

Gourmet 241

Chapter 241: Prince Argon and the Royal Shop

A notification rang loudly as countless large guilds entered the A-rank area in Elvenheim.

[Take back the land that has been taken away by the demonic race.]

[If you succeed in recapturing the land and defending it for two days, then you will become the master of the land that you have protected and your contributions will increase sharply.]

The notifications were easy to interpret. In other words, it was a structure that promoted competition between the large guilds.

Guilds began to enter Elvenheim's A-rank area. Meanwhile, Callian, the guild master of Iris Guild, and Ares, the guild master of Ares Guild, formed an alliance. Through their alliance, they were able to conquer about three small villages and towns. They were fighting a defensive battle in order to gain a stronghold between Elvenheim and the Elven Forest.

Callian and Ares were both grinning widely.

"As expected," Callian said, making Ares nod.

Callian and Ares were both served humble pie by Legend Guild. In the case of Callian, he suffered from failure when he faced off against Legend Guild during the God Juis disaster event. In Ares' case, he suffered failure when he tried to capture King Varen and faced off against Legend Guild.

Right now, they were both ahead of the other guilds, and had been so for quite a long time now. After all, the other guilds only had one territory currently. They were also able to get an opportunity to reach their goal faster thanks to the 'Elven Shop'.

Elven Shops appeared not only in Elvenheim, but also in other villages, towns, big cities and territories all over the continent. The Elven Shops were created due to the war's outbreak and would only be available to players that had accumulated enough contribution points.

On top of that, once the players entered Elvenheim, they were restricted from using the usual consumable items they had with them. The only consumables that they could use were those created in Elvenheim, like elven potions, elven parchment, elven food and even rare elven artifacts.

Right now, Ares and Callian were both able to discover a special purchase from a High Elf woman that stayed in one of the towns they recaptured.

[Elven Shop Upgrade.]

[100,000 war points.]

The woman's name was Ruby.

Callian and Ares had guessed that Joy Co. Ltd. had set up high contribution points as a reward for having more territory, or perhaps having excessive luck to get something special. Their guilds had been extremely lucky, but they also had good defenses. Because of this, they found a way to get ahead of the other guilds faster. They believed that if the ranking of the shop increased, they would be able to get something better for the war.

"Ruby. I'm buying the Elven Shop's Upgrade."

“You need to exchange 100,000 war points for the Elven Shop’s Upgrade.”

“Here’s the 100,000 points.”

“You’ve worked hard to save us elves. Thank you.”

Having that many war points meant that they had hunted many demonic races.

Then, the notifications rang.

[You have purchased the Elven Shop’s Upgrade.]

[Your Elven Shop will be upgraded to Rank C. Callian and Iris Guild will have a 10% discount in the Elf’s Shop.]

[You can purchase more special items in Rank C.]

Callian grinned widely before rushing to check the Elven Shop.

“...!”

His smile became even brighter after seeing that the items sold in the shop became even better than before. Previously, the ‘Elven Arrow of Life’ was only sold in limited quantities, but now, it could be purchased in the thousands per transaction. Surprisingly enough, the arrow had an additional 15% increase in attack power and a 20% increase in critical hit rate when facing demonic races.

That was not the end of his surprise. Although many of the items were still limited in quantities, there were countless things that were now available in the Elven Shop. There was even the Elven Water of Life which could temporarily increase the attack power against the demonic race by 15%.

Iris and Ares Guild had a little more than a hundred members. What would happen if each and every one of them gained a 15% increase in attack power? They could easily pull far ahead of the other guilds.

Then, Callian heard another notification.

[The Elven Shop Upgrade’s price has increased.]

[300,000 war points.]

‘Expensive...’

It was not easy for them to gain contribution points. He was only able to gather 100,000 war points after almost exhausting his individual war points. Thanks to his individual and guild war points, they were now significantly ahead of the others.

Just then, Callian suddenly felt curious. He asked, “What is the highest rank?”

Meanwhile, Legend Guild was also able to gain a town. With that, Genie was also able to meet the Shop NPC, Remin.

Genie tilted her head as she looked around the shop.

[Do you want to upgrade the Elven Shop?]

[50,000 war points.]

‘Oh?’

Then, she immediately checked the information.

[Elven Shop’s Ranks: The Elven Shop would start at rank E. However, it is possible to upgrade your shop to a better and great store if you continue to make contributions. The rankings are divided into D, C, B, A and Royal. Three days after the Rank C store opens, the upgrades that can be purchased will be available in all of the NPC shops in every village and town. If you have a special NPC shop in your town or village, you may be able to increase your ranking by that time.]

“So, you can also use your points like this.”

The privilege that was granted to her store was to gain access to information in advance. This? meant that she would be able to see further information and check them ahead of others.

[Rank C: 100,000 points, Rank B: 300,000 points, Rank A: 600,000 points, Royal: 1 million points. In the case of a Royal Shop, there are only two hidden NPCs that can unlock the Royal Rank. In addition, once the Royal-Rank Shop opens, your 1 million war points will be returned to you.]

“Gasp!”

Genie was shocked.

‘One million war points are needed for the royal rank? What’s worse is that only the royal NPCs can open it?’

It was said that the Elf King and a prince were part of the royal elves, which meant the difficulty was already very high with just this requirement alone. Genie could easily deduce the meaning of the returning of the one million war points.

‘It’s literally impossible for an individual to gain one million war points to access the Royal Shop. This is clearly a privilege and is something meant to sober us up...’

Legend Guild was not performing very well since their numbers were significantly smaller than the rest of the guilds. Right now, they were even down by one person.

Then, Genie sent a message in the group chat to Ace.

She heard that he would bring strong and reliable people but she really did not expect much. However, she still believed that there would be a slight boost in their strength if they came.

?It serves to show and indicate what is in each section of the Immortals' Land. However, it cannot show the rewards list.

?The status of other players, their military troops and personnel as well as their scores while they are still in Immortals' Land can also be viewed.

?The Map of the Immortals' Land gives the owner the opportunity to check the rewards list once. This chance has already been used by the previous owner.

[All Talk Commander]

Unique Title

The map looked quite useful to Minhyuk. When he unfolded the map, he saw the things that were located in Zone 1 written clearly on it. He then turned his attention to his new title... It was literally a special title that Minhyuk had received after spouting those meticulously thought-out lies.

Then, Minhyuk saw the troops crying and laughing in front of him.

"*Sob, sob, sob.* Thanks to our commander, we can be here with you safely and without any worries. I'm so happy to be here with you."

"*Huhuhuhuhu!*"

The Reapers and Iron Blood were all in tears. Just like what they had agreed upon, they all became a part of the Rice Supplement company.

"*Sob, sob, sob, sob!*?Ah! Great Minhyuk!"

"Minhyuk, long live!"

"Minhyuk, long live!"

That was right. They had all become a group of swindlers! Minhyuk pretended to be moved to tears as he started his charade.

"I can't control my tears. They keep on falling down so I'll go over there to calm myself down. *Sob, sob, sob, sob!*"

Minhyuk shed his tears just like that, but once he got out of their sight, a grin bloomed on his handsome face.

'I'll be in big trouble if someone asks for a bite, right?' Minhyuk thought, smiling brightly before pulling out the chicken feet set that he had received after achieving 100% in commanding ability.

"Wow..."

Minhyuk admired the chicken feet for a while when he pulled the set out of his inventory.

‘The Spicy Chicken Feet Set that’s glistening red looks so beautiful. And there is even steamed egg?’

The steamed egg were different from the common ones that were cooked in an earthen pot. When he held and shook the plastic container that contained the steamed egg, it actually bounced and jiggled, looking extremely soft and elastic.

Then, Minhyuk looked at the ingredients right next to it. They were for making rice balls, and there were also some peach Julpis. Minhyuk quickly wore plastic gloves as he sprinkled the rice with sesame seeds. He then used pickled radish as fillings, before rolling it in seaweed.

“I’m a master craftsman in making rice balls!”

Just like what he said, Minhyuk’s skill in rice ball rolling was already at its peak. It could be considered art at this point. There were people that could not make half a ball of rice, or some that struggled to even make rice balls at all. However, Minhyuk could make it very pretty and round.

After making some rice balls, Minhyuk quickly picked up one reddish, shiny and glistening spicy chicken feet with his chopsticks before putting it in his mouth. He was chewing it easily and he could feel the sting in every bite. The flavor of the chicken feet was a little spicy but still tolerable. The flavor that first spread in his mouth was tinged with the delightful aftertaste of smoke and charcoal fire. After eating about three of them, he could not help but let out some breath from his mouth.

“Swiiip— Aaah.”

Minhyuk’s tongue was tingling due to the spiciness. This time, he took a spoon and dug in the soft, jiggling steamed egg. With just a touch of the spoon, the steamed egg easily came out of the container. He could taste the soft and warm steamed egg. The taste of the steamed egg brought happiness and relief in his mouth.

Then, Minhyuk turned his attention toward the rice balls. With his hands wrapped in the plastic gloves, he brought the rice ball to his mouth. The salty seaweed, sesame seeds, and pickled radish blended to create a savory, yet sour flavor in his mouth.

After tasting everything, he quickly went back to his chicken feet. His forehead was already beaded in sweat after eating plenty of the chicken feet. However, the enticing flavor of the chicken feet had a magical temptation that would not allow him to stop eating them until they were gone.

At this time, there was one thing that he needed.

Glug, glug, glug—

Minhyuk quickly took out a glass filled with ice before pouring the Julpis in it. Then, he grabbed the glass and gulped down its icy, yet refreshing contents. His tingling tongue suddenly sizzled and calmed down.

After he finished everything, the notifications rang loudly in his ears.

[You have eaten the Food God’s Spicy Chicken Feet Set.]

[You gained 100,000 Contribution Points.]

“Oh?”

Minhyuk suddenly earned a significant amount of contribution points in one go.

After eating the spicy chicken feet set, Minhyuk opened the map of the Immortals' Land once more to check its contents. There was a variety of information listed on the map. Just then, he noticed something at Zone 2 that caused him to tilt his head.

'A red skull?'

In reality, such a figure represented 'danger' and 'destruction'. Minhyuk clicked on it.

[You can't have additional access. The rewards list has been checked already.]

[The previous owner had already checked all of the information.]

"...Hmm."

Minhyuk tilted his head in thought. The previous owner was Bach, so he thought that he had already finished checking everything. With that, Minhyuk could not see that information, so the rest was left unconfirmed.

Minhyuk stood up and went back to his troops quickly.

It was time to finish taking over Zone 1 so they could move on to Zone 2.

"..."

Eclei was left speechless after coming back from his nap. It was because there was no one in sight. He felt a little strange standing alone in a place where the cold wind was blowing strongly. What was worse was that Bach was nowhere in sight. So he logged out.

The moment Eclei, or Lee Sung-Hae, logged out, he immediately picked up his phone to contact Bach, known as Lee Hyun-Woo in reality. However, before he could even do so, he already saw several text messages on his phone.

'What's this?'

When he finally realized the situation, Lee Sung-Jae could not help but feel flustered.

He found out that Bach was forced to log out by Minhyuk, and their troops had joined the Rice Supplement company. To make matters even worse, Hyun-Woo made a foreigner's pledge. Right now, Hyun-Woo had no choice but to tell Emperor Asvon that he had died from a monster attack, whereas Minhyuk had taken over command of their troops.

Not long after, Sung-Jae called Hyun-Woo. His voice was filled with doubt and anger, since everything sounded so ridiculous to him.

"No. How can you do something like that!!!"

[I let my guard down. I never thought that he would have that skill. He had a skill that would momentarily make him invincible... If it wasn't for that, then I'd definitely win.]

Hyun-Woo still thought that he had lost only by a narrow margin.

[He's a rookie when it comes to fighting.]

“And yet you were killed by such a rookie?”

A moment of silence passed by between them. However, Hyun-Woo said to him not long after...

[That’s what happened... Now, I’m out of commission so I’ll have to depend on you, Sung-Jae. I still have a way to win.]

“A way?”

[Yes. Do you remember that red skull on the Map of the Immortals’ Land?]

“Yes. I remember.”

When Sung-Jae had asked Hyun-Woo about it, he seemed reluctant to reveal anything, and only said that it was a dangerous area.

[It’s a very dangerous area. I have checked the information there completely. It’s the land of the ‘Fallen Spirit King’, and hunting him can grant you two reward options.]

“What’s that?”

[First. It’s becoming a demonic human. By becoming a demonic human, you will get more powerful troops from the corrupted soldiers of the Fallen Spirit King. The second option gives you 400,000 Contribution Points and the Elven Heart. The Elven Heart is said to contain enormous power and can be used as a guild property. And there’s one more thing.]

Sung-Jae quietly listened.

[When you become a demonic human, the second reward will be transferred if someone hunts you.]

Chapter 242: Prince Argon and the Royal Shop

Minhyuk led his troop of 150 men as he started to take over the Immortals’ Land’s Zone 1.

[Player Minhyuk’s contributions have reached 300,000.]

“N...no!!”

“Don’t increase your contributions any further!!”

The Story Creation Team once again came to the office of the Special Players Management Team, only to tear their hair off of their heads.

“This bad punk!”

“Why do you call him a bad punk when he’s so good at playing the game?” Team Leader Park asked them bluntly.

Truth be told, their reactions were natural. Ever since Minhyuk ate up all the ‘rice cakes’ from the Demon Verus event, their team had been struggling to build an update towards a new direction. They only barely managed to sort things out, but if things went on like this, they would be in huge trouble.

Having more points meant that the player would have more supplies available to them. To be honest, just getting the Elven Shop Rank A would give them a huge benefit. However, it was quite hard to rack up the points that would allow the player to go up to Rank A.

For them to be able to do so, the proper means was for the player to use their individual war points to purchase the upgrade, which would require hundreds of thousands of points. Usually, if a player exceeded 100,000 points, they would be able to purchase an epic item at the Elven Shop. This meant that in order to upgrade the shop, one would have to give up purchasing other items. However, it was not as easy as it sounds. Other than for those that were not greedy for strength nor power, or for those that would think about the guild and push everybody to go towards a good direction, most players would be unwillingly give up good items.

This was the reason why they believed that players who could promote the shop to Rank A would only appear towards the end of the war episode. However, right now, Minhyuk's contribution points were already inching closer to the Rank A upgrade.

