themselves to your teachings and gained great strength from them are now wearing red armor."

“...”

"No one has ever spoken your name, but we were all missing you. If you one day appeared before us and told us that you were framed and didn't betray the empire, I wanted you to come back."

At the very least, she wanted to hold the funeral. Mercedes's sad face and shaky voice gradually calmed down. The tears flowing down her cheeks completely dried up.

"But the traitor appeared alive before us."

The reason was because he was hiding behind the Overgeared King.

Kwaduduk!

Mercedes recovered from her confusion. Enormous anger filled her from the betrayal.

"I missed you... I wanted to believe you. Now I'm ashamed and embarrassed."

Surung!

Mercedes pulled out another sword. It wasn't until the double swords were grasped with both hands that Mercedes' strength was revealed.

"Overgeared King Grid, you have done the sin of sneaking a traitor into the empire. And the traitor... I will exterminate Piaro."

Mercedes' meaning was absolute to the Red Knights. Her declaration was a signal. The Red Knights, who hesitated after seeing Piaro, started attacking Kasim again. Meanwhile, Mercedes flew to Piaro and wielded her swords. Veradin and Immortal didn't miss this moment.

"Now!"

Immortal had been watching the strange atmosphere with unease. Now they started to act again. They summoned new undead to hit Grid's soldiers. Veradin shouted, "Grid! You have to summon all your knights right now!"

If he didn't want to lose the strongest farmer that the Overgeared Kingdom was proud of! Summon all the talents and lose everything in return!

Veradin, who believed in the power of the Red Knights and smiled with joy, didn't know. Piaro's Pounding Mortar that took off one of Great Demon Belial's arms. It was a power that a mere player couldn't afford.

"Piaro! How long will you play around? Are you still seeing me as a child?"

Chaaeng!Chaeng!

Mercedes spat out angrily at Piaro's clear disregard as he used his sickle and hand plow to block her swords.

"Pounding Mortar."

Kuoooooooooh!

A pillar, or mortar, that was a size too big for humans to guess appeared in the night sky. It was gigantic enough to devour the bright moon that floated in the sky.

Chill.

The strong aura caused goosebumps. Mercedes and the Red Knights escaped, but the nervous Veradin and Immortal necromancers had low agility and were forced to stand in the wrong place. Yet they didn't despair. Veradin was still smiling.

"It finally came. The legendary farmer's strongest technique." Veradin had watched the Belial raid video several times. It was to grasp the power of Grid, Kraugel and the Overgeared members. In the process, he analyzed Piaro and Pounding Mortar. "A wide range skill that deals physical damage in proportion to the target's maximum health?"

He was certain. He believed that unless the skill dealt proportional damage, it couldn't inflict a critical wound on Belial who had millions of health. The confident Veradin signalled to Immortals top rankers. They all took out new armor.

[The Armor of Great Weight has been equipped.]

[Armor of Great Weight]

Rating: Epic

Durability: 59/59 Defense: 579

- * Increases defense in proportion to the level of the wearer (1 defense per 3 levels).
- * Reduces physical damage by 9%.
- * Movement speed is fixed at 0 and moving isn't possible.
- * Stamina is reduced by 20%.
- * Stamina will be reduced by 1 every 10 seconds.

The armor of the Pero people that was made to endure the raids of the Saharan Empire.

It increases the wearer's defense to the extreme. However, the armor is so heavy that wearing it is exhausting. The durability is lacking because it is designed only for high defense. Wearing it for too long isn't allowed.

Weight: 69,900

User Restriction: Level 250 or higher.

The worst armor that decreased stamina and made it impossible to move! However, the defensive power was high enough to exceed heavy armor.

"If we can endure this attack...!"

The death of the sub-rankers who couldn't obtain such armor wasn't a concern. Veradin calculated that he and the surviving top rankers could help Mercedes destroy Grid. Veradin and the necromancers took expensive buffing potions that temporarily boosted their defense.

Kuwaaaaaaaang!

Pounding Mortar fell. Piaro was aiming for the necromancers from the beginning. He knew that necromancers needed to be taken out when fighting an undead army.

"Kuahahat! Ha?"

Take a step forward. After a while, kill Grid.

Veradin and the necromancers laughing like crazy couldn't even scream as they were crushed.

[The Armor of Great Weight has been destroyed!]

[The Armor of Great Weight has been...!]

[The Armor of Great Weight has...!]

...

...

The heavy weight of the falling mortar contained a power that violated common sense. The armor that Veradin and the necromancers believed in was destroyed and their bodies and souls disappeared without a trace.

“...”

No one could open their mouths. They just gaped at the forest that disappeared. As the trees disappeared, ash-colored pillars scattered all over the night sky. The countless undead also turned to dust and returned to the ground. There was an awkward silence.

"As long as I am alive, no one can harm my king's body." Piaro declared to his confused enemies, including Mercedes. There was no trace of the old days. As Mercedes expected, Piaro recognized the Red Knights as an obvious enemy.

Crack.

Her heart hurt. The hero who taught her how to be a knight was a traitor aiming his sword... No, aiming his hand plow at them. It was awful. It made her wonder if a knight was such a fleeting existence. The Red Knights spoke to the pained-looking Mercedes.

"It's dangerous with just us alone."

"If we retreat... Even Captain Limit would understand."

Right now, Mercedes was the only solo number knight present. Meanwhile, Piaro seemed stronger than he did in the past. In addition, Grid and Kasim were formidable opponents. The Red Knights judged it was impossible to beat the enemies with their current power.

Mercedes nodded and gave a command, "Okay. Everyone retreat."

"Sir Mercedes...?"

