

The Return of the Disaster-Class Hero

## **CHAPTER 71: CONDITIONS ARE A BIT TRICKY**

Unsurprisingly, Lee Gun's words caused a stir in his surroundings.

“D-disciple.”

The people near him were in disbelief. Of course, the Goat Saint had also said a new god had emerged, but that had just been a story.

“C-could it be? Is there really a new god?”

“No way! Does the 13th really exist?”

If a new god had indeed appeared, the world would be turned on its head.

‘The twelve gods gave abilities to humanity.’

Of course, one had to pay a price for these abilities. Whether one was an adult or a child didn't matter. In this era, people could live as beings above normal humans. This was why humanity couldn't go against the order the twelve gods had created. And now, the 13th god and its Saint had shown up!

The disciples of the Archer looked at their Saint with surprised expressions.

Hugo was the same; his mouth had fallen open. “Gun! How can you say nothing to me?”

“See? Even Saint-nim didn't know about it!”

“Not my son! You b\*\*\*\*\*d!” Hugo shouted.

‘Ah! Is that what he was aiming for?’ The Archer Saint stood up in fright. “Not on my watch, you b\*\*\*\*\*d!”

Of course, Hugo understood why Lee Gun was trying to acquire a disciple. Disciples were a strong requisite for a Saint. Of course, Lee Gun probably didn't need disciples to be peerless. However, there was no downside to having them. Instead, that might make him into a transcendent being!

However, this was Hugo's son Lee Gun was talking about! ‘Has he lost his mind? He's already giving me enough of a headache without doing this!’

Hugo knew there was no way his son would become a normal disciple. It wouldn't end there. Chun Sungjae would create Lee Gun's church. He would write gospels and recite prayers about Lee Gun.

However, Chun Sungjae didn't care about his father's reaction. His face held an expression of disbelief. "A-are you sure about it?"

Hugo felt a knife turn in his heart when he saw his son look touched by the offer. There was no way he would let this happen! Unable to stand it in the end, he had to put his foot down.

"Don't fall for it, Sungjae! Of course, Dad's temple is better!"

Chun Sungjae looked at his father with an expression saying, 'What is this ahjussi talking about?'

Hugo remained undeterred and activated his magical energy. "Look! Dad can do this!"

Lee Gun furrowed his brows at the sight.

Pahk!

The room suddenly became scorching hot.

[The Archer's power burns into the sky!]

A blazing flame appeared in the room. The flame took the shape of a ball and floated into the air, looking like the sun. The blazing red dots on it shone like bright gems. The flame was menacing like magma.

This cool sight would make one feel as if they were looking at a small universe. As if to prove this point, the disciples of the Archer Saint looked at it with their mouths agape. After all, this was a Saint's special technique.

The one who executed this skill said, "Look! It's the sun! Isn't that cool! Sungjae, I remember the old days when you said Dad looked cool! You wanted this! In the past, you were too young. It was too dangerous. Now, you're all grown up. If you come under the Archer, I'll let you play with it!"

A sour expression appeared on Chun Sungjae's face. 'How old does Dad think I am?' He said, "Where are you going to use that aside for entertainment purposes?"

"What? That is... Darkness will no longer be a problem! When my Sungjae studies, you can—"

Chun Sungjae looked at Hugo as if the Saint were an idiot. “Why wouldn’t I just turn on the light?”

“I can put it in a steel barrel! I can make you roasted chicken with it! I know my Sungjae likes that!”

“You have an oven. Why would you do that?”

“I bet you don’t know this. You can c\*\*k chicken without oil. This is cutting-edge cooking.”

“I’ll just put it in the air fryer.”

“...!” In the end, Hugo gave up on the sun. He took out his bow. “Look at this! As a member of the Archer temple, your accuracy will go up! You’ll get first place in any shooting game! You can take down hidden enemies one by one—”

“I don’t play FPS games. Also, my specialty is AOE skills on the battlefield. I don’t need that.”

Hugo continued to tempt him. “Archer disciples can track things! If you lose your phone, you can immediately find it!”

“Do you not know that a phone has GPS?”

“Archer disciples are great at handling musical instruments!”

“I don’t need that.”

“You’ll be great at poetry!”

Frustrated with it all, Chun Sungjae replied, “Alright! The Sagittarius sucks. Also, Dad, you should never do missionary work again.”

“...” Hugo sat back down, making Lee Gun click his tongue. Lee Gun wondered why Hugo didn’t highlight the fact that he was one of the battle-type Saints.

In the end, Hugo yelled, “Do you know this? Going under Gun wouldn’t be helpful to you! He only knows how to beat up monsters and insult people! That’s all you’ll learn from him! His only talent is fighting!”

Chun Sungjae looked shocked. “Isn’t that awesome?”

“What?”

“It is my dream to become a battle-type disciple. It’ll be awesome!”

“Sungjae!!!!” Hugo shouted!

“Uncle is a battle-type Saint! I hadn’t even thought about that! As expected of Lee Gun-nim!”

“No! Dad won’t allow it! In fact, give up on being an awakened being right now—Kuhk!”

Lee Gun stepped on Hugo’s foot and stopped him. “Ok, you’re done!” He then brought up a skill that he had learned for this occasion.

[You can use the <Familiar> skill.]

[Familiar (Missionary) (F)]

– Missionary skill

– A human may be awakened as a disciple of the Serpent Bearer.

– If the skill is used on a Construct or a monster, the skill will tame them.

Familiar skill was a must when one wanted to take in a human familiar.

[Caution! Familiar (Missionary) can be attempted only once on the same person.]

[Please decide with utmost care.]

[A disciple’s betrayal will threaten a god’s authority.]

[Please be very careful in choosing someone who will be loyal to the Serpent Bearer.]

That didn’t matter. Since it was Sungjae, Lee Gun didn’t need to check his loyalty. Hadn’t the young man already proven himself in the incident with Heiji? That wasn’t all.

‘Sungjae is top tier in terms of potential.’ Lee Gun had witnessed it himself. Chun Sungjae was young, but the other disciples hadn’t treated him well. ‘At the very least, he will grow to be an SS rank.’

Heiji had merely thought that Sungjae had the potential to become one of the Ten Stars. ‘Short-sighted fools.’ There was more to it.

– Chun Sungjae’s <Personal attributes>

[Genius] Learning Effect: 200%

[Predict Future] Sense 1s into the future

[Persistent Obsession] Specialized Tracking, Increased Completion rate, Increased Success Rate

[Idol Worship] When you are with your idol, all your personal attributes will strengthen.

These personal attributes would continue to grow depending on one's personality and environment. In Chun Sungjae's case, the Genius attribute was pretty good. However, <Idol Worship> was the better one. That was a rare cheat ability.

'He's smart, so I think he'll manage the other familiars pretty well.'

At this point, Hugo was despairing. Of course, his son becoming Lee Gun's disciple wasn't a bad thing. A part of Hugo felt relief, in fact. He knew Lee Gun's prowess better than anyone; Lee Gun was a thousand times better than the Gemini Saint.

The problem was that Hugo knew his son would never look up to him after becoming Lee Gun's disciple.

Lee Gun had a smile of victory on his lips, a devilish smile. 'This is like taking candy from a baby.'

He was about to easily clear one of the three trials. "Alright. You will become Uncle's disciple."

However...

Tuhl-suhk!

Chun Sungjae suddenly fell to his knees, his forehead on the floor.

Lee Gun laughed. "Sungjae? You don't have to kneel!"

"I'm sorry!"

"What?" Lee Gun's eyes turned round.

Chun Sungjae, whose head still touched the ground, had a crying expression on his face. It was as if his world was about to collapse. It looked like he didn't want to speak the next words. Yet, he said, "Thank you very much for your offer! However, I can't do it!"

"?!"

Wailing, Chun Sungjae ran outside. The expression on everyone's face was a sight to behold.

\* \* \*

It was as if the world had gone mad.

"I'm sure of it. The world is ending tomorrow." The first one to speak was a disciple of the Archer Saint. They looked like they had seen a ghost.

"I can't believe Sungjae didn't accept Lee Gun-nim's offer!"

"This is nuts! That was obviously a fake!"

"I'm sure the Pisces Saint sent in a changeling spy!"

"We have to vet him right now!"

Hugo's subordinates were ready to go to war. Of course, their Saint didn't care if his subordinates were being serious or not. As Sungjae's father, he was overjoyed.

"Hahaha! That's my son! There is no way he would become Gun's disciple! F\*\*k yeah!" Hugo was so happy that he started dancing a jig. Waving his hands, he tap-danced. It was quite the spectacle.

On the other hand, Lee Gun was in a bind. Of course, the young man's decision hadn't offended or shocked him. It just felt weird. 'Why can't he do it?'

Chun Sungjae's faith was sky-high. There was no way he would turn the offer down unless he had lost his mind. Of course, Lee Gun didn't need Sungjae to be his disciple, but...

"Ha ha ha ha! No way he would serve Gun!" Hugo continued to make fun of Lee Gun while tap-dancing. "Ha ha ha! Gun got rejected! Gun got rejected!"

"Hey, Taeksoo! I'm being nice right now. Just quit it. Once is enough."

"Gun got rejected! Rejected!"

Was it an exaggeration to say that Hugo looked the happiest at this moment ever since Lee Gun's return? He continued to say, "Ha ha ha ha! Even the mighty Lee Gun isn't much—"

Bbah-gahk!

Lee Gun's kick landed on Hugo.

“Huh-uhk...!”

Sent flying away, Hugo clutched at his stomach. ‘It hurts. It f\*\*\*\*\*g hurts.’ “G-Gun! You..! I can’t believe you put real power behind that kick!”

Lee Gun didn’t care if Hugo was dying from pain. He just picked up his phone. “Yes! Hi, Yooha! It’s me, Uncle. Do you want to become Uncle’s disciple? Yes. Your Dad gave a strong recommendation that I ask you.”

When Hugo heard this, he screamed. His face was asking for forgiveness. “Gun...”

“Yes. Right! I’ll train you. You’ll stick to me for 365 days.”

“#&#\$\*!”

“Yes. Withdraw from the Leo temple and come here!”

Hugo continued to speak in undecipherable words, but Lee Gun ruthlessly ended the call. The Archer Saint despaired. Then, he sat back down in a respectable manner as if he had never tried to make fun of Lee Gun. “Lee Gun-nim! Not Yooha! Please spare Yooha!”

“I’ll see how you act before I make that decision.” Lee Gun had never made the call. Grinning, he put away his phone. He would roll with it.

‘He must have his reasons.’ Lee Gun thought about Chun Sungjae. With his faith toward him so high, it didn’t make sense for Sungjae to run away. ‘Also, his figures for the other gods are negative.’

Lee Gun couldn’t think of a reason Sungjae would enter the service of a different god. Hugo had thought it was simply a rebellious face, but Lee Gun snorted. Even if the young man didn’t listen to his father, Lee Gun didn’t think Sungjae would throw away Hugo to follow a different Saint.

This was true for Yooha too. ‘There must be a reason she is with the Leo temple.’ Lee Gun hadn’t given her the offer yet, but the probability that Yooha would turn him down like Sungjae was high.

‘Moreover, she might not even have a 100% faith.’ So, Lee Gun gave up on pursuing the siblings for now. He stood up as he held no grudge. ‘Let’s finish the trial of strength first.’

Lee Gun picked up his hammer. It was a tool he made weapons with, but it was also his partner in battle, an indispensable weapon.

Lee Gun was about to leave, but he suddenly came to a stop. Then he rolled his eyes. 'I am curious as to what this is about.' He wagged his finger.

[Get Hit Instead of Me (F)]

As soon as he activated the skill, someone surprising appeared in front of Lee Gun.

“Gemini Saint!” The startled Archer disciples were about to get into their battle stance.

However, the charismatic beauty screamed as soon as she saw Lee Gun. “I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’ll crawl on the floor if you want!”

Heiji was prostrate in front of Lee Gun. This was actually Raeriqueen, who was in Heiji’s body. Lee Gun had sent her back to the Gemini temple to see how they were doing.

The “Get Hit Instead of Me” skill could remember up to three people. It would reset itself on a first in, first out basis. Raeriqueen was the very last person Lee Gun touched. So, Lee Gun had to be careful about who he touched with his left hand if he wanted to call forth Raeriqueen.

“Send me to Europe. I want you to find out why Sungjae insists on staying with the Gemini temple. Also, I want you to tell me everything you know about the secretary position.”

\* \* \*

Montreal, Canada!

Caw! Caw!

In this coniferous forest, not a single beam of sunlight could penetrate the dense foliage. The forest was riled up in tension. It was to be expected. This place was the Scorpio Saint’s headquarters. Fierce beasts she had raised surrounded this place.

“Be careful! This is the den of the Scorpio Saint.”

“We will be having a meeting with her.”

“Be on your guards. You might die if you put down your guards because of your beauty!”

Everyone gulped under the lit torchlight. The ones gathered here were the officers of the Leo temple.



“We must succeed in making a deal with the Scorpio Saint. One of Lee Gun’s eight great holy items is on the balance.”

“Yes!”

These disciples’ mission was considered an S rank mission. Every one of them might get slaughtered here. Of course, their temple’s SS rank disciple and Chun Yoocha were participating in the mission to protect the group.

Actually, Chun Yoocha had come only because her uncle’s holy item was the transaction item. Suddenly...

Brrrrrrr!

Yoocha tilted her head in puzzlement after she received a text. Her reaction was due to the sender. ‘Dad?’

She had already told her dad that she would be on a mission, so the message had to be urgent. Thus, Chun Yoocha opened the chat window.

[Hugo: Yoocha!]

[Hugo: Gun’s temple is a no!]

[Hugo: I’ll allow Sungjae, but not you!]

[Hugo: There was that incident with the Libra Saint. You’ll be safest staying in the Leo temple!]

[Hugo: Anyway, Gun’s temple is off limits!]

This was her first time hearing about this. Chun Yoocha tilted her head in puzzlement. “Uncle’s temple?”

## **CHAPTER 72: CONDITIONS ARE A BIT TRICKY**

San Francisco, The United States!

People screamed within the white hospital.

“My god! You’re awake!”

“Oh lord! This is a miracle.!”

The emergency room became abuzz.

The patient was in such an awful state that only interested parties could enter the room, which was off-limits to everyone else. Doctors and nurses had crowded the bed, looking to god for help. Their gaze headed toward the patient on oxygen.

This patient was none other than Leo Saint Stevens. With bandages wrapped all around his head, he could only move his eyes.

Feeling deeply moved, the doctors and nurses spoke to Stevens.

“Are you ok?”

“This is absurd! There’s no way he should’ve opened his eyes again!”

The Leo Saint licked his lips behind his respirator. His breathing was rough. After he licked his lips a couple of times, a sound finally came out. “What happened?”

This made the nearby people scream.

“That’s what we wanted to ask!”

“Your skull was crushed! A frontal bone was crushed by a hammer or something similar. You were in a state where we couldn’t do much!”

The half-conscious Leo Saint gasped as his eyes widened. It seemed he had recalled his last memory. The memory was fuzzy, but he had heard Lee Gun’s laughter while feeling pain in his head. That was it.

Stevens’s muscular subordinates looked moved as they grabbed his hand.

“You being alive is a miracle!”

It seemed they knew who the culprit was.

“Lee Gun did this. That evil b\*\*\*\*\*d hit Saint-nim’s head as if he were breaking open a watermelon!”

At the mention of that name, the Leo Saint suddenly grabbed his subordinate’s arm.

“Saint-nim?”

“Lee Gun!”

“What?”

“Did Lee Gun leave behind my weapon?”

These words left his disciples dumbfounded. They almost told the Leo Saint to snap out of it.

“That b\*\*\*\*\*d is a villain. He committed the heinous crime of cracking your head open! He used a dirty tactic of attacking when you were weakened—”

“I don’t care about that. What about the weapon!” replied the Saint.

“Wait a moment! You have to remain calm right now!”

The Leo Saint’s eyes became bloodshot instead. “My weapon!” He brought down his thick arm.

Boom!

The blow contained so much power that it was almost unbelievable the Leo Saint had been close to death a moment ago.

The Saint shouted, “Lee Gun!”

“You can’t! If you do this, your wounds...”

“Your skull hasn’t mended yet! Please!”

“My weapon! Hurry up and bring me Lee Gun! Tell him to make me a weapon worth a billion dollars!”

Stevens’s eyes were filled with life and power, an admirable sight for his disciples. Yet, the disciples were close to turning mad. Moreover, they couldn’t understand the reason behind his demands. Of all the people to make it, why was the Saint insisting on Lee Gun making his weapon!

“Saint-nim! Lee Gun isn’t even a smith!”

“That’s right! If you want a weapon, you should ask the Goat Saint!”