Furthermore, there was a bigger problem.

“What will happen if the Elven Heart falls into the hands of that player?”

His high contribution points were a problem, but so was the Elven Heart.

In the past, the Ancient Elf, Lumias, was anxious about a war breaking out among their tribes. The elves were a race that hated fighting. However, just because they did not like fighting did not mean that they would just let their tribes be devoured by the war. So, each of the three Elven Chiefs gathered their enormous and outstanding strength to create a powerful weapon that they could use in war, which was none other than the ‘Elven Heart’.

The Elven Heart could only be used if they were in the land of the elves, be it a village, a town, or a big city. It could be used anywhere as long as it was in their lands.

“...What's worse is that Player Minhyuk has the antarinium ore. It's really a problem.”

The antarinium ore had not yet revealed its full strength.

Not long after, Team Leader Park spoke in a lackluster voice, “Player Minhyuk has seen that there was a red skull mark in the Immortals' Land area. The information about that area was already confirmed by another player. Player Minhyuk should be able to safely use his troops, and not need to go to that dangerous area, since he is not aware of the rewards at all. We can be rest assured about that fact.”

“I guess so. We might not be able to do anything else about his high contribution points, but I guess I'm still glad about that.”

Minhyuk's work routine in the Immortals' Land Zone 1 were as follows:

First, he would use his ‘Create a Recipe’ skill for the 100 Iron Blood and Reapers soldiers who came under his command. Well, to be exact, for the additional 100 soldiers of the Rice Supplement company. He fed them consistently during the three meals each day and helped them boost their powers.

He went on to do more.

“Sharpen blade!!”

[You have perfectly sharpened the longsword's blade.]

[The artifact's durability has greatly increased.]

[The attack power has increased.]

“Polish armor!”

[You have perfectly polished the plate armor.]

[The artifact's durability has greatly increased.]

[The defensive power has increased.]

The weapons and armors of all 150 men under him had increased dramatically! It was not just one or two, but 150 people that had a tremendous boost to their strength.

What followed next was them sweeping the entire Zone 1 of the Immortals' Land with ease. Since his knights moved so well on their own, Minhyuk did not even need to move around with his sword. All he did was to command them and shoot his bow from the rear.

[Caron has leveled up.]

[You have gained 1 CHA.]

[Ravis has leveled up.]

[You have gained 1 CHA.]

The notifications did not stop there.

[You have broken through Area A-60 of the Immortals' Land.]

[You have gained 10,000 Contribution Points.]

[You have broken through Area A-63 of the Immortals' Land.]

[You have gained 10,000 Contribution Points.]

[You have broken through Area K-81 of the Immortals' Land.]

[You have broken through six areas in three hours.]

[Commander Player Minhyuk and his troops are running wild and breaking through areas with sheer force.]

[You have proven yourself to be an outstanding commander.]

[You have gained an additional 100 points to your CHA.]

Minhyuk checked his CHA. It seemed like it had already exceeded 200 points. This was only possible thanks to his good commanding ability that allowed him to level up his troops with minimal damage.

They continued to move like that until they reached Zone 2 of the Immortals' Land.

[You have reached Immortals' Land Zone 2.]

[You have gained 50 REP.]

[You have gained 50,000 Contribution Points.]

Once they pass through Zone 2, they could meet Prince Argon. Hence, Minhyuk began to forge forward with his troops.

“Attack!”

The monsters had become more powerful, but Minhyuk’s troops, which had all become stronger than him, could not be pushed back at all. At one point, the notifications began to ring.

[The God of War, Eclei, has given up on the Gods’ Bet.]

[You have acquired the Food God’s Bizzare Spicy Rice Cake Set.]

[You have acquired the final reward, the Food God’s Kitchen Knife.]

‘Huh? Give up??’

Minhyuk had no choice but to tilt his head in confusion.

‘Eclei gave up on the Gods’ Bet?’

He did not know the exact reason, but perhaps it was because he had already lost all of his troops, so it was possible he did not feel that the bet was worth his time anymore.

When Minhyuk tried to check the final reward, the Food God’s Kitchen Knife, another set of notifications went off.

[You have acquired the world’s first Demigod artifact, the Food God’s Kitchen Knife.]

[Your name has entered the Hall of Kings.]

Eclei immediately ran towards Zone 2 all by himself.

One might wonder how he got there all by himself and without any troops. As it turned out, Eclei had troops, but he just did not use them earlier.

[You have summoned the battlefield’s descendants.]

A troop that consisted of thirty stone-like soldiers appeared.

He was saving it for later because of the cooldown. Just like what Bach had told him before, Eclei ran with his troops towards the tomb of the Fallen Spirit King. As soon as he arrived there, he fought against the Fallen Spirit King. The Fallen Spirit King, Ifrit, fell due to the persistent attacks of demonic energy on his body.

Crackle!

Ifrit’s crackling fire spear flew towards him while Eclei’s sword moved.

[War God’s Blessings.]

[The sword of the mighty God of War will penetrate the enemy.]

Flaaaash—

A powerful flash erupted from Eclei’s sword and clashed against the burning fire spear.

‘As expected, this guy is not easy to deal with.’

This area was marked with a red skull on the map because it was very dangerous. It represented a risk where players would become demonic humans. However, in a way, it could also become a great merit.

Eclei would be the first player to become a demonic human. Of course, there would be a fierce battle against other players in the future, but there would also be countless quests and rewards that he could gain by becoming a demonic human.

Anyway, Eclei was not a part of any guild and was only an individual! Becoming a demonic human would make him into a more powerful player.

[The God of War's War Horse.]

Neigh!

A black horse suddenly appeared near Eclei while he was fighting a fierce battle. Eclei climbed up the horse as he began to move forward and push back the fallen Ifrit. Eventually, he was able to successfully hunt Ifrit.

[You have attacked the Tomb of the Fallen Spirit King.]

[The enormous Demonic Energy that encroached and devoured upon the Fallen Spirit King has started encroaching upon your body.]

[You can't reject Demonic Energy.]

[You have become a demonic human.]

[You have acquired 300 REP.]

[In the event of your death, your level will drop by 20.]

[In the event of your death, your artifact drop rate will increase dramatically.]

[The strength of the Fallen's Fire encroaches upon your body.]

[You have acquired 500 Demonic Energy stats.]

[All of your stats have increased by 20%.]

[We are announcing the birth of the first Demonic Human Player in the entire Korean Server.]

[The first person to hunt the Demonic Human will be rewarded with 400,000 contribution points and the Elven Heart.]

Crackle!

A burning black flame penetrated through Eclei's body as it slowly dyed his body black.

At the same time, the country began to buzz in excitement.

[Guys! Amazing! The first demonic human appears from among our country men!!!]

[Wow. Demonic Humans are a new race, right?]

[That's right. But what's surprising is the fact that transforming into a new race is a completely different concept from changing classes. Once you change into a new race, your class will also be strengthened.]

[Wow. So jealous. Does that mean that if I become a demonic human, I can get more artifacts and rewards from the demons and the demon world?]

[Of course. Wow. Really jealous...!]

Fifteen minutes later, the people on the official website, as well as the community sites, were already rife with discussions about the demonic human.

[Then, if you become a demonic human, you'll be able to gain demonic monsters and a territory? Amazing...]

[And it was said that being a demonic human means that you will get stronger too. Unless the person is not high-leveled, then it will be impossible to challenge him. He's almost like a very powerful being.]

That was the time when another message hit the entire country.

[The Fire Demonic Human has been killed.]

[Rewards will now be given to the player that successfully hunted the Fire Demonic Human.]

[...?]

[...?]

[...?]

[...?]

Every single game site and comment section were plastered with question marks for a brief moment. Then, the comments started to flood again.

[What kind of punk dies as soon as he becomes a demonic human?]

[Who's the demonic human?! Come out!]

[I feel sorry for the demonic human... He died as soon as he changed races? Hahahahahaha. I feel really sorry for you. Hahahaha.]

[Woow! Mom, Dad, look I'm a demonic human! I'm really strong! Bring it on! Then poof! Then uwaaa! You did it like that, right?! Hehehehe. Pathetic! Hahahaha!]

One article could be seen at the top of the real-time search keywords list: '*Sympathy for the Demonic Human.*'?The piece described their pity and sympathy for the demonic human.

Fifteen minutes ago.

Eclei recalled what Bach had told him before. According to Bach, the enemy was weak and filled with holes. Of course, his enemy got 150 knights to accompany him, but Eclei had 200 corrupted spirits to match against them. He had also become 20% stronger than before.

Eclei was filled with confidence at the thought of crushing the annoying bastard who became so happy after winning against Bach by such a narrow margin.

Not long after, Eclei could see him and his men advancing towards Zone 2.

‘As expected, he still pulls his bow from the rear.’?

Eclei clicked his tongue before issuing an order. His troop, consisting of 200 corrupted spirits at Level 450 and attacks that could deal tremendous damage, rushed forward. At that exact same moment, a knight, who was cleaning up the mobs in the front, had his chest pierced through with a trident by a Fallen Fire Warrior.

Crackle!

“Urgh!!”

“...?”

“*Keuhahahahaha!*?You bastards! You should have obeyed us!!!”

The knight that was pierced through his chest collapsed. The spirits then launched a fierce attack and the knights collapsed one by one.

Step, step—

Eclei slowly walked. At the same time, Minhyuk tilted his head in wonder before asking, “Who...?”

“...It...It’s Eclei!”

Minhyuk asked the question, even though he knew that Eclei already found his existence to be very annoying. At the same time, it seemed like those two-legged spirits were much stronger than he thought.

Then, Eclei said, “...It’s Eclei!”

“Oh my, my! I know that you’re already ugly, but this is a new level, so much so that I did not recognize you!” Minhyuk bared his teeth and laughed loudly.

While trying to agitate Eclei, Minhyuk knew that he needed to minimize the damage on his troops so he decided to make an inevitable choice. The Iron Blood and Reapers might feel a little tearful, but they have already become his loyal subordinates, so he believed that it would be fine.

Minhyuk first used Saint’s Protection, causing a bright light to burst out and covered his body. Along with the light, all of his stats and attack power increased by 30% of his holy power.

Turn, turn, turn—

Then, he quickly took out his millstone and turned it.

“This f*cking bastard! Have you gone crazy before your death...”

At that moment...

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

Hundreds of lightning bolts rained down on Eclei and his 200 corrupted spirits.

“*Keuaaaack!*”

Eclei was shocked. In an instant, he had received enormous damage, and about 10% of the spirits under him had died.

“Huh? It’s not over yet?”

The soldiers from the Iron Blood and the Reapers company stood behind Minhyuk and watched the scene with open mouths.

“Blooming Sword.”

As soon as Minhyuk stabbed his sword to the ground...

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

...hundreds of sword blades popped out of the ground as they stabbed the spirits.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

Then, a round of explosions devoured and engulfed Minhyuk’s enemies.

“Keuaaaack!”

[Your HP has dropped below 80%.]

[Your HP has dropped below 60%.]

However, Eclei still remained standing, so Minhyuk decided to use his new skill. It was a skill that he had received after he received the Food God’s Kitchen Knife and ate the Food God’s Bizzare Spicy Rice Cake Set.

There was a special skill attached to the Food God’s Kitchen Knife...

Artifact Skill

“Rain of Kitchen Knives.”

Minhyuk threw the Food God’s Kitchen Knife high up in the sky. When it reached a high altitude, a powerful light burst out of its body.

Flash—

Eclei could not help but look up at the sky.

Stab!

Then, a kitchen knife dropped from the sky and extinguished a spirit that was standing beside him. He could see hundreds of knives with glinting blades floating up in the air.

“Yo...you bastard! You’ve been hiding your strength from us...!”

Before he could finish his words, the kitchen knives began to rain down.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab!

The hundreds of kitchen knives that fell from the air killed Minhyuk’s enemies instantly.

“Urk!”

Eclei saw his HP drop by 30% when a kitchen knife pierced his body.

‘I...impossible...!’?

Eclei finally realized that Minhyuk was definitely a ranker. However, what he could not understand was this damn damage! It did not even cross his mind that him being a demonic human was the cause of this all. It was because he transferred and changed into this race that brought about his downfall, since his demonic side was more susceptible to holy damage.

Then, the notifications rang.

[All of your troops have been wiped out.]

[Your HP has dropped below 10%.]

That was when Eclei remembered that the rewards would go to the person or being that killed him.

What he was going through could be explained simply. It could be compared to cooking and eating. Eclei worked hard to cook before scooping up the food with his spoon and bringing it to Minhyuk’s mouth while saying *‘Hurry up, have a bite!’*. It was a perfect analogy for Eclei’s situation.

“Shit, you f*cker!!”

That was when the final kitchen knife fell down and stabbed Eclei on his head.

Stab!

Then, a black screen encroached upon his vision.

Fwiiiiish!

Eclei could not help but stagger and fell to the ground when his capsule opened. He stared into space with a blank, dazed look for quite a long time.

Initially, he was quite pleased by the fact that he became the first demonic human player. However, his happiness was stripped off within just fifteen minutes of receiving it. What was worse was the fact that he dropped his most cherished artifact that would not be available until the end of the Demon World Invasion Episode.

Plop, plop, plop—

Droplets of hot and burning tears fell down from his eyes as he stared blankly into space and cried, “*Sob! F*cker...*”

Later, Eclei would be selected by the players as the third-most pitiful player in *Athenae*.

Chapter 243: Prince Argon and the Royal Shop

After Eclei and his spirits were wiped out, the notifications rang continuously in Minhyuk's head.

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have earned 400,000 Contribution Points and the Elven Heart for being the first person to successfully hunt the Fire Demonic Human.]

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”

The soldiers of the Iron Blood and Reapers all tilted their heads at him in confusion.

“Ahahaha!”

“Y...you... lied about your strength,” one of the knights suddenly said as Minhyuk laughed awkwardly. Not long after, all the knights burst out in laughter.

“Wow! Our commander is so strong!”

“We admire you!”

Fortunately, their favor with Minhyuk had reached the peak, and they would not be fazed nor be disappointed with his lies.

Meanwhile, Minhyuk smiled as he admired his new skill. He thought, ‘Wow, *the Rain of Kitchen Knives is so strong...*’

He was surprised. Having an additional 200% damage was truly a tremendous ability to have.