"Who will guard your retreat?"

What did it mean to be alive? The captain she vowed a knight's oath to was forcing her to betray, rather than be loyal to the emperor, which her former teacher who taught her about a knight's oath was already a traitor. In the end, she would rather die than be corrupted.

Piario smiled for the first time as he prepared for Mercedes' challenge.

"You are the same as ever."

There were those who didn't change under any circumstances. They were the ones who had strong convictions from the start.

"I can't break your will. Good. I will deal the end with my own hands."

Piario was Grid's. He couldn't stand that Mercedes tried to harm Grid. He knew her talents and beliefs and decided to kill the girl he had raised as a seed. But Grid didn't allow it. It was because he witnessed the sadness in Piario's face.

"Piario, do you remember how I wished for you to be happy?"

“Your Majesty...?”

"Summon Knight, Asmophel."

The only key to getting rid of Piaro's bad name. The Red Knights were astonished when Grid shouted this name. Mercedes once again lost her soul.

[Chapter 787](#)

12 years ago, Asmophel condemned Piaro and his loyalists as traitors. The fallen hero. Yes, after Piaro's betrayal, Asmophel was no longer a hero. After destroying his most precious friend Piaro, his fellow men, and their families with his own hands, he isolated himself in a mansion for many years, sinking into drugs and alcohol. It seemed like a ritual. A ritual to call death.

"...One day, you suddenly disappeared."

He might be ruined, but a splendid swordsman was still abducted. Did he do this? Mercedes was aware of Asmophel's ability despite his inaction and wasn't convinced. Therefore, she had only one guess.

"I thought it was a self-fabricated act."

"..."

The old hero Asmophel appeared in a pillar of light. Like the old days, he smiled at Mercedes with a noble and beautiful appearance.

"I thought that you wanted to turn away from a hellish life and left the empire to escape from the protection of the Red Knights."

She was sad. The knight who died for himself, not for his master, was no longer a knight. Mercedes felt sorrow that the hero who had been an idol like Piaro had transformed into a symbol of shame and corruption.

"Yes. I thought you were already dead."

However.

"You're alive. And you're by the traitor Piaro's side." Mercedes gripped her two swords with great strength. Blood was flowing down her hands as she started to tremble. "You were once a hero, yet you betrayed your country and your emperor to be with your friend?"

"..."

The key to resolving the misunderstanding just made things worse. But Grid wasn't worried. He knew that Asmophel would release the misconceptions as soon as he spoke.

"Mercedes, there are a few things to keep in mind."

After responding to Grid's call, the silent Asmophel finally opened his mouth.

"The first one. The Red Knights didn't protect me, they watched me. You know the Fourth Knight, right?"

The Fourth Knight was different from the other Red Knights. It wasn't a position appointed by the emperor but one handed down.

"The Fourth Knight, a position designed to protect the Red Knights, became corrupted. It's my guess that the Fourth Knight is closely related to the Yatan Church. Dive, the one closest to Marie, was a black magician... In fact, he was Yatan's Seventh Servant and the subordinate of the Fourth Knight. The Red Knights who watched under the pretext of protection were the Fourth Knight's men."

"...?"

It was an unbelievable story. The problem was that he claimed the person closest to the empress was a Yatan Servant. Didn't this mean that Empress Marie was related to the evil Yatan Church? Mercedes and the Red Knights didn't believe Asmophel.

"The empress can't be just anyone. The imperial family thoroughly investigated their origins and only welcome the cleanest women. How can the empress be related to the Yatan Church?"

"At first she was a clean girl. But the empress could no longer be clean the moment she was filled with the ambition to place her son on the throne. She held hands with the evil forces that serve the great demons. Humans are weak creatures to temptation." Asmophel's expression was exhausted. "I'm also a weak creature of temptation."

"...?"

"I fell for Marie's beauty. I had a relationship with her."

"W-What...?"

Asmophel didn't use the excuse that his mental state had been weakened by the Yatan essence and that he was brainwashed. It was because of his feelings of inferiority toward Piaro that there was a gap in his mind for Yatan's essence to affect. It was his own fault in the first place.

"That's right. I had lost the qualification to be a knight from the beginning. I betrayed my country and the emperor. Piaro was purely a victim."

Asmophel's heart was shattered and his soul filled with shame every time he reminded himself of his sin. His guilt towards Piaro and his country was endlessly deep, like the depths of hell.

"That's right... I'm the one who betrayed the emperor, not Piaro and the Red Knights."

He didn't even deserve tears. Asmophel's eyes were bloodshot when he thought about it.

"I only wanted to cover up my sin... For my own sake, I framed my friends and comrades, murdering their families and lovers."

It was a terrible sin committed under the name of punishment. Asmophel's body trembled with pain, sorrow, and anger towards himself. But Asmophel didn't stop speaking. It was in order to reveal the hidden truth to the world. This was the only reason why Asmophel was currently living.

"Stop it."

Piario, who had already forgiven Asmophel, tried to stop him. However, it was useless. Asmophel didn't stop. His trembling voice filled the ears of Mercedes and the Red Knights.

"The knight of the empire, the hero who you once admired and loved is still alive. Please get rid of all misconceptions about him and pour the hate and blame onto me."

"..."

What the hell was this person saying right now? The Red Knights couldn't follow the truth. However, Mercedes realized it instantly. Asmophel was telling the truth. In the end, tears flowed down Mercedes' white cheeks. She was aware that Asmophel was still hiding the truth from her. If Asmophel was truly wicked, then Piario wouldn't have forgiven him.

"You..."

