

## Gourmet 141

### Chapter 141: Ballad's Cup, Shabu-shabu

The most flustered were the people left in the dungeon of the Corrupted Goddess Juis. Especially Callian! He could not hide his shock and embarrassment when the Wrathful Spirit of Goddess Juis suddenly disappeared in a flash of light.

‘T...this...?’

Even Black was dumbfounded as he stood next to Callian. He stammered, “W...what?”

That was when a series of notifications rang in everyone’s ears.

[Goddess Juis’ anger has been appeased.]

[All of the catastrophes that Goddess Juis had doomed the continent with, have disappeared.]

[Goddess Juis has blessed the Northern Continent.]

[EXP Acquisition Rate and Item Drop Rate from monsters will increase by 25% for one month.]

“...!”

Callian and Black’s eyes met as they heard another set of notifications.

[The quest has failed.]

[The quest penalty will now be applied, you are banned from entering the Northern Continent.]

“...”

The two were once again left speechless. The quest failed? This meant that they were not able to kill the Wrathful Spirit of Goddess Juis. It just literally disappeared in front of them. Why? It was because the anger of Goddess Juis had already been appeased. When he heard the information that Bach had gotten from the priest, which he had summoned through the soul summoning, he knew that the dungeon would only be created when Goddess Juis was angered.

Callian and Black once again made eye contact. They could both see the dumbfoundedness in each other’s eyes. Then, a thought flashed through Callian’s head. ‘We spent almost a week just preparing for this attack... We also need to pay the mercenaries that we hired in this attack, as well as the potions that they took, including the maintenance for their equipment.’

The cost was nearly 1,000 platinum. According to the previous calculation, their expenses were around 100 billion gold. If converted to cash? Billions of won. Callian suddenly burst out in tears, he could not help but weep at their impending doom. Right on time, one of his tactless guild members also added salt to the wound, without meaning to.

[Guild Chat | Revo: GM! The viewership rating is over 40% now! It’s totally awesome! Wow! So awesome!]

The ratings were over 40%... In other words, 40% of the people in the country were all tuned in to the joke that they had become. They could imagine them going? ‘Hahahaha... They’re f\*cked.’?and laughing at them in contempt.

[Guild Chat | Load: ...Revo. You're not watching the live broadcast right? If you don't want to get kicked out of the guild then you better shut up.]

[Guild Chat | Carmang:...]

[Guild Chat | Hippo:...]

[Guild Chat | Rook:...]

[Guild Chat | Revo: What, what's wrong?]

The guild chat was filled with condolences and crying. The same scenario was also played in the Louvert Guild's guild chat. What was even worse was that Black accepted an interview before about Legend Guild's Chef trying to cook a dish to satisfy Goddess Juis. This was what he said...

[Black: His efforts are commendable. (smile)]

However, now, even without looking at the comments, he could already imagine the viewers' comments.

[BlackRiceFlavor: Hehehehehehehehehehe, look at Black's expression hehe. It's like he was saying 'Where did it go?'. Now he looks like he has lost everything in the world.]

[fadd512: I just can't help but feel angry... The mobs did not drop any gold or artifacts, what the hell is wrong with this dungeon? I heard before that the drops would appear after killing the Wrathful Spirit of Goddess Juis. What did they do all this time?]

[TeacherTongman: What did they do? Slashing in the air, most likely.]

[fad31: Let's not roast them too much... They also tried to save us... I feel a bit sorry for them. Fi. Ght. Ing.]

"Ha, hahahahaha...!" Black suddenly laughed loudly.

When Callian saw him laughing, he also burst out in loud laughter, "Hahahahahahaha!"

The two men laughed crazily for a while. Ballad's Cup, the acknowledgment of Black's cooking, and even the possibility of recruiting senior rankers, these beautiful dreams had all disappeared.

Black snorted as he thought, 'Goddess Juis gave her blessings to the Northern Continent...'

As a result, the EXP Acquisition Rate, as well as the Drop Rate, had both increased by 25%. This only meant one thing...

'That chef bastard, who the hell is he?'

...Goddess Juis had been satisfied completely. They had somehow managed to provide her with a legendary dish, for her to bless the Northern Continent.

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During the time Callian and his team entered the boss room...

Minhyuk was hurriedly moving towards the temple where Eidni was praying as hard as he could. They were quite fortunate that Goddess Juis responded to their calls quickly this time. Minhyuk entered the temple and presented the spicy stir-fried chicken in front of Goddess Juis. Once she laid eyes on her dish, her eyes grew the size of the saucers in shock.

‘H...how did he know?’

Goddess Juis was truly craving some spicy stir-fried chicken! It even had cheese in the middle that looked like Moses performing his miracle, with how it parted the red sauce! The chicken was still steaming when it arrived in front of her. She gently lifted a piece of chicken, dipped it in cheese and lifted it up. The cheese stretched long, making her lick her lips in anticipation.

‘I can only try and eat food once a year after all! What if it’s not delicious?’

Juis slowly moved away from the dish, it seemed like she was a little afraid to taste another failed dish. However, before she could even move away, she felt an unusual power from the dish.

‘D...don’t tell me... for real?’

Juis quickly checked the information of the dish. Her expression morphed into that of genuine surprise. She turned to look at the still-bowing Minhyuk in front of her and thought, ‘Truly impressive...’

The legendary dish that had only appeared in the past a few times! To be honest, Juis was already planning on releasing the catastrophe after a longer period of time. After all, she knew that it was entirely impossible for a legendary dish to appear and satisfy her. However, against all odds, a legendary dish was sitting in front of her. It was even the dish that she wanted to eat the most! Juis hurriedly sat down. Then...

“...?”

...Juis witnessed another amazing sight. A round pan filled with the same delicious food as hers magically appeared in front of Minhyuk.

“Goddess Juis!”

“Speak.”

“I have the ability to manifest the same dish that I have cooked for others. May I have the honor of eating with you?”

Juis thought, ‘Is this his innate ability as a god...?’

However, his skills were still truly impressive. In fact, Minhyuk had not slept for four straight days because he wanted to finish this quest. One could even see the traces of exhaustion on his face. However, he still wanted to taste the legendary spicy stir-fried chicken that he had created!

“I’m giving you permission.”

After Juis gave Minhyuk her permission, she quickly picked up her chopsticks while Minhyuk stood up. Juis did not pay him any attention. She gulped loudly as she stared at the food.

‘Well then, first...’

Juis finally stretched out her chopsticks, clamping down on the chicken that was fully coated and covered with the bright red sauce. She slowly placed it in her mouth, savoring its flavor and texture.

‘S, soft...!’

The meat seemed to have melted in her mouth. Then, the spicy flavor of the sauce slowly spread in her mouth. The flavor and texture of the dish were so divine that a small smile graced her lips. However, when it came to the soft and chewy steamed rice cakes, she could not help herself from exclaiming, "I never tasted anything like this before!"

"Hehehehe! It's delicious if you eat it like this!" Minhyuk said as he picked a piece of chicken and dipped it in the cheese. Then, the cheese stretched out! Minhyuk quickly placed the chicken in his mouth and the stretched cheese was pulled out from the pan.

"I see, you know how to eat!"

"Madam Juis, the sweet potato is also delicious."

"Chomp.?Of course. It does feel a little nice to eat with you, since you know how to eat well."

Following Minhyuk's lead, Juis picked out a piece of sweet potato. Chewing on the sweet potato that was also covered in the savory sauce, she could taste the spicy flavor of the sauce. However, the aftertaste... The aftertaste was beyond sweet. It was a truly exceptional taste.

In the middle of their eating, a notification rang in Minhyuk's head.

[Beanie is requesting a summon.]

My goodness! It seemed like Beanie could smell the food and was now intensely requesting a summon! In fact, Beanie could still gain EXP even if it was in the summons room, as long as Minhyuk ate delicious food. In other words, Beanie could also eat deliciously inside. To think it was actively asking for a summon?

'Perhaps it's because it's more delicious when you eat together.'

Minhyuk suddenly spoke, "Goddess Juis."

"Yeah."

"May I summon my pet?"

Juis suddenly paused her enjoyment. She thought,?'Incarnation...'

However, based on her observations, it seemed like Minhyuk was not aware of his existence. Juis kept silent, only nodding in agreement.

Beanie appeared on Minhyuk's shoulder, its tiny paws raised high. Then... it suddenly slapped Minhyuk's cheek.

Slap!

"Ooiink!"

'How can you eat such delicious food without me! Oink!'

Then, Beanie dropped itself down on the floor as the same dish appeared in front of him. Beanie ate like it wanted to hide the food from everybody else. It picked up the udon noodles first, then...

“Sluuuuurp!”

...Beanie almost sucked all of the noodles in one go! There were even traces of sauce left around the rim of its mouth.

“Oink!”

‘Kyaa! It’s the best! Oink!’

Juis grinned and said, “That’s an interesting pet.”

“Well, yes.”

“It looks just like you.”

“...”

Minhyuk looked at Beanie, speechless. Beanie was literally a baby piggy and people were telling him that he looked just like Beanie... In other words? It meant that he looked like a pig, right?

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Minhyuk quickly spoke up as if trying to defend himself, and said, “Ey, no way.”

“Oink?” Beanie oinked and looked at Minhyuk with a wide grin plastered on his face.

‘Don’t even try to deny it, Master. Oink!’

“...”

Minhyuk was left speechless once again. He quietly placed a piece of pickled radish on top of his chicken and placed it in his mouth.

“Keuhahahaha!”

Then, Minhyuk quickly picked up some chewy hand-pulled dough.

“I...I’m so happy...”

“I also feel happy. I can’t believe that I’m able to eat such delicious food after a year...”

Minhyuk was shocked at Juis’ words. He asked again to confirm, “A...after a year...?”

“I don’t eat any food usually. The exception is when they hold a ritual and ceremonial service for me.”

“...You truly deserve to be angry,” Minhyuk said, as both he and Juis nodded in sync.

For some reason, he felt sad for Juis. The people of Valkyrie Kingdom had always said that she loved to play tricks. They would even downplay the situation, brushing it off and saying that it was not that big of a deal and she was just making such a huge mess out of it. However, when he thought about it, it was a day that she had been looking forward to after an entire year of waiting and anticipation! And that day was ruined!

"I understand. I also would have been angry if I was in your position. I'll definitely tell His Highness, Varen, to prepare harder from now on!" Minhyuk said. He understood her from the bottom of his heart.

"Hoho. Thank you," Juis said, before stopping in her tracks, stunned. She could not believe herself! She unknowingly spoke familiarly with the human being in front of her. It felt like she had known him for quite a long time.

"Ah, Goddess Juis. I'll prepare fried rice for your first meal in a year."

"Ho. That's good!" Juis answered, nodding happily.

Minhyuk quickly moved. With a flick of his wrists, he had already gathered the remaining sauce in Juis' pan. Then, he added some leftover pieces of meat and white rice to it. Just like that, he added some prepared and chopped perilla leaves, lettuce and kimchi to the pan. He also did not forget to add a sprinkle of sesame oil and some red chili paste. Then... He started to stir-fry the delicious rice.

"Oink!"

Beanie was also frying his own fried rice behind Minhyuk. What an extremely amazing piggy. ? Minhyuk's stir-frying was quite a flamboyant and brilliant performance. After quickly stir-frying the ingredients together, he pressed the rice down on the pan before cranking the heat up to the highest temperature possible. This was so the rice would be toasted better.

Sizzle, sizzle, sizzle!

It was the light and cheery sound of the bottom of the fried rice being cooked perfectly.

[This is the best time to turn off the heat.]

Minhyuk quickly turned off the fire and plated the dish. Then, he quickly made his own fried rice. He also did not forget to scratch the bottom of the pan with his spoon.

"He..."

The bottom was toasted to a perfect brown. When he saw it, he could not stop himself from scraping a spoonful, placing it in his mouth. He then exclaimed, "It's really, really delicious!"

"Oiiink!"

"I like it too!"

A pleasant meal was shared between the three of them. After finishing their meals, Juis felt that her stomach was exceptionally full. However, she faintly realized that it was not the end yet. She saw Beanie gesturing at Minhyuk.

"Oink, oink, oink!"

Beanie acted out pouring something into a glass! Minhyuk quickly understood what it meant. He then quickly pulled some cider out of his inventory. The cider appeared in front of Beanie. Then, the cute piglet quickly picked up a spoon with its tiny hands and opened the bottle with a pop!

“Oh.”

Clap, clap!

Minhyuk clapped his hands in admiration. He was quite impressed with Beanie and its antics. Beanie smiled proudly as it poured the cider into three glasses.

“Gulp, gulp, gulp, gulp.”

Juis finally tasted a refreshing and clear cider! Her expression at this moment was screaming? ‘Ah, I feel alive!’. Beanie gulped its cider with an ‘Oink!’ while Minhyuk gulped it down saying, “Kyaa!”

Juis was in awe. She nodded in happiness thinking, ‘I am really satisfied...’

Juis might have been disappointed with what happened at the ceremony, and with Rald’s dish, but the dish that the chef in front of her had given her was truly the best of the best. Once again, she nodded in happiness. Then, notifications rang in her head after she finished her meal.

[You ate a dish from a recipe specially made for you.]

[You won’t be able to eat another dish from a recipe specially made for you for a month.]

[You can’t receive any duplicate buffs during the duration of the buff retention period.]

[Spicy Stir-Fried Chicken.]

[Goddess Juis’ blessings would increase by +6 while her Holy Power would double for 60 days.]

Juis’ eyes widened in shock, ‘Isn’t this buff too amazing?’

Meanwhile, Minhyuk decided to check his satisfaction level. Juis was literally a god, so Varen, Crow and Locke were definitely incomparable to her. He wondered how much the satisfaction bar went up as he quickly clicked on it.

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"...!"

Minhyuk was surprised after checking the satisfaction level! It had increased by 33% in a single go! Furthermore, it did not end there.

[Beanie is evolving.]

[Beanie is evolving.]

Beanie also ate a legendary dish! That meant that its EXP had increased significantly, causing it to evolve twice in a row! Just like before, Beanie’s body floated up as its body shined brightly.

‘Will there be any changes with him this time?’ Minhyuk thought, as the bright light slowly faded away.

"Oink!"

"...Still the same."

Nothing changed in Beanie at all. Minhyuk rubbed his chin as he thought, ‘Yeah. Maybe Beanie will only become a bigger pig if he grows up. Perhaps, it might be better if he remains as a baby piggy.’

With that thought in mind, Minhyuk checked Beanie's stat window.

(Beanie)

Rank: ???

Race: Pet

Level: 5

Attack: 514

Defense: 3,541

Summoning Duration per Day: 4 hours

Summoning Waiting Time: 20 hours

Special Abilities:

?It will immediately detect if there is a medicine nearby.

?Pet Owner's attack will increase by 10%.

?Pet Owner's defense will increase by 8%.

?Passive Skill: Instinctual Protection

?Can now equip two artifacts.

Condition for Growth: The more delicious the food the owner eats, the higher the EXP it gains and the higher the level it could evolve.

Potential: 184

Experience Value: 32% / 100%

The changes in Beanie included a 300-point increase in his attack, as well as a 200-point increase in his defense. Beanie's summoning time had also increased by two hours, with an additional 8% increase in the Pet Owner's defense. However, the most surprising change in Beanie was...

'Can equip two artifacts?'?Minhyuk thought. He had heard that there were cases where pets could wear artifacts.

Then, Minhyuk turned to look at Juis as she waved her hand in the air. Then, more notifications rang in Minhyuk's head. It was the surprising notification about the catastrophe being lifted in the Northern Continent, as well as the EXP Acquisition Rate and Item Drop Rate increasing by 25% over the course of a month! A catastrophe might have passed over them briefly, but the players would eventually cheer for this end result. The 25% increase had literally become an event for all of the players in the Northern Continent. After that, the notification about the completion of Minhyuk's quest finally arrived.

[Kingdom Quest: Make a Legendary Dish for Goddess Juis, Completed.]

[You can now eat Sushi made out of S-grade ingredients.]

[You will receive the Ballad's Cup from Goddess Juis.]

Flash!



A bright light suddenly flashed in front of Goddess Juis. The light was so intense that Minhyuk could not help but cover his eyes instinctively from the blinding glare. Once the light faded away, a large golden goblet filled with water appeared in front of him. The cup was exactly as big as a pot.

“Fufufu!”

“...?”