Lightning Hell, a skill attached to a disaster artifact, had exerted 120% of additional damage. Even the Fluttering Sword had a similar effect. However, the Rain of Kitchen Knives literally dealt 200% additional damage. It was a formidable addition to his strength.

Minhyuk checked the Food God's Kitchen Knife once again.

?All of the special abilities can be used just by having the artifact in your possession.?

?All stats +8%.

?Buff capacity x2.

?Active Skill: Food God's Blessings.

?Active Skill: Rain of Kitchen Knives.

Even though Minhyuk had seen the information earlier, he was still quite amazed by it. The first special ability listed would allow him to use the artifact's special abilities just by owning the item. In other words, Minhyuk could use all of the special abilities of the item, even if he was using Baracca's Sword, or the Saint's Sword. This was definitely a broken ability to have. Food God's Blessings was also a skill of great value.

Artifact Skill

Just like what the effects had said, there would be two black kitchen knives that would appear and surround Minhyuk's body once it was activated.

After checking the Food God's Kitchen Knife again, Minhyuk went ahead and checked his contributions too.

[Total Contributions. 841,311]

The 400,000 Contribution Points that he had received this time had played a big role in the increase of his Contribution Points. Eclei had literally worked hard, only to feed Minhyuk in the end, and Minhyuk enjoyed his meal thoroughly.

Then, he checked the Elven Heart. It was like a hard stone when he took it out.

???

???

'Hm??'Minhyuk hummed in thought.

According to the Guild Chat, Legend Guild had successfully recaptured one territory and had entered a defensive war. However, it seemed like the results were proving to be pretty bad. Legend

Guild, which was a guild filled with an elite minority, was less likely to play a crucial role in the large-scale battle in Elvenheim. Minhyuk could see how disastrous the Legend Guild's state was through the guild status.

...

...

It was not an ideal situation. However, it was also normal. In large-scale combat warfare, guilds with larger numbers of players would always have an advantage, and Legend Guild, with their measly number of 20 people would not have any advantages. Their strength would not be enough to fight against hundreds in terms of warfare. They might be doing well now, but it was unlikely that they would continue to do so in the future.

While looking through the status, Minhyuk found something surprising.

‘Black Mage? I’m sure that’s Ali though??’

It was surprising. Even the Black Mage Ali was racking up his individual Contribution Points.

‘I need to hurry and sort things out so I can help them.’

First of all, Genie had readily agreed to Minhyuk's expedition where he could eat something delicious. Participation in the war was based on one's free will, so it was still safe for him to be late.

Minhyuk quickly picked up the artifacts that Eclei dropped. Among them, there was an ore that was emitting a subtle blue glow that looked as odd as the antarinium that he received before.

“Huh?”

[You have acquired the Demon World's Ore, Viridite.]

Minhyuk tilted his head in thought. When he checked the information, everything was also set to private just like when he received the antarinium ore.

He continued to run forward with his troops and before he knew it, they had already entered Zone 3. As soon as they stepped foot in Zone 3, the notifications rang.

[You are the first to step foot into Immortals' Land's Zone 3.]

[You have gained 200,000 Contribution Points.]

[You have gained 200 REP.]

At the same time, they heard a voice from somewhere.

“Aaaaaaah! The expedition to save Prince Argon!!”

Then, the woman that screamed stood in front of Minhyuk. It was none other than a High Elf. Then, more notifications rang.

[You have met NPC Cania as a special reward for reaching Immortals' Land's Zone 3.]

Cania continued to wait for the man that would fulfill the hundred-year promise between the elves and humans!

Through that human, they would rescue Prince Argon from the hands of the demons that started their invasion and kidnapped the prince from the gaps in their defenses.

Cania was the finest, highest-ranked woman among the High Elves and she was in possession of a special ability. She could hear the voices of Prince Argon and his captors, allowing her to determine where they were. From what she heard, the demons were going to try and kill Prince Argon if they did not get what they wanted. In other words, they did not have much time.

Thankfully, the humans arrived just at the right moment.

“Aaaaaaah! The expedition to save Prince Argon!!” Cania shouted. She was delighted to see the faces of the people that she was waiting for.

Without waiting for them to greet her, she quickly said, “We have to hurry. They’ll be holding the execution ceremony soon. Before that, we need to use the elves’ sacred item.”

Cania was a special NPC. She was the NPC for those that first set foot in Immortals' Lands' Zone 3, so that they could purchase items that could help them in their expedition. She thought that it would be surprising if they would be able to purchase a Rank A upgrade in the store, but she already suspected that it was impossible to purchase such an upgrade. Still, it was an iron rule that they needed to follow, even if the prince’s life was in danger.

The Contribution Points, or the points themselves, indicated just how many enemies the humans defeated and fought for the elves.

Not long after, the human commander muttered under his breath, “Rank A upgrade...?”

“Yes. That’s right. But, Rank A is ridiculously expensive.”

It was special, but she knew that reaching Rank A was unattainable.

“Ho? Right now, do they sell the Elf’s Delicious Honey?”

“Yes. Elf’s Honey is available for Rank D shops, and increases the defense against demonic energy by 1%.”

“Then, we’ll have to upgrade to Rank A. I will be able to find more delicious food by then.”

“...Huh?”

Cania tilted her head in confusion.

‘You want to upgrade to Rank A?’

Rank A required 600,000 points. However, that did not mean that he could just buy the Rank A upgrade quickly! No. He needed to first purchase Rank C for 100,000 points, then Rank B for 300,000 points, and finally Rank A for 600,000 points. He needed a total of one million points just to get that point.

She believed that this human could not have that many Contribution Points. However, the very next moment, Cania’s eyes widened in shock.

[Foreigner Minhyuk had used 100,000 points and upgraded the shop to Rank C.]

[He can now purchase all items at a 10% discount from you.]

[Foreigner Minhyuk had used 300,000 points and upgraded the shop to Rank B.]

[He can now purchase all items at a 20% discount from you.]

[Foreigner Minhyuk had used 600,000 points and upgraded the shop to Rank A.]

[He can now purchase all items at a 50% discount from you.]

[Foreigner Minhyuk is the first user to reach Rank A.]

[Please give him an Elven Treasure Chest.]

“...Im...impossible.”

She was astonished.

“...Im...impossible.”

“???”

Minhyuk tilted his head in confusion when he heard her words. However, he quickly threw that thought out of his mind as he hurriedly looked through the Rank A shop.

“Oh...?”

There were plenty of rare, amazing and powerful things in the Rank A shop. There were even 3,000 Elven Golden Arrows available. Those arrows had an additional 30% on the attack power against beings from the Demon World. The price was also not that high. Of course, the only reason why he thought that it was not expensive was because the operators had already calculated to make them cheap, and the items were discounted at 50% as a reward for the first person to upgrade to Rank A.

“Do you always sell such good things?”

“N...no...”

Cania looked at him in confusion as Minhyuk tilted his head to look at her.

“It’s because it’s Rank A.”

There were a lot of rare and precious artifacts in the shop. What was more surprising was the fact that there were many legendary artifacts in the Rank A shop.

As Minhyuk looked through the shop, he thought, *‘This must be some kind of reward, right? Once you reach Rank A?’*

In addition, Cania also handed a chest to him.

[You have acquired the High Elven Treasure Chest (S) as a reward for being the first to access a Rank A shop.]

The notifications started coming in as soon as Minhyuk read that.

[You have regained 500,000 of your Contribution Points.]

[You have acquired a Rank A Limited Edition Item.]

[Elf’s All Skills Cooldown Reset Parchment 2/2]

[High Elves’ Troops Summoning Parchment 1/1]

[Elf’s HP, MP Full Recovery Potion 3/3]

“...?!!!”

Minhyuk was left in a trance when he saw the shocking rewards.

Then, Cania said, “We don’t have much time. The commanding officer, Baran, is about to start the execution.”

“Execution?”

Minhyuk tilted his head as the notifications rang once more.

[There are 6 hours left until Prince Argon’s execution.]

[The sooner you rescue him, the higher the contributions that you will get.]

Then, a timer appeared in front of Minhyuk.

[5H 59M 59S. 5H 59M 58S. 5H 59M 57S...]

“This place is still under my power. I can prevent the beings of the Demon World from detecting our invasion into Zone 3. But as soon as you leave this place, you will encounter low-ranking demons and demonic monsters.”

When Minhyuk looked around more carefully, he saw that there was a subtle blue glow emitting from a magic circle surrounding them from a distance of about five meters from where he and Cania stood. The 150 soldiers under him had not yet entered Zone 3, so they were still out of range.

Cania continued, “You need to hurry up and buy the supplies that you will need.”

Minhyuk looked around the shop as he asked, “By any chance, is there a higher rank than Rank A shops?”

There were definitely plenty of delicious things in the shop, but Minhyuk could faintly guess that even though the 'Elf King's Gorgonzola Pizza' was available in the shop, there would still be more delicious things if there was a higher-ranked shop.

"Yes. There is. But, Prince Argon is one of the only two who can open the Royal Shop."

"Are there many delicious things there?"

"...?"

For a moment, Cania had to think about the meaning of his words.

'You're not looking for excellent artifacts but for something more delicious?'

However, since they did not have the time, all she could do was answer him as quickly as she could. She said, "Yes. There are many, many, many things! The Ancient Elves had left a lot of delicious things there!"

The pitch of her voice became higher due to the pressing time. Minhyuk nodded.

'That Royal Shop. Let's open it!'

"Men, forward!!!" Minhyuk shouted.

The intermediate demon, Baran, with his dark skin and black horns, was tasked to take Argon's 'Royal Shop' right here.

They needed to take these steps since there was a powerful force that sealed them and drove them out from there. However, no matter what they did, the punk did not want to turn over the Royal Shop to them. He was still stubbornly holding on to the Royal Shop, even though he was threatened with death. Hence, Baran decided to execute the bastard.

The intermediate demon Baran was one of the most powerful demons that were able to squeeze through the gates to the Demon World.

He was just a single mob, but his mere presence could rival that of a Level 480 mob. That was just for the demons in Elvenheim. The lowest among the demonic monsters and demons that passed through the gate and terrorized Elvenheim was around Level 400~440.

Baran laughed his head off. Prince Argon had both his hands nailed to a large cross, and he even had a blindfold on.

"Are you still going to be stubborn about not opening the Royal Shop?"

Argon did not answer. He knew what Baran's words meant, but his thoughts were focused only on one thing.

'If I die...'

If Argon died, a half-filled Royal Shop would be forced to open, and the items and powers in there would be corrupted with demonic energy, which would become their most powerful weapons.

The Royal Shop was a shop where the three ancient elf chiefs hid the force and strength that they had created with the Elven Heart. They were now at risk of losing those powers.

Then, Baran suddenly saw his map burst in a black light. He was the owner of the map of Zone 3 of the Immortals' Land, and he could clearly see the events happening in the zone through this map.

"The humans have invaded."

A smile settled around his face. Not long after, a low-ranked demon named Caron rushed to where they were.

"The humans are here!"

"I know. The 3rd Army's search team and the 3rd Army's attack team are close to them."

Baran was able to monitor the movements of the troops through the map. This demonic tribe was composed of 100 individuals. Although they were low-ranked demons, they were still given special training and were different from the ones dispatched in Elvenheim.

'Those weak humans are about to die. Keuhahahaha!'

Baran looked back at Argon and said, "In the end, you still chose to die. They will not be impressed by your glorious death and your reputation will be ruined, Prince Argon."

Just as he was glaring fiercely at Argon, Caron, who just went out for two minutes, rushed back again.

"C...Commander!!!"

"...What happened? Did you forget something?"

He was back within two minutes, looking like he still had something to report.

"...That's not it. The 3rd Army's search team and the 3rd Army's attack team have been wiped out!"

"...?!"

Baran thought that he was talking nonsense for a moment, and he twisted his lips in annoyance.

"Bastard, I'll tear you to death."

He decided to check for himself. In doing so, his eyes widened in shock. The map showed that all 200 of his men had died.

'I...in just 2 minutes?!?!'

Chapter 244: Prince Argon and the Royal Shop

Baran's face crumpled in annoyance.

'In just two minutes, my troops consisting of low-ranking, but elite, demons were annihilated?'

It was clear to him that something had gone wrong. Baran began to keep an eye on the map. After the 3rd Army search-and-attack teams were wiped out, demons and demonic monsters also started to disappear from the map at great speed.

“Cra...crazy...!”

‘What kind of human has come to this place?! No, it seems like what’s happening right now is beyond common sense!’

Thoughts ran through Baran’s head, because the demons and the demonic monsters only lasted for less than five minutes against the human and his troops.

Ten minutes ago, Cania and Minhyuk began to lead the troops forward.

Boron and Kirun, leaders of the 3rd Army’s search team and attack team respectively, also began to move rapidly.

“Kirun, the time has come for humans to realize how weak they are.”

“Humans are known to be the weakest among all the races. How dare they think of taking Prince Argon away?”

The demons were said to be born for battle. From the perspective of the demons, the actions of humans were just too ridiculous.

They had a rough estimate of the troops that invaded Zone 3. According to their information, there were about 150 soldiers. Their own numbers were around 200, so they thought that they could easily overpower them. Hence, they urged their troops and advanced rapidly.

Not long after, the demons finally came across the human forces after both sides did not take a moment to slow down.

“Show the humans how fearsome we are!!!”

“Kill!!!”

The 200 low-ranked demons that were specially trained and placed in the 3rd Army ran towards the humans with confidence.

‘Are those demons?’ Cania thought, as she looked at the demons in front of them while marching with Minhyuk and his troops.

.

“De...demons...!”

“Demons...!!!”

“Hiiiiik!!!”

The demons had long established themselves as something that humans feared.

Cania's pupils shook. She guessed that Minhyuk would take a detour and bypass the incoming demons, but Minhyuk just told his troops that it was not necessary.

'Why are you so reckless!!!'

Cania thought that the commander was excellent, but he was excessively stubborn.

That was when the notifications rang for Minhyuk.

'Mission?'

It was probably a special reward from Joy Co. Ltd. for the large-scale war that was happening. Through these missions, the players would try to hunt faster and they would become more reliable. The better his performance, the higher his contribution would be.