Over the past 12 years, one hero lived in desperation and suffering from a false accusation while another hero was ruled by guilt. In the end, the source was Empress Marie and the Yatan Church. The moment she realized this.

'...I am the hero of your heroes.'

Grid was excited when he saw Mercedes' eyes. Now that she found out the truth, she had an obligation. It was to make the other Red Knights believe Asmophel's words. In order to do so...

"I need solid information to be convinced. We will go back to the empire and review the events from 12 years ago to determine if your words are true or false. Once I can be sure that your words are true..."

Mercedes stopped and turned her gaze towards the Red Knights. The confused Red Knights nodded with determined eyes. All of them believed in Mercedes.

"We will help you pursue charges against Empress Marie and punish her."

It was the duty of the empire and the emperor towards the two heroes.

'First, I need to investigate Captain Limit.'

Was he also on the empress' side? Or had he been affected by the Fourth Knight? There was a lot to do. Mercedes was in a rush and said to Piario and Asmophel.

"Today I didn't see you. Later when we are reunited, I hope my sword doesn't turn towards you."

In her heart, she wanted to kneel down. She wanted to yell at them for making her feel resentment towards them over the years. But it wasn't possible. She couldn't change her attitude until the other Red Knights understood the truth. She bowed deeply to Grid.

"Overgeared King Grid, I want to apologize for our rudeness and to ask for understanding. Today's price will be paid later, even if I have to give up everything."

"Everything... Okay. I am looking forward to it."

Grid smiled as his heart thumped.

[Affinity with First Knight Mercedes of the Red Knights has increased by 20.]

It was due to this notification window. Grid knew that it was very difficult to raise affinity with this named NPC.

'This woman must've believed in Piaro and Asmophel. It will be a great contribution when the truth is revealed later.'

Perhaps Mercedes would fall into a crisis in the process. The opponent was the empress of the empire. There was a high chance that Mercedes would suffer a counterattack from the opponent and be labeled a traitor like Piaro. It was good from Grid's perspective. It might be an opportunity to take Mercedes away from the empire.

"Let's go."

Mercedes commanded the Red Knights and approached the aide guarding her horse far away. His name was Sky. A player. He was wearing a helmet, so Grid wasn't aware that he was a player.

'Kukukuk... It is a jackpot.'

Sky was excited about being able to glimpse a hidden episode of the Red Knights thanks to Grid. He was one step closer to his grand ambition of making Mercedes his slave.

'I have to reach the empress at the right timing. Grid, thank you. Kukukuk!'

Satisfy wasn't a microcosm world, but a world itself. Politics and betrayal were rampant and there were more than a few wicked people. It was impossible for only one person to survive in this huge world where there were conflicting goals between the two billion players. Sky thought like this and it was right.

"Kasim."

-Yes.

"Go after the witness who overheard the conversation between Mercedes and Asmophel."

-Are you talking about the aide of the First Knight...?What if I'm discovered by the First Knight?

"It doesn't matter. Mercedes will understand. In the worst case, she might stop the assassination, but she will also dismiss the aide. In the future, she also has to be careful."

-I understand.

The current Grid had the power to go beyond reason. His journey to transcend the category of a legend wasn't over yet.

[Chapter 788](#)

The Overgeared Kingdom was the strongest player force in the game and a threat to anyone. It was a basic thing to target them. There were countless people trying to keep the Overgeared Kingdom in check. But Grid wasn't aware of this fact. He overlooked the fate of the strong. He didn't properly defend his kingdom during the National Competition and allowed the enemy to enter.

Grid thought that Khan's sad end was the result of his own stupidity. Khan was the victim of his ignorance.

After Khan's death, Grid became obsessed with wisdom. If he had been a bit wiser, Khan's end wouldn't have been so lonely. Therefore, Grid challenged being reborn as a wise man. The accumulation of knowledge was slow because of his innate intelligence, but Grid believed that by repeatedly thinking 'infinite' times, he could use his own merits and patience to become a wise man. No, he decided not to believe, but to put it in action.

This was the result. Grid was thinking nonstop. He lacked intelligence compared to others, so he had to think many times more than others. He continued and continued to think whenever facing a situation. His head was constantly working.

Why did he summon only Piaro when he was attacked by the Red Knights and Immortal? It was because Agnus couldn't be seen. As a result, Grid thought that the Red Knights and Immortal members attacking him might be bait. If he caught the bait and summoned all his knights, his kingdom would be weakened and the empty house could be destroyed. That's why he first summoned Piaro.

It was this same context that Grid used to judge that Mercedes' aide should be handled. The reason why Grid was concerned about the aide wasn't because he was smart, but because he was thinking.

Grid was exhausted. It was different from when he chose without worrying, acted emotionally, and depended on others. The energy consumption of this mindset was enormous.

Sururuk.

Kasim disappeared into the darkness.

"Sigh."

Grid leaned his exhausted body against the carriage. It was like he had just raided a powerful boss monster. Piaro measured his condition and bowed deeply.

"You went through a lot of trouble."

Piario was proud of Grid. Rather than being frustrated by Khan's death, Grid honored Khan by looking at himself. Grid had done well when facing the emperor. Piario had this type of belief.

Grid asked the smiling Piario, "Was I right to handle the aide?"

Grid had witnessed the discipline of the Red Knights. They were shaken by Piario's appearance, but immediately executed Mercedes' orders. They doubted Asmophel's story, but didn't resist Mercedes' judgment. Grid believed that the Red Knights in this place wouldn't talk about Piario and Asmophel. But the aide was unknown. It was difficult to judge what type of person the aide was when he protected the horses in the distance. That's why Grid ordered Kasim to handle him.