“Why would you ask Lee Gun?” The Leo Saint let out an indecipherable scream. He was trying to say they were wrong.

Stevens let his temper get the better of him, so he became unable to speak coherent words. In his frustration, he smashed the medical devices, driving his bed to a collapsable state.

This left his disciples flustered. They had never seen their Saint act like this. It was as if the man had changed after meeting Lee Gun. Anyway, that wasn't important right now.

“Don't worry about Lee Gun!”

“We will request compensation for damages from Lee Gun!”

Their words made the bed rock again.

“Ah! Stop doing useless s\*\*t!” the Leo Saint replied.

“What? Why is asking for damages useless?”

“If you do, Lee Gun will run away again! He won't make my weapon!” Stevens explained.

“What???”

“Whatever! Just shut up and do as I say!”

Several of them were moved by the Leo Saint's words. He was acting like a battle-type Saint. They expressed their admiration. However, many of them didn't know what to say.

‘He defeated Lee Gun on live TV before. Didn't he say Lee Gun was nothing?’

‘Why would he want that person to...’

Of course, the Leo Saint didn't hesitate to do odd things in the pursuit of power. Around a decade ago, he had brought the Archer's Saint ten-year-old daughter into his temple. The little girl hadn't developed any abilities, yet he made her a deputy general.

It was something that had never happened in that macho temple. Of course, Chun Yoocha turned out to be one of the Ten Stars, who all the disciples came to accept.

On the other hand, there was the story from the press conference. It was said that Lee Gun had killed Red Eye.

‘Is there some piece of information that we're unaware of?’

The disciples screamed when the Leo Saint tried to rush out of the hospital room.

“Sedative!”

The Saint became a bit calmer when the doctors and nurses h\*\*\*\*\*d him up to an IV of sedatives. However, his obsession with Lee Gun didn't end. "So? Where's Lee Gun!"

The question made the disciples massage their foreheads. They were sure that if they didn't tell him, the Leo Saint would try to track Lee Gun down on his own.

"He's in the western countries of the European Alliance."

"!" Stevens's eyes shook.

The disciples had knowing expressions on their faces.

"Even Saint-nim can't chase him there, right?"

That was right. The west was the territory of the Virgo Saint. That man acted as if he was the second coming of Alexander the Great.

The situation was better than the southern countries of the European Alliance, which were completely shut off from the world as a <Unified Nation>. Yet, the west was restricted and hostile.

The European alliance was drastically different from Korea. Korea was relatively the same even after the unknown civilization had invaded it. Moreover, the other Saints were forbidden from entering the European Alliance.

'Anyone caught trespassing is killed instantly.'

The Virgo Saint had enough power to enforce such laws. He was a powerful battle-type Saint.

He was the Saint that Hugo had warned Lee Gun about early on. He was a Saint in the Demi-god rank. There was a good reason why he was one of the top two.

As expected, Stevens's expression was a sight to behold. "Has he lost his mind? Why did he go there?"

"Yes! The European alliance sent a commission to Lee Gun."

"Commission?" The Leo Saint was surprised.

"Yes. A monster considered to be unkillable has shown up there."

"The world is focused on Lee Gun after he killed Thousand Legs."

“Of course, the media is trying to stop people’s faith from dropping too far. They are putting up a token effort to ignore Lee Gun, but....”

“It seems the Virgo Saint is requesting help....” Stevens uproariously laughed as if his laugh would reach the heavens.

“Saint-nim?”

“Don’t be so naive!” Stevens remarked.

“What do you mean?”

“The Virgo Saint would never offer a commission to Lee Gun.” Stevens laughed in an animated manner. A harsh light flashed in his eyes. They were the eyes of a savage beast. “The Virgo Saint hates Lee Gun the most among us.”

“...!”

Although Stevens wasn’t interested in the topic, when Lee Gun had fallen into the tower’s trap, the most likely culprit he had assumed was the Virgo Saint. Of course, Stevens didn’t remember seeing anything out of the ordinary.

‘Anyway, he’s basically walking into the tomb of the West.’ Even though he had the fierce expression of a savage beast, the Leo Saint still gulped. He didn’t mind the development.

He then asked, “What about Chun Yoocha?”

“Yes? As one of the Ten Stars, she went on an S rank mission. She’s at the den of the Scorpio Saint...”

Stevens liked what he heard, and his eyes flashed savagely. “Search Chun Yoocha’s room. I’m sure the bone is there.”

Instead of answering him, however, the disciples asked for more sedatives.

\* \* \*

<European Alliance> The west!

The western dome was where the east met the west. The Aquarius Saint and the Virgo Saint had fought for supremacy in this place. The situation was different from that in the East where the Sheep Saint and the Gemini Saint had fought.

Of course, Sophie was at the top in terms of the number of disciples, but in reality, the Virgo Saint possessed overwhelming more power.

The Virgo Saint had left Sophie alone because the latter possessed a lot of disciples. If he hadn't acted like a hero, he would have severed Sophie's head a long time ago. This meant that this place was the Virgo Saint's turf in reality.

However, in recent days, the Libra Saint was encroaching from the south. Moreover, the Scorpio Saint was encroaching from the north. As their gods gained disciples, the other Saints became threats as they expanded their territories.

Unlike Korea, Europe had culturally transitioned to a religious empire.

[<Called out by god> Dishonest Taxpayers! Sent to god's forced labor camp.]

[The civic groups state 4,500 people are missing. "The non-taxpayers cannot be found anywhere on the holy ground. We believe they were sent into a different world or dragged into the unknown civilization."]

[The temple claims, "There is no way such a thing could happen.."]

Lee Gun was in Belgium. It was past the Italian peninsula, which had changed into a black zone. With a sour expression, the man sat at the train station. It was inevitable.

[There are 139,844 people in the 1 km radius. Search Complete.]

[Faith data is being pulled up.]

[Virgo Faith: 90%]

[Virgo Faith: 85%]

[Virgo Faith: 95%]

...

[Virgo Faith: 93%]

[Caution! There are no people that worship a god aside from the Virgo]

Lee Gun's expression turned stormy. 'S\*\*t! This place is basically under a dictatorship.'

He had planned on taking care of his business, and in the meantime, looking for a disciple. However...

[Serpent Bearer Faith: 0.0005%]

[Serpent Bearer Faith: 0.00001%]

[Serpent Bearer Faith: 0.00003%]

‘S\*\*t! At this point, it looks hopeless. I thought opinions of me would get better after I killed Thousand Legs.’ Lee Gun was eating some fries next to the train station. He could see a transparent dome not too far away.

Aside from the information in front of him, there was another reason for his foul mood. What was it?

“Wow!” For some odd reason, people kept glancing at his face as they walked past him.

This made Lee Gun restless. ‘That’s odd. I put on a good disguise.’ Why were men and women of all ages making a big deal as they walked past him?

‘There are no bad intentions behind their gazes.’ Lee Gun put on his sunglasses once again in annoyance.

Hugo didn’t pay attention to Lee Gun. He nervously hid behind the wall, afraid someone might recognize him. “S\*\*t! This place is too close to England! I’ve participated in several official meet & greets with the British government!”

Was it because he skipped out his commission from the British government? Hugo looked anxious. Of course, he was freaking out for one more reason. “Do you know this? We entered this country in secret. Saints aren’t supposed to enter this place!”

“What about it? You are the one who followed me here.”

“Do you want me to send you alone into the den of an enemy? Also, you’ll probably call Yooha when I’m not with you! You’ll contract her as a disciple!”

“...” Lee Gun looked at Hugo as if the latter were an idiot. He had a good reason to feel this way.

<Hugo Otis>

[Ophiuchus Faith 300%]

[For some unknown reason (daughter), his faith in the Serpent Bearer is constantly deteriorating.

“...” ‘Should I just brainwash this b\*\*\*\*\*d and make him a disciple of the Serpent Bearer? If that’s the deteriorated figure, how high was the original figure?’



Well, Lee Gun could understand that. When a person died, they became romanticized. Moreover, Hugo had been the only one who had known about his abilities. Hugo had seen all of his achievements. It wouldn't be odd that Hugo deified him in his death.

'He pretty much did missionary work when he was drunk'

Despite all that, Hugo's figure was meaningless. Why?

[He is a contracted being loved by a different god.]

[You cannot make him your disciple.]

[The imbalance in the tradeoff is too large.]

[The Sagittarius's level is too high. You will not be able to handle the backlash.]

'As expected, I'll have to make the Sagittarius my slave first.'

Of course, Hugo was unaware of Lee Gun's terrifying plan(?). The Archer Saint had a pale face as he warned his friend, "If I'm being honest, you're in a very dangerous place."

"Why?" Lee Gun asked.

"Heiji said it. She claimed she saw the knife that stabbed you in the west."

"She did."

"There were always talks that the Virgo Saint was the one to drop you. When I bullied Yang Wei, he said the Virgo Saint was at the forefront in erasing your presence from the world."

"!"

Hugo continued, "There is no way he'll let you be if people recognize you. Aside from the monsters, this place is dangerous to navigate without a guide. The surveillance network here is—"

"Ah! You don't have to worry about that." Lee Gun cut him off.

"What?"

Lee Gun nonchalantly pointed somewhere. Hugo almost screamed when he looked in that direction.

“Lee Guuuuuuun-Niiiiiiiiim!” Someone was running toward them while wailing. He was a man in his middle years.

“That person is...!”

Although this man had a disguise on, he was the SS-rank appraiser Lee Gun had met before. Aside from Hugo, this appraiser was the first one to find out Lee Gun’s identity.

“It’s an eternal honor to meet my master again!” The appraiser wailed as he prostrated on the ground. It was as if he was giving Lee Gun absolute fealty.

The surprised Hugo looked at Lee Gun.

Lee Gun let out an evil laugh. “For your information, this guy is an SS-rank disciple for the Virgo Saint.”

The Archer Saint’s mouth fell open. ‘You crazy son of a...’

Yes, this appraiser was someone the Virgo Saint treasured the most. He was the only SS-rank appraiser in the world.

‘He’s an SS-rank and a member of the Ten Stars!’

Above all else, there was another reason Lee Gun had called this man here. ‘There is a high probability that he has 100% faith.’ The appraiser was a scary b\*\*\*\*\*d who had recognized him through his wood carving.

‘Must be 100%!’ Lee Gun’s eyes flashed as he activated the Gaze of a God.

[Ophiuchus Faith: 99%]

“...” Lee Gun did a double-take in disbelief. ‘What’

[Ophiuchus Faith: 99.1%]

In the end, Lee Gun lowered his head as he kept punching the wall. ‘S\*\*t, one percent! So close!’

He was off a mere 1% from the requirement! Even though this faith was higher than the figure for the Virgo...

On the other hand, the appraiser had no idea what was happening. “Lee Gun-nim.”

The appraiser gulped as he carefully whispered to Lee Gun. It was as if he was putting his life on the line. “I have something to tell you before I show you the way.”

“?”

“It has to do with the symbol on the item you gave me.”

Lee Gun’s eyes widened.

The appraiser looked at his surroundings as he seriously spoke. “I believe I found the culprit.”

“!”

## CHAPTER 73: CONDITIONS ARE A BIT TRICKY

Nicknamed “Divine Discerner,” Appraiser Jinmyung was an SS rank disciple. He was the man who had claimed to be Lee Gun’s student at the Integrated Exchange. Lee Gun had given him the task of finding information about a dagger, the dagger that had dropped him into the trap twenty years ago.

Jinmyung carefully handed over a box to Lee Gun. It contained the short sword Lee Gun had given to him after beating up Sophie.

[Short Sword Infused with Death Energy]

Rank: ???

– Cannot bring up info.

Hugo was surprised to see it, his reaction understandable. “Didn’t you show this to Heiji a couple of days ago??”

He was sure that Lee Gun had shown this blade to Heiji and asked about the culprit. In response, Lee Gun grinned and took out something from his bosom.

Hugo exclaimed. “That’s the one!” It was the same short sword.

“The one I have is a replica,” Lee Gun explained.

“What? Replica? I never saw you make that thing.”

Lee Gun snorted as he tossed the blade between his hands. “I can make this small blade during a bathroom break.”

“...!” Hugo was shocked. As a Saint, he had been forcefully granted the Eye for Beauty(S) skill. Yet, he hadn’t noticed at all that this item was a replica.

Moreover, every item Lee Gun made was always two points better than everything else. This made the copy much more valuable. So, Hugo wondered if the copy held any extra abilities.

‘This looks like the original!’ Hugo’s admiration of Lee Gun’s abilities lasted only a moment. “That’s fine! However, I can’t believe you entrusted that item to a Virgo disciple! If I’m being blunt, he could’ve sold you out to the Virgo Saint!”

“What?!” The one to get surprised was Jinmyung.

Hugo continued, “You should be a bit more suspicious of others, Gun!”

“What did you just say, you foppish Saint! You’re nothing without your face, you gangly b\*\*\*\*\*d!”

“...?!”

Jinmyung was ruthless even toward a Saint. Hugo had never been treated this way in his life. However, it seemed Jinmyung was furious. “Why would I sell out my teacher of twenty years? You will be in last place as a Saint forever!”

“...!” This unexpected blow took Hugo by surprise. It made him wonder if this was the appraiser’s normal personality. “He has been your teacher for twenty years? When the hell did you meet Gun?”

“Ah! That’s right. You two are brothers.” Lee Gun chimed in.

“?!”

When Lee Gun double tapped his kill, Hugo took damage for the second time. It meant Lee Gun had raised a student in secret from him. However, the damage didn’t end there.

Lee Gun continued, “If we are strictly going by order, the appraiser is your older brother.”

“?!”

Hugo took damage for the third time.

“Moreover, he’s a thousand times more useful when it comes to investigating. That’s why I left it with him.”

The fourth time...

“Anyway, you guys should be friendly with each other. You do know he is a friend of Sungjae, right, Taeksoo?”

Hugo, who felt like dying, angrily replied, “I don’t know! My son doesn’t have a friend like him!”

Jinmyung looked at Hugo with pity. “Now that I’ve met you, I can see what your son was talking about. He has a good reason to not like you. You’re stubborn and inflexible, a boomer.”

“Kuh-huhk!!” Hugo crumpled to the ground. This was a kill shot.

Lee Gun didn’t care what he did. When it came to a task he issued, Jinmyung had used any means possible to complete the task. Why?

[Short Sword Infused with Death Energy]

Rank: ???

– Cannot bring up info.

[An evil power has destroyed the information within the sword]

[There is no info left within the sword]

[Gaze of a God is too low in level to check the ingredient information]

[No tracking skill can track the remaining owner of the sword]

Hugo, a tracking specialist, couldn’t glean any clues from the sword. However, Jinmyung could do it. Why?

Jinmyung (SS rank) Virgo

Awakened Name(Baptized Name): [One Who Determines Authenticity of All Items]

– One who can tell the history of antiquities

Effect: Can extract memories from all items.

– Possess a skill that determines the authenticity of items.

[Read Memory! SS rank (Virgo)]

[Memory Transfer! S rank (Virgo)]

[Lee Gun-nim's Student (Personal)! B rank (Virgo)]

[Memory Transplant! S rank (Virgo)]

...

Personal Attributes

[Unknown Confidence] Luck Buff: 30%

[Artisan's Sharp Eyes] Observation Buff

[Diligence] Stamina Increase: 20%

[Obsession] Works with items above A rank

[Fanatic] Brainwashing & Hypnosis type skill. Incapacitation! A skill he wants to hide.

[Sensitive Mind] Stamina Discharge: 50%

[Voice] Takes the energy of the opponent

Jinmyung's main skill was the <Read Memory> skill. Whether it was humans, objects, rooms, or monsters, he could extract the object's memories.

He was also born with sharp eyes, but he had become an SS-rank appraiser for a reason. Jinmyung could sift through the memories to check if an item was real or fake. That was full proof.

When Lee Gun had peeped at the ability, he had known Jinmyung was the only one up for this task. 'Well, the only troublesome part was that he couldn't read my memory.' The reason for this was simple too.

[A human cannot dare invade the body of the Serpent Bearer.]

Therefore, Lee Gun wanted Jinmyung to read the memory of the short sword. 'He did say it would take a long time since it wasn't a normal item.'

Lee Gun asked, "So who's the culprit?"

Jinmyung quickly studied his surroundings. "Please excuse me, Lee Gun-nim." His sword-shaped badge thrummed.

Ting!

A curtain of light surrounded the trio.

[A rental skill from the Pisces has been activated.]

[For the next 30 minutes, <Silence Barrier (S)> will remain activated.]

[Rental fee of \$500k has been deducted.]

[Thank you for using it.]

[The water's energy prevents sound from leaking outside.]

When the curtain of light seeped into their bodies, Jinmyung became tense. “You said a sword similar to this was auctioned five years ago?”