Juis was confused when she saw Minhyuk grinning at the cup. He was even tilting his head from side to side as he looked at the cup.

‘Huh? Why is he tilting his head while looking at the cup?’

Juis also followed along and tilted her head side to side, before handing Ballad’s Cup over to Minhyuk.

[You have acquired one of the God’s Treasures: Ballad’s Cup.]

‘Yay! The size is just exactly what I want. With this, I can definitely...! Hehe!’

He would definitely be able to make that dish that went well with sushi! Minhyuk said, “Thank you very much, Goddess Juis! You’ll definitely be blessed with good fortune!”

Minhyuk bowed and expressed his gratitude. Juis smiled at Minhyuk and said, “I’m not yet done with bestowing you with gifts.”

“...?”

Minhyuk was confused. After all, he had already received all of his quest rewards.

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[Goddess Juis’ satisfaction has reached the maximum level.]

This was the notification that Park Minggyu, the Team Leader of the Special Players Management Team, had seen. This meant that Goddess Juis was extremely pleased right now.

Plenty of people had gathered in front of the monitor that Team Leader Park was looking at. There was only one reason! All of them were curious about the person that cleared the quest. Was it Player Minhyuk or was it Iris Guild? In all honesty, Team Leader Park and Lee Minhwa were silently rooting for Minhyuk in their hearts.

‘We’ve?been through hell and back these past few days because of what Iris Guild did!’

In the first place, this entire farce was the plot and drama that Iris Guild had created themselves. The disaster was something that happened because of the drama that Iris Guild created. Due to the whole fiasco, the employees from the Special Players Management Team and the other departments were not able to leave their posts. However, Minhyuk easily solved it, unlike Iris Guild that failed to clear their quest. This was the first time that Minhyuk looked handsome in the eyes of Team Leader Park.

“This is a problem,” President Kang Taehoon suddenly said.

“Goddess Juis is a god that is very free and liberal.”

Typically, gods had more freedom in terms of what they could and could not do compared to ordinary NPCs. Whether in terms of what they could give, what they could increase, or what they could curse, the gods had looser restrictions on whatever they did. Because of that, whatever happened next might be a problem for them. After all, Goddess Juis, the freest of them all, was very satisfied.

‘Does she really want to give Minhyuk additional compensation?’

Ballad’s Cup, which Minhyuk had already received, was a medicine of incredible power that no medicine could ever compare. Its estimated price would amount to billions of won. Athena was not just a simple game anymore. It had now almost become a part of everyone’s daily routine. For the sake of rare and powerful artifacts, the world’s richest would spend millions to billions of won just to acquire them. The estimated price of such an item was only in the billions, but considering the rarity of the item and the competition between bidders, it would probably go for more than twice as much if it was put up in an auction.

At that moment, Goddess Juis finally spoke.

[I’m not yet done with bestowing you with gifts.]

Worry and concern could be heard from the voice of Goddess Juis, as if she was worried that Minhyuk would not like what she would give. Not long after, an item appeared on Juis’ hand.

President Kang Taehoon’s eyes widened in disbelief as he shouted, “Pandora’s Helmet!!!”

“Gasp!”

Surprised voices came from the members of the production team, while Team Leader Park and Lee Minhwa looked at them in confusion. Both of them were unaware of the artifacts since their department was not in charge of them. There were hundreds of millions of artifacts available in Athena. In fact, even the production team that was in charge of these artifacts still needed to look for information, because they did not know a thing about this particular artifact at all.

“Is it something great?”

“It...It’s really great! It’s an artifact that can never be bought with money and it’s also a legendary item!”

“...!”

Team Leader Park and Lee Minhwa were quite shocked when they heard his words. In the end, Team Leader Park could only sigh. He said, “What...he already has three legendary artifacts by himself...”

“In a way, he has four.”

He had Hepas’ Legendary Frying Pan, the Armor of Immortality, Pandora’s Helmet, and Rumad’s Demon Greatsword that he sold. In fact, Minhyuk had already sold Rumad’s artifact, and had received the equivalent amount for a legendary artifact.

“Take a look at his expression...” Kang Taehoon murmured to himself as he continued to look at the monitor.

Minhyuk finally opened his mouth after receiving the item.

[Thank you. I'll use it well. I'm really happy!]

"Ack!"

"Ugh!"

The reason why everyone was surprised was because Minhyuk's expression was screaming something along the lines of 'Well, I guess I got another item!' before he quickly turned around to leave.

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"Thank you. I'll use it well. I'm really happy!"

"Wa...wait...!" Juis shouted. She was a little confused.

'Wait? What did I mean by wait?'

She was obviously grateful to Minhyuk since he satisfied her with exceptional food. It was the food that she could only eat once a year! Since the food was truly delicious, she had decided to give him the helmet just so she could repay this favor.

However, Minhyuk had looked at it with a sullen expression on his face. He thought, 'Eyy. I thought she was going to give me something to eat!'

If Juis knew what was going on inside Minhyuk's head, she would totally think that he was sick in the head. However, Minhyuk still appreciated the gift that Juis had given him. However, he had a place that he had to hurry to, so he wanted to leave quickly.

Minhyuk wanted to quickly go where Rald was! His skin had been rotting, and Minhyuk knew that he could definitely be cured now, so he wanted to hurry and cure him just so he could eat that delicious sushi! He tried to quickly leave, but Juis stopped him from leaving.

Minhyuk hurriedly turned his head to look at her with a curious expression on his face and asked, "What's wrong?"

"N...nothing... Th...that... are you not going to check that?"

"Eyy. I can do it later when I have the time."

"Wh...when you have the time?" Juis asked dumbly. For a brief moment, she wanted to take back the item from him. However, what could she do? She had already given it away.

"Aren't you happy? Since I, a god, have given you another gift because I'm grateful to you?"

Juis highlighted her existence as a god. It was as if she was asking him to praise the gift that she had given him. Minhyuk looked down at the item in his hands and replied to her with a voice that clearly lacked the luster of excitement. He said, "I have received a reaaaaa~lly great gift. Ah, I'm really happy!"

“...”

“But, I’m busy. Aren’t you really busy too?”

“Huh? Y...yeah? But, wouldn’t it still be better for you to check it out?”

Right now, Juis was already blatantly telling him to check it out. Minhyuk had no choice but to cater to her wishes, all while saying?‘Ah, that’s right, gods are all really busy.’.

(Pandora’s Helmet)

Rank: Legendary

Requirements: 200 INT, 200 WIS, 400 Holy Power

Durability: 10,000 / 10,000

Defense: 741

Special Effects:

?Holy Power x2

?All of your skills’ Cooldown will be reduced by 20%.

?All of your skills’ Required Mana will be reduced by 20%.

?Skill: God’s Targeted Praise.

Description: This was the helmet that?Juis?had used in the past. This helmet contains a tremendous amount of holy power as well as an infinite variety of hidden abilities.

Minhyuk also did not forget to click on and check the attached skill.

(God’s Targeted Praise)

Artifact Skill

Level: None

Mana Required: 500

Cooldown: 1 week

Penalty for Use: -2 on all basic stats

Effects: ?After using Praise, the player can bestow their holy power upon a single person for 30 minutes. It can only be given to a person without a shred of holy power.

Description: Two points from each of your five basic stats will be considered as a sacrifice to the gods. This will allow your targeted party to have the same holy power stat as the holy power stat that you possess.

It was not a bad skill. In other words, after consuming two points from all five of his basic stats, Minhyuk’s targeted party would have the same holy power stat as himself for 30 minutes. This was the reason why Juis wanted him to check the artifact so badly earlier.

“I checked it! Please take care!” Minhyuk said, bowing politely before leaving.

Juis could see that he was not as happy as she thought he would be. Then, Juis mumbled as she watched Minhyuk's disappearing back, "A disaster will befall us once again...?"

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Warm light seeped through Rald's rotting body. The light healed him and washed away the disgusting rot away from his body. He thought, 'The foreigner succeeded...'

An amazing person! After all, that person created a legendary dish, something that he was not able to create. To think that it was even a foreigner that made the dish!

Varen had visited him a while ago and told him that he promised the foreigner something. He said, 'I promised him that we will serve him sushi made with S-grade ingredients.'

Rald nodded in agreement. It was an appropriate reward for the person that worked hard for their kingdom! It was now the perfect time for them to show him their gratitude.

Then...

Knock, knock, knock.

...the sound of knocking rang loudly in the room.

"Is someone in there?"

"...Who's there?"

"I'm the foreigner named Minhyuk."

'Ah...!'

That person! The amazing chef that created a legendary dish!

"Please come in."

As soon as he came inside, Minhyuk looked at Rald with undisguised anticipation. His eyes were even sparkling so brightly as he looked at Rald with happiness. Minhyuk asked, "Hello? Are you feeling better?"

"Ah, yes," Rald said, trying to sit up. Minhyuk hurriedly went to his bedside to help him.

"I heard that His Highness had promised to serve you the best sushi."

"That's right. However, your body might only be starting to feel better, so it's fine! It's really fine. Even if I'm starving right now, it's fine! I was supposed to eat that sushi a long time ago, but it's alright! Are you really alright?"

"..."

Rald knew that his words and expression were contradicting. His expression was saying something along the lines of...?'Please do it now, if you don't do it now, then I'll make you do it.'

"...N...no. It's fine. Let's go to the restaurant immediately since it has been delayed for quite some time."

“Ah! If you insist. Hahaha. There’s nothing I can do about it. After all, it’s quite rude to say no,” Minhyuk quickly agreed as if the word refusal was not in his dictionary at all.

Then, he leaned in and sneakily whispered to Rald. He said, “Ah. Wait. There’s something I really want to eat with sushi and coincidentally, I also received a pot from Goddess Juis. Do you happen to have the ingredients on hand...?”

‘He received a pot from Goddess Juis? Do gods have pots too?’

“Is that so? May I know what kind of food you’re going to eat?” Rald asked.

Rald saw the foreigner named Minhyuk’s face brightened at his question. Minhyuk was smiling brightly just by thinking about the food that he wanted to eat.

“It’s shabu-shabu!”

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“Shabu-shabu...” Rald mumbled, smiling lightly at Minhyuk’s words.

Shabu-shabu and sushi were surprisingly a good combination. The shabu-shabu’s dull and cloudy broth tended to become darker and richer in flavor as time went by. Back in the day, Minhyuk had always seen shabu-shabu being served in sushi buffet restaurants.

‘Eating sushi and shabu-shabu? Kgghk!’

Minhyuk did not say anything, but the excitement was clear on his face.

“There are enough ingredients. However, I don’t think that there will be enough S-grade ingredients. The ingredients for sushi are easy to get since we are near the Dragon King’s Sea, but the ingredients for shabu-shabu are mostly vegetables, so we will have a hard time getting S-grade ingredients for it.”

“That’s fine. Are you going to get the ingredients?”

“Of course.”

“Wow!” Minhyuk exclaimed in awe.

Rald grinned and thought, ‘Ah. He’s such a likable fellow.’

The more Rald interacted with Minhyuk, the more he felt willing to do anything for him. However, even though he was known as a Legendary Chef, Rald knew that there was nothing else that he could do for Minhyuk. All he could do was make delicious food for him. Even after Rald told Minhyuk that they would not be able to get S-grade ingredients and they only had sub-par ingredients in his kitchen for shabu-shabu, the young man in front of him was still very happy.

“This way.”

“Yes,” Minhyuk said as he followed him to the restaurant. Seeing the restaurant, Minhyuk could not help but tremble.

Gasp...!

Minhyuk gasped in surprise. After all, there was a restaurant located inside the Royal Palace! Minhyuk felt as if he came to Japan for a vacation the moment he entered the restaurant. The subdued, dark ambiance of the restaurant, as well as the chairs lined up by the bar counter, made him feel like he entered an authentic sushi restaurant.

“His Highness Varen, also likes to eat sushi. Please sit down and wait for a moment,” Rald said as he went out for a bit. When he came back, he was already holding an armful of ingredients.

“I also want to have a dining area at home with this kind of ambiance.”

Rald smiled at him as he began to prepare the ingredients for the shabu-shabu. However, at that moment...

“Please wait!”

“Eh?”

“Could you please excuse me for a bit?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll go out for a bit, then when I come in please say?irasshaimase! Please do it just like this.”

“Huh. Ummm...? Wh...why?” Rald asked, a little perplexed at his weird request.

“I can eat more deliciously that way.”

In Rald’s eyes, Minhyuk was a kind-hearted person. So, he believed him. He said, “Is that so? It will be more delicious that way...?”

“Yes! Please do it like this! Please! Just once!”

“...”

Then, Minhyuk quickly rushed outside before coming back inside and saying, “Oh, so there was a sushi restaurant like this in here? Oh. What a nice atmosphere.”

“I, irasshaimase!”

Rald felt that Minhyuk looked like a good man, but was certainly strange. Minhyuk even spoke to him as if they had never seen each other before. Minhyuk said, “Hello Mister Owner!”

“Yes... hello...”

“This is my first time coming here. You have such a nice atmosphere going on in here.”

“Is...is that so? I paid great attention to the arrangement of the furniture here. Hahahahaha...!”

"I'll take, uhm... your D-course. Oh. Do you also serve shabu-shabu here? I'll have that one too, please!"

"Yes, I understand," Rald said. He was already chopping the ingredients for the shabu-shabu when his head suddenly turned blank. He thought, 'W...what did I just do...?'

Rald placed the chopped ingredients in front of Minhyuk. There were a variety of vegetables placed on the table like bean sprouts, cabbage leaves, chilis, button mushrooms, enoki mushrooms, and even oyster mushrooms. There were also fresh blue crabs, shrimps, and thinly sliced beef off to the side. Minhyuk quickly took out his portable stove and turned it on with a click. Then, he placed his shabu-shabu 'pot' on top of the open flame.

'Oh, did he put the pot on the flame already? Is that the pot that Goddess Juis gave him?' Rald thought as he prepared the sushi. He slightly tilted his head to look at the said 'pot', only to stop in his tracks.

"Hehe! I already boiled the broth earlier~"

The young man in front of him started to season the broth and prepare his shabu-shabu base with the water that he had boiled earlier in the 'pot' that he took out.

Rald's body trembled in fear when he saw such a scene. He said, "Th...that..... Don't tell me... That isn't Ballad's Cup, right?"

"Yeah, you're right?"

Gasp!? Rald gasped, his legs softening in an instant. He almost collapsed on the spot after hearing Minhyuk's confirmation.

"The water in Ballad's Cup has strong and mysterious powers. So I'm going to make shabu-shabu with it. Kyaa!"

"You shouldn't say 'Kyaa!' but 'Ack!'"

"Why?"

"B...Ballad's Cup is a god treasure that has been written in the legends. Such a sacred item..."

"Are we not allowed to boil broth in a sacred item? Please hear me out. Look at this water, doesn't it look much better than normal water? I'm sure it tastes much better than normal water too."

Rald nodded. It was true. The water in Ballad's Cup was definitely different compared to ordinary water.

"So I put vegetables here, boil it well, and make the broth. Then, I can dip the meat and cook in it. Right?"



“Kgghk!?Delicio..... No, no! That’s not it!”

“I live to eat, so it’s alright if it’s delicious.”

Minhyuk nodded happily, satisfied with his perfect logic. Rald knew that he was definitely a good person, but he could see that Minhyuk was beyond strange. Now that he interacted more with Minhyuk, it seemed like the latter was downright crazy. Rald sighed in defeat, turning around to continue preparing the sushi.

Meanwhile, Minhyuk used his scissors to cut up the vegetables and make them smaller, before adding them to his shabu-shabu pot. His shabu-shabu was boiling well! He picked up his spoon and scooped up a spoonful of broth to taste.

“Hoo! Hoo!”

After cooling it down for a little, Minhyuk slowly took a sip from the spoon.

“It needs to be boiled some more.”

Then, what was he supposed to do as he waited for the soup to cook? Simple. He picked up a piece of thinly sliced meat from the side and dipped it in the broth. The red meat of the beef was instantly cooked. He had already prepared the shabu-shabu sauces that included mustard, peanut and chili to the side. Minhyuk personally preferred to dip his shabu-shabu in the chili sauce, but he wanted to taste the flavor of the meat without any additional flavor first, so he directly placed the slice of meat in his mouth.

“Wow. It’s soft and it’s melting! It’s really melting in my mouth!”

“...”