Piario nodded. "Mercedes will decide on her own. She will sort out the trustworthy and untrustworthy knights and aides."

"You trust her."

“She’s an incredibly smart girl.”

That’s why she was his seed.

"And she grew to my expectations. She will later become a new pillar of the empire."

In fact, Piaro was very surprised when he was called by Grid and met Mercedes. He hadn't thought she was alive. It was natural. Didn't the brainwashed Asmophel destroy all of the Red Knights in the past? Asmophel wouldn't leave anyone to hit him in the back. It was difficult to expect that Mercedes, a seed of Piaro, would've survived.

But Asmophel saved Mercedes. The reason...

'In his subconscious, he was afraid for the empire.'

Asmophel was reluctant to kill talent even in his brainwashed days. That was Mercedes. Piaro looked up at the night sky.

"I have become greedier because of your words." Grid declared, "I'm going to make Mercedes mine."

Grid faced an unprecedented pressure when competing with Mercedes. He felt like she was reading all his actions. At first, he thought it was just her excellent skills, but looking back, it wasn't. It was clear that she 'predicted' his behavior.

'A scam.' Grid asserted.

Mercedes was in the same class as Piaro. A wall that normal players could never cross. A transcendent named NPC. Grid wanted to make her his own person. Piaro thought the same. When he exchanged blows with Mercedes, he thought the only way to overthrow her was Fated to Perish.

'Once more time passes...'

She would grow to a level of rejecting Fated to Perish. Piaro's greed grew.

"That's right, Your Majesty. She must be gathered by Your Majesty."

"Um."

Grid nodded. He swallowed down the question of whether Piaro yearned for the empire and his country. He trusted Piaro.

"Let's return to Reinhardt."

Grid thought that it was highly unlikely the empire was behind this raid. It was highly likely the empress was the mastermind. But the issue was too big to judge for himself. He had to quickly meet Lael. Grid immediately climbed into the carriage.

'I'm tired.'

This one day in the empire was like a year. Grid sat on the seat and his eyes moved towards the window. Asmophel entered his gaze. Asmophel was walking on the right side of the carriage with a pained expression.

'His guilt has gone beyond his heart and imprinted in his soul.'

Salvation would be difficult. Piaro might've forgiven him, but the dead Red Knights and their families couldn't. As Grid predicted, Asmophel was willing to end his life the moment he got revenge on the empress.

'...Wait.' Grid made a sad expression only to come up with something. 'Did all the Red Knights really die?'

The rebels who followed the traitor Piaro. This was the evaluation of the previous generation of Red Knights. Grid heard that 'most' of the Red Knights were executed. Yes, most of them. It wasn't all of them. Some were still surviving as fugitives.

'Maybe I can give Asmophel a chance to atone?'

Grid didn't delay. He immediately gave an order to Asmophel, "Asmophel, travel through the continent and find the survivors of the Red Knights."

"Huh? W-What...?"

Surprise and fear. Asmophel's face turned grey from the unexpected command.

Grid stared into his wavering gaze and explained, "I will absorb the previous generation of the Red Knights. It isn't impossible to absorb them. Isn't that right?"

"You want to gather the survivors of the old Red Knights?"

"Yes."

"Is it really appropriate for me to be the one to find them? Why are you leaving it to me instead of Piaro...?"

Asmophel stopped talking. He grasped Grid's intent but he didn't dare say the word 'atonement.' He bowed his head with a dark expression.

"Piaro forgave you."

"..."

"Won't the others be the same? They will all feel like Piaro."

"..."

"Find them. Then talk to them."

Asmophel could only think that the command to 'find the old Red Knights' was purely out of concern for himself. It was also a chance to bring the 'power of the previous generation' to the kingdom. It was an example that showed Grid's mindset of thinking about his precious people, which was the greatest driving force behind the Overgeared Kingdom.

"Always be happy."

"..."

“This is the dying wish I received from Khan. Let us try to be happy together.”

“...I will keep that in mind.”

Asmophel stopped walking and bowed deeply. He didn't raise his head until the carriage that Grid was in had disappeared from view.

Piaro cheered for Asmophel on his journey of atonement.

‘Have strength.’

Please come back with old friends.

[Hwan Kingdom's Resident (1)]

★ Hidden Quest ★

You have to meet the minimal qualifications to challenge the Chiyou test.

First, go beyond the level of an ordinary person.

Quest Clear Condition (1): Don't die until you reach level 400.

* Every time you gain 20 levels without dying while the quest is ongoing, you will gain a large number of additional stats.

* If you die, you will lose all the additional stats you have acquired. The lost stats can't be restored.

* If you die, the quest clear conditions will change to number two.

Quest Clear Condition (2): The number of deaths must be less than 5 until you achieve level 400 (Number of Deaths: 2/5).

* This is the last chance. If you fail to complete the second clear conditions, you will completely lose your qualification to challenge the Chiyou test.

In the past, Veradin visited the East Continent and completely focused on the yangbans of the Hwan Kingdom. He anticipated that he could benefit from the greatest power on the East Continent. As a result, he was the first player to visit the Hwan Kingdom and received the hidden quest to become a ‘yangban.’

It was because he gave off a good impression to the yangbans. At that time, Veradin was level 290. He tried hard to go over level 300 without dying and secured a tremendous amount of stats as a result. But it was all blown away. He touched the Overgeared Kingdom and died two times already.

“Maybe...”

Veradin gulped with a pale complexion. Grid's words ‘the first time’ constantly revolved in his head. Grid really would try to find and kill Veradin many times.

“...In the meantime, I will hide.”