“Yes. I heard an SS rank appraiser appraised it.” This was another reason Lee Gun had sought out Jinmyung. He wanted to see who had sold the sword.

Jinmyung gulped. “In truth, the person who appraised that sword was my senior.”

“!”

“I came in after him. His ability was different, but he was also one of Ten Stars, one under the Virgo Saint.”

“Oh! Your senior must know more about the culprit. Can you contact him?” Lee Gun asked.

“He passed away.”

“!”

“He met a premature death. One week after he appraised the sword, he was assassinated.”

The expressions on Lee Gun's and Hugo's faces changed.

“Also, I extracted the memories from the sword. Some of them have been deleted. Basically, someone covered their tracks perfectly. This shouldn't have been possible unless some being with enormous power meddled in it.”

“...!”

In other words, Lee Gun's opponent wasn't someone normal.

Hugo accepted the reasoning. Even if Lee Gun was tired from killing Red Eye, there was no way a stab in the back by a mere sword would send him into a trap. The Archer Saint was soon proven right.

“There is a powerful curse skill placed on it. The curse is powerful enough to kill a god.”

“...!”

Curse skills were the domain of the Cancer, but even the Crab Saint wasn't skilled enough to kill a god.

This implied that a single Zodiac Saint couldn't pull this off. In fact, Lee Gun already knew the power used on him didn't fit with any of the twelve Zodiac Saints.

“I believe the culprit received power from someone and stabbed Lee Gun-nim.”

Lee Gun smirked. ‘As expected, is the unknown civilization involved?’

After a moment of hesitation, Jinmyung continued, “Anyway, I was able to scrape together snippets of memories...”

“What did you see?”

Jinmyung shut his eyes. His next words were shocking. “It was the Virgo Saint. He stabbed Lee Gun-nim!”

“...!”

Jinmyung's hands shook from the betrayal. The sword's memories were scrubbed, so the memory he had recovered was fuzzy and fragmented. However, he was sure of it. The memory that came out from the short sword was from his Saint.

“I wanted to make sure, so I secretly searched the Virgo Saint's weapon storage. I found identical items...” Jinmyung opened the bag.

Lee Gun laughed when he saw the contents of the bag, while Hugo almost fainted. Weapons identical to the sword that had stabbed Lee Gun were inside it.

Jinmyung was an SS-rank disciple, yet his faith toward the Virgo Saint had been dropping. This was the reason. However, he was fine with this development. Suddenly, he thought about the commission from the European Alliance. Hugo's son had brought it. It was a commission from the Virgo Saint.

“Does that mean the Virgo Saint called you here to— Huhk!”



Hugo was cut off.

Lee Gun, who had taken the sword back, suddenly unsheathed it.

Sguhng!

Twenty years— No, he had been trapped inside the tower for several hundred years. Despite the passage of all those years, he looked undamaged.

Lee Gun's gaze was fixed on the blade. The blade was so beyond being odd that it gave one goosebump.

“Gun?”

“I want to know about the curse skill within this blade.”

“What?” Jinmyung asked.

“You said the skill could kill even a god. Can you reactivate the skill?”

“...!”

Hugo and Jinmyung were both scared out of their minds.

“No way you are thinking about doing that!”

Lee Gun's snake eyes flashed in a scary manner. “It can kill a god. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.”

Jinmyung shivered when he saw the killing intent from Lee Gun. It was something he hadn't witnessed before. However, he still replied, “I know a Regenerator who can bring back the power of a spent skill. I will contact him.”

Lee Gun laughed. Then, he held something out to Jinmyung. It was a necklace.

“This is a protection-type holy item I made. You should keep it just in case.”

“Lee Gun-nim!”

Of course, the necklace was imbued with surveillance and tracking abilities too. It was unknown whether Jinmyung was aware of this or not, but he felt just touched by the fact that Lee Gun-nim had given him an item.

Lee Gun had a more urgent business he had to take care of right now. “First, I have to catch the monster that showed up here.”

“!”

‘I’ll take care of the Virgo Saint after I finish the Trial of Strength.’ The trial was on a time limit. Lee Gun looked at Hugo. “You sent your subordinates ahead as an advance party, right?”

“Yes. They should be...”

Suddenly...

“Lee Gun-nim!”

“!”

Hugo’s subordinates, the ones in the advance party, appeared in the distance. When they reached Lee Gun, one of them brought out a cloth bag.

“Lee Gun-nim! This is it! We found some fur from the monster you two mentioned!”

“We were lucky! We ran across someone who had been attacked by the monster...!”

Hugo, who was pushed to the back, found their behavior ridiculous. “Hey! I’m the one who ordered you to find it...”

However, his underlings didn’t pay any attention to him.

“If it’s Lee Gun-nim, this should be enough to know what kind of foe you’re going to fight, right?”

“Unlike our Saint-nim, your analytical ability is outstanding.”

Hugo felt a surge of anger, but no one cared about that.

“Lee Gun-nim. Is this the monster you’re looking for?”

Lee Gun let out a sharp laugh. “Bingo.”

[Fur of the Monster that eats gods(SS)]

[It is the target for your Trial of Strength.]

His intuition had been correct. The monster that had appeared in this place was considered unkillable. There was a chance that the Virgo Saint had called it forth to harm him.

‘This might be an unexpected gain.’ Lee Gun had been able to find his opponent quickly thanks to all of this. “Where was it last seen?”

“It will be too much for you. You should give up on it.”

An unfamiliar voice replied to him. It was the voice of a robust young man. The young man looked to be in his late twenties. As expected of an Archer disciple, his appearance was top tier. However, he didn’t even have an ounce of humor, and his manner was brusque. All in all, he looked like an old-fashioned man.

The young man had weight to throw around, and he was very tall, taller than both Hugo and Lee Gun.

[Caution! This man’s loyalty to the Sagittarius is very high.]

[His faith toward the Serpent Bearer is very low.]

The information caused Lee Gun’s eyes to widen. As for Hugo, he was shocked.

“Ben!”

This man was someone Hugo knew very well.

[Benjamin Goat]

– Archer! SS rank

“It’s nice to meet you. My name is Goat. I serve the Archer Saint.”

Lee Gun jeered. “Good ol’ Poverty Saint. So you do have other disciples. I thought you had only two.”

Hugo reacted in anger. “The number isn’t that small!”

It didn’t really matter. ‘It’s my first time seeing an SS-rank.’ Lee Gun wondered. Most of the Ten Stars hadn’t shown up in the raid on Thousand Legs, thinking the monster was too low in rank.

The Ten Stars were a new breed of awakened beings. Numbered only ten, they were considered the strongest amongst humanity after Saints.

‘He’s one of the Ten Stars.’ This man was like Yooha. Of course, Yooha was still an S-rank disciple, so the SS-ranks looked down on her.

In any case, SS-ranks were candidates to become the next Saints. They were like commanders-in-chief who kept the generals of the directly-managed temples in line.

As if to prove this, Goat's faith toward the Sagittarius was sky-high. However, for some odd reason, he looked guarded toward Lee Gun.

"It seems you're here to kill the monster. Please go back before you get hurt."

The other Archer disciples screamed when Goat made fun of Lee Gun.

"Goat! Do you realize who he is?"

"He is the legendary Lee Gun!"

"He had an archery match with our Saint-nim."

"Our Saint-nim got folded! He was lousy..."

Goat roughly pressed down on their heads. "Did you forget you guys are disciples of the Archer Saint?"

"Ahhhhhhk!"

"I'm sorry!"

"Anyway, I've heard a lot about Lee Gun-nim from Saint-nim. Still, I'm sure our Saint-nim is better. From what I've heard, Lee Gun-nim succeeded in most fights thanks to our Sant-nim's help."

Lee Gun discreetly glanced at Hugo. The Archer Saint was shaking. Hugo did remember saying that to boost his standing amongst his subordinates.

Oblivious to this, Goat continued, "Anyway, Lee Gun-nim can't do anything without Hugo-nim. Please stay put when our Saint-nim isn't present. You'll get in the way."

'No! Stop it!' Hugo's expression was a sight to behold.

Lee Gun let out a big smile. "Is that so? Taeksoo said that? I'll get in the way?"

Hugo turned pale as if he wanted to deny it. However, Goat was sincere. "Yes. He said you were so bad that he couldn't send you alone into the battlefield."

Hugo gripped his face as if he knew he was ruined. Goat didn't pay any attention to his reaction as he said, "This isn't for you. You should head back."

"What?"

“The advanced party scouted the monster. It isn’t something a human can kill. Lee Gun-nim will fall short.” Goat took out something. “Only I can kill it with this weapon.”

For some reason, when Lee Gun saw the weapon, his eyes turned round. Then, he burst out laughing. ‘Really? Is that how it is?’

## **CHAPTER 74: TRIAL OF STRENGTH**

‘Really? Is that how it is?’ Lee Gun grinned.

In contrast, the blood drained from Hugo’s face. It was to be expected.

“Saint-nim will have no problem killing it, but I think this monster isn’t too great for your temperament. That’s why I’ll kill it with this”

The weapon in Goat’s hands looked like a composite bow.

[Black Hawk made with processed Devil] S rank

- Use against Devils & large monsters.
- Specializes in destructive power.

The bow had a sleek body and was curved toward the heavens, like the horn of a black rhino. This weapon was a stylish bow made from a horn. It had a soft matte body, and the assembled parts looked artistic in their simplicity. The weapon’s appearance was tasteful in an artistic manner, yet it performed very well.

Traces of use could be seen on the bowstring, but everything shone with the luster of newness. Moreover, the bow was designed to add more destructive capabilities. It was perfect.

The bow reminded one of a jaguar with its claws sheathed. It was ideal in thickness, so it was perfect for swift combat. Its design also took the stability of the user in mind. This highlighted how much research the Maker had put into making this weapon.

Shweek!

Goat pointed the bow toward the sky, then instantly drew back the bow. Nothing was visible in the sky, yet...

Kwahng!

A scream came from the sky.

“Kee-ehhkh...!”

A black shape fell.

Boom!

It was none other than a flying-type monster. The monster looked like a crow, but it was as big as two people. Half of the crow had been blown away with blue blood flowing out of it.

The other two archer disciples screamed at the weapon’s incredible destructive capability. The fact that Goat was skilled enough to see his target was an afterthought.

“He didn’t imbue any magical energy into the weapon! What the hell is that destructive power!”

“That’s the Black Stream! Its defense is A+! That monster could withstand the skills of a general, yet...”

“Goat, you had such a bow? Where did you buy it?”

“Ah! Yeorin noona! Is that something that can be bought with money? I don’t think you can buy it with even hundreds of millions of dollars!”

“Did the Goat Saint make it in his <Genius Workshop>? I haven’t heard the news of this weapon!”

“If it were made in the Genius Workshop, I’m sure the news would’ve spread all over the world! This is a legendary-rank item! Legendary!”

Goat shrugged with a subtle smile on his lips. “Without this weapon, I don’t think I could face this enemy. It’s a troublesome weapon to use. After Saint-nim, I’m probably the best at handling it.”

Anyway, even an SS-rank disciple, who was the cream of the crop, was proud of this weapon. However, that didn’t matter much.

[Maker: Lee Gun]

Lee Gun let out a bright smile. Seeing his smile get larger and larger, Hugo started sweating more and more.

It had happened way before twenty years ago. Lee Gun had made this bow during his active service. He hadn't carved his seal on it, but the item satisfied even him, a perfectionist.

This item was one of the items from the "Lee Gun series." Lee Gun had categorized his weapons into bronze, silver, and gold ranks. This bow belonged to the silver series. Above all else, it was an item Lee Gun had gifted Hugo, a special present. Back then, Hugo had felt proud when the weapon had received praise from everyone.

However, right now, the Archer Saint looked nervous. For some reason, he had a guilty expression on his face as he looked at the bow. It was as if he knew a time bomb was about to go off.

"Goat! Where did you buy that weapon?"

"What? This? I got it from..."

Hugo screamed as Goat was about to answer. "Ahhhk!" He then shouted, "Ben! Are you sure you saw that monster?"

"Ah! Yes, it's north of here..."

"Yes! Let's talk as we head in that direction— Kuh-huhk!"

Lee Gun silently stepped on Hugo's foot. After demolishing it, Lee Gun asked with a bright smile, "I would like to ask you a question, handsome subordinate."

"Yes?"

"Where did you get that bow?"

Goat laughed. He appreciated that Lee Gun recognized that his weapon was outstanding. The laugh was a bit snobby as if he were saying Lee Gun could never get his hands on such a weapon.

The Archer Saint's SS-rank disciple answered, "I got it from a pawnshop. Someone sold it, unaware of its true worth. Otherwise, why would a legendary-rank weapon be there?"

Hugo's face became covered in sweat. He didn't dare look at his side.

"Hu-go."

"...!!!" The voice ruthlessly assaulted his ears. Hugo felt a chill run up his spine. He wanted to slip out of there, but Lee Gun grabbed his shoulder.

“Hugo Otis.”

Hugo shook. The man had a bright smile on his face, but it was clear that Lee Gun was furious. Whenever Lee Gun called Hugo by his real name, it meant his anger had reached the max.

Lee Gun asked, “Why did my present end up at a pawnshop? I wonder!”

“Huh-uhk...!”

The temperature of the voice fell to  $-273^{\circ}\text{C}$  as it hit Hugo’s ears. The Archer Saint could feel killing intent from the hand grabbing his shoulder.

“Hmm? Say something. Why was that at the pawnshop, and why is your cute subordinate acting high and mighty with it?”

“That is...” Hugo clenched his eyes shut. He whispered his words as if he were sorry. “I’m sorry! I had no choice at the time! My kids no longer had their mom. They kept crying because they were hungry. At the time, I didn’t even have money for living expenses!”

“What?”

“I’m serious! I planned on getting it back in short order. However, by the time I went back to get it, it had already been sold!”

“...” The hand grabbing Hugo’s shoulder relaxed a bit. Lee Gun was angry, but he also understood what kind of treatment Hugo had received from the world. Moreover, his item hadn’t been used for just anyone. It had been used to feed his cute niece and nephew.

Lee Gun was about to let the matter go when...

“I would think even someone ignorant would auction this item off. Why a pawnshop?”

Goat explained, “Ah! From what I heard, the person who sold it was heavily in debt from gambling. The weapon was probably confiscated.”

Hugo’s mouth fell open in guilt. Murderous intent appeared within Lee Gun’s hand.

“Hey!!!”

“I’m sorry! I was in a bind! I had no job! I gambled only once!”



‘Well, it doesn’t matter. Hugo probably had his reasons at the time. In the end, the item has returned to the right hands.’ Despite those thoughts, Lee Gun knew he had to do something in return. “You shouldn’t expect me to fix your royal holy item in the near future.”

Hugo despaired.

Unaware of what they were talking about, Goat said to Lee Gun, “Anyway, we don’t need Lee Gun-nim. Please head back. I will be grateful if you can escort Saint-nim to his holy ground”

Frightened, Hugo looked at Lee Gun. ‘There is no way he’ll let it go with his temper!’

“Gun. I’m sor—” Hugo was about to apologize, but he soon tilted his head in puzzlement. “Gun?”

Lee Gun’s face was too peaceful. This confused Hugo. With the temperament he had, Lee Gun would’ve already been swinging his fist. However, the man had just snorted. Why?

[You have activated ‘Gaze of a God’!]

[Since your ‘Gaze of a God’ is E rank now, your observation range has been expanded.]

[F rank: Check Basic Info

E Rank: Check Faith and Mental State]

<Benjamin Goat>

[Status: Anxious, Worried]

With ‘Gaze of a God’ increasing in level, Lee Gun could now see a person’s mental state. It was only the surface-level feelings, however.

‘He’s hiding something.’ That was right. Goat had high loyalty to Hugo, but for some reason, he had been purposefully baiting Lee Gun.

Therefore, Lee Gun laughed. “Alright. Have fun killing it. I’ll just watch.”

“...!?”

Goat was taken aback. The events weren't turning out as he had expected.

“What? Is that a problem?”

“No? That is...” Goat looked like he wanted to stop Lee Gu, but Lee Gun nonchalantly walked away.

“Wow! I wonder how strong an SS-rank is~.”

Goat's face crumpled.

\* \* \*

[Caution! You are no longer in human territory.]

[Your life energy and divine status can be stolen by devil-like beasts]

The group was in a fallen city outside the dome. It was a creepy place with no people, and a thick purple fog had settled on the ground.

“Hey! Another one is flying in from there! What are you doing? Do you want to die?”

“No...!”

Kwang!

“Ah! Over there! I can't believe an SS-rank is incapable of hitting that. I guess the Archer disciples aren't that great.”

“That's not—!”

Kwang!

“Hey! I feel threatened! Hurry up and kill that thing! Oh my! Archer disciples are trash.”