Just like what Cania said, Minhyuk believed that the reason for her not wanting to go against them was simple. However...

'If I do that...'

He would earn lesser contribution points. Each mob that they hunted would increase his contributions. Furthermore, there were still six hours for them to rescue Prince Argon, and Minhyuk believed that he could do that within that time frame.

"Kill the humans!!"

"Kikikikik!"

"How dare you come here! Where do you think you are?!"

As the demons started to run toward them, the knights could see that the weapons that they wielded were not that much different from theirs. The only difference was the color of their skin and the horns on their heads, which were even small in size.

'Huh. Shall we try it once??'

Minhyuk raised his hand. Along with his hand, the 150 men of his troops pulled their bows in unison despite their fear. At the same time, Minhyuk also tore the parchment in his other hand.

[You have torn the Elf's Blessings Parchment.]

[The physical attack and defense, as well as the magical attack and defense of you, party members, guild members and soldiers, will increase by 20% against beings from the Demon World. Stacks with all buffs.]

The soldiers' bodies were wrapped in soft and warm light. Then, Minhyuk lowered his hand.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh!

Their arrows flew towards the demons, who looked like they were laughing their heads off, already relishing the thought of slaughtering humans! Kirun and Boron, the commanders of the 3rd Army teams, even burst out in laughter.

“You think you can pierce through the skin of our race with just your puny wooden arrows?!”

“Ridiculous! Your arrows will be split before they can get stuck on my body!”

Just like that, Parmal, a member of the demon that was running forward, tried to calculate the time so they could split up and avoid the arrows.

However, at that moment...

‘F, fast...’

Stab!!!

Spuuurt!!!

“Keuaaaack!!!”

Parmal could not help but stare in horror at the arrow that struck his chest. He could feel that he had received a huge amount of damage from just this one blow.

‘I...impossible!?’

He fell down. Not long after, the rest of the demons began to fall down after they got struck by the arrows, one after the other.

“W...what the hell?!!!!”

“How can something ridiculous like this happen...!”

The humans that the demons had to deal with were knights exceeding levels 400~460 according to Joy Co. Ltd.’s settings. These lower-ranked demons’ levels were similar to theirs. However, the knights had released extremely overwhelming attacks.

After all, Minhyuk had fed them his buffed dishes. And in addition, all of their attacks and defenses were increased by 20%, thanks to the parchment that was purchased in the Rank A shop. That was not all. Even though Minhyuk was still unaware of it, the antarium had increased all five of their basic stats by 15%. It was also thanks to that mineral that their special stats that could not be easily increased with special points, were also increased by 20%. In addition, his newly acquired viridite also had the additional effect of increasing the five basic stats by 5%. Just taking all that into consideration, they had already become 1.4x stronger than their normal selves.

Combining the 1.4x increase in their strength, with their numbers at 150, it could already be said that Minhyuk had literally twisted what Joy Co. Ltd. had designed for the overall scenario.

“Keuack!”

“Graaaaack!”

Then, something amazing happened. Just a moment ago, the demons were laughing their heads off and running toward the humans to slaughter them. Tet now, they started to back off.

At that moment, they saw the human at the forefront turning a millstone.

Turn, turn, turn—

With every turn of his millstone, dark clouds came on top of the demons. Then, lighting began to fall.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

“Keuhaaack!”

“Ugh. Aaaack!”

“Load! Fire!”

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh!

“Keuaack!”

As the lightning struck, the demons started to fall down one by one. Even Kirun was struck by the lightning.

“Keuaaaack!” Kirun shrieked from the extreme pain that ravaged his body.

‘H...how can those weak humans...! I have to quickly inform Commander Baran...!’?

Then...

Fwoosh!

...an arrow that was fired from a distance accurately pierced Kirun’s neck and incapacitated him.

Boron, who was standing right next to Kirun, stared with wide eyes. He could see that the arrow was shot by the human commander from afar.

At that moment...

Bang!

“Keuaaaaaack!” Boron shrieked. At the same time...

Fwoosh!

...the enemy commander tugged at the strings of his bow.

“N...no...”

The human troops that they mocked and underestimated, had now become the object of fear for all the demons present.

The humans continued to nock their bows with their arrows, before pulling their bows tight and let out rains of arrows toward them. Boron could not escape this situation, and his head was pierced accurately by one of the arrows.

Spurt!

Darkness encroached on his vision.

The reason why Minhyuk was able to use his Lightning Millstone even though its cooldown had not ended yet, was simple. It was all thanks to the Limited Edition items that he had received from upgrading the shop to Rank A.

‘Elf’s All Skills Cooldown Reset Parchment.’

The item had very surprising effects; it allowed a reset of all of Minhyuk’s skills’ cooldowns. Scattering Sword, Rampant Sword, Splitting Sword, ?Fluttering Sword, Lightning Hell, Darkfire Storm, Gryphon’s Cry, Rain of Kitchen Knives, Saint’s Protection... all of his skills were reset. The parchment could be considered a truly ‘fraudulent’ item.

Just a moment ago, he pierced the neck of one of the demons with his arrow.

[You have hunted the 3rd Army’s Attack Leader, Kirun.]

[You have acquired a Centurion Totem.]

‘Huh? Centurion Totem?’

Minhyuk tilted his head in confusion. He did not even step forward to acquire the item, but it automatically entered his inventory. Although he had not confirmed its uses yet, he was sure that the day would definitely come when he had to use it.

Then, Minhyuk once again pulled his bow as he aimed for the demon beside the leader. He had assumed that the demon was also a leader.

[You have hunted the 3rd Army’s Search Leader, Boron.]

[You have acquired a Centurion Totem.]

He had received another one. By the time the Lightning Hell had ended, all of the demons that were rushing forward were wiped out.

“It wasn’t that big of a deal, right?”

“What the hell? You haven’t got a single one?”

“Why did those bastards act up earlier!!!”

“...”

As for Cania, who watched everything unfold in front of her, she was left speechless.

‘Who in the world are these humans...?’

She had no choice but to think like that since the demons they faced were clearly strong, even though they were just low-ranked demons. Just like what was mentioned before, they were originally stronger than humans or elves. They were born to fight. However, against all common sense, they were easily wiped out within two minutes.

At the helm of it all, Minhyuk was the one responsible for making a supposedly fierce battle into a child's play. Since he already skimmed through the Rank A shop that no one else had seen, all the arrows that his troops had used were purchased from the shop. He even purchased plenty of other items that made them almost invincible.

Then, the notifications rang in Minhyuk's head.

[You took 2 minutes and 48 seconds to finish the mission.]

[Your mission accomplishment rating has reached a ridiculous level.]

[You have earned 50,000 Contribution Points, the highest amount of contribution that you can get from this mission.]

With that notification, Minhyuk realized that he had consumed a lot of contribution points. This meant that his contribution points were not enough to upgrade his shop to a Royal Shop.

'But what if I clear the missions quickly?'

Missions were more likely to appear in every area. The corner of his lips suddenly pulled up. He would blitz through those missions faster than anybody else.

"Player Minhyuk has broken through the 2nd Army's 400 demons and demonic monsters in just five minutes. He has cleared the second mission and achieved a new high!"

"Player Minhyuk has broken through the 2nd Army's 500 demons and Demon World Golems in four minutes! He had slaughtered them alone with his Fluttering Sword and Rain of Kitchen Knives! He has achieved 400,000 contribution points!"

"Player Minhyuk has achieved the best result for the third mission. After he had used all of his skills, he once again used the skill reset parchment! His contribution has reached 600,000!"

Lee Minhwa continued to report to the other members in the room. Inside the Special Players Management Team's office, other than President Kang Taehoon, the various team leaders, including the production team leader, and the event planning team leader, were present.

"..."

"..."

"..."

All of them were left speechless. After a moment of silence, President Kang Taehoon opened his mouth and said, "Crazy. He's too strong. He's really doing everything on his own."

What was even funnier was...

“You can’t even call this a bug. *Ugh...*”

Kang Taehoon supported his forehead with his hand.

‘My god. This wouldn’t even have happened if Minhyuk did not absorb the soldiers from the Iron Blood and Reapers company.’

Just by gaining an additional 100 men, Minhyuk was able to acquire a tremendous amount of contribution points, allowing him to look through the Rank A shop and arm his men with ridiculously strong items. Soon enough, he already racked up another 600,000 points again.

“This... He’s not going to open the Royal Shop, right...”

Kang Taehoon sighed deeply as Team Leader Park said, “Commander Baran is going to establish a barrier.”

“Right. If they set up a barrier, then those 150 men will not be able to get to them.”

Commander Baran used Verus’ powers to set up a barrier. It was somewhat like another mission. Then, words flashed up on the screen.

[The final mission for Player Minhyuk has been given.]

If he had not shown such an enormous display of strength, then his last mission would have allowed the entry of his entire troop, without having the need to break out Prince Argon alone.

For Baran, who had set up a barrier, he believed that it was an ‘impossible’ task to fulfill.

Argon was pinned on the cross. He thought, *‘If I hadn’t let my guard down, then...’?*

Argon was the only child of the Elf King, and a powerful man. In fact, his father was not as strong as him. That was the reason why the demons immediately attacked the sleeping Argon as soon as they invaded the Elven Forest.

They tied him up with things crafted from one of the finest minerals in the Demon World, ‘Ballacanium’. One could never remove them if they did not have the key.

‘No, it’s not entirely bleak... I heard that it’s possible if a human has as much holy power as the Pope or the Saintess.’

Grin—

A subtle smile formed on his lips. It was because the demons around him were busy trying to save themselves.

As for Baran...

“Construct the barrier now!!”

“The barrier? That would drain more than 30% of our demons’ demonic energy.”

“This would be for the better. If we set up the barrier, we can buy 30 minutes of time. We can proceed with the execution and get out of here with that amount of time.”

The barrier that they set would limit the number of enemies that would come inside. This was one of Verus’ excellent barriers! Although it would deprive the demons of their demonic energy, it was an inevitable choice at this point.

However, at that moment, Baran heard bells ringing suddenly.

Riiing—

Riiiiing—

It was the alarm alerting them of an enemy invasion. He quickly hurried out.

“The enemy?!”

“Th...that...”

Not long after, his subordinate mumbled the end of his sentence weakly. Baran’s forehead crumpled in annoyance.

“There’s some kind of pig.”

“...Huh? Pig?”

Baran looked at the lesser demon, wondering if he was mentally alright. After moving along, Baran could finally see. There was a little pig that stood in front of a group of 100 demons.

The baby piggy, Beanie, had taken on a serious mission from Minhyuk. If he accomplished the mission, he would receive a delicious ‘Choco Bar’. That was why he decided to do his best. His only mission was to provoke the enemies.

‘How should I provoke you? Ah...!!! I have a good idea.’ Beanie thought.

“What the hell is that pig?”

“It’s a baby piggy.”

“It’s a baby piggy, but... it looks a bit cheeky.”

“...Did you just ring the bell for the enemy invasion, for this trifling matter?”

At that moment, Beanie looked at them arrogantly. Then, Beanie turned around as he pushed his curly tail towards the demons. Then—

Pooooooooot—

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”

Beanie farted. An incredibly loud fart burst out of Beanie’s tiny body.

“Oink!!”

Then, Beanie wiggled his butt and swayed his body. He turned around to look at the demons with his hand fanning his nose.

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”

Veins popped out on the foreheads of all the demons present.

Beanie’s provocation was truly an active, max-level, excellent aggro skill! It was at that moment when his ‘Great Fart’ was triggered!

Fwwwiiiiip!

Another fart came from Beanie’s butt involuntarily, when he suddenly applied the wrong amount of strength to his sphincter.

“I’m...I’m coming for you!!!”

“Catch it!!”

Beanie ran away.

Chapter 245: Prince Argon and the Royal Shop

Genie glared sharply at the small village in front of her. This was the closest village en route to the Elven Forest from Elvenheim. Perhaps Iris Guild might be able to take over the great city of Allentian in the future, however, she was too focused on what was in front of her.

‘I did not know that there was a demon officer here...!’?

The demons also had classes and ranks among them. Their officers usually came from high-ranking demons. As it turned out, the higher demon that was hiding in the village was one of the five important demons that came to invade the Elven Forest.

Rufel, the commander that led the invasion, was a superior demon with the title of the Count. His deputy commanders that actively participated in the invasion held the Viscount title. They also had plenty of superior demons that did not have any titles among their ranks. Demons with titles could exert a frightening amount of force compared to those without titles.

As for Genie, it was very surprising to find out that there was a deputy commander hiding in this small village at the front lines, a place that was far off from the great city of Allentian.

‘I’m sure that this village is quite different from other villages.’

Genie was now certain that there was a special reward hidden in this town. Legend Guild was currently still behind most of the latecomers. This place might be the stepping stone that they needed to climb up in one go. In addition, Legend Guild’s force could shine brightly since this was just a small battle.

“Start the operations.”

The members of Legend quickly moved following Genie’s orders.

Stab!

Assassin Abel quickly moved and dealt with the scouting demons all over the place. The Goddess of the Battlefield, Ascar, also moved along with him to hunt the other scouts. Unfortunately, no matter how much they tried to be discreet, and no matter how many scouts they dealt with, they were eventually found out.

“There’s an attack!!”

“The enemies are here! Protect the deputy commander!”

After hearing the shouts, Genie and the rest of Legend Guild saw demons pop out all over the place. They also saw the deputy commander, Regel, another demon with a title himself, lift a staff encrusted with black jewels.

[The Eyes of the Demon King.]

[A pupil that can find the enemies.]

“...!”

Not long after, a giant eye rose above the small village. The pupil of the gruesome and gigantic eye suddenly turned towards Genie.

“...!”

Then, Regel burst out in laughter. He said, “Found you. *Keuhahahahaha!*”

The members of the Legend Guild heard a string of notifications.

[You have entered the Demon King’s realm.]

[Based on the Demon King’s realm, your physical and magical attacks will be reduced by 30%.]

[Your AGI has decreased by 20%.]

“...?!”

The other demons that were hidden earlier started to appear one by one.

‘*No way?*’

Earlier, Genie felt that a small number of elites that were selected from the human camp to launch a surprise attack against the high-ranking demons, would be a good way to kill a number of them without making too much noise, giving the humans an easy win.