Veradin always believed he was better than others. For a person who manipulated other people, Grid and his items that violated common sense caused him to feel a new shock and horror. He didn't want to face Grid anytime soon. It was the first time that Veradin feared another person.

'I can't believe I'm feeling like this towards an ordinary person...!'

Kwaduduk!

Anger filled Veradin's body. He suddenly had a question. It was about the reaction of the Red Knights to the farmer summoned by Grid.

'Why did they look so shocked?'

The necromancers were in the rear of the battlefield. They were too far away so Veradin couldn't hear the conversation. This was bad.

'There is something. Something...'

Maybe the key to breaking the current crisis was the farmer? Veradin looked at new possibilities.

At the same time, the outskirts of Titan.

Chaeeng!

Mercedes' sword blocked a dagger flying through the darkness. Sky belatedly realized that his neck would've been pierced if Mercedes hadn't acted and hurriedly raised his shield. Mercedes looked into the darkness.

"Tell the Overgeared King I know what he's concerned about. Please let me handle it."

-...Understood.

"...?"

A chill went down Sky's spine as a gloomy voice was heard from the darkness.

'What? Why was I on the brink of being assassinated?'

Mercedes said to the frightened Sky, "As of today, you are dismissed."

"Yes...?"

"You can never set foot in the imperial palace again."

"W-What is this...?!"

What the hell was this all of a sudden? It happened when Sky was confused and going to ask for an explanation.

[You have lost your qualifications for the second class 'First Knight's Aide.']

[All Red Knights quests currently in progress will be destroyed.]

[You are denied entry to the imperial palace.]

[The 7 points of affinity built up with Mercedes have been reset to 0.]

“Eh...? Eh eh?”

Sky trembled from the unbelievable reality. He was worried that Mercedes had noticed the darkness inside him. After a while, he was left alone. Sky reflected on this incident and realized that Grid was behind it. He had to think about the circumstances.

“You...! You son of a bitch!”

Sky felt extreme anger at Grid because he could no longer fulfill his goal of making Mercedes his slave. But after a moment.

“C-Crazy...”

Sky started to feel fear instead of anger. He feared Grid’s transcendent power that could destroy one person’s life so easily. The presence of the new and matured king was too great to compare to the previous one.

[Chapter 789](#)

“Did you handle it properly?”

“Yes. We didn’t hide our identities and attacked.”

"Hrmm... why is there no response?"

It had been a week since Grid returned home. It meant it had been a week since the Red Knights and Immortal attacked him. However, the Overgeared Kingdom still hadn’t announced any stance.

"Despite their king being attacked, they didn’t even announce it, let alone react..."

They wouldn’t have hidden it because of fear. Then they must be up to something.

Dok dok.

Limit tapped the table and frowned.

"Did they see our intentions?"

The Overgeared Kingdom could be aware that the empire was starting to split into the emperor and empress. If the Overgeared Kingdom had a capable schemer, they could’ve discovered that the empress was behind the attack rather than the emperor.

“A tough opponent.”

It was correct to say that the plan to use the Overgeared Kingdom to weaken the emperor was in vain.

“It didn’t work out easily.”

Limit determined and glanced at Mercedes. It was a signal to leave. Mercedes sighed with relief after leaving the office.

‘For Captain, His Majesty is definitely an enemy.’

After meeting Piaro and Asmophel and finding out the truth. Mercedes had been looking at Sword Duke Limit for the past week. She thoroughly investigated how far Limit intervened in the tragedy that occurred 12 years ago. However, was it that easy to investigate a duke? The more she tried to access about Limit, the more interference she faced. One of them was the Fourth Knight.

"Sir Mercedes."

"Sir Gyuratan?"

The position of the 'Fourth Knight' in the Red Knights was special. He played the role of defending the Red Knights from outsiders and performed the work of an inspector in peacetime. The Fourth Knight must constantly observe and watch the Red Knights so that the essence of the Red Knights didn't fade.

12 years ago, Fourth Knight Gyuratan ruled that Piaro was a traitor. Mercedes trusted Piaro, so she didn't like Gyuratan from the start. She doubted him. However, now she felt hatred and hostility instead of just suspicion. The true darkness that collapsed the Red Knights. A figure closely related to the Yatan Church. Thanks to Asmophel, she became aware of Gyuratan's reality.

Mercedes smiled as she faced Gyuratan in the hallway. She didn't expose any hostility. The basics of a swordsman was to control their emotions.

"It has been a long time."

"I have been away for a while. I was conducting a review on the death of Third Knight Lorex and Fifth Knight Dia."

"..."

Lorex and Dia. They were both killed by the Undefeated King's descendant. They also missed Piaro. Mercedes had briefly thought about Lorex and Dia when she met Piaro a week ago.

If Lorex and Dia were still alive... if they knew the truth...

'They would've cried all night from joy and sorrow.'

They would've been a great strength. Mercedes was missing the colleagues she couldn't meet again when Gyuratan's voice entered her ears.

"In the course of the investigation, I accidentally stumbled on your traces. Sir Mercedes, it seems like you were in Valhalla for a while?"

"..."

"Did you go after the Undefeated King's descendant to get revenge for your colleagues?"

"...That's right."

"The result?"

"I didn't get revenge. I couldn't find the Undefeated King's descendant."

Mercedes fought directly against the descendant of the Undefeated King in Lubana and knew him. It meant she was familiar with the characteristics of the Undefeated King's descendant. But despite

infiltrating Valhalla for two months, she couldn't find a person who could be considered the Undefeated King's descendant.

"You disobeyed a command and couldn't even get revenge... If you were able to get revenge, I might've asked for leniency from the emperor. Now it isn't possible."

"What now?"

"What should I do? Should I report to His Majesty that you violated an order?"