Rald glanced at Minhyuk as he continued to make sushi. He saw Minhyuk picking up some vegetables—enoki mushrooms, bean sprouts and cabbage leaves—and placing them together with a piece of beef. Then, he clamped all of them together. The vegetables looked like they had absorbed enough broth since they looked plump and juicy.

‘Once you bite it in your mouth, I’m sure the broth will spread in your mouth.’

The chili sauce would also add flavor to those bland vegetables. Then, Minhyuk pulled the chili sauce near him, and dipped everything in his chopsticks in it before placing it in his mouth.

“Kyahaa! Yummy!”

“Keuha! Delicious...”

“...?”

“...”

Rald unknowingly exclaimed as if he had tasted the dish himself. He quickly turned around and prepared the sushi once more. He was so embarrassed that he pretended that nothing had happened earlier.

Then, Minhyuk asked him as he continued to eat his shabu-shabu, “Please be honest. You want to taste the shabu-shabu made in Ballad’s Cup, right?”

Rald was caught in a dilemma. Did he want Minhyuk to give him a bite? Or did he want to take a sip of the soup? No, how could he even think of eating shabu-shabu made in Ballad's Cup?! He was not that kind of person!

"Yes."

"...You understand my feelings!"

"That... Well..."

"Yes. I'll eat it well!"

"..."

Rald felt sad. He could at least pretend to eat it reluctantly if Minhyuk suggested it to him, but he could not just ask for it himself. He quietly completed the assorted sushi with eyes shining in tears. After finishing the assorted sushi, he placed it in front of Minhyuk.

"Wow. These colors! It looks so fresh!"

The sushi platter that Rald prepared looked incredibly fresh and plump. Some sushi would be so disappointing that they did not even have a 1:1 ratio of toppings to rice. However, Rald's sushi looked like there were plenty of fish and seafood, and on top of that, it was at a perfect ratio with rice. There were ten pieces of sushi laid in front of him and they all looked appetizing and drool-worthy.

Minhyuk first picked up flatfish sushi. The white flesh of the flatfish sushi looked like a long fishtail that was spread on top of the rice. Even though the part that was used in the flatfish sushi was its fin, its texture would be extremely chewy and the taste was definitely fresh. Minhyuk placed some wasabi in his soy sauce, dipped the sushi in it, and placed it in his mouth. As soon as he chewed on the sushi, he could feel the stinging flavor of the wasabi spreading in his mouth, which was immediately followed by the light and chewy flavor of the flatfish, as well as the sweetness of the rice.

A smile quietly appeared on Minhyuk's face. He said, "Wow. I have never had such delicious flatfish sushi in my life!"

Just as Minhyuk was admiring the taste of the sushi...

[You have eaten Flatfish Sushi made by the Legendary Chef.]

[You have gained 20 DEX.]

Minhyuk's smile grew wider.

'Not only does It tastes good, it even boosts my skills!'

This time, Minhyuk picked the salmon sushi. Salmon had a soft, milky, and rich flavor that could only be tasted once it was chewed. The richness of the flavor of the fish could be a little greasy, but the stinging taste of the wasabi could easily clear it away. Once he placed the salmon sushi in his mouth, it was as if the salmon had melted with how soft and chewy it was!

[You have eaten Salmon Sushi made by the Legendary Chef.]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

Next was tuna sushi. The meat of the tuna that was placed on top of the tuna sushi was its belly. The tuna belly was arguably the best part of the fish. In order to honor this sushi, Minhyuk placed a separate dollop of wasabi on top of the tuna sushi. Then, he dipped it in his wasabi sauce before placing it in his mouth.

“Kghhh~?My nose is tingling!”

The spicy flavor of the wasabi quickly climbed up to his nose. The tingling was so intense, and a tad painful that he had tears in his eyes, but the flavor and the aroma that followed was truly a pleasant combination in his mouth. This was the reason why some people would directly place wasabi in their sushi, they were captivated by this strange tingling in their noses.

[...made by the Legendary Chef.]

[You have gained 40 REP.]

Next was the egg sushi. Egg sushi was the simplest sushi. However, the taste and the texture of the egg would determine the ability of the sushi chef who made it. Once Minhyuk placed the egg sushi in his mouth, he could feel its soft and fluffy texture. The sweetness of the rice as well as the light flavor of the egg slowly spread in his mouth as he continued to chew. The taste was so scrumptious that could not stop smiling and grinning foolishly.

[...made by the Legendary Chef.]

[You have gained 30 Magical Defense.]

Then, he ate the eel sushi, sashimi sushi, and torch-grilled wagyu sushi, one after the other! Whenever he ate a piece of sushi, his EXP, REP and DEX increased. In total, Minhyuk gained four levels, 80 REP, 80 DEX and 100 Magical Defense. He also received an additional 80 in his physical attack.

All in all, he was satisfied with the delicious food that he ate. Just then, he found himself wondering...

‘Come to think of it, I don’t hear any notification about my DEX anymore?’

He had always heard a notification whenever his DEX increased by 100. However, his DEX was now at 1,401 and he did not even hear a notification for his 1,400 DEX.

‘Maybe I’ll get a notification once it reaches 1,500?’ Minhyuk thought, head tilting in wonder.

‘This idiot! What are you thinking about when there’s still food in front of you!’

Minhyuk’s mukbang was not yet over! And, Ballad’s Cup’s power would only come into full view once he had finished eating his shabu-shabu.

‘I’ll add some rice noodles to my last bowl of shabu-shabu and make some rice porridge with the remaining broth!’

Minhyuk quickly placed some rice noodles in his pot of shabu-shabu.

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Genie, Locke and Khan were currently speechless.

“Crazy... This is the level of the global players...?”

“Wow. Isn’t this insane?”

“How can we break this?”

They were challenging the Time Attack Dungeon. However, they could only attack the dungeon a total of five times every day. What was worse was that the whole world was participating in this Time Attack Dungeon event! This was also the reason why all of the players were struggling to break the record for the time attack dungeon. Genie, Khan and Locke all thought that they would be in the top five this time, especially since they were still enjoying the buff that Locke received from the dish that Minhyuk had made for him. However...

[South Korea, Legend Team: 1 hr 19 mins 56 secs. Rank: 21st.]

“...”

There was nothing they could do anything about it. This was the proof that there were mountains beyond mountains, and players that were more powerful than them out there in the world. Genie’s eyes scanned the list. Her eyes locked on the team that was ranked first.

[America, Black Swan Team: 59 mins 38 secs. Rank: 1st.]

There was a twenty minutes gap between their clearance time. It was just twenty minutes, but it was such a huge gap, especially when it came to attacking the same dungeon repeatedly. It was like running a 100-meter race. The difference between a good and bad player was only around 3~4 seconds, but it was still a huge gap. Right now, there was a twenty minutes difference in their dungeon attack time. The second place took about an hour and seven minutes to clear the dungeon. Looking at it, the gap between them was still huge.

Khan opened his mouth as he looked at Genie’s frustrated expression. He said, “Genie, think about it. Wasn’t there a guild member named Julian in the Black Swan Guild? The one that was hailed as God Bavecka’s child?”

“...Ah!” Genie shouted in surprise.

Julian, God Bavecka’s child, was said to have a tremendous amount of holy power. Every time the holy power reached an increase of 100, there would always be a huge additional damage against the undead. In Julian’s case, his party members must have definitely bet everything on his holy powers. They probably even tried to find ways to maximize the use of holy power for this.

“I heard that God Bavecka’s Child, Julian, has 1,300 points in his holy power.”

Holy power reaching 1,300 points... This was a huge figure. Holy power, just like DEX, was a stat that could not be raised so easily. It also could not be raised with regular bonus points. However, there were things that one could do to raise their holy power, such as abstaining from cursing, eating

meat, and even celibacy and other terrible things that really could not be done by a normal person. To think that Julian's holy power was at 1,300? That was a terribly huge number.

"Shit. Do we also need to recruit someone with high holy powers?"

"No. No matter how high the holy power of that person is, it would be completely useless to compare with Julian. There's only one thing that we could do now."

"What is it?"

Locke and Khan turned to look at Genie at the same time. She said, "Khan and I should eat Minhyuk's buffed dishes."

"As expected... It's the only thing that we could trust."

If both of them could eat Minhyuk's buffed dish, it would be possible for them to shorten their attack time significantly. It would not even be impossible for them to rise to the top 5.

'However, this is just a temporary increase in strength...'

In other words, it was not their own power. Genie had finally realized how high the walls they needed to climb just to get on the same level as the rest of the world.

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Minhyuk finally finished eating his shabu-shabu porridge. He simply added some rice and egg to the remaining shabu-shabu broth, before stirring it continuously and letting it boil. Once he finished eating the rest of his porridge, the notifications rang continuously in his ears.

[You have eaten Shabu-shabu made with the Water from Ballad's Cup.]

[Food God's Greatness.]

[You have ignored the medicine penalty. However, it still remains ineffective for other people.]

[A Medicine Cooking. You have obtained additional stats.]

[You have gained +400 Holy Power.]

[With Ballad's Cup's Blessings, your Holy Power Acquisition Rate will permanently double.]

#### Chapter 144: Beanie's Innocent Transformation

[Additional 20% damage will be inflicted on undead monsters.]

'Ho? Holy power, huh...'

Holy Power was a stat that could affect buff ability and deal additional damage against the undead. It was a very difficult stat to raise, even if one was an ordinary priest. After all, the methods for increasing the stat were quite tricky and very particular.

'Wasn't it something like not eating meat? My god! What a crazy way of obtaining stats, right?!'

Obtaining an increase in holy power was so particular and tricky that it even forbade the players from doing a lot of things. However, the benefits of these sacrifices were huge.

After he finished eating, Minhyuk finally remembered the Kong Qing Elixir quest that he had received from Boroto.

“Rald.”

“Yes.”

“Do you happen to know anything about Kong Qing Elixirs?”

Rald looked at Minhyuk in surprise. He said, “You’re not from the Northern Continent, but you know about the existence of the Kong Qing Elixir!”

“A person named Boroto had requested that I bring him some Kong Qing Elixir.”

“Oho. So it was Boroto, huh? I remember him,” Rald nodded as he continued to say, “Kong Qing Elixir is located either deep underground or under the sea, a place that is quite hard for humans to enter. It is a mysterious liquid that falls one drop at a time and will only accumulate after a huge amount of time.”

Minhyuk nodded in understanding.

“However, to be truthful... I also have no way of getting any Kong Qing Elixir either.”

“...Eh?!” Minhyuk exclaimed in surprise. Rald was also helpless?!

“Even if it was deep underground, the location where the Kong Qing Elixir can be found changes every time. Before, it used to be frequently located in Valkyrie Kingdom. However, I don’t think that that is the case right now. It has been years since we’ve last seen it here.”

“H...how can this be...!” Minhyuk said, feeling a bit discouraged. It was the Kong Qing Elixir that tasted like a carbonated drink! Was it really hard to find?

Rald looked like he could not bear to see Minhyuk with such a sad look. So, he opened his mouth again and said, “But?he?might know where it is.”

“He...?” Minhyuk asked in confusion.

A hint. This might be a hint!

“The Dragon King.”

“Ho?”

The Dragon King. Simply put, the king of the seas. The Dragon King’s Sea was located not far from Valkyrie Kingdom. From what Minhyuk heard, there were plenty of mysterious things that were yet to be discovered by the local players there. And even if he did not want to, Minhyuk still had to go to sea since he needed to proceed with Ellie’s quest. Not only that, there were plenty of delicious seafood waiting for him at sea.

‘Blue crab, shrimp, clam, flatfish, rockfish, oysters!’

Minhyuk could not even count them on one hand!

“But it’s not easy to meet the Dragon King, after all, he is the king of the seas. He must be living deep beneath the sea. Also, just in case you need this information, he has three children.”

“Three...?”

“The three of them are all strong individuals. One of them is even comparable to Sir Perle in strength.”

Minhyuk nodded. He knew that Perle was comparable to Rumad in strength, so if he compared their strengths, they must be truly powerful.

“Make sure to avoid any friction with them.”

[Hidden Quest: Meet the Dragon King!]

Rank: S

Requirements: Encounter with Rald.

Rewards: Boroto’s Buffed Dish.

Penalty for Failure: Decrease in Boroto’s favor.

Description: You have met the elusive Legendary Chef, Rald! According to him, the only person who might know of the location of the Kong Qing Elixir is the Dragon King. So go meet the Dragon King!

Minhyuk nodded happily.

‘The sea! I’m looking forward to it!’

He said his goodbyes to Rald and left the restaurant to prepare for his journey to the sea. He first went and bought a fishing rod, some bait, as well as the ‘Dorito’s’ bubblegum. Dorito’s bubblegum was Valkyrie Kingdom’s specialty, an item that could help anyone breathe underwater.

“Oh, this bubble gum tastes really good!”

Since Minhyuk was deemed by every citizen of Valkyrie Kingdom as a hero who had saved their kingdom, he was able to buy items at a 10% discount. It was a special perk that was given to the person who saved their king and their kingdom from the catastrophe.

As Minhyuk chewed on the bubblegum, a notification rang in his ears.

[You can breathe underwater for one hour.]

“Phtew!”

Once the sweetness of the bubblegum faded, Minhyuk quickly spat it out on a tissue before taking five more out and placing it in his mouth.

[You can breathe underwater for one hour.]

“Phtew!”

He spat the bubblegum out and popped in a few more in his mouth. The merchant selling Dorito's bubblegum laughed incredulously at Minhyuk's actions.

“On...one piece is worth 50,000 gold... why waste so much money on such an expensive item?”

“It doesn't taste good once the sweetness has faded away!”

“...”

“I'll buy 300!” Minhyuk said, deciding to buy Dorito's bubblegum in bulk.

[Beanie is asking for a summons.]

Minhyuk was quite confused when he saw the sudden notification. Still, he summoned the baby piggy. The moment Beanie was summoned, it dropped down on the ground and dashed off somewhere.

“Huh? Where are you going? Beans!” Minhyuk shouted, quickly chasing after Beanie. After chasing for quite some time, Minhyuk saw familiar faces, ones that he had not seen in quite a long time.

“Woow. The pooppy pig is taking a real piggy with him!”

They were Hyeminnie and Hyemin'sDaddy. Minhyuk quickly approached them in surprise. However, he could tell that something was strange with Beanie. That was when he saw Hyeminnie holding a bag of Jupa-chups?lollipops in her hand. Beanie quickly sat down in front of her like a puppy and then...

“Oiiiiink...”

...Beanie oinked as if it was trying to say that it wanted to eat it, looking at the Jupa-chups with twinkling eyes.

“Huh? This is Hyeminnie's, baby pooppy.” Hyeminnie said, quickly jerking her hand away and hiding the candy behind her. Beanie's eyes started to shine with tears as it bowed its head in disappointment.

“Oiiiiink...” Beanie cried sadly. It looked like it would shed tears at a drop of a hat. Hyeminnie and Hyemin'sDaddy both looked at Beanie in pity.

‘Oh my god. How can there be such an adorable and pitiful pet like this?!’

‘It's a waste of my candy but... should I give him one? I feel so sorry for him...!’

Hyeminnie rummaged through her pockets and gave a lollipop to Beanie. It was as if she could not bear to see the baby piggy sad. The still-sullen and depressed Beanie brightened in an instant at the sight of the candy. It tapped its tiny head on Hyeminnie's legs, as if it was asking if it could really eat it.



“You can eat it, baby poopy!”

Beanie nodded fiercely, a happy smile plastered on its face as it ate the lollipop.

‘This swindler...?’Minhyuk thought, well aware of Beanie’s con-man personality. He looked at his pet absurdly.

‘Huh? Wait. He got it just like that...?’

Minhyuk found Beanie’s method to be amazing.

“Oh. Huh....?”

“Ack?!”

Hyemin’sDaddy could not help but gasp. After all, Minhyuk suddenly sat down like Beanie in front of Hyeminnie and looked at her with twinkling eyes as he cried out, “Oooooiiiiink...?!”

Minhyuk copied Beanie down to the T. When Hyeminnie did not give him any candy, he also looked down sadly.

“Oooooiiiiink...” Minhyuk also cried sadly.

‘This is the most important! A voice filled with tears!’

Hyemin’sDaddy and Hyeminnie were both speechless. They were shocked at how Minhyuk copied Beanie, just to ask for some candy.

‘He’s still as weird as ever...’

‘P...poopy piggy is really strange...’

Hyeminnie and Hyemin’sDaddy eyes met as they looked at each other with wry smiles.