On the contrary, it seemed that the demons had thought through things carefully. Since there was going to be a small number of elites, then they set up a trap and drove them to despair.

Not long after, a streak of black demonic energy shot out from the Demon King’s Eye. The black demonic energy penetrated the bodies of all the Legend Guild members present at the scene. At the same time, like a beacon of light, all the demons saw their positions.

“There they are!!!”

“Goddamnit!!”

They could assume that the demons’ deputy commander, Regel, was someone that had great control over black magic.

“Death’s Dancing!!!”

Ascar’s sword dance flew towards the incoming horde of demons.

Stab, stab, stab!

Slash, slash, slash!

“*Keuhahaha!*?This wench has such a petty trick!”

“*Keuk!* It’s much stronger than what I thought?”

“Are they really the elites from the human race?”

More demons appeared all over the place, and their numbers alone appeared to be over 70.

‘What’s worse is that the most powerful demon present in Elvenheim is currently here, right?’

[Fire Whip!]

[Your fire whip will kill the enemies surrounding you.]

Crackle!

Genie’s whip burned with fire, as she whipped and slashed at the incoming demons.

Shwaaa!

Crackle!

“*Keup!*”

The demons’ bodies caught fire and they hurriedly tried to extinguish and remove it. However, it did not seem like they received much damage, since the humans’ attack was reduced by 30%.

Spurt!

“*Kyaak!*”

Ascar staggered back after her arm got slashed by one of the demons.

[Giant’s Fist.]

Khan’s fist became as big as a truck as he struck the demon.

“*Kekeke!*?Your fists feel like cotton!!”

A 30% reduction in their attack meant that they could only exert about 2/3 of their usual strength. The demon felt that the fist that struck him was just ridiculously weak.

“This shit!”

“....If I wasn’t caught in the Devil King’s Realm.”

Usually in these kinds of traps, those that exerted more power would gain the upper hand. In fact, AOE debuffs like this were quite hard to find, so everything was just dependent on the strength of the individuals.

Aside from Regel, there was another strong demon that appeared. It was none other than Kona, who was not a deputy commander, but one of the demon’s attack leaders. She was a female-like demon that wielded a powerful mace.

Baaang—

Locke flew back after being hit directly by the mace.

“Ugh!”

He fell to the ground and stumbled.

[You have received a huge impact from an iron mace.]

[You have fallen into a temporary stunned state.]

Locke shook his head as hard as he could, and tried to stand up, but it did not work.

‘If it wasn’t for that damn 30%!’

In other words, their strengths were only at the level of someone at Level 320.

‘If we had our Kaistra with us, we could ignore this with his AOE aggro but...’

Kaistra was currently in his village and could not participate in the war. Just then...

Kiyeeeeeeeeee!!

A chilling cry of a dragon resounded in the area. Then, Genie saw a dark air current flutter into existence in front of her. The black air current slowly turned into a figure of a man wearing black armor with a black sword on his waist. There was even an ice dragon sticking out of the man’s arm.

Crack!

The ice dragon immediately let out an ice breath that covered a huge area.

“Keu, keuaaaaack!”

“Ugh, aaaaaack!”

The entire Legend Guild was caught in surprise.

‘What the hell? That’s very strong, right?’

Then, the man looked up at the sky and said, “Britney.”

Kiyeeeeeeeeee!

At his call, Britney bellowed loudly.

[Britney's Roar.]

[Negate all abnormal status.]

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

Legend Guild was once again astonished. Then, magic suddenly started to rain down from the back of the gigantic black dragon flying in the air.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

Along with those loud explosions, several players, which included Ace, jumped down.

“Tonight, I'm the star!!!”

“...?”

“...?”

“...?”

“That crazy little punk...” Crow muttered under his breath, as the man that was clad in all black wielded his sword and dashed forward.

Ching, ching, chaeng, chaeng, chaeng, ching—

The demons' bodies sprayed out fountains of blood with every strike of the man's sword.

‘S...strong...’

‘Wow... Isn't he crazy strong?’

He was on par with, or perhaps stronger than the members of Legend Guild. The same was also true for the other mysterious masked men that jumped off of the black dragon a while ago.

Then, Ace said, “Let's shout our team's slogan!!!”

“We!!!”

“Are one!!!”

“With the deprived elves!!!”

“Give us your heart!!!”

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”

Among them was one blushing guy. It was none other than General. General thought, ‘*Sob... Why am I doing something like this here?*’?

The fact that he was playing *Athenae* came to the Chairman’s ears so he accompanied the latter. Anyway, because of their sudden appearance, they were able to clear out the demons, obtaining an item called ‘Deputy Commander’s Totem’. Genie then heard notifications.

[You have succeeded in recapturing Philip Village.]

[Philip Village has special and extraordinary strength hidden within.]

[The time to defend Philip Village has been greatly reduced.]

[If you defend Philip Village for 36 hours, you will completely recapture the village.]

[If you invest 250,000 Contribution Points in Philip Village, it will turn into a bunker-type village.]

[You have acquired 200,000 Contribution Points.]

Then, the man clad in all black approached Genie and said, “How have you been, Ms. Jihye? Ah. Jisoo and Seoktae are here too.”

“Un...Uncle?” Genie asked in surprise. The voice of the hero that saved them was very, very familiar.

‘*Who in the world are these father and son??*’

Then, the two decided to form an alliance. The notifications then rang following their decisions.

[The guild ‘Black Dragon and the Boys’ has formed an alliance with Legend Guild.]

“...Un...Uncle”

“What’s wrong?”

“No...nothing...”

The rest of Legend Guild were all shocked.

‘*Bl...Black Dragon and the Boys...?*’

‘*A parody of Neotaiji and the Boys ...??*’

‘*Their guild name is weird...?*’

Then, the users that were wearing their masks started to take them off one by one.

“The president of Nottogi...?”

“Gasp... The president of Ilhwa Construction...”

“Keok... That’s the president of Ilhwa Distribution...!”

And lastly, Black Dragon took his mask off.

“...”

“...”

“...”

They were not idols, but old men.

Argon heard a clamor outside.

“Catch that!!”

“Catch that pig!!”

“Huh, Huuuuuuh? What’s that posture that it did just now?!”

“He looks like he’s going to poop?!!!”

“I, I, I, I’m coming to get you!!!”

“Catch thaaaaaat!!!”

There was a lot of noise outside. Then...

“Hello?”

“...?!”

Argon was shocked when he suddenly heard a voice out of thin air. Then, the blindfold was peeled off of his eyes. Argon could not help but squint when the harsh glare of light entered his sight. He finally caught sight of the world again after not being able to see for quite a long time. However, there was nothing around him. Not long after, a man’s face popped out of thin air.

“...!”

“*Shhh!* I’m here to save you.”

Then, the man looked around as he hurriedly reached out for the nails that bound his arms to the cross...

“You can’t take it out... It’s an ore with tremendous power. You can’t take it out. You need to bring the key that Baran has.”

...the worst handshake in the world happened. Then...

“As expected, you’ve also infiltrated.”

...the man wearing the cape took it off of his body. Argon quickly said, “Baran is currently a middle-class demon, but he was once a superior demon. He was stripped of his title because of a mistake that he made in the past. However, he’s still recognized for his skills. He’s a very strong foe.”

“...Is that so?”

Baran's lips curled up in a weird smile. He said, "That's right. I can tear a man to death with just one hand."

"Ho."

The man, Minhyuk, looked mildly interested. Then, a thick strand of demonic energy came out of Baran's body.

"I'll teach you about the fearsome demons. You, weak humans, are no match for someone like me."

Baran was a very talkative man. He was also a staunch believer of his strength, since he was once a nobility with the title of a viscount, proclaimed by other demons as the 'God of Great Battle Energy'. He was also good in 1:1 fights. This was what Joy Co. Ltd. was aiming for. The commander of the Argon Rescue mission, who came to this place alone, had to deal with the demon that was dubbed the God of Great Battle Energy.

Baran continued to speak arrogantly, "I'll give you the chance to go first, weak human."

Minhyuk nodded and said, "Then, thank you!!!"

Argon's eyes widened in shock.

'You should not attack first. His armor is special. As soon as your sword stabs him, his demonic energy will snatch it and throw it away.'

"N...no...!"

However, before Argon could even stop him, Minhyuk had already closed the distance between them.

Baran's mouth was twisted into a devilish smirk. He thought, *'First, I will defend myself with Baroque's Armor...'*

In the event of an attack, Baroque's Armor could ignore the attack aimed at Baran. What was worse was that as soon as the sword struck the armor, the armor would immediately recognize it and fling it away from the enemy. In other words, the armor had the ability to keep the enemy from using their weapons.

Then...

Stab!

Just like what Baran expected, Minhyuk's sword was embedded in his abdomen.

Then, a notification rang in Minhyuk's head.

[Intangible Sword.]

[Your sword strike has ignored all of the enemy's defenses.]

[Lightning]

[3 strikes!]

Bang, bang, bang!!!

“Keuaaaaaack?!” Baran shrieked, stunned by the huge damage that was suddenly inflicted on him. However, before he could even straighten his thoughts, another notification rang in Minhyuk’s head.

[Lightning]

[3 strikes!]

[Intangible Sword.]

[Your sword strike has ignored all of the enemy’s defenses.]

Bang, bang, bang!

Once again, three thunderbolts accurately struck Baran’s body.

Lightning, a skill that could only be triggered with a low probability, was triggered twice in a row for a total of six strikes. The Intangible Sword skill had even triggered twice in a row.

Burnt, Baran crumpled to the ground.

“Eh, isn’t he too weak?” Minhyuk asked, tilting his head in confusion after seeing how different the situation was from expected.

“...”

Argon was left speechless.

Chapter 246: Territorial Defence (Top)

“Wow. He’s really weak. How can he die with just one stab? Maybe he lost all his abilities when he got demoted to a middle-class demon?”

“...”

Argon’s mouth closed and opened, like a carp blowing bubbles in the water. Then, Minhyuk approached him.

“No. Can you look for the keys... please?” Argon asked, unconsciously being polite.

“Ah. That’s right. You said that I should remove those with a key, right?”

Minhyuk, who had just tried to pull out the nails, turned around to approach Baran again. Suddenly, a loud “*thud!*” rang loudly in the room.

“Huh? But I thought that it can’t be pulled out?”

“...Huh?”

Just to make sure, Minhyuk touched the other nail that was embedded in Argon’s other hand. The nail came out just like a chopstick that was stuck in between rice.

“Huh? This came out too? Eyyy. Wait. Did they nail it loosely? The demons are too sloppy. Tch!”

Argon's mouth was once again shut in silence!

Then, the notifications began to ring in Minhyuk's head.

[You have saved Prince Argon.]

[You have acquired a ticket to the Demon World.]

[You have gained 400,000 Contribution Points.]

[You can now upgrade your shop to a Royal Shop.]

[You have acquired 3,000,000 EXP.]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have leveled up.]

Then, footsteps rang nearby.

“Catch it!!!”

“Catch that!!!!”

“Prince Argon is escaping!!!”

Prince Argon looked at Minhyuk and asked, “Do you happen to have a bow, or something like that?”

“Yes.”

“Let me borrow it.”

Minhyuk handed his Abyss Bow to him. Argon pulled the string taut and aimed it towards the wall. Then...

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

...hundreds of invisible arrows passed through the wall and pierced through the demons that were running behind the wall. It looked just like a machine gun firing its bullet.

However, a few demons were still able to escape and enter through the door.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh!

Argon's arrows pierced through their foreheads with great accuracy.

“...Wow.”

Argon felt that he had exerted more force than what he had estimated that he could use. His forehead crumpled as he groaned in pain.

“Keuheuk. I have been tied up for a long time,” Argon said, looking down at his palms. He was very bold to shoot those arrows, despite knowing that his palms were wounded.

“Please, drink this.”

Argon’s eyes widened in shock when he saw Minhyuk handing him the ‘Elf’s Full HP, MP Recovery Potion’.

“This potion... Did you upgrade to a Rank A shop?”

“Yes.”

“...A...amazing.”

Argon knew more than anyone how difficult it was to upgrade and access the Rank A shop. He quickly gulped down the potion. He quickly felt the effects of the potion and the wounds that littered his entire body started to recover.

“Please upgrade my shop to the Royal Shop.”

“...Yes?”

Argon tilted his head in confusion. The upgrade to a Rank A shop was already surprising, but he was telling him to upgrade it to a Royal Shop? To upgrade to a Royal Shop, he needed to have an additional one million Contribution Points. However, before he could even offer him a piece of advice, Argon heard the notifications.

[Requesting to open the Royal Shop after taking 1,000,000 Contribution Points.]

“...!”

Argon’s eyes widened further as he looked at Minhyuk in surprise. The Royal Shop was a shop that was created by the three great elves. It contained the most outstanding items that the elves had ever created, and was filled with things that Argon was not even aware of.

Argon readily nodded in agreement. In the first place, the chance to open the Royal Shop was one of the rewards for rescuing Prince Argon, so he had no complaints there.

At that moment, the notifications poured in on Minhyuk’s side.

[You have purchased an Elven Shop upgrade.]

[You have used 1,000,000 points.]

[Your Elven Shop will be upgraded to the Royal Shop. Members of ‘Legend Guild’ and your allied guilds can use Prince Argon’s Royal Shop.]

[All items in the Elf Shop will be available to you at a 70% discount.]

On top of that, just like what Cania did, Argon also handed him a treasure chest.

[You have received Prince Argon’s Treasure Chest (SSS) as a reward for being the first to access a Royal Shop.]

Minhyuk started to read the notifications as they continued to ring.

[The Food God's Shop has opened.]

[You have reacquired 1,000,000 Contribution Points.]

[You have acquired an SSS-rank Limited item.]

[You have acquired the Elf's Character HP, MP, Skill Cooldown Reset Parchment. (2/2)]

[You have acquired the 60% Skill Casting Time Reduction Parchment. (5/5)]

[You have acquired an Elite High Elven Troops Summoning Parchment. (1/1)]

[You have acquired a Mass Teleport Parchment. (2/2)]

Minhyuk's surprise grew at every notification that rang in his head.

'60% casting time reduction? Character skill cooldown reset and HP and MP restoration?'

Of course, it went without saying that they were all items that could be used in a war. Looking at these items alone, he was sure that once he went to Elvenheim, they would have a tremendous effect.