"You...!"

"Don't forget. The First Knight should be an inspiration to all knights of the empire. But didn't you disobey his command and act according to your own will? I can't overlook it."

"Uh...!"

"If another order comes again, don't violate it. Even if you are the First Knight, His Majesty won't overlook it."

'At this point, I need to investigate the tragedy of 12 years ago...'

It was the worst. Why was her mistake noticed at this timing? She had no luck.

'No... It isn't a coincidence.'

Mercedes realized it. This timing, Gyuratan intended it.

'It's likely that he knew I violated the order from the beginning.'

But he buried it until it was appropriate to be used, like now.

'He knows that I have started to doubt the tragedy of 12 years ago.'

She could no longer hide her hostility. Mercedes glared at Gyuratan, who just laughed and shrugged.

"Well, don't worry about the Red Knights. Sir Lucas and I will manage them very well. Ah, Sir Lucas was arrested? Then I will manage them alone."

"..."

She wanted to let out a flurry of curses. No, she wanted to tear out his throat. Mercedes felt a strong killing desire, but endured it. She couldn't do anything to him before she found out the truth and revealed it to the world.

"Let's put it all together."

The capital of the Overgeared Kingdom, Reinhardt.

Lauel started writing on the blackboard. At the top was the name Garam, the yangban.

"The yangbans are defined as having the best strength, the dukes of the empire are advanced level, First Knight Mercedes is lower advanced, Asmophel is of the intermediate level and Your Majesty and Kraugel are below him?"

"That's right."

"Piaro? Isn't he the best?"

"When looking at his level, it's logical to classify him as lower advanced like Mercedes. Mercedes actually competed with Piaro."

"But what if Piaro used Fated to Perish?"

"Among the named NPCs, there are many who can resist Fated to Perish... Hmm, but there is deadly damage even if it is resisted. Piaro is classified as on the same level as the seven dukes."

"Being below the yangbans even when taking Fated to Perish in consideration..."

It was very important to know the power pyramid of the world. Lael looked at the blackboard with a serious expression.

"By the way. If Garam was so strong, how did you get away from him?"

"Didn't I tell you? He was absent-minded and God's Command fortunately activated, allowing me to repeat Linked Kill Wave Pinnacle twice."

"Then..." Lael erased Grid's name at the bottom of the board. Then he wrote Grid between the yangbans and the seven dukes. "What do you think about this location?"

"..."

"Your Majesty." Was this a joke? Lael saw Grid's questioning eyes and spoke seriously. "It's good to be cautious but please don't lose sight of your ambitions."

"I haven't lost sight of my ambitions. I made a realistic self-diagnosis after thinking about it deeply."

"Isn't it funny to unconditionally trust your thoughts? You're not smart, are you?"

"..."

"You're much stronger than what you measured yourself as." Lael was convinced. "Raise your level. Keep your level higher than named NPCs and equip yourself with your items."

"What are you talking about? Don't you know how fast named NPCs raise their level?"

The level of NPCs would naturally rise with the passage of time due to the compensation effect when the average level of the players rose. It was a basic rule, not common sense, that a player could never catch up with the level of a named NPC. But Lael had a different opinion.

"Did you forget how fast your level up speed is? The named NPCs become stronger in proportion to the average level of the players. Isn't it possible to raise your level much higher than the average?"

"..."

"Starting today, use your God Hands, Noe, Randy, and the Overgeared Skeletons to make infinite hunting macros. In particular, the Overgeared Skeletons. How long do you want to leave them as useless skeletons? If I had them then I would've already made them into a death knight or lich."

"..."

Lauel's words were right. In the meantime, Grid had neglected the importance of level and he also failed to utilize the Overgeared Skeletons. But why did he feel like squeezing Lauel? Grid tried to calm his boiling anger while Lauel gave advice.

"In addition, don't forget to constantly think during combat."

Train to repeat the infinite thoughts even during dire moments.

"You'll become better than a genius."

"It's hard to use my mind because I have a stone head. It's particularly hard to think while moving the body." Grid grumbled.

"Real stones don't think. Calling you a stone head is... No, I'm sorry."

"Can I hit you?"

"I'm sorry!"

Lauel regretted talking without thinking. He knew that if he received one hit from Grid, he would die!

A fortnight after the end of the 3rd National Competition. An item that the medalists were waiting for entered their inventory.

[3rd National Competition Medal Reward]

It was a gift box containing the items that the medalists wished for. Of course, Grid wanted the production materials.

[The Blue Dragon's Breath has been acquired.]

[The White Tiger's Breath has been acquired.]

[The Black Tortoise's Breath has been acquired.]

"Good."

Grid smiled as he got the rewards for Battlefield and his two gold medals. Maybe this was just before the birth of a new myth rated item. He couldn't not feel exhilarated.

[Blue Dragon's Breath]

Contains the blessing of the blue dragon.

It will increase lightning resistance by 30%.

It can be used to infuse items with the powerful aura of the blue dragon.

However, it can only be attached to items with a strong lightning attribute.

Weight: 2

[White Tiger's Breath]

Contains the blessing of the white tiger.

It will increase earth resistance by 30%.

It can be used to infuse items with the powerful aura of the white tiger.

However, it can only be attached to items with a strong earth attribute.

Weight: 2

[Black Tortoise's Breath]

Contains the blessing of the black tortoise.

It will increase water resistance by 30%.

It can be used to infuse items with the powerful aura of the black tortoise.

However, it can only be attached to items with a strong water attribute.

Weight: 2

"Very good!"