“F\*\*k!” Veins popped out on Goat's face as he kept shooting his arrows. “Holy s\*\*t! Don't you have any desire to fight them yourselves?”

His reaction was understandable. This land was under the unknown civilization. They had captured and made it one of their bases. Therefore, the number of monsters here couldn't be compared to that in the dome, a human territory.

Goat had already killed several hundred monsters by himself. “Don't just watch! Why don't you take care of the nearby monsters?”

Lee Gun, who had been walking along in comfort, snorted. “Why would I? You said I’m weak, so I should stand back.”

“...!” The expression on Goat’s face was a sight to behold. He had dug his own grave.

Lee Gun didn’t care as he happily opened a bag of potato chips. ‘Idiot.’ His goal was to kill the SS-rank monster. There were thousands of monsters around them. Why would he drain his energy by killing those monsters one by one? That would be insane.

‘Also, my EXP doesn’t increase during the Trials.’ Doing that would be a loss for him. That was why Lee Gun hadn’t beaten Goat yet.

Of all the people in the world, Lee Gun knew better than anyone as to how it felt fighting the unknown civilization in their den. ‘Letting him take care of the small fries is just advantageous for me.’

That wasn’t all.

“Keee-ehhkh!”

[You have acquired high-rank data]

[You have acquired high-rank data]

Although his EXP didn’t rise, he kept stealing the final blow to steal the data from monsters.

‘He’s a great shuttle.’ Lee Gun laughed. At the end of the day, he had to admit that an SS-rank disciple was strong. This was his first time seeing an SS-rank fight, but even he had to acknowledge Goat’s fighting ability. It was understandable why Goat was confident of killing the monster by himself.

‘In truth, he’s already comparable to a Saint.’ Lee Gun knew that if he underestimated his opponent, he might be in trouble.

Due to all that, Lee Gun felt like he had missed out on a great candidate. He queried Goat. “Why do you not like me? Do you really think I did nothing while I hid behind Taeksoo?”

“No. I don’t. I accept Lee Gun-nim’s achievements,” Goat answered.

“You accept it, but...” Lee Gun asked him to continue.

“You beat up people at the drop of a hat.”

“!”

“If you don’t like something, you damage other people’s property.”

“...!”

“If someone disagrees with you, you beat them up. It makes people keep their mouths shut.”

“...!!”

“Doesn’t that mean you were a thug before you became a hero?”

“...!!”

It seemed Lee Gun felt wounded by Goat’s words. ‘This b\*\*\*\*\*d is cheap. He’s attacking me with facts.’

Goat furrowed his brows as he looked at Lee Gun. “I can carry out this mission by myself if I have this weapon. That’s why the two of you should....”

Lee Gun clicked his tongue. “You can’t kill it with that alone.”

“What?”

Lee Gun continued, “In the first place, you can use only half of its power. Do you know that?”

“What??”

“If you want to die, you should continue to shoot my baby in such a half-assed manner.”

“What? Your baby?” Goat was confused.

“Just shut up and hand it over. This is how you use it.”

“What??” Goat was baffled. ‘Why the hell did he call it his baby? Also, I’m getting plenty of power out of the bow, yet he says that it’s only half?’

‘!’

Suddenly, a sound came from within the fog.

Gohhhhhhhhhhh!

It was an extremely terrifying roar.

[Warning! It's the target of your Trial of Strength.]

Then, Lee Gun saw something familiar within the fog. It was the symbol engraved on the blade that had stabbed him.

\* \* \*

At this moment, Hugo had arrived at a venue to meet the representatives from the European alliance. He was here in Lee Gun's stead.

Hearing the odd sound, the Archer Saint turned his head. The sound was so faint that he wondered if his ears were playing tricks on him. However, he heard the sound again.

Gohhhhhhhhhhh!

The roar had shocked everyone.

“What the hell? What kind of sound is that?”

“It's a monster!”

The enemies were coming. Moreover, this monster was the target of Lee Gun's Trial of Strength.

However, Hugo's expression changed for an entirely different reason. ‘This sound...’

He was sure of it. This was the monster that had eaten his wife ten years ago.

## **CHAPTER 75: TRIAL OF STRENGTH**

It was the day of his son's 5th birthday.

[I'm sorry, honey! I don't think I will be able to make it there again. Please tell Sungjae that I am sorry!]

Chun Jiwoo! Hugo's wife was a researcher for MIT. She was so busy with her work that after her son Sungjae had learned to walk, her family had seen her only once or twice a year.

Her absence was related to the fact that Lee Gun had died. Specifically, it was related to a <Lee Gun> weapon, a weapon that could kill the ever-increasing number of monsters. The weapon, which was a missile, was at the final stages of completion.

‘The weapon left behind by Mr. Lee Gun became an important base.’

Chun Jiwoo had been a fan of both Lee Gun and Hugo. After researching Lee Gun’s weapon, she had found a clue that could potentially spell the end of the monsters. Of course, her colleagues didn’t think Lee Gun’s weapon was worth researching. But Chun Jiwoo trusted her husband, who had told her about Lee Gun’s abilities.

Due to her dedication to her research, she had found a hint.

[A line of monster weapons that doesn’t affect humanity has been developed.]

In reality, Lee Gun had made it. With this weapon, Chun Jiwoo knew that her husband wouldn’t have to do the breaking work of fighting on his own.

The weapon would first be used around the tower Lee Gun had fallen in. Hugo had always wanted to search the Devil’s Tower, and this weapon would allow him to do that.

On 7/15/2015, the weapon was close to being finished. Chun Jiwoo had arrived at her destination at 1 am.

“Mom!”

Her son had wanted to see her as his birthday present, so she had immediately returned to Korea. Although she had a busy schedule, it was a request made by her young son, who never asked for anything.

Her five-year-old son was nodding off as he waited for his m\*\*\*\*r at the airport. The kid’s father, Hugo, had been hired for mercenary work and he had asked a close subordinate to pick up his wife.

The trio of Chun Sungjae, Chun Jiwoo, and Hugo’s subordinate had been returning home in a car.

“Mom. I’m hungry.”<https://7cea19796b35982cb0b5c2c365394efb.safeframe.google syndication.com/safeframe/1-0-38/html/container.html?upapi=true>**AD**

“Sungjae, it won’t be long before we reach our house.”

“I’m hungry...”

“Sungjae!”

“It’s fine, Madam. Sungjae didn’t eat his dinner. He was waiting for your return. It’s understandable that he is hungry. We can visit the drive-through over there.”

“I’m thankful that you brought Sungjae at this hour. I feel bad about this!”

“Haha! It’s fine. I’m doing this because I like it.”

While they had visited the fast-food joint, an incident had occurred.

“Madam!”

The incident was a major one that the news had covered extensively at the time.

<A red fog accompanied by a Red-zone monster appeared in the middle of the city.>

<One Archer Disciple and a thirty-year-old female were killed.>

<Two brothers in high school were able to run away>

<Shock reverberates as a Legendary-rank monster shows up in the middle of the city>

<How is this possible in a region under the gods’ protection?>

It was hard to believe something like this could happen. Hugo had immediately rushed back upon hearing the news, but it had been too late.

Sungjae was spacing out from what he had witnessed. Thankfully for Hugo, the kid was unhurt, but Hugo had lost his most treasured subordinate and the wife he loved very much.

Moreover, he was unable to track down the unknown monster that had killed the two of them. The weapon that his wife was developing had been entrusted into the hands of the Goat Saint.

Ten years had passed since that incident, which was dubbed as the <Blood Fog>.

‘That gluttonous monster has shown up here?’ Hugo could never forget its roar. He shot to his feet.

Boom!

Murderous intent was visible all over his face. This took aback the people from the European Alliance, who were here for the meeting.

“Otis-nim?”

Hugo’s cold, green eyes looked out the window. He was at Flanders, in the northern portion of Belgium. This place bordered Netherlands and Germany, which were Red zones now, making this place humanity’s frontline city.

Therefore, Hugo could see the wall of the dome that marked the territory of humans. He could hear the cries of monsters from outside the dome. “The monsters that showed up here...”

“What about it?”

“You said the Virgo Saint commissioned Lee Gun to subjugate the monsters?” Hugo asked.

“What? Ah! Yes!”

“The Virgo Saint was the first one to report the situation about the monsters. However, the monsters weren’t a good match for him...”

“Also, Lee Gun-nim’s exploits were amazing in the raid on Thousand Legs.”

“The Virgo Saint’s side brought up these points to us, and they wanted us to commission Lee Gun-nim to subjugate—”

Bboo-doohk.

Hugo ground his teeth in anger, surprising the government officials. Although the Archer Saint acted prickly in official meetings, he never showed this much murderous intent. They were seeing this side of him for the first time.

Hugo was as mad as he had ever been. It was to be expected. This was the monster that had taken his wife and subordinate from him. Hugo became sure of that when he heard the Virgo Saint wanted Lee Gun to handle the monster.

‘He’s trying to kill Gun.’

The talk about thinking highly of Lee Gun’s exploits was a front. The fact that the Virgo Saint knew the identity of the monster made this scenario much more likely. There was no way he was unaware of it.

‘All the twelve Zodiac Saints know about that monster.’

In the Blood Fog event, the Zodiac Saints had suffered a bad loss trying to kill that monster. To be precise, the one to suffer a crushing defeat was Hugo, the Archer



Saint. The other Zodiac Saints had shown up, saying they would help, but in reality, they just stood on the sidelines. The monster had shocked even them.

The other Zodiac Saints had come to watch the monster at a whim, but it didn't take long for their expressions to change. They had retreated in haste. Their reactions were understandable.

'A monster that eats gods.'

That was the only way to describe the monster. The matter was beyond the monster being strong; something was special about it. It was on a different level. Moreover, the monster had consumed the power of the gods.

'It was an unkillable monster like Red Eye, but in a different way.'

At the time, the monster had stolen thirty percent of the Sagittarius's power. If another Zodiac Saint hadn't saved his life, Hugo would've died to the monster. After that day, the Archer Saint had never regained the stolen power.

'That b\*\*\*\*\*d becomes more tenacious when the opponent is stronger. It tries to steal magical energy from its foes'

Hugo had experienced feeling absolutely helpless in front of that monster, so he was sure of one thing. Lee Gun was in danger.

\* \* \*

Weh-weh!

It sounded like the cry of a little child. Lee Gun furrowed his brows. 'The sound of a kid crying after the lowing cry?' Lee Gun was sure of it. He had never heard the lowing cry, but he had heard the wailing of a child.

The fog started getting thicker.

Gohhhhhh!

Colored blood red, the fog instantly encased the city outside the dome. It wasn't just the city.

"Ahhk!"

"H-help us! Kyahhkh!"

The fog attacked the people within it. The attack wasn't a simple physical attack.

“Hey! Snap out of it! Hey!”

“What... what are you doing? We are on the same side! Hey!”

The people stuck inside the blood-colored fog started falling by ones and twos as if they had their souls stolen. The screams started to get louder.

The defense force of the Virgo Saint, which had been protecting the dome, was taken aback.

“General! We’ve lost communication with the other teams!”

“How can it reach the third dome...”

This was the last line of defense for humanity. The dome was composed of a total of five layers. The human city was located in the innermost area, with fifty kilometers between the five layers. It was like having five Great Walls of China.

This enormous barrier divided the territory of humans and monsters. The humans were far away from the c\*\*e holdings of the unknown civilization, yet the land was crawling with monsters.

The furthest dome from the human city was named the fifth dome, and the closet was the first dome. Therefore, many predicted that if the first dome was breached, humanity would end.

“This is bad! They already broke through the fourth dome!”

“The headquarters want us to gather troops at the third dome!”

If things went poorly, even the first dome might fall today. Of course, most monsters that weren’t on the same rank as Red Eye had stopped at the fourth dome.

Nevertheless, Calamities still showed up within the city, which allowed monsters to be summoned within the dome through special means. However, this batch of monsters was advancing at a worrying rate. They were already close to reaching the third dome.

“I want the advance party to focus their attacks!”

As the command rang out, their surroundings became covered in thick fog. The advance party, which had been atop the dome, disappeared into the blood-colored fog.

“No! Help!”

The fog moved at an incredible speed as if it were devouring prey.

[Caution! Your opponent's level is high.]

Hearing the distant screams, the Archer disciples quickly brought out their bows.

“Hurry up and locate the enemy!”

The eyes of the two disciples turned golden. This was the <Hawk Eyes> skill, a skill exclusive to the Sagittarius. The skill allowed one to see an ant from 500 meters away. It also had a penetration ability that allowed one to locate hidden enemies.

Even if a monster had a fog form, it had to possess a real body. No stealth-type monster could hide from “Hawk Eyes.”

“Lee Gun-nim! Noona! I found it!”

Suh Jihoon, the youngest Archer disciple, quickly pointed toward a broken-down building. Something was flashing within the red fog.

Yoon Yeorin and Suh Jihoon drew their bows back.

[Torturous Bondage (S)]

Kwahng!

However, their skills were obliterated, destroyed by an explosion caused by a different arrow.

“...!”

The two quickly turned their heads and saw Goat holding the bow made by Lee Gun. Veins were popping out on his neck.

“Don't attack it at all!” Goat shouted.

“What?”

“You guys will die if you do!”

“...!”

Goat's words surprised the two disciples. In truth, Goat had never spoken to his subordinates in this fashion until now. The other Archer disciples were a mixture of S rank and A rank. Moreover, they were skilled enough to be left as guards for the Archer Saint's holy ground.

Of course, one of them was an A rank, but this small group consisted of elite members. Since this A-rank disciple fought on the frontline, he was close to the S rank. No one would look down on their battle capabilities.

However, Goat was serious. ‘That is too much for them.’ He had already experienced fighting this monster once before. Moreover, this monster had defeated their idol, Hugo.

Goat explained, “Instead of visual cues, it chases after a person’s magical energy! That’s why you shouldn’t use skills! Just run away—”

At that moment.

Weh-Weh!

A sound rang next to him.

“...!” Goat quickly brought up Lee Gun’s bow, but something more surprising happened.

Bbah-gahk!

Lee Gun kicked Goat. “Just give it to me, b\*\*\*h.”

“Kuh-huhk!”

After taking a kick in the shin, Goat felt like dying. ‘He caused damage through an S-rank leg armor guard!’

On the other hand, Lee Gun was fascinated. He hadn’t put much strength behind the blow, but Goat had endured it. This proved that he really was an SS-rank.

With his hand in his pockets, Lee Gun cracked the joints of his fingers. “Whatever! Just give me the equipment you’re wearing. Also, I’m taking back the weapon I made if you plan on using it that way.”

“Lee Gun-nim can’t win— What! What did you just say? You made what?”

Lee Gun laughed. The Archer disciples had been too busy admiring and praising the bow that they had missed the conversation between Hugo and Lee Gun. Of course, the disciples would’ve needed the hearing ability of Lee Gun’s ears to hear the whispered conversation. Anyway, that didn’t matter.

“I’m the one you were praising so much. Also, you’re using the bow wrong!”

The expressions on the disciples’ faces were a sight to behold.

‘Did Lee Gun-nim really make that weapon?’

“No way! That bow is much better than the weapons made by the Goat Saint?!”

“Then the debt-ridden person who sold it to the pawnshop— Koohk!”

“The leader of your house did that.” Lee Gun took back the bow while Goat tried to stop him in desperation. However, Lee Gun just told him to f\*\*k off and kicked him once again.

“You really can’t do this!” Goat clutched at his leg. Feeling like his leg was about to break, he yelled in desperation, “That monster stole the power of our Saint-nim! Defeating it is impossible! It can eat the power of a god!”

“!” Lee Gun was surprised. Since Lee Gun was Hugo’s friend, it almost felt like Goat was unburdening himself.

Goat continued, “Ten years ago, that monster ate the Archer Saint’s wife and his first disciple! Our Saint-nim was somehow able to retrieve their bodies later, but...”

Goat clenched his eyes shut. That incident had taken place during his apprenticeship period. He could never forget that day. The monster had eaten everything, including objects, bodies, and souls. It even ate a god.

“Saint-nim was rescued with the help of the Goat Saint, but... From what I’ve gathered about recent events, Lee Gun-nim is the thirteenth Saint now. This b\*\*\*\*\*d goes crazy for a god’s power! It has a special skill that can paralyze the power of a god! For a Saint, it’s the worst type of monster!”

Lee Gun accepted Goat’s reasoning. Saints were different from disciples; their entire bodies were under the rule of the gods.

If the flow of power from their gods was disrupted, the situation would be as though they had swallowed rat poison. That was enough to traumatize a person.

“Whatever!” However, Lee Gun just drew back the bow.

## **CHAPTER 76: TRIAL OF STRENGTH**

Chun Sungjae couldn’t forget what he saw that day.