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“Hehe. This is really delicious, Beans!”

“Oink!”

[Beanie is happy.]

Minhyuk and Beanie were both eating their lollipops happily. Hyemin’sDaddy had told him that it had been quite a while since he had last accessed?Athenae. Minhyuk also just found out that Hyemin’sDaddy was also a guild member of Legend Guild.

“Hyeminnie, how are you these days?” Minhyuk asked Hyeminnie as he ate his strawberry milk Jupa-chups.

She played with Beanie happily while answering, “I got better! I also gained 10 kilograms. And I’m going back to school.”

“That’s a relief,” Minhyuk said, smiling brightly. The fact that his unintentional benefactor, Hyeminnie, was getting better was great news to him.

Then, Minhyuk suddenly remembered something. He said, “Ah, that’s right! Beanie can now equip two artifacts, so is it alright if I make a production request?”

Minhyuk was not sure, but there might be a possibility that Beanie’s ability to find medicine would get enhanced after he equipped him with two artifacts.

“Ah. Of course, it’s possible,” Hyemin’sDaddy smiled at him. Then, he continued to say, “I’ll take gold as payment.”

Minhyuk’s movement suddenly paused. The smile that Hyemin’sDaddy was giving him was quite different from his smile earlier. It was like he was saying ‘Student, I’ll give you a discount so buy from me.’?or something like that. Well. It was also a fact that Minhyuk had received his frying pan as a gift from him, right?

“I also need some artifact materials. Do you have any on hand?”

Minhyuk thought carefully if he had some artifact materials on hand. He thought,?‘I have the Basilisk’s Heart, don’t I?’

The Basilisk’s Heart was an SS-ranked artifact material! It was a material that was not worse than the Sacred Branch that he got last time. He also had the Phoenix’s Feathers, as well as some Twin-headed Ogre’s Blood. Looking back, it seemed like his inventory was filled with amazing materials.

After seeing all of these materials, Hyemin’sDaddy was left in shock. He asked, “W...what is your level now?”

“I’m a little over 250 right now.”

“...”

Hyemin’sDaddy shook his head in disbelief. There were plenty of materials here that could not be obtained by someone at Level 250.

‘But, I wonder if it’s really fine to make pet artifacts with these good materials? Hmm. Well, it’s also good to make pet artifacts,’?Hyemin’sDaddy thought. He gulped at the power that he felt from the artifacts that Minhyuk was wearing. The armor, the cloak, the sword, the helmet, even the frying pan that he made for him... everything that Minhyuk had equipped were unusual artifacts.

‘Pets are existences that can help a character gain more strength. Some can even add around 100~120 in strength and power to their owners.’

Characters had obvious limitations. Once the character had equipped all possible artifacts that can be worn, they could not wear anything more. Once their skill level had reached MAX, they would not be able to level up any more. High-leveled players often run into these difficult problems. The only way left for them to grow more was to either level up, or get a higher quality item. However, it was very difficult and time-consuming for them to get the materials for a good item. In fact, growing with the help of items was almost close to impossible.

That was when the concept of a 'pet' came into view. A pet would be the fastest way for a character to achieve tremendous growth. That was because pets could increase their buffs and abilities whenever they grow. What more for an artifact-wearing pet?

'Making a pet wear an artifact is almost the same as adding a character equipment slot.'

Once Beanie wore an artifact, his capabilities would increase, which in turn would also boost his owner's powers.

"I hope that the ability to find delicious food gets enhanced."

Whisper, whisper—

"Ah. Yes..." Hyemin'sDaddy answered with an awkward smile.

"Ah. Can you please take care of this too?" Minhyuk said, handing over Pandora's Helmet to him. Pandora's Helmet was giving off a subtle glow.

"It's too eye-catching."

"Ah. Then, shall we add some cloaking ability to this artifact?"

"Wow. Can you do that for me?"

"That's 41 platinum. Ah, since we're guild members... I'll give you a guild member discount. You only need to pay 40 platinum."

Minhyuk finally realized that Hyemin'sDaddy was a total businessman! He gave out a quotation of 41 platinum, smiled at him, and said that he would give him a discount when it was originally priced at 40 platinum!

"Ah. I know," Minhyuk said. Minhyuk had a lot of gold under his disposal, so it did not matter that much. Furthermore, the problem in the kingdom had already been sorted out, so he could sell his items at twice the price soon. Just in time, he could see the commander of the kingdom knights, Sir Perle, running towards him.

"How long will the production take?"

"Artifacts for pets are much easier to make compared to player artifacts, so it can be done by today. However, you have to leave your pet with me."

"My pet?" Minhyuk asked in confusion. He was wondering how he could leave his pet with him when the summoning time was only for a few hours.

"Yes. If you place your pet in a pet storage, it can be summoned for a whole day. In the meantime, I will use a potion named 'Pet Conversation' to try and talk with your pet so I can produce the artifact that your pet wants the most."

"Oho."

That was quite a good idea. Minhyuk temporarily left Beanie in a pet storage, before leaving quickly since Perle kept on urging him.

“Hyemin. Let’s go buy some potion.”

“Yeah Dad! Baby poop, protect this place while I’m away. Okay?!”

Beanie waved pitifully over the fence. Its tail wagging sadly as it watched Hyeminnie move away from it.

“Oiiiink...”

‘Don’t leave me behind. Oink~’

Hyeminnie kept on looking back at Beanie. Then, once her figure disappeared from Beanie’s sight, it plopped on the ground. The pitiful look on its face had disappeared, replaced with a tough, weary expression. It looked like it had stayed at a desolate and dreary place for quite a long time.

“Oiiiink.”

‘It’s really hard to play with a child. Oink.’

Beanie sighed loudly as it massaged its own shoulders. It slowly looked around until it saw a pet cat sitting nearby. It raised its hand towards the cat.

Pause!

The pet cat was surprised when it saw Beanie looking at it! Then, Beanie grinned wickedly as it gestured at its own shoulders.

‘Massage my shoulders. Oink!’

#### Chapter 145: Beanie’s Innocent Transformation

A majestic and magnificent castle laid deep beneath the Dragon King’s Sea. However, it was currently shrouded in a horrible, chilling air. Dozens of sea creatures died for no reason under the hands of an angry Dragon King.

The Dragon King sat on his throne whilst surrounded by the blood of the dead dolphins. Prostrated in front of him was a thin body that was shaking wildly in fear. She was one of the Dragon King’s children, Kiari.

Kiari was one of the rabbitmen. Simply put, she was a rabbit that looked quite similar to Judy from the animation, *Zootopia*. Despite her harmless appearance, she was not to be underestimated. Kiari was a genius among geniuses. She had studied and mastered all of the defensive formations and tactics that were placed in the Dragon King’s Palace.

Kiari was born to live for the Dragon King, and the Dragon King alone. She pledged to live and learn for the sake of the Dragon King ever since she was young. She was also proficient in swordsmanship and could easily slaughter enemies with a quick slash of her sword. Kiari had been bestowed the ‘Sea Guardian Sword’ by the Dragon King in the past. It was a sword that had amazing power that allowed her to control water freely.

This very same powerful Kiari was currently trembling in fear. She thought, ‘H...how can this be...!’

Why did the Dragon King kill these innocent dolphins?! There was no reason at all for their slaughter. Kiari understood the true nature of the Dragon King since she had stayed with him the longest. He was a merciful and kind man. The Dragon King’s Palace would even host festivals every year and all the sea creatures would dance to songs and praise the benevolence of the Dragon King. The Dragon Palace was truly a beautiful sight back then.

However, one day, the Dragon King suddenly changed.

‘It started back then...’Kiari thought, biting her lips tightly. She knew that it all started back then when he battled against the Great Mage Arfield.

The Great Mage was ranked seventh among the eight Pinnacle Strong Men. Great Mage Arfield was a sinister person who hid curses all over the continent. There were already rumors circulating the continent about his death. However, he suddenly appeared in the Dragon Palace one day. No, it was more fitting to say that he was not the Great Mage anymore. He came to the palace with a new identity, the King of the Dead. Arfield had turned himself into a lich. Arfield suddenly started attacking the Dragon Palace. Nonetheless, the Dragon Palace was not something that anyone could easily topple over.

The Pinnacle Strong Men were all based on the standards of the continent, and Arfield was one of these men. However, the sea creatures were not ranked with these standards. The Dragon King and all of his children fought hard against Arfield. It was a fierce battle that shook the seas.

In this fierce battle, the person that overcame and stood victorious against his opponent was the Dragon King. He had fought with great strength and abilities, eventually defeating Arfield. However, he also suffered grave injuries as a consequence.

That was the moment where it all began. The Dragon King’s body seemed like it was getting weaker every day, while his ferociousness and brutality increased. Even so, he was still the Dragon King.

Kiari wanted to speak up, but she stopped herself and just bit her lips tightly. She was raised by the Dragon King, and in a way, she was indoctrinated to protect and only protect the Dragon King. The children of the Dragon King were beings who were given by Sea God Roves to the Dragon King.

Roves emphasized to the three of them that the Dragon King was their father and he was the eternal ruler of the seas. Even though Kiari was opposed to what he was currently doing, she could not bring herself to tell him to stop or come to his senses. Also, the body of the Dragon King right now was so frail that he would probably break down with just a simple attack.

Suddenly, a creature came inside in a hurry. He was the Dragon King’s trusted aide, Jiang Bei. Jiang Bei was literally a walking octopus. He said, “Dragon King! I finally found a way to heal Your Majesty's body!”

“Is what you’re saying true?” The Dragon King asked, the corner of his lips curling into a frail smile. However, deep inside, the Dragon King was smiling widely.

“So you finally found ‘that’ huh? Lec?”

This question was directed towards none other than Jiang Bei.

Jiang Bei, no, Lec, looked into his eyes and answered, “Yes.”

Lec’s eyes glinted sharply. However, the figure reflected in Lec’s eyes was none other than Great Mage Arfield!

Kiari and the rest of the creatures residing in the Dragon Palace might have already been in a panic if they found out that Great Mage Arfield did not die during the battle with the Dragon King. Instead, he had pretended to die while hiding himself inside the Dragon King’s body. In the first place, there was only one reason why he decided to attack the Dragon King’s Palace.

‘The treasure of Roves, the Sea God...!’

Arfield was sure that it was hidden somewhere in the Dragon Palace. He targeted such an item because he knew that Roves’ treasure would definitely carry a tremendous amount of holy power. Such an item was a threat to his existence, so he had to either assimilate or eliminate it. In other words, the Great Mage Arfield wanted to take away the treasure, and use his powers to convert the holy power to black magic which could assist him greatly.

After taking over the Dragon King’s body, Arfield killed plenty of creatures in the Dragon Palace. Using the blood of these creatures, he instructed Lec, his own loyal aide who had turned into Jiang Bei, to continue the search for hints using black magic. Finally, after a long time, Lec had finally found the hint!

“What is it?” The Dragon King, no, Arfield who was pretending to be the Dragon King, asked excitedly.

“It’s Rabbit Liver.”

“Rabbit Liver?”

At his words, the Dragon King’s eyes turned towards Kiari, the only other person in the room. Kiari trembled wildly at the Dragon King’s gaze.

Two among the Dragon King’s children were rabbitmen, and the remaining one was a turtleman. All three of them carried tremendous strength in their bodies. For the rabbitmen, the source of their strength was hidden in their livers. In the case of the turtleman ‘Radin’, he had a *cintamani* stone hidden beneath his tough shell. Kiari and the other child, Jevis, both had this so-called liver as well, but they possessed different uses and effects. The problem was that they still did not know how to extract these to get their powers. The only known method was through their death.

Kiari bowed towards the Dragon King and said, “I...it would be my honor to sacrifice myself for the health of the Dragon King...!”

‘There’s nothing that I can do anymore. I just wish I could return to the past!’

At that moment, the aide said, “One moment. It’s unfortunate, but the rabbit’s liver is not Kiari’s liver.”

“Is that so?” The Dragon King said as he removed his intense gaze from Kiari before giving her orders, “Get out, Kiari.”

“...Yes.”

Hop, hop, hop, hop!

Kiari bowed her head down as she hopped her way out of the throne room. Once she was out of the room, Arfield listened intently to what Lec had to say.

“Roves’ treasure is sealed and hidden in Javis’ liver. However, she had been missing for a few days now.”

‘That is a treasure with a great amount of holy power!’

Arfield grinned so wide that his mouth was almost split in two, realizing that it was just within his reach. Radin, the turtleman, slowly entered the throne room. He was literally walking on two legs! He had two swords strapped on his back, while one of his eyes was covered with a black eye patch. He was also one of Arfield’s underlings in disguise.

“There’s not much time left. The body of this Dragon King will soon crumble. We have to do the soul exchange.”

“Yes!” Radin answered as he lowered himself and nodded in agreement.

At that moment, Lec said, “But, Great Mage...”

“What’s the problem?”

Lec’s voice suddenly turned unusual. It seemed like there was an obstacle in front of them. He said, “I heard that the place where Javis was last seen was a place where only foreigners can enter.”

“Only foreigners?” Arfield asked, expression turning serious. However, he turned towards Radin and gave him his orders.

“Radin.”

“Yes, Great Mage!”

“Find a way to get those foreigners to obtain that rabbit’s liver and bring it to me!”

“B...but... Will the foreigners hand it over to you once they get it?”

Arfield smiled sinisterly when he heard Radin’s worried voice. He said, “Kill them. If that’s not possible, then use all the gold and silver as an incentive.”

‘But, what if these two things don’t work? It can’t be. At most, I’ll just throw a reward that’s much bigger than the rabbit’s liver.’

“They won’t know about its power unless they eat it.”

Grin—

Great Mage Arfield laughed loudly. He believed that it was such a useless worry.

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Hyemin'sDaddy and Hyeminnie visited the pet storage to check on Beanie. They could not help but tilt their head at the sight of Beanie playing with the other pets around him. It was a cute sight.

“Oink, oink!”

The cat immediately rolled around as if it received some orders. However, that was not the reason why Hyemin'sDaddy was tilting his head in confusion. He could see that all of the pets within the fence were all shivering and trembling. They looked like they were all scared of something.

“What’s wrong with them? Are all the pets in here sick?” Hyemin’sDaddy asked the clerk of the pet storage facility.

The clerk was taken aback. She quickly approached the fence where Beanie and the shivering pets were. She said, “Oh my! What’s wrong? It wasn’t like this earlier? Huh, where did all the children’s food go?”

The clerk was shocked. She remembered filling up the bowls of all the animals in here, but the bowls were all currently empty!

“Ah. Are you going to feed a potion to the pet?”

“Yes. Here’s the temporary consent form.”

Hyemin'sDaddy gave the clerk the temporary consent form that he had received from Minhyuk earlier. With this temporary consent form, another player would be given permission to contact other people’s pets as well as feed them potions. When Hyemin'sDaddy handed the potion over, Beanie quickly approached the fence and reached for it. Then...

Gulp, gulp, gulp, gulp—

“Oink!” Beanie squealed in admiration.

[You have fed a Pet Conversation.]

[You can now have a heart-to-heart talk with Beanie.]

‘Well then, shall we start?’

From now on, Hyemin'sDaddy would ask Beanie about the kind of artifacts that it liked, whether it was a sword, an armor, a shield, a pair of boots, or even accessories.

‘I’m hungry. Oink!’

Hyemin’sDaddy heard Beanie’s thoughts, confirming the potion’s effects.

‘Can you hear me?’

‘Oink! Where did that sound come from?’

‘It’s me, the one in front of you.’

‘Ah, the handsome uncle! Oink!’

Hyemin'sDaddy felt happy with Beanie’s compliments. So, he gave it some delicious food to eat.



‘Delicious. Oink, oink, oink!’ Beanie said, wagging its tail in delight.

‘Are there any artifacts that you like? You can tell me anything that you want.’

‘Oink? There is! Oink!’ Beanie said. It nodded its head furiously as Hyemin'sDaddy looked at it with anticipation.

Right now, he had good quality materials on his hands. The last thing that he made was the Legendary Frying Pan, but that was something that was only for Minhyuk, so he was quite excited at the thought of making some cool artifacts now.

‘Oink! When making vegetable pancakes, I want that spatula that can flip everything in one go. Oink!’

‘...’

Hyemin'sDaddy was confused for a moment.

‘W...what's this? It feels like deja vu?’

He looked at Beanie blankly as Beanie looked back at him with sparkling eyes.