Grid was filled with joy as he held the beautiful blue, white, and black beads. He was excited by the thought of strengthening these three breaths and upgrading his items, just like he strengthened the Red Phoenix's Breath.

'Let's quickly become stronger!'

He was filled with enthusiasm! Grid was grasping the hammer with blazing eyes when a guest arrived.

"Grid, keep your promise."

"...You?"

The guest was surprising. It was the sky above the sky. Sword Saint Kraugel. He was staring at Grid with a radiant look that didn't match his normal image.

"Will you make me a sword?"

"Y-Yes..."

Had he been waiting for this day? Kraugel appeared as soon as the reward arrived. It seemed he had been waiting in Reinhardt.

'He has a cute side.'

Grid smiled as Kraugel told him good news.

"Recently, I have found a good hunting ground. I'll let you know if you want."

"Ah, thank you..."

"You should rest for 10 minutes every time you hunt a monster."

They were meaningful words.

'How high is the difficulty of this hunting ground?'

Grid was filled with anticipation and tension.

"Speaking of which, I killed 52 people from Immortal. In return, can you make me armor and boots?"

"...5-50?"

"52 people. I lived in Titan for a while. I can show you the proof shots if you want."

"..."

Truly the sky above the sky. Tremendous skills were a default for him.

Grid received two breaths and a small amount of adamantium from Kraugel. Kraugel's eyes were gentle as he watched Grid start a fire in the furnace.

'He seems to be overcoming the wound. It's fortunate.'

[Chapter 790](#)

The Hwan Kingdom's national wood. The White Phosphorus Tree, also known as the Eternal Tree, was burned as firewood. The overwhelming momentum of the flames instantly filled the smithy.

'His Majesty has started working!'

The attention of the blacksmiths concentrated on Grid. The blacksmiths knew that the person who could control the flames, heat, and temperature so completely was only Grid since Khan died.

'Khan's latter years.'

'He dealt with the flames as brilliantly as His Majesty...'

The eyes of the blacksmiths reddened as they started reminiscing.

"Kraugel, there are three options."

Grid took out a hammer and anvil and started to explain to Kraugel.

"First of all, if you have a specific item you want then give me the production method. Then I will learn the design and make the item for you. You already know right? The performance of the items I make is higher than that shown in the design."

From Grid's standpoint, it was a great benefit because he could acquire new designs for free.

"Secondly, you can leave the design entirely to me. In this case, I will make items based on the production methods I already have."

"It's really wonderful."

"That's right. In this case, you can have something created by a legendary blacksmith."

"Of course I..."

Kraugel was interested in the second way. It was a natural choice since he knew the power of the sword weapons that Grid used. But Grid gave him a third option.

"No, listen to my words."

Grid interrupted Kraugel's mouth and thought about Khan. How much help did he get from Khan every time he made a new item? In particular, Khan's opinions were great when making new items. The best blacksmith that Grid respected helped Grid with his knowledge and insight. Khan thought about what materials should be used for newly created items, what characteristics should be included and so on.

Now the role that Grid wanted Kraugel to play was Khan's role. Grid wanted Kraugel's knowledge. Grid was convinced he would be a great help in making the strongest sword.

"Kraugel, what do you think is the ideal shape for a sword?"

"...?"

"Tell me. I will realize your ideals with my skills."

"...This is the third way?"

"Yes."

Duguen!

Kraugel's heart thumped as he met Grid's eyes. His Swordsmanship Creation skill passed through his head. Since he had a unique skill that could create new sword techniques, the blacksmith Grid would have an item creation skill.

Kkuok.

Kraugel formed fists to calm his trembling body.

"In the history of the Overgeared King... My name will be part of your history that will be worshipped in later generations. Is it okay?"

It was a very prudent question. Kraugel had met many people and he knew that people clung to their feats as they rose higher. They wanted to keep other people from appearing in their feats.

Grid's answer was simple. "Is it okay? Is that a question? It isn't okay, it's an honor."

Grid remembered. At the time of the Belial raid, he saw Kraugel learn Piaro's technique. It was the best tribute that Kraugel could show to Piaro. Now Grid was paying homage to Kraugel.

"The best blacksmith will make the best sword with the best swordsman. Won't another great legend be born?"

"..."

“Let’s make it together. The strongest sword. The best legend.”

Undefeated King Madra fought for his kingdom all his life but in the end, he lost his head to his son. Pagma betrayed a friend due to his sense of duty to save the world and contracted with a great demon. Braham realized the absurdity of the world and despised his own people, but after he became a human, Braham was betrayed by his friend because he was a vampire.

The tales of the legends that Grid knew were all sad and vilified. Grid didn’t want to be like them. Kraugel was the same.

“...It’s a great honor.”

“Okay. Then let’s begin.” Legendary Blacksmith’s Creation.”

[Legendary Blacksmith’s Creation]

You can create three equipment item production methods every time the skill level of the ‘Legendary Blacksmith’s Craftsmanship Skill’ goes up.

Number of items that can be created at present: 9/24.]

* When items are produced using this skill, the name of the creator is automatically placed on the item.

Jiing-

A blank blueprint appeared in front of him.

"I think the ideal sword using the knowledge of a Sword Saint..."

The blueprint had a huge black space.

"It’s different from person to person, but it’s generally a heavy sword. It’s the easiest to use in terms of width, length, and weight, thus having high utility. Considering all the variables. It’s the least inconvenient to use."

“Really? I thought it was a long sword. In fact, the Enlightenment Sword is a long sword. It is a sword that emits black flames.”

"Have you ever used a heavy sword?"

"I don’t like it. I’ve always used a greatsword or a long sword..."