However, the thing that piqued Minhyuk's interest the most was this...

'Food God's Shop??'

Minhyuk quickly opened the detailed description.

'I can access items that are fit for my class?'

Minhyuk quickly went through the information with more care and anticipation.

You can view items 1 to 3 in order.

- Fantastic Chinese Cuisine Set. 400,000 points. When eaten, you can acquire hidden skills or skills that are yet to be acquired in your class. (However, if it's not available, then you will not be able to acquire it.)
- Fantastic Bossam & Tray Noodle Set. 400,000 points. When eaten, the rank of one of the artifacts that you have equipped will be upgraded randomly.
- Chicken & Pizza Set. 400,000 points. When eaten, one of the special skills attached to one of your equipped artifacts will be reinforced randomly.
- Elves' Finest Pork Tenderloin. 50,000 points
- Elves' Finest Beef Tenderloin. 60,000 points
- Omitted...

“...?!!!”

Minhyuk pondered for a moment, but soon understood what it meant. The items listed in the Food God's Shop were said to be tailored for the player's class. This meant that the items suitable for the Food God was none other than 'Food', and hidden within those dishes were excellent rewards.

Starting from 4, 5 and 6, the items listed were ingredients. When he checked them, he found out that they were all SS-grade ingredients. Minhyuk looked at the shop in satisfaction.

Now that he had rescued Argon, they continued forward to join his forces. According to Argon, he would continue to stay with Minhyuk in the meantime. Of course, this was only natural since the Royal Shop was only available through Argon.

Not long after, Minhyuk regrouped with his forces. Then, he heard another set of surprising notifications.

[You have successfully completed the quest to rescue Prince Argon.]

[You can select one knight each from the Iron Blood, Reapers and Rice Supplement Company. They can be hired to work in Valhalla Territory.]

It was a slightly different concept from vassals. It was because they were not NPCs under Minhyuk, but literally a military force under his command. Hence, Minhyuk selected one from each of the companies. Of course, he selected the leaders that led them. When he checked, he saw that their levels averaged at Level 440~470. Minhyuk smiled happily. Then, he purchased the first dish listed in the shop, the 'Fantastic Chinese Cuisine Set'.

[You have used 400,000 Contribution Points to purchase the Fantastic Chinese Cuisine Set.]

Valhalla Territory.

Farmer Bardan was heading towards his field holding his pickaxe just like any other usual day. He was only in his mid-30s, but due to the curse of baldness that was passed down in his family, his hair had mostly fallen out. He also heard that they had presbyopia in the family.

'How can I grow my hair while I farm again today?'

While thinking about that on his way to the field, Bardan heard Corr, the rumored new vassal, shrieking loudly with his recorder.

“Grow up seeds! Seeds!”

“Tch, tch!” Bardan clicked his tongue.

'I hear that he was a pretty successful paladin for a saintess, but why has he been like that for a few days now? Is what he's doing normal for seeds to grow?'

As a professional farmer, he could not understand the logic in what Corr was doing. Then, at that moment...

“Huh?”

...he felt a warmth rubbing slightly against his bald forehead. Before he could confirm it, the warmth had already disappeared. Not long after, he looked up at the sky.

“Is it because it’s sunny today?”

He moved on without much thought. After Bardan finished plowing his fields, he came straight home. Then, the next morning... he was left stunned as he looked at the mirror.

“...!!?!?!”

Just like a desert, his head previously did not have a single blade of grass on it. It was so shiny that no hair could be found at all! However, a few strands had already started to sprout from his shiny head. The hair was so short that it looked like the prickly hairs of a newly grown beard!

Bardan recalled the warmth that he had felt yesterday.

‘D...don’t tell me?!?!?’

Today, he went to the place where Paladin Corr was staying.

“Grow up seeds! Seeds!!”

Just as Bardan expected, he felt the warmth on his head again. And the next morning...

“...*Gasp!*”

Bardan was thoroughly shocked. It was because his hair grew longer compared to yesterday.

When Legend Guild left for Elvenheim, Deputy Lord Ben was left in Valhalla Territory mulling over ways to increase the finance of the territory. Then, he heard stories about people singing strange songs in town. The song they sang went on like this...

“Talmor Fati~ didididi~”

“Grow, grow hair! Grow, grow hair!”

“Talmor Fati! Ddiddiddi!”

Deputy Lord Ben ended up sending some of the soldiers to investigate. From them, he discovered that the people that sang the song were mostly men in their 40s and 50s.

“What the hell is Talmor Fati?” Deputy Lord Ben asked aloud, wondering about what it was when another report came in.

“The people that sing this song often go to the field where Paladin Corr is. In fact, they go there every single day.”

“Really? Let’s go and look.”

Grandpa Ben quickly moved. He could not help but be stunned when he saw the scene in the field.

“Sir Talmor!!”

“Sir Talmor!!”

The field was jam packed with hundreds of people, as a man stood in the middle of it all, looked around seriously and said, “Do you believe?”

“We believe!!”

“Do you desire it?”

“We desire!!”

“We want black hair!!!”

“We want it!!”

“Then, let’s drop it down!!!”

Then, Paladin Corr took out the Frightening Instrument and turned it into his favorite instrument, the recorder. As soon as it transformed into a recorder, he blew into it.

The rhythm and beat of the notes that he played were exactly that of the Talmor Fati, the song sung by all those men in town.

Ddiddiddiddiddi~?

“Talmor Fati!”

“Talmor Fati!!!”

“Aaaaaah! My head is getting warm!”

“Aaaaaah!”

“It’s growing! It’s growing! Soooob!”

They looked like they were praying as they clasped their hands together. Then, they suddenly burst out in tears! Not long after, they raised their arms high up in the sky as they shouted...

“Grow, grow! Hair, hair!!”

“Grow, grow! Hair, hair!!”

“Grow, grow! Hair, hair!!”

Then, a shocking thing happened at that moment. Ben clearly saw that the hair of some of the people present started to grow at a speed visible to the naked eye!

Due to his age, Grandpa Ben was also experiencing hair loss these days. He felt some warmth on his head. That was when he thought of a way to increase the finances of Valhalla Territory. That was right...

“Talmor Fati!!!”

‘Paladin Corr will definitely make Valhalla Territory rich!’

Following Minhyuk Religion, another religion was starting to emerge. This was the story of the birth of the Talmor Religion.

Chapter 247: Territorial Defence (Top)

Paladin Corr had a meaningful smile on his face. A farmer named Bardan had approached him, saying that his hair suddenly grew. Even the foreigners that visited Valhalla Territory after seeing this strange phenomenon all said the same thing.

“Huh? It’s Talmor Fati!!!”

“*Ddiddiddi~ Ddiddiddi~?Talmor Fati~*”

Paladin Corr thought of a great idea. He would ask them to call him ‘Talmor’ and require a monthly grain tribute from them, which he would dedicate to Lord Minhyuk. After all, he surmised that this must be something that was brought about by the effects of the Frightening Instrument and his skill Athenae’s Prayer.

“*Ahem, ahem.*”

Just then, the Deputy Lord, Grandpa Ben approached him.

“Oh, will the Deputy Lord join us too?”

“Sure. What should I shout?”

“Talmor Fati!!”

“Then... Talmor Fati! *Ddiddiddiddiddi!*”

“Hahahahaha!”

Paladin Corr smiled cheerfully. At that moment... Corr saw that the ground where he planted the seeds was shaking. He quickly left behind the people that gathered to check on it. He saw that something had already begun to grow there, and was left in shock.

‘*What the hell? A weapon??*’

Something clearly grew out of the ground. There were hilts of swords, or perhaps maybe the end of the spears. There was even a top of a shield, and a tip of a helmet. In the midst of them all, a seed grew faster than the others. When Corr looked at it closely, he was taken aback by surprise.

The existence that came out of the seed which grew higher than any other seed had a pair of eyes, a nose and a mouth. In other words, it was a face.

“A...a face?”

It was clearly a face made out of stone, but even though its eyes were closed, it was most definitely a human head.

Corr did not have a bad head on his shoulders, so he could easily deduce some things. He had heard about Elvenheim and the demons’ invasion. Now, there was also this seed that was said to be

dropped by an Ancient Monarch that was cursed by Verus. He knew that this seed possessed great power.

‘Th...the troops will definitely...!’ Corr thought, eyes widening in surprise.

Lev, one of Iris Guild’s attack leaders, was widely recognized as one of the top three talented players under the warrior classes in the country. Currently, he was moving together with an elite group formed from the Ares Guild’s and Iris Guild’s 1st attack teams.

Lev shook his head. The Iris and Ares Guild had maintained their alliance after they successfully captured the largest city, rising to the top of the invasion war together. However, even though it was not explicitly said, the attack teams were all competing against each other, over obtaining the honor of being the first team to penetrate through the Elven Forest.

Currently, the Elf King, Gorn, arrived at Elvenheim yesterday and had taken his position as the commander-in-chief. He was extremely exhausted and fatigued when he arrived in Elvenheim. He had told the foreigners that all the entrances and exits to the Elven Forest had been blocked.

In short, what they needed to do was to pierce through the Elven Forest. Iris Guild was trying to squeeze through the cracks and gaps to recapture and take over the Elven Forest, the heart of the event.

As they continued to march forward, the troops entered a small cave.

“Don’t let your guard down!”

“Yes!”

“Yes!”

It was said that the Elven Forest was now rife with more powerful demons, compared to those present in Elvenheim. A thick smile was plastered on Lev’s face as he entered the small cave.

‘Fi...finally...!’

A faint and feeble light was shining at the end of the cave.

‘Once we reach that light, we will be able to reach the Elven Forest!’

Lev was leading thirty elite, well-built men. As soon as he entered the cave, notifications went off.

[You are the first to step foot in the Elven Forest.]

[You have received 300,000 Contribution Points as a reward for being the first to reach the Elven Forest.]

[Guild Master Callian, the Guild Master of Iris Guild, the guild that you are affiliated with has received 100,000 Contribution Points.]

[Iris Guild Members have received 30,000 Contribution Points.]

[The Elven Artifact Treasure Chest (S) will be rewarded to the first player that stepped foot in the Elven Forest.]

Lev did not hesitate, immediately checking the Elven Artifact Treasure Box.

[You have acquired the Ancient Elf's Faded Sword.]

He proceeded to access the information about the artifact. Upon discovering that the item he received was a legendary artifact, he could not help but feel delighted.

Callian, together with Ares Guild's Guild Master, had decided not to partake in the rewards that were directly obtained by the players, which meant that this Elf's Sword literally belonged to Lev!

Then, at that moment...

"It seems like some rat got in here."

...he heard a low-pitched voice somewhere near him. The source of the voice was a demon with a horn, and it stood taller than any other demon that Lev had ever seen.

At the same time, the notifications rang out.

[The Commander-in-Chief, the Alchemist, Count Rufel has appeared!]

[Dark Demonic Energy has constricted your breath.]

[You are experiencing difficulty in breathing due to an abnormal state.]

[Your breathing has become unstable.]

"Keoheok!"

"Keuaaack!"

The players felt that their breaths were running out, as if something was squeezing their necks.

'Commander-in-chief Rufel!'

He had never shown himself so far. As far as they heard, Commander-in-Chief Rufel was the highest-ranked noble in Elvenheim, as well as the most powerful demon present above ground currently.

"Get to your positions!" Lev hurriedly gave his orders. Then, he lifted his newly acquired Ancient Elf's Faded Sword.

However, the extremely huge Rufel, who stood at two meters, just walked nonchalantly and said, "You would do for my experiments."

"Kihaaaaaack!"

"Kieeeeeeeck!"

As if on cue, strange, unidentified cries emanated from deep within the darkness behind Rufel. Not long after, the beings emerged.

Simply put, the creatures that appeared looked like giant dogs. However, they only resembled dogs, beyond that, their shape and form were horribly melted, so much so that they looked like they were spilling out of their bodies.

“Hellhound...?”

The hellhound was one of Hell’s demonic beasts and they were considered to be rare presences in the Rank A areas. However, the creatures in front of them felt a bit different from the hellhounds that they knew of.

Then...

Dash—

...the hellhounds dashed towards them.

“Groooooowl!”

“Grrrrrrr!”

The hellhounds rushing at them were faster than the normal hellhounds that they had seen before. Lev quickly lifted the sword up high.

[Lethal Sword.]

[The tip of the sword will stab straight at five vital points.]

Pipippipi—

His sword moved in a flurry, creating afterimages. With every sweep of his sword, holes would appear all over the bodies of the hellhounds that tried to rush at them in all directions.

Baaaaang!

One of the hellhounds exploded.

“It’s not that big of a deal, isn’t it?”

“What the hell. This much is nothing.”

“I got scared for no reason!!”

Everyone shouted after being scared off by Commander Rufel. However, something extraordinary happened not long after they shouted their words of confidence.

Flaaaash—

Green gas rose and scattered from the body of the exploded hellhound. It was akin to a bomb exploding and it was so sudden that they did not have any time to avoid it.

[Abnormal State. You have inhaled the ‘Demonic Beast’s Gas’.]

[All abilities and skills will fall by 15%.]

[The probability of your attack failure has increased by 30%.]

“...Gasp?!”

“Wh...what the hell?!”

Lev wasn't the only one affected. Killing off just one hellhound had inflicted debuffs to all seven of them who attacked, and the debuff was even extremely potent. Their capabilities had decreased by 15% and their chances of attacks failing had increased by 30%.

Just then, another one rushed in, while Rufel just looked at them from the rear, with his hands behind his back as if he was watching something interesting.

“Fire arrow! Fire arrow! Fire arrow!”

The mage, Batarin, released all the fire arrows that he had saved before.

Bang!

[Your attack has failed.]

Unfortunately, the first magical attack had become useless. It bounced off of the body of the hellhound. However, the second attack exploded which was followed immediately by the third.

Baaaaaaang—

Just like before, the gas erupted and scattered once more.

Splurt!

“Keuaaaaack!”

“Ugh. Aaaaaaargh!”

The players shrieked.

[Abnormal State. You have inhaled the ‘Demonic Beast’s Gas’.]

[Your HP will drop at a rapid rate of 1% per second.]

[A terrible poison will start to melt your skin.]

“...!”

It was only then that Lev realized something.