‘Oink! I also wish to have a helmet, oink!’

‘Oh. Helmet!’ Hyemin'sDaddy thought as he nodded.

‘Finally, a decent request...!’

‘It would be good if it can also substitute as a silver pot, oink. So that I can take it off and make ramyeon right on the spot whenever I get hungry, oink...!’

Hyemin'sDaddy laughed helplessly, “Ha, hahahaha...”

Not long after, he sent a whisper to Beanie's owner, Minhyuk.

[Hyemin'sDaddy: Minhyuk. Beanie wants a spatula that can flip a lot of vegetable pancakes in one go, and a helmet that can also be used as a silver pot to cook ramyeon...]

The Basilisk's Heart was a material that was equivalent to the Sacred Branch. Even the Twin-headed Ogre's Blood and the Phoenix's Feathers were materials that were worth a fortune...

‘Don't tell me that I have to do something like that again?’

[Minhyuk: As expected of my Beans! Well, you know what. Just make those items!]

Hyemin'sDaddy was speechless. He had hoped that it would not happen again, but it seemed like he had reached that point somehow. Then, he looked at Beanie as he murmured to himself, “More than that, just what kind of absurd chemistry and understanding does this owner and pet have....?”

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[Hyemin'sDaddy: Minhyuk, I've finished making the items.]

After Minhyuk received all of his rewards from Varen, he logged out for around four hours in reality before logging back in again. When he came back inside the game, more than half a day had

already passed. He was just in time to receive Hyemin'sDaddy whisper about the completion of Beanie's items.

Varen had truly bought everything at double the price. Minhyuk's entire fortune before he sold the artifact had gone to the crafting of Beanie's items, so it was really fortunate that the value of the legendary artifact was enormous. The price of the artifact was around 400 platinum and with Varen's double offer, Minhyuk was able to sell it for 800 platinum. Combining with the rest of the items, the total money that Minhyuk had received was 2,321 platinum.

Varen also gave Minhyuk a chance to open his treasure trove, which gave him a chance to get a pair of epic boots.

(Chef's Nimble Boots)

Rank: Epic

Requirements: 500 DEX, Cooking skill at Master or higher

Durability: 10,000 / 10,000

Defensive Power: 415

Special Effects:

?Attack Speed +13%.

?Cooking Speed +20%.

?The taste of any dish that you cook will have a 3% increase and will taste better than your previous cooking.

?Buff Effect Volume +20%

Description: This is the Chef's Nimble Boots. It's an excellent artifact that can easily make the wearer comfortable once they wear it. It is also an artifact that can't be bought with any money.

A king was truly a king. Varen had a lot of treasures in his treasure trove. However, the only reason why Minhyuk chose the boots was...

'My dish will taste 3% better!'

...purely for that reason and that reason alone.

Minhyuk then went to the pet storage facility after receiving Hyemin'sDaddy's whisper. The moment he entered the facility, he was forced to stop in his tracks. There, he saw Beanie standing in front of him. Beanie had an upside-down silver pot on its head, while it held the lid as a shield with its left hand, and the spatula with its right.

[Beanie is feeling confident.]

"Oink!" Beanie cried out proudly as it stuck out his protruding belly. It seemed like it was making sure to show off its new artifacts to Minhyuk!

"..."

## Chapter 146: Beanie's Innocent Transformation

Hyemin'sDaddy laughed awkwardly when he saw Minhyuk standing in a daze in front of Beanie. He said, "Ha, hahahaha. H...he looks good? Right?"

"Ah. Oh... Mhmm...." Minhyuk chose to hum. He was completely clueless on how to respond to those words. Whether he agreed or not with the sentiment would remain unknown to everyone.

However, unlike Minhyuk and Hyemin'sDaddy, Hyeminnie was smiling broadly at Beanie. She said, "Kyaaaaa~!?Baby poop looks so cuuuuuuuute!"

"Oink!"

[Beanie is feeling more confident.]

Then, Beanie approached the mirror that Hyeminnie brought over to look at itself.

"E...everything that Beanie wanted was achieved, huh?"

"But,?but Beanie?can only wear two artifacts... So what's going on with that pot lid?"

"Ah. The effects won't be exhibited due to the restrictions. But, I added a special effect that can let him wear it even with the restrictions. Once the artifact restriction gets lifted, he will be able to wear more artifacts later on."

Minhyuk nodded in understanding. Then, Hyemin'sDaddy handed Pandora's Helmet over to him. The subtle glow of light that had been continuously emitting from it was no longer shining. Right now, it just looked like a tough, strong helmet. On top of that, it looked vastly different from Oz's Helmet, the horned helmet that he previously equipped.

"Please check Beanie's artifact too."

"Yep."

(Hepas' Flipper Blade)

Rank: Epic

Requirements: Beanie's?Attributed Artifact

Durability: 3,000 / 3,000

Attack: 316

Special Effects:

?STR +25%

?Owner STR buff +4%.

?Skill: Flipping Blade

Description: A Flipper Blade that was made by Hepas. It does not attack like a regular spatula. Anyone that gets attacked by the Flipper Blade will be damaged as if they were slashed by a blade.

(Flipping Blade)

Artifact Skill

Level: None

Mana Required: 300

Cooldown: 1 hour

Effects:

?AGI will double for 30 seconds.

?Slashing Force will increase by 1.3x for 30 seconds.

After checking the spatula, Minhyuk quickly moved on and checked the silver pot that Beanie was wearing on his head.

(Hepas' Silver Pot)

Rank: Epic

Requirements: Beanie's Attributed Artifact

Durability: 4,000 / 4,000

Defense: 270

Special Effects:

?STR +5%.

?Owner's Defensive Power +10%.

?Skill: Paralyze

Description: A Silver Pot made by Hepas. Your pet can wear it on his head but once he gets hungry, he can wash it well and use it to cook ramyeon. The ramyeon will definitely be delicious.

(Paralyze)

Artifact Skill

Level: None

Mana Required: None

Cooldown: None

Effects: There's a 5-9% chance of paralyzing the enemy for two seconds if your pet received or blocked an attack.

(Hepas' Pot Lid)

Rank: Epic

Requirements: Additional Equipment Slot, Beanie's Attributed Artifact

Durability: 3,000 / 3,000

Defense: 316

Special Effects:

?STR +4%

?Owner's Defense + 3%

?Skill: Absolute Defense

(Absolute Defense)

Artifact Skill

Level: None

Mana Required: 500

Cooldown: 24 hours

Effects: Both Beanie and his owner will gain absolute defense for 2 seconds. No attack will land on Beanie and his owner's body.

(Pandora's Helmet)

Rank: Legendary

Requirements: 200 INT, 200 WIS, 400 Holy Power

Durability: 10,000 / 10,000

Defense: 741

Special Effects:

?Holy Power x2

?All of your skills' Cooldown will be reduced by 20%.

?All of your skills' Required Mana will be reduced by 20%.

?Skill: God's Targeted Praise.

?Skill: Artifact's Form Transformation, only for wearable artifacts

Description: This was the helmet that?Juis?had used in the past. This helmet contains a tremendous amount of holy power, as well as an infinite variety of hidden abilities.

(Artifact's Form Transformation)

Artifact Skill

Level: None

Mana Required: 500

Cooldown: None

Effects: Allows you to change the shape of your equipped artifact to any shape that you want. Since this is a temporary transformation ability, the artifact will return back to its original form at the touch of the owner.

'Oh?'

Minhyuk was quite impressed with the Artifact's Form Transformation skill. Then, he turned his sights towards his frying pan that was quietly hanging on his back.

‘What Frying Pan Killer, that is the Frying Pan Killer?!’

Minhyuk did not want to be famous. However, recently, he had been the talk of the town and it had been quite difficult to move quietly for his own purposes.

‘Artifact's Form Transformation.’

As soon as Minhyuk finished thinking about the skill, the notifications came up.

[Hepas' Legendary Frying Pan can now change its form.]

[Rapier, Longsword, Greatsword, Katana... Omitted...]

Minhyuk quickly chose the rapier. Then, Hepas' Frying Pan suddenly changed its form into that of a rapier. Minhyuk touched the frying pan and it quickly turned back into a frying pan.

“In the case of an armor, once the enemy hits it with an attack, it will return back to its original shape,” Hyemin'sDaddy explained the skill further when he noticed Minhyuk casting Artifact's Form Transformation.

Minhyuk nodded as he turned his frying pan back into the shape of a rapier. Then, he also turned his Armor of Immortality into the shabby leather armor that novices use. As expected, Hyemin'sDaddy, Hepas' Descendant, was truly worth his price.

As for Beanie's artifacts, even though they all look ridiculous, they were still good enough that other players would become wide-eyed with jealousy once they saw them. The most important thing was that Beanie was satisfied with it. No matter how strange it looked, it did not matter as long as Beanie was happy with it. That was what Minhyuk thought.

“We're going to use it well. Beanie, say goodbye!”

“Oiiink!” Beanie cried, bowing at a 90-degree angle.

Hyemin'sDaddy, also known as Hepas' Descendant, chuckled at the sight.

“Ah, when will we receive the land and title?”

“I just came back after asking. They said that they will give it after one week once all of the guild members have gathered.”

“Aha.”

Usually, a title or a territory would only be rewarded to a guild once all of the guild members had gathered. Currently, almost all of the guild members of Legend Guild were busily moving around as they pioneered the Northern Continent. Thanks to Minhyuk, they had received Goddess Juis' buffs, which spurred them on even more.

“Are you leaving? Where do you plan on going next?” Hyemin'sDaddy asked. He could see that Minhyuk had prepared something, so he was curious about where he wanted to go.

“Yes. I’m going out to sea.”

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Genie, Khan and Locke all returned to Valkyrie Kingdom after they had finished all of their chances of attacking the dungeon today. They met Hyemin'sDaddy in the kingdom and heard that Minhyuk went out to sea.

“We don’t have much time...”

“How about sending a whisper?”

They badly needed Minhyuk’s help to lessen their time in the Time Attack Dungeon. However, who would have thought that Minhyuk had already left for the sea.

“I think he’ll be back in a week, though?”

“Ah. Is that so?”

“Yes. I heard that the guild members all have to gather after a week to receive the title and territory.”

“Ah...” Genie nodded. However, by the time Minhyuk came back, the Time Attack Dungeon would be ending already.

‘But...Minhyuk just left. I can’t just tell him to come back just like that.’

Genie wanted to give Minhyuk as much freedom and convenience as possible.

“There’s no helping it,” Genie said, smiling bitterly. It seemed like their ambitions and hopes of reaching and taking the top spot in the Time Attack Dungeon had to be pushed back to next time. Khan and Locke seemed like they understood the meaning of her words.

“Oh right. Why don’t you check your REP first?”

“Yeah. Wait,” Genie said, nodding her head.

King Varen would give them their reward, but they would only be able to receive the title and the territory if they had a high enough REP. Every kingdom or empire would have different requirements for the REP needed to get a title. The title that they would receive would depend on the amount of REP that they had.

As they were walking through the kingdom, they were able to meet with the commander of the knights, Sir Perle. He asked, “Oh. His Highness Varen said that he’s going to grant you the title of a Viscount?”

“Yes. His Highness, Varen, said so himself.”

Even though they would be given the title, they believed that they would at most receive the title of a?Baron or at least the title of a Baronet.?Why? It was because the Northern Continent was a newly pioneered continent. For that reason, some people were still reluctant to give them a higher title, no

matter how widely known and popular Legend Guild was in Valkyrie Kingdom. It was still a little difficult for the citizens to accept them as one of their own. However, King Varen seemed to be extremely grateful to them, and had let one slide.

“Check it faster!”

There was a simple way for players to check on which title they could get and how much REP they needed for said title. All they needed to do was to go to the main bulletin of the city and check it. The main bulletin served as a guide to the city’s specialties, NPCs, open quests, and information of the likes. When Genie checked the main bulletin, her eyes widened in shock.

“...I...is that right?” Genie said, gnawing her lips in worry. Khan and Locke also frowned when they saw her being anxious.

“Why?”

When they looked at the bulletin, they could not help but gasp in shock and disbelief.

“This is crazy. You need at least 800 REP to become a viscount...?!”

“OMG...!”

The three of them all frowned at the same time. Genie’s reputation was only at 500 right now.

“This is the Northern Continent, you know. So we need that much to get a title and territory here.”

“Do any of our guild members have that high REP?”

“Aside from Genie, I don’t think there’s anyone else.”

They knew that Genie had the highest REP among them. However, they saw Genie shaking her head. She said, “There is. He has a reputation that’s a little... no, much higher than mine.”

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Dragon King’s Sea.

An old man was loading a fishing net and a fishing rod as he prepared to set sail on his boat.

“Ayo! Grandpa Ben! Are you going out to sea again today?”

“Of course! I’ll definitely catch it today!” Grandpa Ben said, grinning widely at the person that greeted him.

Grandpa Ben was a famous fisherman. However, he had been struggling to catch this one fish for several years. The fish was none other than the ‘Golden Salmon’. The Golden Salmon was an extremely rare fish in the Dragon King’s Sea!

Ben had declared that he would only stop fishing once he had caught this fish. He had been chasing after the Golden Salmon for quite a long time now. In fact, this was a legendary game among fishermen. However, for Grandpa Ben, it was a necessary game! His son was killed at sea and the Golden Salmon was bait that could lure out that bastard culprit!



Just as Grandpa Ben was about to set sail with his boat...

“Hello!”

...A young man greeted him. Ben could see a fishing rod hanging on the young man's back. He watched the young man nibble on some grilled buttered corn. It seemed like he was extremely hungry.

“Ho. A foreigner?”

A foreigner! Dragon King's Sea had become a lot more peaceful thanks to Goddess Juis' blessings. This was the reason why plenty of foreigners appeared and entered Valkyrie Kingdom.

“Yes. Why are you going out to sea?”

Ben looked at the young man and said, “The fishes that we're catching here are all lame and uninteresting, so I'm going out there to catch the best fish!”

“Ooooooh?!!! The best? What kind of fish is it?!”

“The sea out there has a lot of those faded flatfish, rockfish, and even diamond saury! Fish that can't usually be caught in these shallow waters!”

“Woaaaaow...!” The young man exclaimed, eyes widening in shock. He looked like he just heard an unbelievable story. Then, the boy leaned over and asked excitedly, “By any chance, can I go with you?”

“Uhm... You, boy?” Ben asked, looking at the boy from head to toe. The boy looked shabby with his black rapier and helmet. As if realizing that it was rude to greet someone without showing his face, the man quickly took off his helmet. What greeted Ben was a handsome smiling face.

“Hehe. I also want to go with you!”

“The young man took off his helmet as a sign of courtesy and respect for me!”

“Boy, what is your class?”

“I'm a chef. Ah, I'll make you delicious food with whatever we caught on the way!”

“A...a chef,” Ben said, rubbing his chin in thought. It was true that there would be plenty of fish that would be caught on their way, and it would be amazing if he could eat them more deliciously than usual!

“Okay, get on!”

“Thank you very much!” The man said, quickly boarding the boat as they silently departed from the port.

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Lee Minhwa's eyes were shaking wildly, like an aspen leaf out in the open. She hurriedly shouted, "T...Team Leader!!!"

Team Leader Park hurried over when he heard her voice that sounded much more urgent and hurried than normal. He asked, "What's the problem?"

Team Leader Park frowned as he followed her shaking finger that was pointing at the monitor.

"Ben? He's going with Ben now?"

The reason why both Lee Minhwa and Team Leader Park were so shocked was because of the owner of the boat that Minhyuk was riding on.

"Of all the boats that he could have boarded, how did he board the boat of one of the 'Pinnacle Strong Men'?"

Chapter 147: The Old Man and the Sea

"To be precise, he used to be one of the Pinnacle Strong Men."

"Yeah," Team Leader Park said with a nod.

Ben, the person whom Minhyuk hitched a boat ride with, was one of most important and valuable NPCs in the newly opened Northern Continent update. Ben had disappeared from the eyes of the public for quite a long time. He had disappeared right after his son's death and was promptly forgotten about the people. Over time, someone filled in the place that he left empty as one of the Pinnacle Strong Men.

Originally, he was the person standing on the eighth place, the place that Rumad had before. Ben used to be considered as the eighth strongest among the eight Pinnacle Strong Men. Since he was no longer remembered, nor considered to be a part of the Pinnacle Strong Men anymore, Minhyuk did not hear any notifications about him. In other words, he was like an NPC with a hidden identity.