As he would meet his m\*\*\*\*\*r after a one-year absence, he had been overjoyed. He had even begged his dad’s closest subordinate to take him to the airport.

On the return trip from the airport, he had felt a pang of hunger. In his happiness of seeing his m\*\*\*\*r after a long time, Chun Sungjae had decided to act a little more spoiled that day.

“Madam!”

However, a red fog had appeared, and a monster emitting a bizarre sound had attacked them. The first one to get eaten was his mom. She had been trying to hide Chun Sungjae in the car.

“Sungjae!”

The next one the monster swallowed was his dad’s subordinate, who had successfully cut off the monster’s arm. The subordinate told Sungjae that his dad would come and rescue him; he shouldn’t be afraid. However, the monster ate the subordinate as he tried to protect the kid.

Like with most people, his birthday was the happiest moment in Chun Sungjae’s life. Yet, it became a day when he had lost the people he loved the most in an instant.

Despite that, Chun Sungjae had never lost hope at that time. He had believed his dad would rescue the two who were taken away. After all, his father was a hero the world praised. He was one of the twelve invincible heroes. Moreover, the other heroes were here too.

“It’ll be fine, Sungjae. Your father and the other Zodiac Saints will save the two of them.”

However...

“Hugo! No!”

“Have you lost your mind? Your power will get stolen!”

The Zodiac Saints had run away. This remained hidden from the world, but Chun Sungjae knew it. Moreover, only one of the Saints had saved his father.

In the end, Chun Sungjae saw his father suffer in silence at the funeral. At that moment, the kid had realized something. His father had the people who were precious to him get stolen from him.

Due to this, Chun Sungjae entered the Gemini temple, the strongest temple in Korea, when the age restriction eased up. He went ahead with it despite the pushback. After all, he wanted to kill the monster that had stolen two people from him.

As for why Chun Sungjae didn't join his father's temple, he was the reason for the death of the Archer temple's general. That general was a big brother figure to the other Archer disciples. Chun Sungjae couldn't face those disciples.

That wasn't all. 'The Gemini Saint deals with souls.'

An applied version of "Soul Invocation" allowed one to call back the souls of the dead. The magic tomes owned by the Gemini Saint described this technique.

[Conversation with the Dead]

With that skill, Chun Sungjae could recall at least two souls. He would like his father, sister, and the Archer disciples to meet the two departed souls once again.

Therefore, the young man tenaciously stacked achievements and gathered points. He also gained access to the <Magic Library>, which was accessible only to the Saint and the generals. His efforts had finally allowed him to reach this point.

'With this, I can...' Chun Sungjae carefully picked up a book. Then, he heard a sound from his badge.

[Would you like to rent the World Tree Magic Tome(SS)?]

[You need 187,000 contribution points to rent it.]

[Archbishop-rank Chun Sungjae's current contribution points: 187,483.]

Chun Sungjae hadn't used a single point in the past three years. He had eaten the minimum amount of food and lived together with his friend during that time. After what he was about to do, these points would instantly vanish, but he didn't care. With such an amount of points, he could buy a 100-pyeong penthouse. In fact, he could buy ten such penthouses. But he didn't care.

[Renting complete. You've used all your points.]

[Remaining Points: 483]

The lock on the magic tome disappeared, and Chun Sungjae quickly turned to a specific page. The magic tome was filled with magic theories; it was full of SS-rank spells that other magicians would covet.

[Warning! Your rental of the magic tome will end in 9m57s!]

Since the renting had a time limit, most magicians would try to memorize the SS-rank spells. However, none of those spells had caught Chun Sungjae's eye. He could

memorize those spells just by glancing at them. To him, something was far more important than those spells.

‘Page 1,467...!’

One month ago, as a reward for a special deed he did, he had gained a chance to open this book instead of receiving a penthouse. However, the time restriction had been three minutes. Therefore, he could memorize only half of that spell. But today would be different.

‘I can memorize it all.’ Chun Sungjae finally opened page 1,467.

“...!” His face crumpled soon. ‘It’s gone.’

He saw signs of the page being ripped out. Suddenly...

“You were a step too late,” someone said while waving the ripped pages.

Chun Sungjae was surprised. ‘Yoon Siwoo!’

Yoon Siwoo was a third-generation member of the Libra Saint’s family. He had come to the Gemini temple as an exchange student. He was one of the two rich siblings in this temple.

A menacing look entered Chun Sungjae’s eyes. It was to be expected. ‘He’s the enemy who killed the two of them..’

Chun Sungjae’s reaction was normal. Yoon Siwoo was one of the two high school brothers who had run away from the scene of the <Blood Fog> ten years ago. In truth, the Blood Fog had appeared because of these two brothers.

Yoon Siwoo continued to wave the ripped pages. “I’m not a genius like you, so I can’t read something as difficult as this. However, I do know you won’t be able to read it if I get rid of these.”

At that moment, the magic tome pages in his hand burned up. Yoon Siwoo hadn’t used the magical energy of the Gemini. He had used the magical energy of the Libra. “I was wondering why the top disciple of the Gemini temple had chosen to rent a magic tome instead of taking the penthouse. I wanted to play a prank on you.”

Chun Sungjae snorted as if he knew that was nonsense. ‘Prank, my a\*s!’ “Are you afraid I’ll give it to my uncle?”

“!” This surprised Yoon Siwoo.



Chun Sungjae continued, “What? Do you really think I don’t remember your faces? The Blood Fog appeared because of you bastards.”

These words left Yoon Siwoo flustered, and his brows furrowed. Yoon Siwoo had used a proxy to take care of the incident. Therefore, his and his brother’s faces had never appeared in the news. They had been questioned only once in the investigation.

‘This little kid is too smart.’ Yoon Siwoo replied, “You should try harder. It seems you planned on taking that spell to your uncle, whom you trust so much. Well, that wouldn’t have mattered either, since the uncle you love to death will die soon.”

“What?”

“If the Blood Fog gets caught, that’ll be a problem for us. The Zodiac Saints went to great lengths to cover up that story.” Yoon Siwoo took out his phone. He held up a stream of a broadcast.

[Do you see this? A red fog is thick outside the dome of Belgium!]

[From our research, this is the same Calamity that showed up ten years ago. It showed up at a fast-food restaurant near the Incheon airport.]

[At the time, the fog had knocked 5,000 civilians unconscious. Those civilians haven’t woken up to this day!]

[Will that fog also descend on Belgium?]

[The fifth and the fourth domes have been destroyed. The defenders are heading toward the third dome.]

[The situation is very dangerous. From the information we are receiving, anyone who has breathed in the fog has fallen unconscious...]

[Ah! Wait a moment! We have received information that Lee Gun was seen outside the dome!]

Chun Sungjae was startled. ‘Uncle went over there because of a commission. Could it be? The monster that Uncle went to kill is...’

Chun Sungjae’s heart sank. Of course, he believed in Lee Gun, but that monster was... The young man now regretted handing over the commission letter. He had been naive. Of all the monsters, this monster had caused significant trauma to him and his father.

Chun Sungjae scrunching up his face was a rare sight. Yoon Siwoo laughed as if that satisfied him. “The Virgo Saint knew the truth, and it was why he commissioned your uncle. That monster is the natural enemy of the Saints.”

“...!”

“The idol who you love so much will get crushed, just like your father.”

\* \* \*

“Whatever!” Lee Gun laughed as he sent his arrow flying. The arrow split the air and flew at breakneck speed.

It looked like Lee Gun was aiming for the enemy’s body, but Goat flinched when he saw the arrow’s trajectory. ‘No! It’s going to miss!’

Lee Gun hadn’t even aimed properly before releasing the arrow. Goat knew this would happen. ‘That’s why I said...’

The enemy was within the fog, and Lee Gun wasn’t a long-range type User. The shot would go wide. However...

“Kee-ehhhhk!”

“!?”

Everyone was shocked to hear the sound emanating from the fog.

“What the hell? Did he hit it?”

“What? Are you kidding me! The trajectory was off!”

Lee Gun had aimed in a direction away from the monster’s location that they had pointed out. Like Goat, the other Archer disciples realized this as well. They got ready to send a second volley of arrows.

Suddenly, the red fog became denser.

[Caution! This is a special fog.]

[Gaze of a God and 13th Sense can’t locate the enemy.]

[Caution! The number of enemies and their location can’t be discerned.]

Despite the warning, Lee Gun laughed as if this wasn’t a problem. “What do you mean, I can’t locate it?”

He continued his fierce attack, sending three arrows flying in succession! It sounded like a cannon was going off.

Too-gahk! Too-gahk! Too-gahk!

“Ooh-ehhk!”

“Ooh-ehhhhhk!”

“Ooh-ehhk!”

The mouths of the Archer disciples fell open. The bow and the arrows were the same, but the power and speed behind each shot were on a different level than that in Goat’s hands. That wasn’t all.

“Four, five, six! Ten!”

Too-gahk! Too-gahk! Too-gahk!

“Oong-kee-ehhhhhk!”

Lee Gun moved at an incredible speed. Moreover, his stance was all wrong, and he sent the arrows flying every which way. The funny part was that each arrow found its target.

After receiving Lee Gun’s bombardment, the flustered enemy showed a reaction.

“S\*\*t! It went into hiding!!”

“I can’t see it with my skill!”

Their enemy had camouflaged itself.

Lee Gun perked up his ears. ‘Of course, I can locate them.’

He didn’t need his skills to locate his enemies; he could locate them using sound. Lee Gun could tell the size, movement, and trajectory of his enemies’ movements using sound.

Hoo-doohk.

A sharp laugh escaped Lee Gun’s mouth when he heard the faint sound of sand shifting. He once again sent the arrows flying in a frenzy!

Too-gahk!

“Kee-ehhhhhk!”

Too-gahk! Too-gahk!

“Ehhhk!”

“Ehhhhhhhk!”

Goat was surprised. That wasn't for any other reason. Lee Gun's 100% accuracy was indeed surprising, but Goat found his stance familiar as well. 'It's similar to Saint-nim... Wasn't Lee Gun supposed to be a close-range fighter?'

Finally, the screams within the fog dissipated, and something surprising happened.

“Ah! The fog is...”

The dense fog started to disperse, revealing thirty monsters— No! They were thirty things!

“Branches?!”

These were the monsters Lee Gun's arrows had sliced up. All the dead wood branches had teeth. Their mouths released the fog as they ate people.

After the fog vanished, an interesting thing happened where the dead branches lay. Something flew into the sky. However, that didn't matter.

“I got rid of the noisy ones that kept crying.”

“...!”

Now that his vision was unobstructed, Lee Gun looked in a certain direction. “I can finally destroy the main body.”

“What?”

Lee Gun immediately punched the ground.

Kwah-jeek!

When his fist went deep into the ground, a surprising thing happened.

Doo-doo-doo-doo-dook!

A large earthquake occurred, and the monster emerged from the ground.

Go-ohhhhhhhhhh!

Kwahng!

The building-sized monster surged into the air, the root being its true body. The monster roared from the ground.

[Warning! This is the monster that eats gods.]

[It uses divine magical energy as fertilizer for its growth.]

This monster was an ugly monster that looked like a toad. Above all else, its magical energy was completely foreign.

“Kuhk!”

The Archer disciples placed their hands over their mouths, an unconscious gesture. The monster looked so horrible that they wanted to throw up.

Soon, a wriggling thing approached them. It looked like the tongue of a snake. Goat broke out in a cold sweat. He was sure of it. This was the monster that had snatched away the Archer Saint’s wife and the Archer general ten years ago.

This monster stole divine power, so none of the Saints’ skills worked on it. It could steal magical energy and kill its foes through proximity. This had been the case with the Zodiac Saints.

However, the Archer disciples would be fine. ‘We can’t use skills, but we can dish out physical damage. We just have to shoot arrows from a distance!’

As they thought about the plan...

Kwahng!

“?!”

Tossing his bow without any hesitation, Lee Gun headed straight toward the monster.

[You can sense something within it.]

“Lee Gun-nim!!!” Goat yelled. He was truly surprised. Lee Gun was approaching the monster without a weapon, which was a suicidal move. “You can’t! If you touch him...”

Lee Gun didn’t pay attention to Goat.

Kwah-jeek!

He grabbed the monster's face with his bare hands. Then... "You're the b\*\*\*\*\*d that made my friend and nephew cry?"

Kwah-jeek!

He ripped apart its mouth with his bare hands.

## **CHAPTER 77: TRIAL OF STRENGTH**

Lee Gun had thought it was weird. When he had reunited with Hugo after twenty years, he had realized his friend had become much weaker than he remembered.

Hugo's god, the Sagittarius, wasn't weak, and Lee Gun hadn't taught Hugo to be this weak either. Of course, Hugo could never reach his level, but Lee Gun had trained him to the level where he could fight toe-to-toe with the other Zodiac Saints.

Despite that abnormality, Lee Gun had overlooked this matter. He himself had become too strong and had spent several hundred years within the infinite reset tower. Also, human memory was imprecise. Therefore, Lee Gun had chalked up Hugo's matter as a discrepancy in his memory.

'Maybe he forgot the favor I did in training him and slacked off for the past twenty years.'

Lee Gun now realized his assumption had been wrong.

[Monster that Eats Gods (SS) (0/1)]

[It has become stronger through the Archer Saint's power.]

[The consumed power of the Archer Saint has grown into a mature tree.]

The monster had grown after sucking away his friend's power ten years ago.

[Warning! The monster has become more powerful after eating the power of the sun god.]

Lee Gun had to admit the monster was powerful. However...

Kwah-jeek!

"Boo-hhhhhhhhh!"

Everyone screamed when Lee Gun ripped apart the monster's mouth.

Letting out a sharp laugh, Lee Gun looked at the ruined mouth. The monster had tried to close its mouth shut, but Lee Gun had ripped open the mouth until the damage reached the monster's ears.

Blood splattered into the surroundings. The monster thrashed as if it was in pain.

Boo-ohhhhhhhh!

The situation seemed as though the monster was telling Lee Gun to stop, but the man showed no mercy and said, "You ate like a pig with that mouth."

Zzeeeeeeeeeek!

"You ate indiscriminately until now."

Zzuh-uhhhhhhk!

"Throw it all up! B\*\*\*\*\*d!"

"Boo-ohhhhhhhh!" An incredible scream rang out.

Lee Gun kept pulling on the monster's mouth until he ripped it away entirely. This scene shocked the Archer disciples.

"Huhk!"

They had watched Lee Gun do that with his bare hands.

The youngest of the Archer disciples was the most affected. Suh Jihoon placed a hand over his mouth as if just looking at the scene hurt his mouth.

"This is crazy! He's peeling it as if it's a cornhusk!"

However, such bravado didn't last long. Lee Gun had taken Goat's high-rank equipment for himself, but not even a lunatic would rip apart this monster with his bare hands. Even the Taurus Saint, a defensive-type Saint, wouldn't try such a crazy move. Why?

"Lee Gun-nim!"

Since he had made contact with the monster's skin, Lee Gun's skin melted away. That wasn't all.

Ooh-doohk, ooh-doo-doohk!

The monster's blood was so poisonous that the blood could melt the muscles and bones of nearby creatures just by its presence.

[Caution! The monster's blood is ruining your body.]

Lee Gun had gotten drenched in the monster's blood. The muscles of his face, shoulders, and wrist started to decompose. The blood on him had strong acidity. As his muscles melted away, one could even see his bones.

The monster roared with its torn mouth as if it wanted to show its prowess.

“Kee-ehhhhk!”

The Archer disciples screamed. “Lee Gun-nim!!!”

Goat's contorted face turned pale. ‘I should've stopped him from getting close to the monster!’

Lee Gun had worn Goat's S-rank defensive gear, but even that gear wasn't sturdy enough to block the monster's blood!

“Hyung! What are you doing? Hurry! We have to use the Aquarius's recovery skill!!!”

The youngest of them, Suh Jihoon, desperately tried to bring forth his badge, but Goat's hands just shook in place. As a high-rank User, Goat knew the situation better than anyone. That was a fatal injury.

Ten years ago, the Archer Saint Hugo had barely survived when he had closed the distance to the monster. Lee Gun's situation was beyond the injury Hugo had suffered. At this point, Lee Gun was basically a corpse! However...

Pahng!!

A deafening sound rang the next moment as the enormous toad was sent flying.

Boom!

The toad let out a roar as it lay on its back.

“Ooh-ohhhhhh!”

It wailed even after it had its tongue pulled out.

The people watching this turned in surprise. They saw Lee Gun walk forth while rolling his shoulders.



“How dare you spit that nasty s\*\*t on me?” Lee Gun held the monster’s tongue, which he had pulled out with one hand. The tongue was as thick as a person. Lee Gun pulled it, then cut it into a manageable length.

Zzeek! Pahk!