"...Well, as I said, the ideal form is different for each individual. In the first place, it might be arrogant to discuss an ideal form. When cutting fruit, a knife is the best. When walking through a jungle, a machete is the best. There are differences depending on the application."

The experiences and knowledge of a Sword Saint combined with the knowledge and skills of the legendary blacksmith.

"But universally, a heavy sword is better in combat? Are there any other special features?"

“No.”

"Do you intend to add another option by giving the sword a distinct shape?"

"Like the shark that is part of Failure?"

"Yes."

"If you don't know, the basic form of the sword is good. It is more important to have the balance of the sword be even than to have the center of gravity to one side."

"The answer is correct. This is why the cross section of the sword is a diamond shape."

"Section?"

"The cutting surface you see when you cut with the sword. The balance is important so a perfect diamond as the cutting surface is preferred. On the other hand, I prefer a hexagon or octagon."

"I don't know anything about these details."

"You don't know about me."

"...?"

"I'm a legendary blacksmith. Even if I put special decorations on the blade, I can perfectly balance it. I can do it with my skills. So tell me what you are thinking. What features do you want?"

"This is interesting..."

Buzz buzz.

The blacksmiths gathered near Grid and Kraugel started to make a disturbance. It was surprising that a black-eyed man with a good face was sharing his thoughts with their king.

"This...?"

The four biggest blacksmiths from Pangea, including White, were the most surprised. They remembered that Kraugel was the 'Little Hero' of Pangea. The Kraugel they remembered was a great warrior. Yes, he wasn't a blacksmith. Nevertheless, Grid was listening to Kraugel's opinions.

'Why?'

Was he qualified to replace Khan's vacancy? The blacksmiths questioned it.

"He is a saint with a sword."

"...?"

"The first Sword Saint after Muller."

"...!!"

The youngest blacksmith, Panmir, announced the true identity of the black-eyed man. The stir was huge. The blacksmiths were astounded as they saw a prominent figure in a totally unexpected place. As they were at a loss for words, Panmir gave his opinion.

"Wouldn't the two of them make the best sword in history?"

No one was able to reject Panmir's opinion. The expectations about what sword would be born from the combined knowledge, experiences, and techniques of the legendary blacksmith and Sword Saint were great.

"But..." White was feeling admiration when he felt a sense of incongruity and asked, "Panmir, have you gathered all the firewood for today?"

"...I will go and come back to see His Majesty's sword."

It was very sad. Panmir pouted. He was the youngest blacksmith in the smithy despite being the 1st ranked blacksmith.

Over three hours. This was the time it took Grid and Kraugel to coordinate their opinions. They finally finished the shape of the sword. Now all that was left were the materials.

"The Blue Dragon's Breath and White Tiger's Breath..."

Grid confirmed the two breaths that Kraugel had.

"Will the sword use the Blue Dragon's Breath? Then I have to use a mineral compatible with the lightning attribute."

"No, I want my sword to contain the White Tiger's Breath."

"What?" Grid was confused. "Isn't the white tiger of the earth attribute?"

The earth attribute was related to a higher defense. It was common for the earth attribute to create options for a higher defense. Meanwhile, the lightning attribute was good for speed and power. Generally, it gave options for increasing attack power. In other words, the breath most suitable for a weapon was the blue dragon, not the white tiger.

"Why are you using a white tiger breath for your weapon? Isn't it better for armor? Shouldn't you use the White Tiger's Breath for armor?"

"No, this adamantium that I gathered is for armor. The Blue Dragon's Breath will be attached to the boots to increase the overall speed."

"But still. Isn't it hard to expect overwhelming attack power if you attach the White Tiger's Breath to the weapon? Shouldn't a weapon have high attack power? Look at the blueprint. You can expect to have additional defense options just from the form of the sword. But you want to increase your defense even more?"

"Just as speed is linked with power, weight is also directly linked to power. For example, Chris' 1,000 ton Sword."

"...Ah." Grid's common sense was broken. "Minerals with the earth attribute are generally harder and heavier... Do you think you can use that weight to exert a higher attack power?"

"Yes, I believe that if the White Tiger's Breath is used well, you can complete the best sword that combines high attack power and defense."

"That's a possible interpretation."

If he looked at magic as an example, the power of earth magic wasn't very weak. In particular, magic of the stone crushing series was very powerful.

"A weapon with the earth property..."

A smile crossed Grid's face. Once he heard Kraugel's words, he wondered about the results of earth-based weapons.

'It will be easy to name the item.'

A sword with strong earth attributes. A sword made of stone. Then he would try it.

"Okay. Let's finish the Stone Sword."

'Stone Sword?'

What was the Stone Sword? A chill went down Kraugel's spine.

Overgeared Guild, Overgeared Kingdom, Overgeared King... Grid's naming sense was the worst.

"Wait a minute, Grid."

"The material will be stone. We can sometimes replace it with bloodstone."

The mass production of the sword. A sword made of stone would be ideal for the Overgeared knights while the version made of bloodstone would be ideal for Grid and the Overgeared members. Yes, from the time that he asked Kraugel to cooperate with the item creation, Grid was aiming to improve the overall strength of the kingdom. Imagine the Overgeared knights and the soldiers using a sword designed by a Sword Saint. It would be overwhelming.

"The name of the item."

"Hey Grid..."

"Stone Sword."

"..."

Kraugel couldn't understand Grid's naming sense. He should be glad of one fact. There was room for various modifiers to be added to the items that Grid produced. Yes, the name of the sword used by Kraugel in the future wasn't likely to be a simple Stone Sword. Especially when it was a sword with the White Tiger's Breath attached.

However, Kraugel didn't know this fact and was filled with deep despair.