"Ghost Spear Ben..." Team Leader Park mumbled to himself. This was the nickname that was given to Ben.

Meanwhile, Lee Minhwa was also mumbling to herself. She said, "The monster that Ghost Spear Ben wants to catch and kill is a legendary monster, right?"

Team Leader Park nodded at her words. No one in the country has successfully raided a legendary monster. Fortunately, the successful raids of epic monsters had surged lately. This was thanks to the considerable increase in the number of epic monsters that were released during the Northern Continent update. However, the fact that no one had successfully raided a legendary monster in the country still remained true. Of course, there were plenty of legendary monsters scattered in the Northern Continent. And if they successfully hunted one...

"The thing that will drop... I believe Player Minhyuk would like it very much, right?"

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Ben grinned widely at the glittering blue sea. He asked, "Son, aren't you cold out here?"

The renowned Ghost Spear became an ordinary fisherman after realizing that no fisherman in the Northern Continent had the ability to catch the Golden Salmon. Even the most skilled fisherman in

Valkyrie Kingdom was only at the Advanced level. However, this level was not enough to catch the Golden Salmon. So, Ben decided to start his fishing career right there and then. For many years, his boat continued to set sail every single day without fail. After all, the rascal that killed his son was still alive and hiding in a cave. However, that cave...

‘Only foreigners can get inside that cave.’

That was why he wanted to catch the Golden Salmon. Ben wanted to use the Golden Salmon as the bait and lure the bastard out of his cave so he could avenge his son.

As his thoughts came to foreigners, Ben turned to look at the foreigner who boarded his boat. The boy introduced himself as a chef. Ben watched as Minhyuk pulled out his fishing rod, loaded some bait and threw the line as hard as he could while muttering a weird chant.

“God, please heed my wishes. Please answer my prayers. Dragon King, please give me a flatfish and a rockfish!”

Ben could not help but laugh at him when he heard those words. He said, “Little boy, fishing is not that easy. Do you think you can easily get fish just by praying to the Dragon King? Fishing requires a lot of waiting, waiting, waiting and more waiting.”

Fishing in?Athenae?was extremely difficult, that was why it was hard to find skilled fishermen. For years, the only thing that Ben did aside from eating and sleeping was fishing! He might have been hailed as the Ghost Spear before, but he was also a man who climbed to the Master Fisherman level.

However, at that moment...

“I caught one!”

“...Eh?” Ben replied dumbly.

‘Th...this boy is quite lucky!’

When Ben first tried his hands with fishing and brought his boat out, he spent 24 hours waiting for a fish to bite. To think that something bit on the boy’s bait as soon as he threw the line?

Then, the young man loaded another bait and cast his line once more. After just five seconds...

“I caught another one!”

Flap, flap, flap, flap!

An energetic fish flapped wildly as it hung at the end of the fishing line.

“Gasp!?”

Then, Ben thought,?‘D...don’t tell me.... Is it really because of the prayer?!’

Ben also threw the line with great strength before sitting in front of the rod and murmuring to himself, “God, please heed my wishes. Please answer my prayers. Dragon King, please let me catch a Golden Salmon!”

\*\*\*

A red spot immediately appeared in Minhyuk’s sight the moment he lifted the fishing rod.

‘As expected of DEX!’

This was the special privilege of his insane DEX! Minhyuk was able to see where he needed to throw the line and how much strength was needed, all thanks to his DEX. However, even though there were red spots that could aid him in fishing, they were still divided into narrow and wide spots.

Minhyuk loaded his fishing rod with bait and casted the line towards one of the circles with as much strength as he could. As soon as the line was casted, a fish immediately bit on the bait.

[You have casted the line at a fairly good spot.]

[You have acquired a rockfish.]

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

Flap, flap, flap, flap!

“I caught one!”

‘A fresh rockfish! This guy is even flapping wildly!’

Then, Minhyuk suddenly thought,?‘Huh? Don’t tell me.... That red spot...?’

It was a huge spot. There were plenty of huge spots all over the sea compared to the smaller ones. For about 30 huge spots, there was at least one small spot. To test his theory, Minhyuk quickly casted his line to one of the huge spots. Not long after, a fish was caught.

[You have casted the line at a fairly good spot.]

[You have acquired a flatfish.]

“Kyaa!”

A fresh and energetic flatfish! Minhyuk kept on casting his line, pulling out one fish after the other every time he tugged at his line. Then, he turned to look beside him.

“Huh?”

“God, please heed my wishes. Please answer my prayers. Dragon King, please let me catch a Golden Salmon!”

“...”

The old man who introduced himself as Ben started to pray very hard. He did the same prayer that Minhyuk did for fun earlier. There’s no way that they could get more fish because of the Dragon King, right?

Still, Ben showed great sincerity. At that moment...

“Dragon Kinggggggg!”

He even shouted at the top of his lungs with his hands stretched out towards the sky. He looked like a devout fanatic, with how sincere he was.

‘Are the elderly really this superstitious?’

After he finished his prayers, Ben's eyes widened when he saw his fishing line going taut.

A fish bit the bait!

Ben turned to look at Minhyuk with a surprised expression on his face. He said, "Ooooooh...! I prayed like you did and it worked!"

"...?"

Minhyuk was quite confused. Then, Ben lifted his fishing rod with all his might. And what appeared was...

"This is a shoe!"

...a shoe.

"I don't understand why people throw their trash in this beautiful sea!" Ben shouted in anger. It was unknown whether he was angry at the people who threw the shoes in the sea, or he was angry at himself for catching a shoe.

Then, Minhyuk caught another fish. He kept on throwing and pulling, which in turn made Ben feel grumpy. Ben thought, 'No, this boy... turned out to be a talented fisherman?!'

"Ho, it's a big catch...!?" Gasp?! Minhyuk shouted in surprise. He was already quite happy with catching all those flatfish and rockfish, but this one definitely took the cake!

[You have casted the line at a fairly good spot.]

[You have acquired a flower crab.]

It was a flower crab that looked fresh and yummy!

'This is heaven...!'

Minhyuk did not need to do anything special, just with his fishing rod and some bait, he would be able to get anything that he wanted!

"You look so delicious..." Minhyuk said. He smiled happily as he looked at the crab that was hanging on his fishing rod.

Then, he heard Ben trying his luck as he casted another line. He said, "Boy, how did you pray to the Dragon King? Why are you catching things so well?"

"That was just a joke!"

"..."

Minhyuk finally realized that Ben had mistaken his prayers as the reason why he was able to catch fish so well.

"Boy, how long have you been fishing?"

"I did it for the first time today."

“...”

Ben was left speechless. He had been doing this for several years, but he was worse than someone that tried it for the first time today? At that moment, another fish bit on the line that Minhyuk had casted.

“Wow, it’s a big catch! It’s a big catch!”

“...Actually, fishing is something that anyone can do, but if you want to be hailed as a skilled fisherman, you have to catch special kinds of fish.”

“Ho. Special fish? Is that like the Golden Salmon that you mentioned earlier?”

“Yeah. We’re now at the spot where that guy is usually seen.”

“Oho!”

Minhyuk was so excited. They were at the spot where the special fish that Ben was talking about was known to appear! After testing out the red circles for some time, Minhyuk finally concluded his little experiment.

‘As expected, it really is a prediction!’

Right now, Minhyuk could see five small red circles. This was a number that was far higher than what he had usually seen earlier.

‘The ones in the smaller circle must be more special!’

Minhyuk was now sure of this. After all, he had tested his theory for quite some time and it really did coincide with what he thought.

Ben suddenly spoke up as if he wanted to repair his broken pride as a fisherman. He said, “You’re just being lucky today so don’t think that you’re good at fishing with just that. It’s much harder to catch a special fish. No matter, I’ll try and hook one up so you can see how it’s done. After all, I’m someone who has fished here for five years.”

Minhyuk casted another line while listening to Ben talk. This time, he had set his sights on the smaller circle.

[You have casted the line at the best spot.]

[You have acquired a Fantastic Flower Crab.]

The best notification appeared! This notification only popped out when he casted his line on a small circle. It seemed like what he had thought earlier was truly the case. The smaller circles were really housing those special fish that Ben was talking about earlier.

“Yeah! It’s a Fantastic Flower Crab!”

“...”

Ben had been fishing in this sea for years, but it took him three years to catch a single Fantastic Flower Crab. His nose stung and he felt sour. For some reason, he felt like he wanted to cry after seeing how good Minhyuk was at fishing.

‘No, I can catch that too!’

Unfortunately, there were no fish that took Ben’s bait even after an hour of waiting, which turned to two, then three, then four hours.

“Ho! It’s a big catch!”

“Assarabia Colombia! Huh? I want to drink Colombian coffee... Yay!”

“Another big catch!”

“...”

On the other hand, Ben could not catch any fish at all. When Minhyuk turned around, he saw that Ben had not caught a single fish. He thought, ‘Y...you said that you have been fishing for five years but you’re really bad at it, huh...’

Ben’s back looked extremely desolate. It seemed like he felt sad and depressed with his lack of luck today. Minhyuk knew that Ben was a nice person. After all, he gave him a free ride on his boat and brought him to the spot where special fish could be caught. He ought to do something so he would not feel sad, right?

“Don’t be too discouraged. Well, come on! I’ll make you something delicious!”

“Ahem, ahem. Something delicious?” Ben asked, slowly turning to look at Minhyuk. In fact, he was the worst cook that one could ever encounter. Because of that, all he could eat when he was at sea was sashimi.

“Yes. Let’s see,” Minhyuk said, using his ‘Create a Recipe’ skill in hopes of helping this old man, since his fishing skills were poor.

The recipe that appeared was...

(Flower Crab Ramyeon Recipe for Ben)

Required Ingredients: Fantastic Flower Crab, Barade’s Green Onions, Bean Sprouts, Cheongyang Peppers, Shin Ramyeon

Expected Dish Grade: Rare ~ Epic

Expected Effects:

?A dramatic increase in Ben’s fishing skills.

?+1 in Ben’s Spear Skill: Ghost Spear

‘Huh...?’

Minhyuk looked at the recipe strangely after he saw the special effect listed at the very end.

‘Ghost Spear? What’s that?’

Was Ben proficient in that Ghost Spear skill? Minhyuk was confused. After all, the only thing that he could see was an ordinary old man in front of him.

‘Maybe he used to be a spearman in the past?’

However, Minhyuk did not get entangled with the thought. After all, his father used to tell him that he wanted to live comfortably and fish his days away once he grew older. Perhaps, Ben was a retired soldier who became a fisherman after retiring?

Minhyuk did not ask any questions and just thought about it silently. There was something more important in front of him. As he read the recipe again, he could not help but be filled with excitement.

‘Wow. My goodness. Flower Crab Ramyeon!’

Where was he right now? He was sitting on a boat as he floated in the middle of a vast, blue, glittering sea!

Shwaaaa!

Whenever the wind blew, the waves of the sea would hit the side of their boat and rock them slightly. Their bodies would sway and tremble as they tried to balance themselves. Just sitting in a boat would cause their bodies to be overwhelmed with fatigue, which in turn would trigger an extreme hunger in them. At times like these, what better food to eat than Flower Crab Ramyeon?

“Kgghk!”

Just imagining it was making Minhyuk excited. He declared, “I’ll cook you some Flower Crab Ramyeon!”

“Oh? I see, it’s Flower Crab Ramyeon,” Ben said, smacking his lips. He looked like he was also happy at the thought of such a delicacy.

The ingredients needed for the recipe that Ben wanted the most were easy to procure. Minhyuk had already caught the Fantastic Flower Crab, and since he was a Korean, he always had the Shin Ramyeon that he loved in his inventory. Minhyuk quickly pulled out the ingredients needed and started to cook.

First, Minhyuk trimmed off the legs of the crabs. Then, he boiled the water for the soup. He first prepared the soup so he could cook the crabs first before the rest of the ingredients. After preparing the water, he placed the crab inside the pot. Once the crab was cooked to some extent, he added the bean sprouts, cheongyang pepper, and the ramyeon together. After boiling the ingredients together, he finally added the green onions on top of the soup gently. The beauty of flower crab ramyeon was that no egg was needed in it. Everyone liked this crab ramyeon because it was both spicy and refreshing!

Clack!

In just an instant, the cooking of the flower crab ramyeon was finished. Minhyuk waited for a while before opening the lid.

Shwaaaaaa!

The steam rose and a flower crab that had turned completely red greeted them.

Gulp—



It was the sound of Ben gulping down his saliva as he looked at the appetizing food in front of him. As usual, a copy of the flower crab ramyeon appeared in front of Minhyuk.

“Oh?”

Ben casted a quick glance at Minhyuk when he saw kimchi in front of him.

“Kimchi is the best combo for ramyeon!”

“Kgghk!?You do know your stuff huh!”

Minhyuk lifted the noodles up and placed some noodles in his bowl.

Shwaaa!

The steam rose along with the noodles. Then, Minhyuk lifted the pot and poured some soup into his bowl. After doing all of that, Minhyuk picked his bowl, blew on it rapidly and gulped the soup down.

#### Chapter 148: The Old Man and the Sea

The flavor of the soup changed greatly with the addition of the flower crab, cheongyang peppers and bean sprouts. All in all, it could be described with one word... Refreshing!?That word alone could encapsulate the flavor and taste of the soup.

“Then, next....”

Minhyuk picked up the noodles from his bowl and...

Sluuuuuurp!

...inhaled them in one go.

“Hoo! It’s really delicious!” Minhyuk said, steam coming out of his mouth as he spoke. Then, he picked up another mouthful of noodles. This time, he made sure to pack it together with plenty of bean sprouts.

Sluuuuurp!

Minhyuk slurped everything in one go. The taste of the crunchy bean sprouts and the chewy noodles spread in his mouth. Then, he took a sip of the soup, before rounding it off with a bite of kimchi.

Kgghk! Minhyuk could not help but let out a sound of happiness. Then, he saw Ben also inhaling the soup from the pot.

“This soup tastes amazing! It will be better if we have that?thing?here,” Ben said, as he flicked his wrists as if he was holding a small glass and drinking its contents.

“It would be a dream if there is soju here as well. It’s a shame though, I can’t drink in such a dangerous sea.”

Then, Minhyuk picked up the flower crab and cut it in half with his scissors. He said, “Ooooh. Look at all this fat.”

“The creatures that you can catch here in the Dragon King’s Sea are all fresh, juicy and plump.”

Minhyuk picked half of the crab and tried to suck off the white flesh from the red shell. As soon as he sucked the shell, the crab meat immediately went into his mouth. Not only was it chewy and sweet, but it also had that savory and delectable flavor. The pieces of shell that were eaten together with the meat tasted a bit different, but it was not that bad.

“Sluuuurp!”

Minhyuk copied Ben, holding up the pot as he slurped the soup down. It might be a spicy flower crab ramen, but the taste was also similar to a spicy hangover ramyeon. It was truly both refreshing and delicious. Minhyuk’s nose was already running without him even realizing it. After finishing his meal, he blew his nose loudly.

Once Ben finished eating, he heard a string of notifications.

[You ate a dish from a recipe specially made for you.]

[You won’t be able to eat another dish from a recipe specially made for you for a month.]

[You can’t receive any duplicate buffs during the duration of the buff retention period.]

[Flower Crab Ramyeon.]

[Your Fishing skill will increase by 10% while Ghost Spear will increase by +2 for 10 days.]

“...!”

Ben looked at Minhyuk in surprise. He thought, ‘I did not expect such a young chef in shabby clothes could be such a great chef...!’

He was both in awe and admiration of Minhyuk’s skills.

Meanwhile, Minhyuk decided to check the progress of the satisfaction bar from his ‘To Have a Feast with Other People’ quest. The satisfaction level increased by 33% after he fed Goddess Juis making the total reach 50%. Then, Minhyuk suddenly tilted his head in confusion.

[Satisfaction: 56%]

“...?”

The reason why he was tilting his head in confusion?

‘What’s this?’

The ranker Crow only gave him a 2% increase, while King Varen gave him a slightly higher increase at 5%. Meanwhile, Goddess Juis directly catapulted his satisfaction level to 50%, with an increase of 33%. However, now...

‘6%?’

This meant that Old Man Ben was someone more influential, and possibly stronger than both Crow and King Varen.

“Shwiiiiiiii!” Ben blew his nose loudly before looking at Minhyuk and saying, “Hoho. I can’t remember the last time I ate this well. Boy, the power of your dish is great!”