Something clattered to the ground. It was Lee Gun’s top armor, which had become unrecognizable.

Clank! Clank!

The armor’s disappearance revealed Lee Gun’s muscular upper body. This surprised the Archer disciples even more.

“His body...!”

Just a moment ago, Lee Gun’s arm bones had been exposed, but now, his arms were healing at a breakneck speed. The decomposed muscles crazily regrew, and the nerves regenerated back to the right places.

The toad once again spat its filthy spit, but Lee Gun didn’t care.

Cheeeek!

[Super Regeneration has started.]

[Since its rank has gone up, the regeneration speed has become faster.]

The melting skin of his face recovered quickly. The fearsome recovery ability satisfied Lee Gun, and he smirked. After all, he had put most of his acquired points into Super Regeneration.

[Lv. 10]

[Remaining Points: 15

5]

Lee Gun had put nine of his fifteen points into Super Regeneration.

[Gaze of a God (F)

Gaze of a God (E)]

– Consumed Point: 1

[Super Regeneration (E)

Super Regeneration (B)]

– Consumed Points: 9

[Super Regeneration (E)]

– Your damaged body will regenerate at a super high speed for 20s.

– If you get attacked during regeneration, the regeneration speed will decrease by 50%

– If you get a minor wound and full recovery takes less than 20s, the remaining time will be stored. The remaining time can be used immediately.

– Cooldown time: 2 days

[Super Regeneration (B)]

– Your damaged body will regenerate at a super high speed for 60s.

– The amount of magical energy needed increases with each use.

– Caution! If your Divine Status falls below 30%, this skill cannot be used.

Since his EXP would stay stagnant until he cleared his trials, Lee Gun had planned on being extra careful about upgrading his skills. It was something he should've agonized over, but Lee Gun didn't think too deeply about it.

'I can do anything if I can last long enough. If I'm not dead, I can kill my enemies. It'll be sink or swim.'

Lee Gun had upgraded Gaze of a God only to check the faith of people around him. The main thing he invested in was Super Regeneration, which was the best skill for withstanding attacks.

In truth, the thing that used to bother Lee Gun the most had been the cooldown time. Now that he had significantly increased the level of the skill, this skill had become usable.

[Super Regeneration will remain active if your magical energy and Divine status allow that.]

The corners of Lee Gun's mouth turned up. 'There's no waiting time. This is unlimited regeneration.'

Of course, his current opponent could consume the power of a god. The situation could potentially turn dangerous since Super Regeneration was one of his skills.

[Caution! The monster is sucking away the divine power to use as nourishment.]

[The effect of Super Regeneration has been diminished.]

[Its duration has been reduced from 60s to 30s. The duration is 10s now.]

[Your magical energy is being sucked away. There is a limit on reusing the skill.]

Lee Gun laughed at the warning. 'I just have to kill it before the time runs out!'

Pahng!

Lee Gun rushed forward, surprising everyone. Before they could even register the surprise, Lee Gun extended his hand. The slime, which had been hanging on his belt, looked up. Then, it spat out something.

[Hammer That Grants Achievements (SS)]

Lee Gun grabbed the handle of the enormous hammer and brought down the weapon on the toad.

Kwahng!

The force behind the blow obliterated the toad's face and eyes.

"Boo-oohhhhh!"

"You think that hurts, b\*\*\*h!" Lee Gun told the monster not to be a crybaby as he pulled out its eyes. "My nephew doesn't celebrate his birthday because of you!"

Lee Gun had found out Sungjae's birth date a couple of days ago from Hahn Jimin. So, he wanted to buy Sungjae a present and celebrate his birthday. However, Hahn

Jimin had advised him not to. In the process, Lee Gun had heard something unexpected.

Chun Sungjae's birthday coincided with the date his m\*\*\*\*r had passed away. The young man had never celebrated his birthday after his m\*\*\*\*r's death.

'I was wondering why he hated hamburgers.'

Kwahng!

The disciples were mesmerized. They were sure of it.

"I'm pretty sure he isn't using a skill to do that, right?"

"I don't think he uses magical energy much in the first place."

"Then... that is pure physical ability?"

It was nuts. That was the only way to describe the scene.

The Archer disciples had warned Lee Gun that attacking the monster without any divine power backing him up would be dangerous. They now realized why Lee Gun had scoffed at that idea.

In the first place, Lee Gun had never received any skills from the gods. Skills were merely supplementary tools for him. They were something he used if he felt like it.

"H-he just threw away his hammer?"

"Huh!"

Of course, this strategy wasn't an impossible tactic.

'It's possible if you can read your opponent's movement.'

In theory, an SS-rank disciple could replicate what Lee Gun was doing, "theory" being the important part.

'I could never do it.' Goat accepted that. This wasn't a matter of skill. 'No human in this world has b\*\*\*s of steel like him!'

Who was crazy enough to charge a monster with no weapons and skills! Lee Gun's boldness and nerve transcended what humans had to offer. The man looked unafraid of death.

At that moment...

The Archer disciples were surprised to sense a familiar energy

“Saint-nim!”

Hugo was standing next to them. They had no idea when he had arrived, but it shouldn't have been long. After all, Hugo was gasping for breath.

The meeting Hugo had been in was a hundred kilometers away from this location. It wasn't a distance that could be traveled within a dozen minutes, but clearly, the Archer Saint had used all he had.

This was understandable since Hugo had realized this monster was the one from ten years ago. It was his nemesis, but above all else, he had almost died fighting it. This monster had killed his wife and subordinate. Hugo couldn't let the monster kill Lee Gun too. However...

“Kee-ehhhhhhk!”

The Archer Saint watched as the monster died. It was literally being ripped apart. Hugo had wanted to kill it in the past, but he had been unable to. Even though he was hailed as one of the twelve heroes, he had felt helpless that day.

After losing Lee Gun in the Devil's Tower, that was the only other time Hugo had felt a despair of unimaginable magnitude. And this monster was the reason Hugo didn't want his children to become awakened beings.

“Keh-ehk!”

Boom!

The wail pierced the heavens, and the sound of the monster crashing to the ground rang out.

Hugo felt mixed emotions.

[The Serpent Bearer's actions have left a deep impression on a contractor serving another master.]

[Your second great achievement has been recorded in the Serpent Bearer's bible.]

Hugo's invariable idol stood over there.

On the other hand, Hugo's subordinates were in a state of panic. As soon as Hugo showed up, their faces turned pale.

“L-Lee Gun-nim!! No weapon!”

“He didn’t use any skills!”

“His skin was melting away, yet he ripped apart the monster with his bare hands!! It was as if he were husking a corn”

The disciples looked like they wanted to cry.

“Are we sure Lee Gun-nim is really alright?!”

Hugo sighed. Lee Gun had been pretty tame in killing Thousand Legs. He had sliced up that monster in a conventional manner, so not much was said about the fight.

“Only the Zodiac Saints know his eccentric way of fighting.’

“L-Lee Gun-nim! I think he didn’t use a skill since he’s fighting this opponent!”

“What if he died attacking in such an unreasonable manner?”

“Ah! It’s fine. He’s always like that,” Hugo explained.

“What?!”

No. If Hugo was being honest, even this was tame compared to how Lee Gun really was. If Lee Gun became serious about his antics, the situation would turn into something that one shouldn’t watch with their eyes. Once, after witnessing what Lee Gun had done, Hugo had been unable to eat food for three days.

Boom!

“Wow! This... this is heavy!”

The youngest Archer disciple and Yoon Yeorin used their hands to carry the black bow. This was the Black Hawk, the longbow Lee Gun had tossed aside in the middle of the fight. Lee Gun probably didn’t want the monster to eat the weapon.

“Oohk! Lee Gun-nim! How did he shoot consecutive arrows with this heavy weapon?”

“If you want to use this freely, your strength has to be really high!” Hugo took the bow with one hand. The bow weighed as much as a small truck.

Boom!

At the very least, one needed SS-rank strength to use the bow. Without that much power, pulling back the bowstring would be difficult.

“He threw this away in the middle of the fight! It’s a powerful weapon! I have no idea why Lee Gun-nim threw it away to fight up close!”

“Did the bow not suit him?”

‘No, there is no way that was the case.’

Even Hugo acknowledged Lee Gun’s skill in archery. There had to be another reason Lee Gun didn’t even fully use his hammer against the monster.

“Hugo!” Lee Gun roared like a tiger.

Hugo realized he had made a mistake. He reflexively pulled back Black Hawk’s bowstring.

Something was rushing toward Hugo. They were the branches everyone thought were dead.

“Wehhhhh!!!”

“Wehh!!!!!”

The branches were going crazy as if they had located a tasty treat. In the past, these bastards had grown after consuming the power of the Archer Saint. Therefore, they went crazy when they sensed the familiar and special nourishment.

Seeing this, Lee Gun angrily yelled, “Idiot!”

“I understand. I’ll kill them right now...!”

“No, stupid! Don’t shoot! I want you to let them bite you!”

‘What the hell!’ Hugo understood not using his skill, but Lee Gun wanted him to let the branches bite him! ‘Has he lost his ever-loving mind?’

Hugo was about to shout something in anger when something within his possession emitted light. It was Lee Gun’s item.

## **CHAPTER 78: TRIAL OF STRENGTH**

The item that emitted light in Hugo’s breast pocket was the holy item Lee Gun had made and given to Hugo.

“What the hell is this?” Hugo didn’t have time to be surprised as screams erupted from all directions.

Wehhhhh!

Wehhh!

The branches revealed their treacherous teeth as they converged upon him. Hugo violently shook free from them. His disciples kept shooting their arrows, but they couldn’t kill the enemies.

“Wehhhhh!”

It seemed the monsters had concluded that they needed Hugo’s power if they wanted to eat Lee Gun.

“Wehhh!!!!!!”

The grotesque monsters kept tenaciously running toward Hugo. They knew that in the past, they had greatly benefited from the Archer Saint’s power. The branches seemed like a school of piranhas. Their teeth were powerful enough to break stones.

Hugo reflexively tried to raise his bow again, but he heard an earful of swear words.

“Idiot! I told you to let them bite you!” Lee Gun shouted.

“?!”

Lee Gun subdued the monster in front of him as he yelled, “Throw away your bow!”

‘F\*\*\*\*g hell! How can he say that after seeing their teeth? Those teeth will reach my bones!’

Lee Gun continued, “You don’t want to listen to me? Who cares! You have no wealth to leave behind! There’s nothing to be worried about!”

“What? You...!” Hugo wanted to say that Lee Gun was the biggest jerk in this world, but in the end, he just threw away his bow.

Boom!

This surprised Goat. “Saint-nim!”

The heavy bow made a divot on the ground. Overjoyed, the branches charged toward the defenseless Archer Saint. However, Hugo heroically laughed. “I’ll trust you! If my children cry because of this, it’s all your fault.”



“Saint-nim!”

The group of tree branches acted as if they had found the jackpot. They rushed forward, while the Archer Saint took a pose like a soccer goalkeeper. He shouted, “Alright! Try eating me! I’m just like dry meat! I won’t taste good!”

Wehhhhhhhhh!

Some branches attacked his neck, which they found the tastiest. Others attacked the thighs since they were easy to hang onto.

“Saint-nim! You shouldn’t do that! What are you doing?”

“Look after my kids!” Hugo was full of spirit, but also scared. He clenched his eyes shut. As he thought he was going to follow his wife and subordinate...

Paht!

An incredible amount of light rushed out of him. The intensity couldn’t be compared to before. Then, something surprising happened.

“Wehh—”

“Wehh—”

Letting out death cries, the branches shriveled and fell to the ground.

“Wehhhh—”

Then, they turned into pieces of fragments that resembled coal. Their small hands, feet, and shark-like teeth, all disappeared.

“...!”

While everyone was still in a state of shock, Hugo let out a shout.

“Koohk!”

He took out the item in his breast pocket, a sculpture of a red horse. Lee Gun laughed as if things had gone to plan, while Hugo’s eyes turned round.

The Archer Saint’s reaction was understandable. The item had taken care of the monsters, but... ‘I’m pretty sure this is an item that gathers goods.’

Lee Gun’s lips twitched as he felt the magical energy fill his body.

[You have acquired abundant energy.]

[Your stolen magical energy has recovered.]

[You can now use Super Regeneration.]

Yes, this was why Lee Gun wanted to do nothing. That item was like a backup battery for magical energy. The red horse extracted magical energy from anything that touched it. Originally, it was supposed to siphon off Hugo's magical energy.

'Since they stuck to Taeksoo, I could steal their magical energy.' What had happened was like a chain reaction. That wasn't all.

[Your item has gained Growth data.]

[Since it has accumulated a certain amount of EXP, it has evolved.]

[The item has evolved from the A rank to the S rank.]

<A Fake Horse That Somehow Looks Like It'll Make Money> Rank S

– The magical energy of the person who touches the item will flow into another. The name of the subject (Lee Gun) has to be written on the item.

– Amplifies the extracted magical energy

– The loss of magical energy in the transfer has decreased.

Amongst the data he had earned, Lee Gun had put the <Growth> attribute into this item. He had done this as a test.

Until now, all the weapons Lee Gun made eventually broke. If he could make weapons that could evolve, it would be perfect.

Realizing what had just taken place, Hugo became happy. "I don't know what happened. However, it happened because of this!"

"That's right! I can't believe you didn't trust the gift I made for you," Lee Gun replied.

Hugo was deeply moved. It seemed like he was looking at an immature son who had finally grown up. "Wow! I thought you scammed me again. I can't believe you really made an item for my benefit. Is it a protection-type holy item?"

Lee Gun, who had been feeling exultant by Hugo's words, flinched. "Uh... Yeah! You're right. It's a protection-type holy item."

Goat had been observing Lee Gun, and he tilted his head in suspicion. ‘That’s odd! I felt the magical energy of both the monsters and Saint-nim get drained away. Was I just imagining it?’

Lee Gun played dumb. All Zodiac Saints wasted a lot of magical energy, so no one would notice him siphoning off a little of their energy for himself.

Hugo wasn’t clever enough to notice that. He didn’t have the time either, as the group had another more important task to pay attention to.

“Boo-ohhhhhh!”

An ugly light appeared in Lee Gun’s eyes. His gaze headed toward the toad, which was enraged after Lee Gun had thwarted its plan.

[Caution! This monster is the subject of the Trial of Strength!]

[You cannot use your magical energy!]

[You cannot call forth your familiars!]

The toad targeted Lee Gun. It had realized Hugo was nothing compared to Lee Gun in power.

As for the man himself, Lee Gun ran toward the toad while cracking his hands. Hugo quickly shouted at him, “Gun! You can’t fight it head-on! They are the ones—”

Lee Gun grinned. “F\*\*k off! Do you think I don’t know that?”

Hugo felt uneasy when he saw the smile.

Kwahng!

When Lee Gun struck the ground with his fist, many monsters emerged from underneath. Other toads similar to the previous one appeared before them. They had been hiding in the nearby trees. The interesting part was that a rope-like vine connected all of them.

“Alright! I created a bowl. Now I’ll turn you all into pulp.” Lee Gun extended his hand.

As if the slime had been waiting for this moment, it ran up Lee Gun’s arm, then transformed into a pair of enormous scissors. They were gardening scissors.

Lee Gun separated the scissor blades and held one in each hand.

Clank!

Wielding them like dual blades, he jumped into the hole he had created.

The surprised Archer disciples quickly clutched at Hugo.

“Saint-nim! L-Lee Gun-nim is...!!!”

“He is going to be buried alive...!”

The Archer disciples looked like they were on the verge of crying, so Hugo tried to soothe them. “It’s fine. I’m not sure, but I think that’s the monster Gun was looking for.”

“But!”

“If you have time to worry about him, you should just close your eyes,” he replied to their worries!

“What?”

The disciples wanted to ask their Saint what he was talking about.

Chul-puhk!

However, something hit them in their cheeks and heads. They froze. The item that felt like soft dough was the flesh of the monsters!

Then, a bone-chilling sound rang out.

“Ha ha ha ha ha!”

Poo-ahk! Poo-hahk!

As events unfolded in the crate, looking at the situation was like looking into a blender.

“Windmill-Shaved Ice Maker!” It was a technique where one spun blades like a windmill. The blades rotated at the speed of light as wind surged into the air.

Koo-goo-goohng!

Chopped-up flesh pieces and long clumps of something unknown flew into the air.

Lee Gum had ground the monsters until they became slush. Moreover, identifiable body parts, such as eyes and tongues, flew into the air.

This made all the Archer disciples cover their mouths.

“Oohk! I had Beef tripe and intestine soup today for lunch.”

“Ooh-ehhk—”

“M-my stomach—”

They were battle-type disciples who fought on the frontline. They were desensitized to the sight of violence, yet they couldn't watch this scene with their eyes open.