‘Th...this...?’

They were the suicide squad. Whatever the future would bring was dependent on Lev and his team right now. Almost 90% of the villages in the Rank A region had already been recaptured by the players. If the passage was opened in this state, the players would be able to enter through it. However, as it turned out, Rufel had laid a trap that could wipe them out easily. Their situation right now was akin to a ‘suicide squad’.

“Grrrrrrr.”

“Groooooowl.”

Suddenly, hundreds of giant hellhounds appeared behind Rufel. No, perhaps there were still more to come.

Not long after, dozens of hellhounds stormed into the fray.

Bang!

[Abnormal State. You have inhaled the ‘Demonic Beast’s Gas’.]

[Your sight has temporarily turned blurred and hazy.]

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

[Demonic Beast Explosion.]

[A powerful explosion will devour and engulf the surrounding area.]

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

There were many players that got swept in the explosion and exploded together with the gas. In just an instant, his troops of 30 elites had been wiped out.

Then, Rufel moved his sword...

Slash—

Plop.

...and the remaining person, Lev, was easily decapitated under his hands. After killing Lev, Rufel moved outside the cave and was met with the sight of Allentian. He said, “After doing some maintenance, I’ll sweep right over there.”

A notification rang for all the players present in Elvenheim’s Rank A zones.

[Commander-in-Chief Rufel is preparing to attack.]

[A full-scale aerial strike will shortly take place in Elvenheim’s Rank A zones.]

[You can earn 1.5x Contribution Points during the attack period.]

Along with those notifications, an unidentified video popped out in front of the players. It was the video showing Commander Rufel as he muttered to himself while looking at Allentian. Then, information about Rufel appeared.

[Rufel. Alchemist and Commander-in-Chief.]

[He who successfully hunts Rufel will be rewarded with enormous Contribution Points and rewards.]

That was when the players realized that Rufel’s first point of attack was none other than ‘Allentian’. It was the largest city that was ever recaptured by players. It was even recaptured by two of the largest guilds in the country, Ares and Iris Guilds. This was also the place where the strongest defenses were being created by forming alliances with each other.

Callian and Ares were both delighted. The Commander-in-Chief of the demons was personally coming. If they successfully hunted this important character, they would reap enormous Contribution Points and rewards.

What the two of them did was simple. They had already acquired four cities, so they decided to gather and concentrate all of their troops in Allentian, leaving only 20% to protect their other cities. Their intentions were obvious.

“If we completely stop the attack here, then we’ll be able to hog all of the Contribution Points and rewards.”

“Fufufufu. That would be great.”

There were currently more than 300 guilds present in Elvenheim. This number included small, medium and large guilds. Among all of the guilds, most of the contents were under the ‘monopoly’ of Ares and Iris Guild, with support from their ‘allied’ guilds.

The total number that gathered for him alone was 800. What was more was that the individual players from Iris Guild had earned 30,000 Contribution Points each as a reward for being the first to reach the Elven Forest. Iris Guild even purchased something special from the Elven Shop. It was none other than the ‘Blood Sticking Alliance’. This alliance would allow the other guilds allied to them to purchase goods from their Elven Shop, which meant they were all heavily armed with elven artifacts.

Simply put, they were very confident with their current strength.

“They are starting to move. It seems like the invasion is about to begin.”

“I heard that the beings that Rufel had unleashed committed suicide and caused debuffs and explosions.”

“Our plan is simple. From what I heard, just a slight attack will cause those beings to explode. Let’s bring forward those that can attack from afar and let the mages prepare for an AOE attack magic. We’ll start with the suicide squad tactic once they come in and kill them in one fell swoop.”

After all, the two of them planned the operation. As for the suicide squad tactic? They believed that as long as they did not let them near them, that was all that mattered.

There were plenty of bandits and assassins that set up countless traps in the city with the help of Robi, a player with the hidden class, Master of Traps. Once their enemies reached the range of their traps and got caught in them, the traps would trigger and exert a stronger power than any other attacks.

Even Twilight Chef Black began to distribute his most cherished buffed dishes to the best of the elites. It was a tremendous amount of preparation for the upcoming battle.

Along with those preparations, the network started broadcasting about them.

[‘Callian’, the alliance of guilds in Elvenheim Area A, is now fully prepared.]

[There are plenty of troops currently waiting in Allentian right now. I think there are at least 30 of the top rankers in our country present in the area too.]

[All of the players are watching in anticipation. It seems like Rufel’s camp is starting to make its move. Will Callian be able to successfully defend the city?]

Boom— Boom— Boom—

The magnificent sound of drums began to ring loudly. Then, a huge cloud of black mass covered the sky and scattered down on the ground. The falling black mass slowly turned into hundreds of creatures. It was none other than the hellhounds.

“Kiheeeeeek!”

“Kyaaaaahaaaack?!”

“Graaaaaaack!”

Hundreds of hellhounds suddenly appeared! There were even three beings standing in front!

[The Deputy Commanders seem to be in the Elven Forest. The beings that appeared right now are Commander-in-Chief Rufel’s loyal men.]

[They are Commander Rufel’s Slayers: Kenny, the Slayer of Anguish. Rhond, the Slayer of Death. And Conir, the Slayer of Frustration. According to the information released, the Slayers are around Level 500~550 or even higher. They were even said to be among the most powerful in the Demon World to the point that they can dominate the creatures in there!]

At that very moment...

Vwooooooooooooo—

...the horns blared loudly as the hellhounds dashed forward.

Callian and Ares, who were standing in front of their troops, watched hundreds of fierce animals rushing towards them.

Meanwhile, the members of Legend Guild all climbed up to the highest point of their newly acquired village, Philip to watch the battle.

Not long after, Ascar mumbled, “If Allentian is breached...”

She turned her head to look at Genie, whose face stiffened as she raised her head.

“...our Legend Guild will be smashed.”

Chapter 248: Territorial Defence (Top)

Before the invasion of the Demon World’s Commander-in-Chief Rufel, Minhyuk had used 400,000 Contribution Points to purchase the ‘Chinese Cuisine Set’ from the ‘Food God Shop’ after he rescued Prince Argon. At the same time, Prince Argon, who was a vegetarian, was eating the salad that Minhyuk gave him after his stomach complained of hunger.

Minhyuk felt that it was quite a relief. He thought, *‘Fufu. If Prince Argon ate meat, I would have been in great trouble!’*

Then, the Fantastic Chinese Cuisine Set appeared in front of him.

‘My goodness...!’

Dried black bean noodles, spicy seafood noodles, tangsuyuk were placed side by side with mandarin rolls and chili japchae. These were the dishes in the set.

A smile appeared on Minhyuk's face once he saw the set. He had purchased this set first, and wanted to taste it quickly. Grabbing the wooden chopsticks that came with the set, he ripped it apart and poured the dried black bean noodles sauce into a bowl filled with noodles.

"Hiyaaa..."

Minhyuk drooled over the gleaming black sauce that he poured all over the bowl. The onions looked crunchy and the juice seemed to be overflowing with juices.

'And, doesn't this dried black bean noodles look darker than the regular black bean noodles?'

Minhyuk mixed everything well, making sure to poke the fried egg on top and mix it together with the rest of the dish.

'It seems like the development team really knows how to eat, huh?'

Sometimes, there were days when the dried black bean noodles would only have one quail egg in it, but the dried black bean noodles in the Chinese Cuisine Set had two fried eggs on top.

After mixing everything well, he turned his attention toward the tangsuyuk. He divided the dish in half and poured sauce on one half, while leaving the rest untouched. The second half was for him to enjoy the crunchy and crispy texture of the meat, while the first half was for him to enjoy the soft texture of the skin that was coated with sauce.

'Well then, all the preparations are done!'

Minhyuk first picked up the dried black bean noodles. He made sure to get a chopstick full of noodles and egg, before slurping it together in his mouth.

Crunch, crunch—

The pleasant crunch from the crispy onions resounded in his mouth. It seemed like the dried black bean noodles purchased from the Food God Shop had a really strong flavor.

"Wow. Delicious!" Minhyuk said, shoulders twitching in happiness.

After gobbling the dried black bean noodles, he turned towards the tangsuyuk and picked one that had not yet been soaked in sauce. Just like that, Minhyuk dipped the piece in the sauce and placed it in his mouth.

Crunch, crunch—

The crunchy 'dipped' tangsuyuk always gave off a pleasant sound as he chewed on the excellent texture of the meat. This time, he picked up a piece of tangsuyuk from the ones that were already soaked in the sauce.

'Ah. This is really an art!'

The fried skin of the tangsuyuk that had been poured with the flavourful sauce was thoroughly soaked. After eating the tangsuyuk like that, he reached out for the spicy seafood noodles next.

‘When you’re eating spicy seafood noodles, you will crave black bean noodles. And when you’re eating black bean noodles, you will crave spicy seafood noodles.’

Minhyuk stirred the spicy seafood noodles well with his chopsticks, making sure that the mussels, squid and onions were all mixed together. After stirring everything together, he lifted not just the noodles, but the entire bowl, before blowing on it gently. Then, he sipped the warm soup and savored its flavor.

“Refreshing.”

In the past, the young Minhyuk could not relate to the adults’ words when they said that it was refreshing to drink spicy soup. Now, the same words flowed out of his mouth easily.

Only after tasting the spicy soup did he use his chopsticks to clamp, inhale and slurp the noodles. He also dipped some raw onions in the black bean paste before placing it in his mouth.

Crunch, crunch—

After finishing the spicy seafood noodles, Minhyuk turned toward the mandarin rolls. The mandarin rolls were warm, as if they were just taken out of the fire. Then, he stretched his chopsticks towards the chili japchae. The chili japchae was a dish that was stir-fried in chili oil and had a spicier, deeper flavor than normal japchaes. Various ingredients like red pepper, green pepper, onion, and pork neck were stir-fried together, resulting in the colorful and appetizing dish in front of him.

Minhyuk placed the chili japchae on top of the mandarin roll before placing everything in his mouth.

Munch, munch—

The flavor of the spicy chili japchae was immediately followed by the soft and warm flavor of the mandarin roll. The flavor was enough to put a smile on his face. Minhyuk closed his eyes to savor the flavors deeply.

Grin—

A chuckle unknowingly escaped from his lips.

‘Wow, the food in the Food God Shop is comparable to the real God’s Dish...’

The taste was clearly different when he tasted them with his own tongue. Minhyuk did not know how the same food could taste so different. After he finished everything, Minhyuk heard the notifications.

[You have eaten the Fantastic Chinese Cuisine Set.]

[Searching for the special powers and skills that you have not yet acquired in your class.]

[Search in progress...1%, 21%, 34%, 47%... 88%, 100%.]

Ring!

[The search has been completed.]

[The Active Skill: Let’s Have a Meal will be created.]

‘Huh?’

The name of the skill was the best among all of the skills that Minhyuk had ever acquired in *Athenae*

. After acquiring the skill, he quickly checked the information of the Let's Have a Meal skill.

Active Skill

?If you shout 'Let's Have a Meal!', a barrier will be created with a five-meter radius for 30 minutes. Within the created barrier, you can choose two people from your guild members, allied guilds, party members and vassals to feed them buff dishes.

?It will be impossible for an enemy to attack or for you to attack an enemy within the barrier. In addition, there's an increased probability of having higher grades for the buffed dishes. The time inside the barrier flows six times faster than the time outside. However, those inside will not be able to feel it. To the people outside, you will appear as if you are moving six times faster. 30 minutes inside the barrier is equivalent to five minutes outside.

?The same food that you cooked for others inside the barrier will be created in the future. In addition, they will receive a temporary increase in all five basic stats as soon as the dish is created, but only the buff of the highest graded buffed dish will be applied.

?1% buff for Normal Dishes.

?3% buff for Rare Dishes.

?5% buff for Unique Dishes.

?8% buff for Epic Dishes.

?12% buff for Legendary Dishes.

?Buffs will be applied for 24 hours.

'Wow...'

Right off the bat, this skill had become Minhyuk's favorite skill. It was a skill that would allow him to eat, even if he was in the middle of a fight. Even the barrier that Black Mage Ali had used could not compare. It was a barrier that could prevent absolutely anything. In addition, it seemed like it was also possible to use it to plan or assess their situation in case of an emergency.

Minhyuk still had a bit of contribution left, so he wanted to buy the "Chicken & Pizza Set" immediately after the first set that he ate. At that moment...

[Legend Guild and Black Dragon and the Boys have formed a temporary alliance.]

"...?!"

Minhyuk was surprised because Black Dragon was his father. So Minhyuk quickly sent a whisper to his dad.

Minhyuk pondered for a moment while he talked with his dad. He had currently sorted out all of the things here. He also thought that it would be better if he brought the rescued Prince Argon to Elf King Gorn. With those in mind, he quickly made a decision.

‘I’m going to go and take care of my dad first...’

Food was important, however, Minhyuk was already planning on going to Elvenheim anyway. His reason was simple. It was because he needed to gain additional Contribution Points so that he could purchase the rest of the dishes in the Food God Shop.

Before he started, Minhyuk pulled a stunt, “*Sob, sob, sob.*” “My dad is in a very critical situation. There are plenty of demons there. Can you guys help me?”

Among them were the commanders of the Knight Orders. They had already become members of Minhyuk’s Territory, so it was no problem to bring them along. However, the rest of the knights were still members of the empires, so they needed to come with him out of their own free will.

Fortunately...

“How can this be?!!! Our commander’s father is in a critical situation!!!”

“We should go now!!!”

“We’ll just tell Our Majesties that the rescue operations took a lot longer and are still underway!”

...they were all of the same minds.

Minhyuk knew that Legend Guild was in a very precarious situation. These knights that had become more powerful would be a great addition to their power. However, there was one problem.

“How can we get to Elvenheim...?”

He was wondering how he would lead all of his troops to Elvenheim’s Area A. Although there was a Mass Teleport Parchment, it would only work if he had been to that place. In addition, the only place that they could warp to was Roscul Village and they still had to travel quite a distance to the Area A.

At that moment, Argon turned to look at Minhyuk. He said, “You’re going to Elvenheim’s Area A?”

“Yes.”

“I know a quick shortcut. From Area D, we can head directly to Area A.”

Area D was a place where anyone could come and go quickly at any time. The same was true for his troops.