[You have received Ben’s favor.]

[You have received Ben’s favor.]

“Even your fishing skills are also out of this world.”

Ben had seen how Minhyuk was able to catch a fish whenever he cast his line. He thought, ‘I wonder if this guy can catch the Golden Salmon?’

Ben was suddenly filled with anticipation. He decided to tell Minhyuk his story. He said, “Boy, there’s a favor that I want to ask of you. Will you listen to my story?”

Minhyuk could smell the scent of a quest. He thought, ‘There’s a chance that something delicious will be rewarded, right?’

Then, Ben began his tale, “A few years ago, I was still wandering all over the world. At that time, I had a son. My one and only son.”

Minhyuk nodded as he listened to Ben’s story.

“Once a year, I would go and meet with my son. Whenever that time comes around, my son would run to this sea, you know? It’s because my favorite food can be found here.”

Ben looked melancholic as he recalled the past.

“But one day, my son never came back from here. That bastard ate my son!”

“That bastard?”

“That’s right. That bastard. He’s a very scary bastard that only lives in the Dragon King’s Sea. He has devoured everything in this sea and has now gone into a cave. As far as I know, he hasn’t been out for quite a long time now. The only way to lure him out is to use his favorite food, the Golden Salmon.”

Minhyuk nodded in understanding. He thought, ‘Golden Salmon... Every time I hear its name, I can’t help but think that it is delicious...’

His mouth started to water at the thought of the pinkish flesh of salmon sashimi! He asked, “By any chance, are you going to use that Golden Salmon to feed the bastard?”

“No. It’s too precious. It will only be used to lure the bastard out.”

Minhyuk nodded once more while Ben continued to talk. He said, “I need to lure the bastard out, so can you possibly catch some Golden Salmon for me?”

[Linked Quest: Catch a Golden Salmon.]

Rank: SS

Requirements: Ben's favor

Rewards: ???

Penalty for Failure: Ben's favor will drop and you will be kicked off the boat.

Description: Ben saw the possibility of acquiring the Golden Salmon through your hands. Catch a Golden Salmon!

'SS...?' Minhyuk thought, a little taken aback. It was even a linked quest to boot. This meant that there would be a few more things to do after he caught the Golden Salmon.

'What the hell, is the Golden Salmon really that hard to catch for it to be SS-ranked? Or maybe it's the process of catching it?'

He received an SS-ranked quest when he was asked to make a legendary dish to satisfy Goddess Juis. However, right now, there was a quest that was of the same rank right in front of him and the rewards were even marked mysteriously with "???". In the case of "???" in the rewards section of the quest, it could either turn out to be the best, or the worst reward. However, before he accepted this quest, there was still one thing that he needed to make sure of.

"I have a question!"

"Ask away."

"Who are you exactly?"

"..."

When Ben heard his question, he could not stop himself from showing surprise on his face.

'Did he recognize me? How on earth did he know?'

Then, Minhyuk continued, "There's no harpoon in your boat, instead there's a spear."

If there was a spear in the boat instead of a harpoon, it was only natural for others to think that the person forgot about their harpoon and hastily brought a spear. However, Minhyuk went on, "This sea is not an easy place for an old man to venture alone in. Besides, the calluses on Grandpa Ben's hands should be from using the spear, right?"

"..."

This was something unexpected for Ben. He thought that Minhyuk was just a good chef. It turned out that he had keen eyes, assessing and analyzing the situation that he was in. Ben thus explained his identity. After all, it was not easy to ask for a favor without any explanation whatsoever.

Minhyuk was a bit surprised at his story. He thought, 'He was one of the Pinnacle Strong Men...'

Of course, it was in the past tense. However, Minhyuk had fought with one of the Pinnacle Strong Men and knew of their strength. In fact, he could not deny it when other people deemed him lucky

after he successfully hunted one of the Pinnacle Strong Men. At the same time, Minhyuk was thinking about something else entirely...

‘He’s one of the Pinnacle Strong Men...? Then, his rewards will definitely not be the worst, right?’

Of course, Minhyuk was not that interested in the rewards, instead, he was more interested in the Golden Salmon that he was asked to catch, as well as the monster that it was supposed to lure. He was so curious that he asked about it before accepting the quest.

“What kind of monster is the bastard that you’re talking about?”

“It’s a Clam Golem.”

“...?!”

Minhyuk almost fell down on his butt when he heard Ben’s words. He could feel his food antenna twitching rapidly! That bastard must be delicious!

“C...Clam Golem?”

“Yeah. All kinds of shellfish in the world are stuck together to create its body.”

“B...by any chance... are there abalones?”

“Of course! Didn’t I tell you? All kinds of shellfish in the world are stuck on its body, mussels, pen shells, scallops, oysters...”

“M...my goodness...”

Minhyuk trembled in excitement. He said, “Mussel soup! Oyster pancakes! And even the clams used in grilled clams?!”

“B...boy. The look in your eyes has suddenly changed...?”

Minhyuk shivered as he remembered that time when he drove to the beach with his friends. The sellers stationed by the shore would yell?‘Buy from me, I’ll make it cheaper for you!’?and trick the passersby.

A feast, both for the eyes and the stomach, was laid out in the open! There were clams that were laid out on the grill, refreshing mussel soup and other necessary ingredients!

‘Corn cheese...!’

The small ears of corn would be laid out in the griller with plenty of cheese sprinkled on top of it. Once the cheese melted, it would cover the whole corn! When the clams got cooked, they would open slowly as if saying?‘Come here and eat me~ Baby.’. To think that there were clams like that here?

“I...I will help Grandpa Ben avenge your son!”

The light in Minhyuk’s eyes had changed! They were now filled with solemnity.

Ben was deeply moved when he saw how serious Minhyuk was about helping him. He thought, ‘M...My goodness....! I can’t believe that he’s this determined when we just met for the first time...!’

[You have received Ben’s favor.]

It was true, Minhyuk did look very determined. If only Ben knew the truth.

Ben replied, “However, the problem is there’s only one Golden Salmon in this vast sea. From the story that I have heard from the Dragon Palace, we need the Golden Salmon to lure out the Clam Golem. This was a story that has been passed on for many generations.”

The Dragon King’s Sea was vast and wide. This was the reason why Ben was having a hard time catching the Golden Salmon. It was extremely hard to find a single existence in such a vast area. Minhyuk thought deeply before asking, “Do you know anything about the special abilities or effects that the Golden Salmon has?”

“Hmmm. I only know that once you eat the Golden Salmon, it will immediately strengthen your skills and abilities.”

“Ho,” Minhyuk said, realizing that Ben was likely referring to SPs. The SP that could increase stats like DEX and holy power! He was not sure if the Golden Salmon could raise those stats, but he guessed that it could be a little similar to that.

Then, he heard Ben say, “I’ve actually seen the guy once, but I failed to catch it! It was right in front of me too!”

Ben could only sigh in disappointment whenever he recalled that moment.

There was a reason why Minhyuk asked Ben about the ‘Special Abilities’ of the Golden Salmon. It was because he had an easier way of finding it.

“I think we can find the spot where it’s located right away.”

“W...what?!” Ben asked, eyes widening imperceptibly.

‘How?! I have only seen it once in all my five years of sailing in this sea!’

Minhyuk used his ‘Ingredient Tracking’ skill. He chose?Japanese Cuisine?from the selection of food in the hologram that popped up.

[What is your desired buff effect?]

‘Boosts the ability that I want.’

[Searching for the ingredients in a 10-kilometer radius.]

[Ingredient Tracking has succeeded.]

[Golden Salmon is a legendary ingredient that can add SP.]

[Can be cooked with Food God's Cooking Skill Level 2.]

[Suggested Menu: Salmon Sashimi.]

‘Kyaa!’

Minhyuk could not help but be surprised. That was right. Salmon would be delicious if you eat it as sushi, but it would taste best if you sliced it into large enough pieces and ate it as it is. It was delicious whether you dipped it in soy sauce with wasabi, red chili paste, or wrap it in seaweed with radish sprouts and sliced onions. He was also surprised that the ingredient was successfully tracked in one go.

‘It’s definitely good that the radius of the Ingredient Tracking skill has increased to 10 kilometers!’

Minhyuk saw the red circle on the hologram. He exclaimed, “This way!”

“Huh?”

For a moment, Ben could not understand what Minhyuk meant, and asked, “What are you talking about?”

“I already found where it’s located. Let’s go this way!”

Ben’s eyes widened. In fact, he was quite doubtful, but since he had nothing to lose, he raised the anchor.

Shwaaaaaaa!

The boat quickly caught the wind as it headed towards the area where the red point was marked at a high speed. Minhyuk could see that they were quickly approaching the area where the red point was located and at one point, they had approached it very closely.

‘There’s really no Golden Salmon in here, right?’ Ben thought. Was it even really here? Then...

Fwiiiish!

... a salmon with golden scales shimmering under the bright rays of the sun could be seen swimming just beneath the surface of the water. The light that the salmon’s body was emitting was a sight to behold.

[You have found the legendary Golden Salmon.]

[You have acquired 30 REP.]

“...!”

Ben looked at Minhyuk incredulously. He thought, ‘H...how in the world...!’

Chapter 149: The Old Man and the Sea

Was this not the Golden Salmon that he had a hard time finding for the past five years?!

Splash!

The Golden Salmon dived deeper underwater. The sound of the splash finally woke Ben up from his reverie. He had no time to be in a daze! He quickly rummaged around in his boat for his net. Once he found his net, he spread it a little before throwing it out into the waters.

Shwaaaaaa!

A big net unfolded into the sea.

"Heave-ho!"

After quite some time, Ben decided to pull the net up to check if he caught it. However, Minhyuk shook his head at the side. Just as Ben thought, 'I did not catch it.' the net came up empty.

'Crazy...!'

Minhyuk's eyes narrowed sharply as he stared at the red circles all over the place. There were plenty of red spots scattered throughout the sea. However, he was quite surprised. One, the red spot that marked the Golden Salmon was as small as a needle. This spot was not even big enough for Minhyuk to throw his bait at. Two, the speed of this needle-like red circle was hard to follow, as it was extremely fast.

The other spots that represented the other fish were also moving around, but they were either moving slowly, or were big enough for a bait to be thrown into. On the other hand, the Golden Salmon's circle had a much smaller radius, and was too fast for him to throw his bait or cast his line.

Minhyuk quickly moved his hands as he cast his line over the fast moving circle.

Shwaaaaa!

As if the circle was mocking him, it swam straight out of his line.

'How should we go about this?'

"Grandpa! Spear! The spear!"

Ben was one of the Pinnacle Strong Men and could wield the Ghost Spear. If they could not catch it, then the next best thing would be to poke right through it. However, not long after, Ben said something that placed Minhyuk in a desperate situation.

"A dead salmon...can't lure out a great predator like the Clam Golem."

"..."

Minhyuk's brows creased in frustration. He thought deeper about it, 'If Ben were to throw his spear and directly hit the Golden Salmon...even if it's bigger than a normal fish, it will still be blown to pieces.'

There was only one thing that Minhyuk could do right now.

'Cast my line!'

Krrrrrrrrrr!

The punk got away.

'Cast it again!'

Krrrrrrr~rrrrrrr!

So Minhyuk kept on casting his line, reeling it in, and casting it again. He had no other choice but to do this over and over again, since the bastard was moving around like crazy. It did not even bother



leaving the vicinity of the boat, as if it was mocking and teasing them. An hour soon passed and still, Minhyuk kept on casting and reeling his line.

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

Nevertheless, he still had not caught the Golden Salmon. After quite some time, it leisurely disappeared as if it had become tired of playing with them.

"..."

"Goddamn!"

Ben looked at the water desperately. He had been looking for it for five years straight, but he was still helpless and lost it in the end.

Then, Minhyuk said, "We're not done yet."

"..."

"We can find it again."

Based on the direction of the red dot, Minhyuk pointed to a place as he urged Ben to move. He said, "Let's go, once more!"

The boat set sail once more and arrived at the area where the Golden Salmon was. They cast their lines. The bastard escaped. Cast. It escaped. Minhyuk believed that there was nothing in the world that he could not eat if he put all of his efforts into it.

'He who does not work, shall not eat! No pain, no gain. The food will taste more delicious after working hard!'

In addition, his will was burning ever so brightly. He had caught a glimpse of the Golden Salmon earlier, and it looked truly delectable. He could eat it deliciously after using it as bait! So, Minhyuk kept on casting his line in hopes of catching the elusive fellow.

Two hours went by just like that.

[You have gained 1 DEX.]

[Your Skill: Will has been triggered.]

[All skills and abilities related to DEX will increase by 27% temporarily.]

As he heard the notifications, it seemed like the tiny dot that represented the Golden Salmon grew a tiny bit bigger. Minhyuk's will had grown stronger. He kept on casting his line for an hour, two hours, four hours, seven hours. He kept at it even until the sun set, and throughout all night. When the new morning dawned on them, Minhyuk was still chasing and casting his line over and over again.

[Novice Fishing has leveled up.]

Ben had taught Minhyuk his fishing skills. In fact, Minhyuk could already be considered an amazing fisherman with just his DEX alone. However, without learning the skill, he would not be able to receive the additional privileges that he could get from leveling up his skill from novice to intermediate, then to master. So, Minhyuk decided to learn the skill first. Right now, his Novice Fishing skill had already reached Level 8. Oblivious to all that, Minhyuk continued to cast his line.

Ben looked at him with admiration and appreciation in his eyes.

‘F...for the sake of my child’s revenge...!’

To think that this young man that he had only just met recently was trying his hardest, for the sake of his son’s revenge. Minhyuk kept on casting his fishing line, all the while with a solemn expression on his face. He did not even take a single wink of sleep. Sweat was dripping down from his forehead as he tapped his sore back before casting the line once again.

However, unbeknownst to Ben, the thoughts running through Minhyuk’s mind were completely different.

‘I want to catch this fellow quickly so I can eat something delicious!’

Trapped in his own illusions, Ben thought, ‘I’m willing to do anything for him...!’

In truth, Ben had nothing left to his name. After his son had died, he had given up all the power and riches that he used to have, turning his back on everything. Part of it was also because he strongly believed that his son had died like that due to him, so he gave up everything and focused his all on fishing here. Ben left behind all of his gold, treasure, power... everything that he had.

‘Because of that, I have nothing. If only I had something...’

Ben looked down at his callused hands.

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Genie, Khan, Locke and the rest of the guild members of Legend Guild were all looking for quests all over the Northern Continent.

“Is there anything I can do for you?”

“Keuhahaha. My heals can treat you. Would you like me to give you a treatment?”

“Are there any girls who look like Robin here? I’m Ace that beat the red-footed Jeff from Dongha Elementary!”

All of them were looking for quests that had some things in common. One, it should be a shareable quest, and two, it should be a quest that could give them a vassal.

Vassal. In other words, a faithful and loyal subordinate. A vassal was an essential being for guilds, especially because NPCs were people who lived in this world. It was very important for them to capture the heart of a loyal and influential vassal that would be able to take good care of the people in their territory once they gained the title. They needed someone that would fully support the person that would receive the title for their guild.

“Why isn’t Minhyuk answering our whispers? It’s not even turned off, right?”

When Genie sent a whisper to him, this was what she sent.

[Genie: Minhyuk, do you want to be a nobleman?]

Of course, Genie could also fill in her work and increase her REP. However, it would take longer for them to expand their territory and establish such a position as their own. Rather, it would be

more efficient for the GM, Genie, to step back and yield to Minhyuk. However, Minhyuk had not replied to any of their whispers at all.

Not long after, Genie saw Khan running forward to where she was. He said, "I found a good vassal!"

Genie grinned widely and said, "Oh?"

"He used to be one of the Heavenly Spear Masters in the continent?"

"Wow. It's really true, right?"

They had all checked the rewards in the shareable quest and had clearly seen the Heavenly Spear Master as part of the list. They had estimated his level and they believed that he was at about Level 400. A level on par with the current top rankers!

"We really need to have such a vassal!" Genie said, grinning happily. Now, the only thing that they needed to do was share the quest with Minhyuk once he came back.

Then, Khan said, "But, for some reason... Why do I feel like Minhyuk will ask the vassal to do plenty of chores when we're away?"

"Huh?"

"Like picking lettuce or maybe cooking ramyeon?"