On the other hand, it seemed Hugo had known this would happen. Normally, Lee Gun calmly(?) took care of monsters when he needed to recover ingredients. However, this wasn't the case right now. ‘When there are no useful ingredients, he becomes like that.’

Lee Gun's excuse was that monsters had great regenerative abilities. He didn't want to do the same thing over and over again.

‘I think that's his hobby.’

One could tell by looking at Lee Gun's eyes that he didn't covet any of the ingredients. Of course, the disciples did not know this. They kept throwing up.

“Ooh-ehhhhhhk!”

“Huh-uhk— The meat I ate yesterday—”

The sight was grotesque, but they were more terrified of the one who had created it. At this point, Lee Gun was a calamity-type monster.

Lee Gun headed toward the corner. Lumps of flesh lay there. Before grinding the monsters into a pulp, Lee Gun had taken these lumps of flesh out of their bodies and thrown them to the side.

Lee Gun swung his scissor blades toward the lumps of flesh.

Poo-ahhk!

Poo-gahk!

Then, something surprising happened.

“Huh-uhk!”

“Huhk!”

The lumps of flesh were as big as a house. When Lee Gun breached the membrane covering them, people came spilling out. These people were the ones on the defense force that had been protecting the dome a while ago.

“Cough! cough!”

“What... what the hell!”

Before putting the toads into the blender, Lee Gun had cut away their stomachs. His intuition had told him that these stomachs held survivors. These people were still alive since the stomachs hadn't secreted the digestive fluids.

The disoriented survivors looked at their surroundings.

“What happened?”

“Huhk! Lee Gun?!”

The shocked people looked at each other.

“Why is Lee Gen...”

Lee Gun grinned as he faced them. “As a reward for saving you guys, each person will give me \$100k.”

“?!”

The surprised people wailed.

“Thank you! We'll never forget what you've done for us!”

“?”

[A small achievement has been recorded in the Bible.]

Lee Gun shrugged it off. Placing the scissors on his shoulder, he headed somewhere.

“Boo... Boo-ohhh...!”

His destination was the first toad he had encountered. It was probably the leader of all the toads. This toad still kept most of its shape compared to the others, and it was letting out a murderous intent.

“Boo-ohhh!”

The toad acted as if it wanted to eat Lee Gun right this instant. Of course, Lee Gun had left it intact for a reason.

[Something is inside it.]

This thing had been bothering him from the start. Lee Gun activated his skill for the first time.

[13th Sense]

His vision changed into a world divided in black and white.

[You have discovered something odd]

The abnormality was located in the abdomen, but not inside the stomach. A blue object was emitting light.

The snake-eyed Lee Gun laughed. “Alright! This concludes step one.”

Finally, he plunged his hand into the monster.

Poo-oohk!

“Boo-ohhhhh!”

Kwahng!

An incredible light erupted as the monster’s body exploded. Then, a powerful energy surged into the sky.

[You have released the Life energies.]

[You have completed the Trial of Strength.]

\* \* \*

It was an extraordinary scene.

“Uh? What the hell is that? Is that a Comet?”

“What? It’s daytime!”

The world was discussing the issue. The first place to be affected was Belgium. It had started in the temporary medical care center at the third dome. The medical center was full of patients ambushed by the Blood Fog.

Some people had fallen over dead for no reason. Their relatives were mourning their deaths.

“Huhk!”

“Elise?!”

“Huhk!!”

“Joe!”

The people who weren't even breathing suddenly got up.

“My god! This is a miracle!”

Their surprise was premature.

“Ah! Look at the monsters that were coming toward the dome!”

The wood-type monsters that had been charging toward the dome shriveled up and fell.

The disciples realized the implication.

“Their leader must have died!”

“Was it the Virgo Saint?”

“What are you talking about? He didn't even show up today.”

“Then who...!”

\* \* \*

A hospital on an isolated island near the ocean! Hospitalized in this hospital were the people who had lost consciousness because of the Blood Fog ten years ago. The number of people who had remained in a vegetative state for the past ten years was 4,200. No one could diagnose what was wrong with them.

Of course, few knew the existence of this hospital. After all, the Blood Fog incident had been erased from the media.

The doctors knew these patients had no hope, and many of them had insisted the patients should be put off life support. However, some doctors had invoked the protection of the Archer Saint, and these patients got treatment in secret.



Nevertheless, after ten years, most had given up. But today...

“Doctor! Something big happened!”

“What?”

The hospital which no one visited turned into a madhouse.

“The patients are waking up!”

“What?”

The doctors and nurses rushed around when the people who couldn't open their eyes for ten years did exactly that.

## **CHAPTER 79: THIS IS SUSPICIOUS AS HELL**

[Breaking news! The Blood Fog, which had appeared north of the Western Dome, dissipated at 3 pm.]

[The casualty number had reached 200. It has been 10 years since the incident when the third dome was threatened. That was a shocking incident.]

[However, something odd happened this time. The people who were considered dead are waking up!]

[Experts believe these people had been trapped within the Blood Fog...]

Cheongdam-dong, Korea. The entire Cheongdam-dong area was the Gemini temple's territory. Today, shouts of dismay erupted here.

“What? The Blood Fog got defeated?”

The Gemini temple's magic library!

This breaking news left Yoon Siwoo, who had been confronting Chun Sungjae, flustered. Until a moment ago, the reports said that the third dome was in danger of falling; there were mass casualties. The newscasters made the situation seem like a grave matter!

So what had happened?

“Did something happen? Who was it? Who killed it!” Yoon Siwoo looked like he wanted to break his phone.

All the news being broadcast right now was about the disappearance of the Blood Fog and people celebrating. The identity of the one who had killed the monster was still unclear. The name hadn't been released yet. Of course, there was no way it was the Virgo Saint.

'He would leave it alone because he wants Lee Gun dead!' Yoon Siwoo was about to lose his mind. "Skills don't work on that monster! Which crazy b\*\*\*\*\*d killed it without any skills?"

In contrast, Chun Sungjae's face brightened. It was his uncle; the young man was sure of this. His father could never accomplish that. Only one person in the world could.

Yoon Siwoo was in a bad spot. He didn't even pay attention to Chun Sungjae. 'There is no way Lee Gun killed it, right?'

He started sweating. This was to be expected. 'If it's so, I'm in a bad spot.'

This was the monster from ten years ago. To cover up the sins of the two brothers, a special item had been brought out. The situation had also been doubled as a type of experiment.

Hugo had failed to kill the monster back then, and it had reappeared after ten years. This made Yoon Siwoo's situation difficult.

'S\*\*t! We went through so much to bury that incident!'

Five thousand people had died instead of the two brothers. The only witness had been the Archer Saint's wife, and they had taken care of her.

Things were supposed to turn out their way. The monster should've disappeared after destroying the domes. However, someone had killed it. This changed everything.

'If they analyze the corpse, they'll find the evidence...' If a memory reader or an analyst caught wind of what he had done, Yoon Siwoo would be done for.

The anxious Yoon Siwoo continued to sweat profusely. However, he soon started laughing. 'If Lee Gun killed it, he must have the body, right?' He had to s\*\*\*\*h the corpse away from Lee Gun before the man handed it to the media.

With that idea, Yoon Siwoo quickly turned his head. "Chun Sungjae! You need a magic tome related to souls, right? I'll lend you the magic tomes I borrowed. In return, I want you to introduce me to your uncle—"

The sight in front of him shocked Yoon Siwoo. “What the hell? Where the hell did he go?”

Chun Sungjae was no longer there. However, that wasn’t the important part. “Wait a minute! What happened to the magic tomes?”

Chun Sungjae had run away with the magic tomes Yoon Siwoo had borrowed.

\*\*\*

[You have completed the Trial of Strength!]

[You will now receive the trial’s reward.]

[Body Upgrade Stone]

[Your new achievement has been added to your bible.]

[Achievement 2]

– A great Saint called the Archer Saint was deeply moved by the Serpent Bearer.

[Achievement 3]

– After you killed the monster that eats gods, the human souls inside it were liberated.

[Legendary rank achievement (Achievement 2) has been engraved. Your divine status has increased further.]

[With the power of Achievement 2, you can borrow Constructs and disciples from the Sagittarius’s Saint. (Contingent on Consent)]

[Each achievement can be expressed as power for the owner and the disciples.]

Lee Gun was satisfied, especially so with the reward. The stone that would allow him to upgrade his body fascinated him. The stone had appeared in his pocket without him even realizing it.

[Body Upgrade Stone]

– A godly stone capable of evolving a human body into the body of a god

– The stone disappears after use. It upgrades a random part of the body.

Lee Gun immediately broke the stone.

[You have used the stone!]

[The upgrade, including the adaptation, will take a day!]

[There might be side effects during that time. Please be cautious.]

Did the effect of the item already start taking effect?

Lee Gun felt a bit of stiffness in his body, but he just laughed. ‘The only rewards left are the personal familiars of the Serpent Bearer, the Serpent Bearer’s Divine holy item, and a Divine rank awakened skill.’

Each trial gave a reward after its completion.

‘The only things left are to find my disciple and secretary.’ Lee Gun had to complete the Trial of Intelligence and Reputation. Of course, the two trials weren’t important right now.

‘It’s as I expected.’ Lee Gun’s sharp gaze headed toward the toad’s corpse. To be precise, he was looking at the toad’s back. The monster’s back was overgrown with thick vines, and Lee Gun could see a familiar tattoo engraved there.

[An unknown wicked energy has been left behind at the place!]

Lee Gun was sure of it. This was the symbol on the blade that had stabbed him. He had thought he had seen it through the fog, and he had been right. Therefore, he found the situation abominable.

Why?

The blade that was the reason he fell into the trap had the same symbol engraved on it as the monster that had eaten Hugo’s wife.

‘That means the culprit is the same person.’ The appraiser’s information piqued Lee Gun’s interest again. ‘He said the Virgo Saint has a connection to that symbol.’

The appraiser had informed Lee Gun that the Virgo Saint’s storage was full of blades with that symbol. Moreover, the appraiser had searched the memory of the blade. The one to stab Lee Gun was the Virgo Saint.

‘It’ll be faster if I ask him myself.’ A harsh light appeared in Lee Gun’s eyes. He swung his scissor blades.

Chul-puhk!

After carving out the region with the tattoo, Lee Gun quickly called forth his holy item.

[Book Containing Anything] S-rank

Lee Gun put the evidence on page 44, then turned around.

“Ooh, ooh-ehhk...!”

“!” The Archer disciples, who had watched him work, kept retching.

“Ah! I don’t think I can eat for a while— Oohp!”

Lee Gun found them pathetic. “You guys are making such a fuss after seeing only that?”

“?!”

‘Only that! What kind of psychopath would do such a crazy thing to a Calamity rank monster?’

“The <Slaughterer> under the Libra Saint is known to be the cruelest, yet even he wouldn’t do this!”

‘Who the hell is that?’ Lee Gun hadn’t even heard of the term. “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Your subordinates are weak like their Saint. Ah!

“I’m going to have Beef Tripe Hot Pot today for dinner!”

When Lee Gun mentioned Beef Tripe Hot Pot, the Archer disciples recalled the carnage once again and covered their mouths.

Lee Gun once again approached the toad that was the leader with his scissor blades. This made the disciples rear back in fright.

“Is he planning to put that in the hot pot?”

Lee Gun was crazy enough to do it.

“Huhk! No! You shouldn’t— Uh?”

Contrary to their expectations, Lee Gun unexpectedly walked past the body.

“Why are you walking past it? Don’t you need the ingredients?”

When Lee Gun had killed Thousand Legs, he had cheerfully dismantled its corpse. The animated gif of him fileting the monster had been passed around the world.

However, Lee Gun turned the scissor back into its slime form. “I don’t need that. Hugo can wrap things up.”

“!”

This surprised the Archer disciples even more.

“Even if the monsters that he turned into slush aren’t mature trees...”

“They all looked good enough to use!”

Most of the monsters that Lee Gun had turned to slush were still in their growth phase; the ingredients collected from their corpses would lack durability.

Lee Gun had probably decided he didn’t need those ingredients, and so, he had ground them into a pulp.

“What about the vines and their bodily fluids? If we sell them to the Goat Saint’s <Genius Workshop>, we can make a lot of money!”

“We can make millions of dollars just by putting them up for a quick auction!”

“Isn’t that the reason you didn’t make it into a shake?”

Lee Gun acted as if he hadn’t heard them. He had eyes for only one person.

On Hugo’s lips was a smile full of complicated emotions. ‘Thank you.’

There was only one reason Lee Gun wasn’t being greedy.

‘He’s doing it for me.’ This monster was Hugo’s nemesis. It had eaten his wife and subordinate.

Lee Gun was calmly saying that he didn’t want to make a weapon with the body of his friend’s nemesis. He was also allowing his friend to do as he liked with the corpse.

Hugo called forth his bow. The arrow on it was an arrow composed entirely of fire.

“Oh, yeah! Hugo!”

“...?” Hugo wondered why Lee Gun was calling his name in such a scary manner.

“Kuhk!”

Lee Gun tossed something. The item hit Hugo on the head, and he fell.

“Hey! What the hell are you—” Hugo became surprised when an item came to a stop next to him. It was a burning gem.

[Sagittarius’s Power]

Unlike Lee Gun, Hugo couldn’t pull up the information about an item. Yet, he immediately recognized what this rock was. It was the power of his god, which the monster had stolen from him. Hugo exclaimed, “My god! How could this...”

“It was stuck to his bladder like a urinary stone.”

“!”

“Hurry up and eat it. Regain your power.”

“Gun...!” Hugo looked moved as he gazed at his friend. Lee Gun always acted indifferently, but he was a thoughtful friend. “Gun! Thank you so much! I only have you—”

“F\*\*k off, idiot! You’re dead,” replied his best friend.

Hugo froze. “What?”

“You’re inept! How can you lose to that lousy monster? How could you let it steal your power?”

“...!”

Lee Gun let out a harsh laugh. “I can’t believe someone I taught got his pocket picked like that. You wanna die?”

“It... it isn’t like that!” The monster wasn’t lousy. “I couldn’t help it!” Hugo started taking a beating.

“Saint-nim!?”

Lee Gun cracked his knuckles. “Also, you never told me what happened to your wife? You also lost a general-rank subordinate?”

“That is...!”

“It seems I need to train you again. It has been a while, right?”

Lee Gun's hand had just reached Hugo when...

Brrr!

Hugo quickly answered the phone. "G-Gun! W-wait a moment! Phone! I got a phone call! This is important business!"

Normally, this was his work phone, on which he rarely answered calls. However, he had to accept this call to save his life. Acting busy, Hugo turned around. "Yes! This is Otis! What's going on— What?"

Hugo's expression changed. He had been running away from Lee Gun up to this point, but now, he came to a complete stop.

"They woke up?" Hugo could hear crying through the phone.

The nurse, who had called him, continued.

– Yes! The patients are awake!

This phone call had come from the hospital Hugo had secretly been supporting for the past ten years.

Most people couldn't manage the expenses that came with long-term care of patients in vegetative states for ten years. To keep the patients alive, the hospital needed a massive amount of money. Moreover, many had pressured the hospital to cut off the funds to the patients.

Therefore, the Archer Saint had supported this hidden hospital. It was how most of the patients were able to stay alive. Above all else...

'That's where my wife and subordinate are hospitalized.' Of course, Hugo hadn't told about it to his children or the Archer disciples. In fact, he had told no one.

Everyone thought that the patients' bodies were burned after the funeral.

– I don't know why, but the patients have awakened after ten years!

"...!"

– Anyway, Hugo-nim, you're our hospital's benefactor, so we wanted to notify you first!

The Archer Saint's mouth became dry at the news. It was great that people had woken up, but Hugo had only one question to ask. "What about the two of them?"



– What?

“Did those two wake up?” Hugo’s voice was shaking a lot. Then, he heard the person answer in a small voice.

– Ah...

This was enough of an answer.

– I’m sorry! The two of them haven’t woken up yet...

Hugo’s expression turned a little morose. “Thank you for calling me! I’m glad the others woke up. Yes. If anything changes—”

“Who is it?” Lee Gun suddenly asked.

Hugo ended the call and acted as if it was nothing. “The European Alliance— Kuhk!”

“It was the hospital, right?”

‘How did he know that?’ Hugo was about to turn his incredulous gaze toward Lee Gun, but...

“Uncle!”

He heard a familiar voice coming from a short distance. It was Chun Sungjae’s voice. The young man held a bag that looked full of items resembling books.

“Uncle! Uncle killed it, right?” As soon as he had seen the broadcast, Chun Sungjae had used the teleporter to come here.

Teleportation cost a lot of money, so it was something unimaginable for most people.

The light in Chun Sungjae’s eyes lasted only a moment. He came to a stop when he saw the toad Lee Gun had killed.