Genie grinned at his words. She said, "Eyyy. There's no way~"

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Ben made coffee for the still struggling Minhyuk, who slowly savored the scent of coffee before sipping it. However, once he tasted the coffee, his forehead suddenly crumpled. He said, "Why is the coffee so bland?"

"...I...is it?"

"It's really too bland. Eyyy. Ah! You got the amount of water wrong!"

'I, I'm the Ghost Spear Ben, but I'm being criticized for making bland coffee...!?' Ben thought, his expression blank. He wanted to make coffee for Minhyuk since he was tirelessly working hard for his sake! The only problem was... He drank one cup, and then two, three, four cups! It did not stop there.

"As expected of Maxhim Coffee~"

After drinking his 150th cup...

[You have become addicted to caffeine.]

[Your heart will beat fast and you won't be able to fall asleep.]

[You have an invincible body that can ignore and resist all abnormal states.]

[You have resisted an abnormal state.]

“Yeah. It’s zero calories if it’s delicious~” Minhyuk said, drinking 200 cups of coffee in one sitting. Then he continued to say, “Right! You’re good at measuring the water now!”

“Hohoho! And you’re good at drinking coffee! Hohoho!”

“Just keep on doing it like that! You’re doing it right!”

“Hohoho. Right. I’ll work hard on making coffee!” Ben said. Then, he suddenly tilted his head in confusion, and wondered, ‘Huh? What’s this, why am I so happy with such compliments?’

He did not know the reason, but he strangely felt happy. It had been two days since they had started this chase and cast strategy. By now, Minhyuk knew that catching it was impossible with what they had. There had to be another method. They needed to find another way.

Ben kept on refilling the coffee in his cup. Minhyuk thought hard while he downed the coffee in his cup. At that moment, Minhyuk finally thought of something! ‘...Why didn’t I think of this earlier?’

He relied too much on fishing! Minhyuk quickly looked down at the energetic salmon that was teasing them in the water.

‘Create a Recipe...!’

There was no guarantee that the ‘Create a Recipe’ skill would work on beings that were not human-like. However, this skill would show him what the being would like to eat the most. What about fishing? Fishing required plenty of waiting and patience as one waited for the fish to take their bait. In other words, he wanted to make use of this skill to lure the Golden Salmon into taking the bait voluntarily.

After that? Perhaps catching it would be easier than what they were doing now. Minhyuk quickly put his thoughts into action. He looked at the Golden Salmon that was happily swimming in their vicinity. The Golden Salmon had already come up to the point where the bastard could mock and tease them leisurely. However, no matter how hard Ben tried, the punk was still too fast for him to catch.

‘Create a Recipe!’

(Shellfish Bait Recipe for Golden Salmon)

Required Ingredients: Fantastic Flower Crab, Faded Shrimp, Giant Lobster...(omitted)

Expected Dish Grade: Rare ~ Epic

Expected Effects: An increase in the special points.

“...It worked!” Minhyuk exclaimed. He had tried it just in case, and it really worked!

“We need some Fantastic Flower Crabs, Faded Shrimps and Giant Lobsters!”

“...Is that so? Then, let’s quickly catch them!” Ben said, casting his line immediately. He did not have a shred of doubt about Minhyuk’s plans.

[You have acquired a Squid.]

[You have acquired a Giant Lobster.]

[You have acquired an Angler Fish.]

[You have acquired a Fantastic Flower Crab.]

They were able to fish for all of the ingredients in just six hours. Once Minhyuk had collected all of the ingredients, he began to ground all of the shellfish. In addition, his Food God's Acquisition Skill also helped him in making the shellfish bait. After he completed preparing the bait, he hung a fist-sized amount at the end of his fishing line.

Minhyuk made eye contact with Ben. He could see the tension and anxiety in Ben's eyes as he threw the line carefully towards the needle-sized spot.

Plop!

The bait went into the water with a loud splash. Once again, he could see that red dot moving quickly towards where they were. Minhyuk kept on chanting? 'Please catch the Golden Salmon!' in his head. This was how the both of them waited. They waited and waited for an hour, then two hours, then five hours.

"Eyy. I guess it's too smart to take the bait..."

"...Phew. I guess there's still a fish that is smart in front of the bait that they want the most."

The two of them sighed. They were on the verge of giving up. They just talked mindlessly, grumbling about their bad luck. Minhyuk did not even notice the red dot that was quickly approaching the bait. Then, at that moment...

Twang—

...the fishing line suddenly went taut!

"...!"

Minhyuk's eyes widened as he quickly reeled the line in. Ben also looked at the water nervously. Not long after, the huge body of the Golden Salmon was pulled out of the water.

Puhaaaaaa!

Along with it, a series of notifications rang in Minhyuk's head.

[You have succeeded in catching one of the Legendary Fish, the Golden Salmon.]

[You have acquired the Title: Fishing King, Kang Taegong.]

## Chapter 150: The Old Man and the Sea

The quest window also changed along with the notifications.

[Linked Quest: Hunt the Clam Golem.]

Rank: SS

Requirements: Ben's favor.

Rewards: ???

Penalty for Failure: Sharp decrease in Ben's favor.

Description: You have finally caught the Golden Salmon! Now, the only thing that you need to do is to use the Golden Salmon to lure the Clam Golem out!

Minhyuk trembled in excitement. He thought, 'Kgghk! This is just like what father said, a special touch!'

Without meaning to, Minhyuk truly felt happiness. The feeling of finally being able to catch the fish after waiting for hours on end was truly delightful.

Ben felt like his heart was bursting with tension when the Golden Salmon bit the bait. Once the fish broke out of the water, he could not help but let out a huge sigh of relief and happiness. He quickly tied a rope around the body of the salmon. He said, "This rope is magical. You can never untie it once something is tied by it."

The scales of this fish were slippery, so to prevent it from jumping away from their grasp, Ben had specifically prepared a magical rope. Minhyuk nodded as he checked the title that he received.

(Fishing King, Kang Taegong)

Unique Title

Title Effects:

?The probability of catching a special fish increases by 1.5x

?All five basic stats +5

Minhyuk smiled happily when he saw that there was an increase in his chances of catching special fish.

Flap, flap, flap, flap!

The Golden Salmon was flapping wildly as it desperately tried to get out of the boat. Ben quickly finished tying the magic rope on its body, before tying the other end to his hands. He then threw the Golden Salmon back in the water.

Ben was once a part of the Pinnacle Strong Men, so his strength could easily subdue the Golden Salmon. This was also the reason why they were not worried that the Golden Salmon might escape from a lack of strength.

"Now, all we have to do is lure that bastard out!" Ben said, his expression turning dark.

'It has been five years. I have waited for this moment for five, long years.'

The boat slowly moved. Ben chewed on a Dorito's Bubblegum. Minhyuk copied him and chewed on a Dorito's Bubblegum too. Then, he spat out the gum after chewing it.

"...Why did you spit it out?"

“The sweetness is gone. Oh, right! We have to go under the sea!”

“...”

It was the Dorito's Bubblegum that could help anyone breathe underwater freely, but Minhyuk ate five in one go! Not only that, he was eating it for the taste rather than the effect!

“I have to chew a lot so I won't have to spit it out.”

“...Uhhh,” Ben hummed as he nodded blankly. Then, he said, “Follow closely behind me.”

“Yes!”

Ben jumped off of the boat with the spear strapped on his back. Minhyuk quickly followed him into the water.

[Due to the effect of Dorito's Bubblegum, you will be able to breathe underwater for a duration of one hour.]

Minhyuk felt that it was truly something amazing. He was under the sea, but he could still breathe freely. Minhyuk could swim well and easily followed Ben under the sea. Just like that, they arrived at the bottom of the sea. He could see plenty of mysterious creatures growing near the rocks, as well as hidden crabs and schools of fish swimming past them.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Of course, Minhyuk did not forget to snatch them up and put them in his inventory while closely following behind Ben.

Minhyuk happily swam and continued grabbing seafood along the way, until they arrived in front of the cave. They slowly landed on the sea bed. Strangely enough, Minhyuk felt as if he was walking on land instead of walking underwater. This was another effect of Dorito's Bubblegum.

The scene at the depths of the cave was unclear, since it was covered in darkness. Minhyuk squinted his eyes to look inside. He thought, ‘There are grilled clams here...!’

Ben tugged the Golden Salmon and guided it in front of the cave. The light that was glowing from the body of the Golden Salmon slowly stretched out towards the cave, illuminating the scene inside. That was how bright the light of the Golden Salmon was.

Ben held the shaft of his spear tightly. He thought, ‘Son...!’

When Ben turned his head, he caught sight of Minhyuk peering inside the cave.

‘Come to think of it...’

His son would be around the same age as Minhyuk had he been alive.

‘It's been quite a while since I last laughed.’

.

When Minhyuk cooked ramyeon for Ben, the latter felt that it was truly delicious. He even laughed at Minhyuk after watching the boy eat his food deliciously.

‘It’s been years since I last ate with someone else.’

Ben was truly grateful to this kind, young man named Minhyuk. Then, he saw Minhyuk spitting out the gum again.

“Ack!?M, my breath...!” Minhyuk exclaimed in horror, before quickly popping out another ten pieces of Dorito’s Bubblegum in his mouth. He said, “Phew... Dorito’s gum is really delicious!”

Minhyuk was a strange man, full of weird antics, but Ben was definitely grateful to him.

Time flew by as they waited in front of the cave. An hour, two hours, five hours, twelve hours. They have been waiting for quite a long time now.

“...What the hell?” Grandpa Ben asked loudly. He could not understand what was happening. In all the years that he had spent in the Dragon King’s Sea, he had seen a variety of creatures, including a bipedal fish, mermaids and even guardians. Through them, he had learned that the way to lure out the Clam Golem was to lure it with the Golden Salmon. According to them, the Clam Golem had a big appetite, and it would lose all reason once it saw the light of the Golden Salmon. However, twelve hours had already gone by, and nothing was happening.

‘W...why the hell is it not coming out!’

Ben was flustered and it was the same for Minhyuk.

‘I...I want to eat grilled clams!’

Grilled clams. This was what friends at Minhyuk’s age would usually do... One of these friends would have a car or two, and the friends would ask him to go to the sea. The person with the car would then become the designated driver as they laughed and talked among themselves. And once everyone fell asleep...

‘These f\*ckers!’

The friend with the car would rub his nose helplessly as he looked at his sleeping friends before leaving them alone. However, once they arrived at the beach, everyone would be in high spirits, as they all hung out and ate grilled clams.

For most others, it was a normal routine.

‘Hey, let’s get clams today! Okay?!’

That was it. However, the same was not true for Minhyuk. He also wanted to try grilled clams while sitting on the shore and enjoying the sea breeze.

‘But this bastard’s not coming out!’

Minhyuk turned to Ben and asked, “Do you know how strong this predator is?”

Ben thought for a moment and said, “I think it’s as powerful as a knight of a regular empire?”



“Hmm?” Minhyuk hummed in thought. It seemed like it was not as tough as he thought it to be. In fact, if it was as strong as an imperial knight, then its level would be around Level 300~360.

‘I think I can try and hunt it?’

“The reason why that bastard is famous in the Dragon King’s Sea is mainly due to its rarity. Also, that bastard will only eat things that aren’t usually eaten, also mainly preying on the trash in the Dragon King’s Sea.”

Minhyuk nodded as he listened intently to what Ben was saying.

“This is also the reason why the Dragon King said that there was no need to hunt such a guy.”

“I see.”

It was just special because of its rarity. It seemed like having the legendary tag added to its name did not necessarily mean that it would be strong. It could also be tagged as legendary based on its rarity. In fact, Minhyuk had seen plenty of monsters whose strength did not match their rank in the dungeon filled with hungry monsters. It would be easier to think of it like this... Rare or unique mobs would also sometimes exist in dungeons for Level 100 players. One could say that this case was similar to such a scenario.

“Then, why don’t I go inside and lure the guy out? I’ll take the Golden Salmon with me.”

Ben’s eyes trembled in anxiety when he heard those words. He tried to discourage Minhyuk, “H... how can you go so far inside? There might be danger.”

Minhyuk shook his head when he heard Ben’s worry. He could not keep waiting like this for a day or two. With the Golden Salmon already tied and caught, Minhyuk knew that it would die sooner or later. What would happen if the Golden Salmon died?

‘Then, the taste of the salmon sashimi would drop...!’

Salmon sashimi would only taste good if it was fresh, right? Without understanding the motivation behind Minhyuk’s ‘courage’, Ben felt deeply moved.

“Grandpa Ben needs to finish his fishing career. So, let’s hunt it down quickly. I’ll be quick and lure it out as soon as possible. Also, I have an invisibility cloak that can hide my body and aura.”

Ben hunting the Clam Golem was already overkill since it was not as strong as expected. He could easily kill the Clam Golem if he wanted to, but if it did not come out, then were they just going to jump around here crazily?

Ben suddenly thought of a way around it. He said, “Just in case something happens, how about we tie this rope on your body? If you tug on it three times in a row, then I’ll pull you out quickly. No

matter how good you are at fishing and cooking, you're still a chef, right? You have to be careful, ok? Just be careful."

Ben had thought that Minhyuk was a chef that had just learned cooking. It was not without reason after all. It looked like Minhyuk had focused all of his attention on raising his production-related skills, like his fishing and cooking skills, which would mean that he likely had a hard time increasing his power.

Minhyuk smiled when he heard Ben's words of concern. He said, "I'm really strong, you know?" "Hoho. Of course," Ben said, dismissing his remarks as a joke to relieve his tension. He watched Minhyuk drag the Golden Salmon inside as if he was taking a dog on a walk.

Minhyuk quickly triggered his abilities that would buff his strength the moment he stood in front of the cave. First, he used Ellie's Swordsmanship to increase all his stats and increase the chances of his additional damage, evasion rate, and critical hits. He also used the invisibility effect of Great Mage Arfield's Cloak.

[Invisibility.]

[Invisibility will fade away after two hours. Invisibility will also remain for two seconds after an attack.]

"Oh...!" Ben gasped in shock after seeing Minhyuk's body disappear in an instant. Even the rope that tied his body disappeared. It only looked like the golden rope was keeping the Golden Salmon tied.

Minhyuk walked slowly into the depths of the cave. He thought, 'I heard that it's the size of a two-ton truck, right?'

Minhyuk was told that it was a very huge guy and that all of the shellfish that existed in the world stuck together to form its body. He was sure that the bastard would not be that hard to find.

He continued to walk inside until he arrived in a wide open area. The area was as big as a school auditorium. However, surprisingly enough, the center of the floor was hollow.

'Is this a separate entrance?'

It was probably a unique setting for this specific dungeon. Minhyuk stood aside to watch the schools of fish that swam and got sucked into the hole. Even trash got sucked inside.

'Wow... Do I just have to sit here and fish will come regardless?'

Minhyuk thought. Then...

Clatter!

"...?"

...rocks started to fall from above, causing Minhyuk to look up at the cave's ceiling.

"...!"

Minhyuk was so surprised that he almost let out a loud gasp. He could see the bastard right above him, plastered on the ceiling.

[Named Monster.]

[You are the first to discover the Legendary Monster: Angry Clam Golem.]

[You have gained 20 REP.]

[Your EXP Acquisition Rate and Item Drop Rate will double while hunting the Angry Clam Golem.]

“...?”

Minhyuk had two things that he was confused about. First, the name of the Clam Golem was not just Clam Golem, but Angry Clam Golem. Second, its appearance was completely different from what he had heard from Ben. The bastard looked like it was just a bit larger than an adult male, with a height that was around two meters. It was plastered on the cave's ceiling like it was Spiderman. Its pair of beady eyes looked around, creepy enough to induce fear as its head slowly moved.

Creaaaaak—

Minhyuk's eyes met with the monster's eyes. Thankfully, it could not see anything. That was when Minhyuk saw the black light shining out of its body, as well as the parts and ingredients that he could collect from it.

‘I can eat it...!’

Although it was much smaller than what he expected it to be, Minhyuk would still be able to harvest a huge amount of shellfish from it. Then, the monster opened its mouth widely...

Vwoooooooooooooooooom!

...as wide as a truck! It became so large that Minhyuk could not help but gulp in fright. It seemed like the bastard was trying to suck the Golden Salmon. However, the range and size of its mouth was enough to swallow Minhyuk together with the Golden Salmon. What would happen if it successfully ate the Golden Salmon?

‘My Golden Salmon...!’?Minhyuk thought, gripping his sword tightly.