“...!” Ten years had passed, but Chun Sungjae recognized it. An unspeakable amount of joy and sorrow appeared on his face. “Uncle really killed it...!”

Hugo happily stood next to his son, but he couldn’t hide the bitterness in his expression. With the monster’s death, the patients in the hospital had awakened. After all, the monster had eaten their souls

However, his wife and subordinate were different. The monster had swallowed their bodies too. The situation seemed like it was too late to do anything.

This made Hugo glad that he hadn't told his children about his actions. Otherwise, he would've felt sorry for giving them false hope.

"Sungjae," Lee Gun suddenly said.

"Yes?"

"Take this. We are past your birthday, but this is your birthday present." Lee Gun tossed something toward him, and Chun Sungjae's eyes turned round. "Uncle went through a lot to find this."

Chun Sungjae grabbed something. It was the people he had wanted to see the most for the past ten years.

## CHAPTER 80: THIS IS SUSPICIOUS AS HELL

Chun Sungjae couldn't take his eyes away from the items. Even though Lee Gun had especially prepared this present for him, the young man was baffled. His reaction was normal. 'Uncle. Why this of all things....'

Yes, the things in Sungjae's hands were figurines of the Archer Saint. One of them depicted the Archer Saint in his twenties, when he had looked the most handsome. Then there was the figurine depicting his current version. It was the Archer Saint in his forties. Typical of the Archer Saint, the figurine showed him pulling back on a bow. It was a very cool pose.

However, none of that mattered to Sungjae.

'Why the Archer Saint's figurines of all things?'

Lee Gun's gift had mystified the Archer disciples, too. The only one to feel deeply moved was Hugo.

'Gun! You son of a b\*\*\*h. You really are my friend!' Hugo had asked Lee Gun for cooperation as he wanted his kids to love him. It seemed Lee Gun was going along with his request.

Chun Sungjae stared at his father's figurines, then nodded as if he understood what Lee Gun wanted. "You want me to use these as dioramas when he gets eaten by a monster, right? Thank you very much!"

"That's right— Hey! Chun Sungjae! How can you say that about my figurines?" Hugo was about to say that Sungjae was being too much, but Lee Gun just cackled.

“Why would I give the figurines of the lousy Archer Saint to my nephew as a present?”

“Hey!”

Lee Gun continued, “The real present is the content within the figurines.”

“Content?”

Instead of answering Hugo, Lee Gun looked at the figurines in Chun Sungjae’s hands.

[Lee Jaewon] [Chun Jiwoo]

A grin made its way to his lips. “There are souls within them. One is Lee Jaewon. The other one is Chun Jiwoo.”

“...?!”

These familiar names surprised everyone. The expressions of the Archer disciples, Chun Sungjae, and Hugo all changed at once. This was especially true for Hugo, who had just received a call from the hospital. The Archer Saint’s hands shook. All of them knew what Lee Gun’s words implied.

Chun Sungjae’s hands shook. The names had sent him in a state of disbelief. “It... it’s Mom and Jaewon hyung?”

This reaction satisfied Lee Gun.

Yes, this had been why Lee Gun hadn’t attacked the toad with his weapon at the beginning. It had to do with the souls within the monster.

In the beginning, the monster was stealing his magical energy, so Lee Gun got to see the monster only once. However, he had prior incidents in dealing with Yang Wei and Heiji. It didn’t take long for him to sense the presence of souls.

Lee Gun could feel countless human souls within the monster, but the energy of the Archer Saint shone more brightly than the others. Two souls stood out.

In truth, Lee Gun didn’t know the name of the two souls, but this lined up with the story Goat had told him. Lee Gun had just made a deduction about these souls’ identities. He wondered if they were Hugo’s wife and subordinate, who the monster had eaten ten years ago.

Therefore, Lee Gun had attacked the monster in a way that didn't hurt the souls. Then, he had extracted the two souls from the monster. Of course, they were souls, but he couldn't hear their voices.

Why?

[The souls aren't fully intact.]

Their souls seeped with the Sagittarius's power, so he could see signs of the monster feeding on the souls as nutrients. As further proof, Lee Gun could hear the wails emanating from the other souls, while these two souls were dead-silent. Moreover, most of the souls had returned to their bodies on their own. It was in contrast to these two souls.

“Still, these are their souls. I'm sure of it.”

“...!”

Everyone's face turned pale. These words caused a stir, especially amongst the Archer disciples.

“This isn't something even the Gemini Saint and the Pisces Saint can do. They can't extract souls.”

“Don't you have to be Divine rank to do it?”

“Noona! Don't talk nonsense!”

The stunned Goat looked at Lee Gun. ‘What is the extent of this man's abilities?’

Chun Sungjae's hands shook as he gazed at the souls. ‘If these are really the souls of the two of them...’

The young man clenched his eyes shut in anger. “Ah! As expected, I needed the burned pages of the magic tome!!” If he had the pages, he could manifest the souls. He might have been able to use magic to let the souls possess other bodies. “Why did that son of a b\*\*\*h have to burn it?!”

“Son of a b\*\*\*h?” Lee Gun tilted his head in puzzlement but overlooked the matter. “I'm not sure why you're feeling sorry for yourself, but you don't have to do anything unnecessary.”

Since the souls were damaged, Lee Gun hadn't known if returning the souls would be successful. So, he had let the Piggy Bank hold them in its mouth until now. As Lee Gun's familiar, Pixiu possessed a low-rank version of the Super Regeneration skill.

[All items within the Piggy Bank's body will gradually regenerate.]

[Once you possess a disciple, your disciple can use the Serpent Bearer's basic skill <Regeneration> within your holy ground.]

“Anyway, try putting those souls into their bodies. I'm sure they'll come back to life.”

Despite those words, Chun Sungjae looked like he was about to cry. His reaction was understandable. “Their bodies... We already cremated them 10 years ago!”

He might have their souls, but the souls had no bodies to return to. There was a reason Chun Sungjae had studied subjects like necromancy within the Gemini temple for the past three years.

“Their ashes are at the cinerarium....”

Baffled, Lee Gun glared at Hugo. “Oh really? You even tricked your kids?”

“...!” The sudden words surprised Hugo, and he looked at Lee Gun.

Lee Gun laughed at his reaction. “Cinerarium, my a\*s! Your wife and subordinate are in vegetative states. They are at a hospital”

“?!”

Chun Sungjae felt a shock of unimaginable magnitude.

Lee Gun scoffed at Hugo's reaction. “What? Did you think you could trick me? I remember what the bedwetter said. She said they are neither dead nor alive. It doesn't take much to piece together the story.”

In the end, Hugo pinched the bridge of his nose. He should have known he couldn't get one over Lee Gun. “That's right. Both of them are at the hospital.”

“Dad!!!”

“Saint-nim!!”

Chun Sungjae was on the verge of crying. He felt betrayed.

“The chances of them waking up were zero,” Hugo explained. That wasn't all.

[I want you to pick, Hugo. Choose either A or B.]

The Archer Saint once again remembered that woman's smile and ground his teeth.

Chun Sungjae yelled as if he had enough. “What about Noona! Does Noona know?”

“...”

When Hugo avoided his gaze, Chun Sungjae angrily took out his phone. “Wow! At the very least, you should’ve told Noona— What the hell is this?”

He had ten missed calls, all from his noona. His sister never called him this much. That wasn’t her personality, so this situation took him aback.

However, he soon became frightened.

[I heard you got scouted to Uncle’s temple?]

Was he imagining things? The question was simple, but Chun Sungjae felt like an underlying threat lay behind the message. It was as if she were threatening to kill him if he joined Lee Gun’s temple first.

“Great! How did she find out? I was going to boast about it to her at a later date....” Of course, that didn’t matter right now. Chun Sungjae turned around. “Anyway, where’s that hospital? I’ll go there right now and—”

“You can’t! Dad will go later— Kuhk!”

Lee Gun kicked Hugo. Then, he bullied the address out of him and gave it to Chun Sungjae. “When you reach the hospital, just twist the heads off those crappy figurines. You’ll be able to put the souls back into their bodies.”

Hugo, who was on the ground, angrily shouted, “You... You put their souls in my figurines on purpose!”

Lee Gun completely ignored him. When Chun Sungjae and the other Archer disciples were about to teleport, he moved. “Hey, Sungjae.”

Lee Gun flicked a coin toward Chun Sungjae, surprising him. “Use it when you’re in need. You’ll know the moment when you’ll need to use it.”

“?” Chun Sungjae tilted his head in puzzlement as he looked at the unknown coin. Engraved on the coin was a snake symbol that he had never seen before. ‘It doesn’t feel like the 12 Zodiacs.’

In the end, that didn’t matter.

“You should go buy some flowers. Also, you’re a big boy. Don’t cry too much because you’re seeing your mom after ten years,” Lee Gun advised him.

“...!”

For a moment, Chun Sungjae felt a surge of emotions. He couldn't say anything. At that moment...

[His faith has increased explosively.]

[You can locate the location of your zealot.]

As soon as Chun Sungjae disappeared, Hugo spat out the dirt in his mouth and expressed his anger. “Did you give something weird to my son again?”

“It's none of your business.” Lee Gun touched his pocket full of coins as he laughed in a pleased manner.

After finishing his Trial of Strength, Lee Gun had unlocked this skill to help with the Trial of Reputation. He had created these coins with the <Missionary> skill.

[Five points have been deducted.]

[You have unlocked the Missionary Skill]

[Familiar(Missionary)] (M)

– One human will awaken as the direct familiar of the Serpent Bearer.

– You can create Missionary(Regular) coins.

The reason he had created those coins was simple.

[The current subject has a faith of 300%!]

[Condition satisfied! It is possible for him to become a Missionary!]

[Chun Sungjae: Special A+.]

[You can choose 2 options.]

[<Missionary(Regular)> or <Missionary(Special)>]

[The subject's abilities have increased. His faith has increased by a lot.]

[The familiar's value has increased compared to before.]

[If you choose the Missionary(Regular) option, you can immediately bring him in as a familiar. You will acquire rewards up to the A rank.]

[If you choose the Missionary(Special) option, there's a probability of failure. However, if it succeeds, you will acquire achievement and rewards up to the S rank.]

Lee Gun laughed. 'What's good is good.'

As he headed to the Virgo Saint's city, he asked his friend, "Why didn't you go with them?"

"I have no right to see their faces. Also..." Hugo's eyes turned cold. "There is still the Virgo Saint. You can do your thing. I don't plan on leaving you behind because of personal matters."

The Virgo Saint was the most eccentric person amongst the Zodiac Saints. He was almost on par with Lee Gun in terms of eccentricity. There was no way a meeting between these two crazies would be quiet. If Hugo sent Lee Gun by himself, anything could happen.

Also... 'This symbol...' Hugo was still furious. He had all the reasons to storm the enemy with Lee Gun.

"When we meet him, the first thing we'll do is decapitate him."

"Call."

After twenty years, the duo of Lee Gun and Hugo finally joined hands with each other.

\* \* \*

The Virgo Saint's holy ground was called the <Girl's Palace>. It was a fancy and old-fashioned place that resembled the Palace of Versailles. From floor to ceiling, it was all painted in gold. Moreover, all the high-rank disciples taking care of the holy ground were women.

The Virgo Saint was a powerful battle-type Saint. All his disciples were gorgeous. They could be mistaken for models, but every one of them was an outstanding fighter.

A very flamboyant man entered the room.

"Saint-nim!"

"Kevin-nim!"



The man was a blonde, handsome young man wearing bloodstained armor. His cape fluttered in the air as he moved.

The Scorpio Saint and the Gemini Saint were two of the most beautiful women in the world. However, if one had to pick the most handsome man, the Virgo Saint would be at the top of the list.

[Even Adonis[1] will be sent packing and crying in front of this era's most beautiful CG-like beauty.]

[Even Hollywood actors refuse to take pictures with him]

This man was the Saint with the most female fans. Men were jealous of him and called him the narcissistic sultan. The man looked like a prince or a noble, but he had a bit of a temper. He was the Virgo Saint, Kevin Hazard.

Kevin was a battle-type Saint. Considered the strongest swordsman in the world, he was also known as the king of the west.

Today, Kevin had come back from the frontline after killing monsters. He had made his much-awaited return to his holy ground, yet he heard something absurd. "What? Lee Gun entered my land?"

"Yes. That is correct."

"Also, Lee Gun killed the monster at the third dome in my absence?" Kevin asked.

"Yes! The monster was supposed to be unkillable. Saint-nim, you said the monster is a poor matchup for you, so you contracted Lee Gun..."

The Virgo Saint had come into the room with his arms wide open, but his eyes flashed at those words. "Have you lost your mind? Why would I bring him in to defend my land?"

The Virgo disciples, who had been taking off his armor, became silent when their Saint glared at them. The fact that their Saint had contracted Lee Gun to kill the monsters indeed made little sense.

"Why would I do that? Why would I want to do something that'll put the spotlight on Lee Gun?"

Yes, the Virgo Saint hated Lee Gun.

"Lee Gun... I wouldn't be satisfied even if I beat him to death!"

The reason for Kevin's hatred of Lee Gun was quite simple. Lee Gun had always received more attention than him!

"Lee Gun! He died as a hero and was deified for the past twenty years! He received all kinds of attention! As if to make things worse, he turned up out of nowhere after twenty years! He once again stole the attention of the world!"

The Virgo Saint couldn't hold himself back. He unsheathed his sword. Pandemonium ensued.

"S-Saint-nim!"

"Please calm— Kyahhk!"

"Die Lee Gun!"

Kwahng!

The Virgo Saint planted his blade in Lee Gun's photo.

When the Devil's Tower had fallen, the angriest Zodiac Saint was the Virgo Saint. It wasn't for any other reason. 'My great raid to the Red zone is not even on the front page! It got overshadowed by the fall of the Devil's Tower??'

That was right. At that time, Kevin had been leading the first successful raid into a Red zone, yet it had gotten overshadowed by the rumors of Lee Gun's return!

Kevin's achievement had been worthy of the Guinness World Records! That wasn't all. He had never won against Lee Gun even before the latter's death twenty years ago.

Who cared if Kevin used his excellent tactical and martial prowess to achieve all kinds of exploits?

<Lee Gun holds the record for the fastest subjugation of the monsters.>

<Kevin, second>

It didn't matter if Kevin broke records that might draw the attention of the public!

<Lee Gun set a new Guinness Book record for being the fastest eater.>

<Kevin, second>

<Kevin came in first place in a fishing competition. He caught a 300-meter-long fish. He's in the first place.>

<Wait! Lee Gun shows off by catching a 1784-meter-long monster to set a new record>

<Kevin is in second place!>

<Second place!>

<Second place!>

Had Lee Gun been doing it on purpose?

The Virgo Saint was plagued by the curse of Lee Gun! From the first page of the newspaper to the top story on the news channels, Lee Gun was always number one.

As if to make matters worse, Lee Gun would always be in front of him in the line even when he had to use the restroom! Kevin had never been able to best Lee Gun in anything. The subject of the topic didn't matter; he always lost the first place to Lee Gun.

“This is true for the YouTube videos too! The video of me participating in the great raid has been in second place for the past twenty years! I'm always lagging behind Lee Gun by a small amount!! Second place!!”

Kahng!

At this point, Kevin wondered if he was cursed. Of course, he had one solace. There was one aspect where the Virgo could always win against Lee Gun. It was his face.

<The Virgo Saint has once again been voted as this year's most handsome Saint>

<Lee Gun is in the thirteenth place.>

If one was being honest, Lee Gun used to look like an orc. Kevin had almost felt sorry for Lee Gun's monstrous looks.

However, after Sophie's press conference a few days ago, everything had been turned on its head.

<Lee Gun has been voted as this year's most handsome Saint.>

<The Virgo Saint has been pushed down to the second place.>

“Ahk!”

“Saint-nim!”

The Virgo Saint turned violent as he oozed steam. “That b\*\*\*\*\*d Lee Gun once again dares to...”

“Please... please calm down! The gossip rags probably photoshopped him to raise the view count! He probably looks like a squid in real life!”

“That’s right! No one can win against Kevin-nim! We’ll guarantee it!”

In the end, the Virgo Saint overlooked the matter for now. He wondered why a commission was sent to Lee Gun in his name and why did the fourth and the fifth dome fell so easily.

However, he decided that wasn’t important right now. “You said Lee Gun is in my land right now?”

“Yes, that is correct!”

The Virgo Saint’s eyes turned sharp. “Good! It was truly regrettable when he suddenly died twenty years ago.”

Kevin stood up from his seat. “I’ll kill him myself this time around. I’ll take the number one spot from him!”

Full of rage, the Virgo Saint headed toward the town.

1. Adonis was a youth of remarkable beauty in Greek mythology. He was loved by both Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, and Persephone, goddess of the underworld