Then, Argon said, “We’re going to need a ride.”

Argon snapped his fingers, and 150 black horses, along with two white horses, appeared from his subspace.

“These are very good horses, Arthdal and Perth. Let’s go.”

Argon was in a hurry because he knew that his father, Gorn, was there too. Minhyuk nodded his head as he rode the horse. They started galloping fast. As they made their way towards their destination, Minhyuk sent a whisper to someone that he could trust. The person he sent a whisper to, readily accepted his request.

Ruwan was chuckling loudly. He thought, *‘This is complete annihilation.’*

Ruwan was the man who dug minerals with the Food God Minhyuk in the mine where the chocolate tree was located. He eventually succeeded in changing his warrior class to the Indomitable Blacksmith class.

The Indomitable Blacksmith was an amazing class. It was a legendary class with the power and skill of a warrior, as well as an excellent blacksmith. Just like Hepas’ Descendant, he was also unable to produce a very formidable artifact yet, but he still gained a lot of strength as both a blacksmith and a warrior.

Ruwan’s strength grew quickly and he was now currently occupying a very small town in the outskirts of Elvenheim’s Area A. He was now the guild master of ‘Raging Volcano’. It was a medium-sized guild that was on the smaller side; however, it was still one of the rapidly growing guilds these days.

Unfortunately, the troops that had been concentrated on the front lines were slowly starting to flow to the rear. Right now, his HP was rapidly falling after he defeated a Hellhound.

[Abnormal State. You have inhaled the ‘Demonic Beast’s Gas’.]

[Your HP is falling at a rapid pace.]

The recovery potion that he had brought before was also on the floor of the garden. What was worse was...

Ruwan laughed ruefully. After the demons and the demonic beasts invaded, he had led his elites to take on the ‘aggro’. This village’s special ability was the ‘cellar’ hidden under the ground. He could hide things in that place that was hidden deeper than the basement.

Ruwan had chosen to hide his guild members there, while he went out to sacrifice himself, together with the elites. Unfortunately, the worst outcome still arrived, he could not help but suddenly remember that day.

‘I wonder how Minhyuk is doing these days?’

When he and the miners thought that they would be wiped out, the chef that laughed and mined with them killed the enemies with his ghostly movements. He was truly a kind, polite and wonderful man. Before they parted, Ruwan had asked him, *‘How can I be as strong as you?’*

‘Eat well, exercise hard and sleep well!’

After saying something absurd, he stopped walking and turned to look at Ruwan. He said, *‘Ruwan, I’ll see you at the top.’*

The memory of that time brought a smile to Ruwan’s face.

‘Yearning...’

That was right. He was longing for that. For the real power that this world’s strongest did not show. Influenced by Minhyuk’s words, he had been reborn and had become a great guild master.

‘It’s been a while since I’ve seen him. I should send him a whisper later.’

Right at that moment, other demons appeared. The problem was that these demons did not include the demons that they were struggling to kill earlier.

“I guess this bastard is the boss.”

“Kekeke.?I want to kill him more painfully.”

‘Don’t touch me. I’ll die if you just leave me alone.’

The demons approached Ruwan with a weapon called flamberge. Flamberge was a brutal weapon that could tear apart the flesh. He would not feel any real pain, but it was not refreshing or nice to feel his throat being cut off.

Just then...

Fwoosh, fwoosh!

Ruwan, who had closed his eyes in defeat, suddenly heard a strange sound coming near.

‘What?’

Clip, clop, clip, clop.

His enemies were taken down. Then, a voice rang out, “Ruwan, hello! You’ve become a great guild master now, haven’t you? Wow!”

“...M...Minhyuk?”

Minhyuk had arrived at the outskirts of Elvenheim’s Area A. He was as polite, cheerful and handsome as ever.

“Mi...Min...”

However, before he could even finish saying his words...

[You have temporarily lost consciousness.]

[Your HP has dropped below 5%.]

[You will die if you don't get treated.]

...Ruwan had blacked out. When he opened his eyes again, he saw that his guild members were all surrounding him.

"GM, are you alright?"

"Mi...Minhyuk!"

He leaped up and looked around for him, but there was no one else in sight. However, his eyes widened not long after.

"Wh...what's this? How am I still alive?"

There were over 80 demons and demonic monsters that attacked them. Their numbers were beyond what their guild could handle.

"A man suddenly appeared and wiped them out. He said that he was close to Ruwan. He even had his own troops. GM, do you know him?"

"It took him about three minutes, I think?"

"Isn't he very strong?"

Ruwan saw the bandage that was wrapped around his arm. He used to wear these bandages before. He grinned as he caressed the bandage, muttering softly, "This is why I admire you."

The Frying Pan Killer. He was still as polite, cheerful, and wonderful as ever.

Chapter 249: Territorial Defence (Top)

'The First Coalition has collapsed...'

In the end, Callian and Ares of the First Coalition failed to stop the invasion of the demons and the demonic beasts. Genie, or Im Jihye, started watching the video again. It seemed like the battlefield was filled with endless frost. She could see Callian raising his hands high up in the sky as he shouted while hundreds of hellhounds flocked to them.

"Everyone, fire!!!"

At the frontline, the troops of mages and archers all prepared for the attack.

[Ah! That's Paliar, he's the third in the local Mage Rankings! He's a mage whose specialty is fire magic!]

[I can also see Rigurd, the fifth in the Archer Rankings!]

Along with those words, Paliar floated in the air.

[It's Fly!]

[It's the magic that allows them to fly in the sky!!!]

Bright light shone from Paliar's wand as he waved it around. He shouted, "Fire Storm! Fire Wall!"

A huge wall made out of fire started to cover their front as huge tornadoes made out of flames began to rampage toward the hellhounds. With his magic, countless other magic poured from all over the place. Even the archers' arrows tore through the air as they attacked the hellhounds.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh!

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

Stab!

"Kiheeeeeeeck!"

Puhwaaaaaak!

"Kyaaaaahack!"

AOE magic and plenty of arrowheads flew all over the place. It was only then that Ares felt that something was amiss.

"...Callian."

"Yes?"

"How come those guys did not explode?"

According to Lev's words, they were forced to log out when they encountered Alchemist Rufel's hellhounds that caused abnormal states and explosions.

"I don't know either. Maybe it was just a trap, or gimmick when they hunted my guild members?" Callian said, tilting his head in wonder.

'Why bother doing something so troublesome?'

Right at that moment...

Kiiiiieeeeeeeck!

"...!!!"

Ares and Callian's faces crumpled in shock and disbelief.

'Don't tell me?'

Their eyes turned to look up at the sky. There, they saw hundreds of bone wyverns flying above them, with figures completely black as they flocked together, just like a figure of hundreds of migratory birds in the sky. Just like that, the wyverns quickly descended one by one.

"Kahaaaaaack!"

"Kiyeeeeeee!"

The creatures riding on top of those wyverns were none other than the hellhounds.

[Th...they're coming down!!!]

[The hellhounds are falling straight down in the heart of the city!]

[Hundreds of hellhounds are falling from the sky!]

Callian hurriedly gave his orders, “Mages, archers!!!”

Following his words, the mages and the archers quickly took position. One arrow from an archer accurately pierced through one of the hellhounds. Then...

Puhaaaaaa!

Green smoke scattered and fell down on them. Starting with that hellhound...

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh!

Dozens of arrows and magical attacks also accurately hit the falling hellhounds. It was a momentary mistake. Callian should not have given that order to the mages and the archers.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

The hellhounds that fell on the ground exploded.

Fwiiiish!

Fwiiiiiiish!

As a result, the gas that escaped from their bodies began to cover the entirety of the city.

“Goddamnit!”

“This crazy shit!”

The demons loved to fight. For that reason, the players believed that the demons would only engage in ruthless slaughter as they treated these things like a game.

Meanwhile, the commentators kept on shouting.

[The Allied Guilds are in chaos!!!]

[The city will be left in ruins in just a single move!!!]

[This is an unbelievable sight!!! The Coalition had lost with just the AOE debuff!!!]

That was when they saw Rufel’s mouth open into a shit-eating grin. Then, he raised his hand and pointed his index finger forward. He finally started the real plot of his devious game. With his movement, the three Slayers began to move.

The Slayer of Anguish was a woman of great strength. With just a flick of her fingers, the arrows that were embedded in the bodies of the hellhounds were pulled out as they disappeared without a trace. With just a wave of her hands, dozens of crazy spells floated around her.

Flash—

All of the magical attacks that were swirling and creating chaos in the area disappeared in a flash of black light. It was a large-scale Dispel! It showed that she was a high-ranking mage.

After all the magic disappeared, the Slayer of Death moved. As soon as he moved the staff that was hidden underneath his ragged robe...

Chiiiiiiiiing—

...the bodies of the hellhounds started to melt, starting from their skin to their eyes, then their organs, until their entire bodies melted away. After everything melted away, bone hellhounds began to rise from the remains of their bodies.

“Grrrrrrrrrr!”

“Keong! Keong! Keong!”

Hellhounds made out of their own bones rose from the ground and began to run amok.

“Tankers! Stop them!!”

The tankers had drunk the Elves’ Stamina Potion and had their stamina boosted. As soon as they heard the order, they quickly formed a huge shield with their square shields. However, everything was already a mess.

Baaang!

Baaaaaaaam!

[Abnormal State. You have inhaled the ‘Demonic Beast’s Gas’.]

[Your physical defense has dropped by 30%.]

[A terrible poison has started to melt your skin.]

“Hiiiiik!”

“Uwaaaaa!”

The tankers finally lost it when an explosion happened above them and they were forced to inhale the poisonous gas.

Spurt!

Pop, pop!

“Grrrrrrrrrr!”

“Keuaaaack!”

“Ugh, aaaaaaargh!”

“Hiiiiik!?Sa...save me!”

It was just a virtual reality game, but the demons, demonic beasts, and hellhounds all looked disgustingly ugly. Goosebumps raised all over their bodies as fear started to encroach upon the players.

Slash!

“Stay in line!!!”

At that moment, Valdar, widely known as the Golden Shield and the number one in the Tanker Rankings, shouted loudly as he slammed his golden shield on the ground. The players quickly gathered around him as they formed a defense team.

Bang!

Valdar shouted once more after a hellhound smashed into his golden shield, “Attack!”

It was a flashy shield art using his flashing shield! The players' spears and swords stretched in the gaps between their shields!

[Golden Sun!]

[The mighty golden sun is shining brightly upon your forces.]

[Guild members within a 30-m radius will have an increase of 30% in their defenses!]

Sure enough, the number one in the Tanker Rankings was clearly a cut above the rest. Just then...

Crackle, crackle, crackle—

...a huge bolt of lightning struck down on Valdar's shield.

Bang!

Valdar tried to stop himself from being pushed back but...

Bang!

“Keoheok!”

...A hellhound that snuck behind him suddenly exploded and dealt him a huge amount of damage. Valdar was caught up in a chaotic mess, and everything around him seemed to play in slow motion.

He saw Callian and Ares stuck in a fierce battle against the three Slayers. Unfortunately, no matter what they did, their foes were too strong.

Ares and Callian were even knocked unconscious by the sudden bolt of lightning from the Slayer of Anguish. Along with that strike, the Slayer of Death brought the dead back to life, as he pressed on with great fanfare.

Then, a man suddenly appeared in front of Valdar. It was none other than Conir, the Slayer of Frustration. Strangely enough, he was wearing full body armor with his body wrapped in bandages and his hand holding a sword.

“Stop him!!”

“Protect Valdar!!!”

The players all flocked towards Valdar with their shields raised up high. However, at that moment, the sword in the demon's hand moved.

Shwaaaaaaa—

It was just a single slash, but dozens of black sword lights flew out from it and pierced through their shields. The players' bodies were all stabbed through by the sword lights. Their shields could not even stop the attack one bit.

“...”

It was at that moment when Valdar realized...

‘Allentian is finished...!’

Flop—

His head fell off of his body, as Conir’s intermittent voice passed through Valdar’s ears.

“Hung... ry... Haz...”

Then, a black screen appeared in front of Valdar.

Im Jihye could not help but sigh after watching the video. The Iris and Ares Guild both faced a crushing defeat against the demons. Meanwhile, the demons and demonic beast legion were already preparing to push through.

The people that were walking on the street stopped as they looked at the electronic display. Through the screen, they could see what was left of the once glorious Allentian. It had turned into a barren wasteland.

They knew that the three Slayers and the hellhounds that brought about a huge and terrible debuff had the greatest contribution in Allentian’s fall.

“The Slayers are too strong, right?”

“Shit... How do you even kill them?”

“According to the information from the operators, there would be a huge reward for successfully hunting the three Slayers, right?”

“...But, is it even possible? Right now, their next target is...”

The demons stopped for a while after they conquered Allentian. The next target that was waiting for them was...

“It’s Legend.”

“Will Legend Guild be able to stop them?”

“They can’t stop them. How can they even stop them? They’re less than 20 people.”

“What guild did they ally with this time?”

“No. They can stop them. All of the guilds located in Area A are in danger. Since Ares and Iris are not the only ones, they could still make another allied force. They should form a new coalition that is built around them. I reckon since the Legend Guild is composed of the elite minority, then they should be the one to kill the Slayers, while the other guilds hunt the hellhounds and the swarm of demonic beasts.”

However, not long after, someone more sensible appeared. He said, “...Do you think the other guilds will do such a thing just for Legend Guild to outshine them?”

The largest guilds in the country were known as the Four Great Guilds. Right below them, those guilds that were ranked 5~10 were known as the 'Sun Guilds'.

Currently, the guild masters of the guilds ranked 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th were gathered together.

"Miss Alicia said that she wouldn't come."

"She's pretending to be nice all by herself."

The story that they told was simple. While Legend Guild bought them time, they would attract other players and build a new defense coalition that would become the third line of defense.

They believed that the first battle encounter failed because they did not expect aerial warfare. In addition, they also believed that Legend Guild would slaughter a lot of those demons before they died.

"It's unfortunate, but Legend Guild will fall here."

"...Well, it can't be helped."

That was what they were saying, but the reality was different. The reason why they did not form an alliance with Legend Guild in Philip Village was simple. Legend Guild was a guild packed with the best rankers. If they lose this war, then they would all receive penalties. Then, once the breaking point was reached, the guild rankings would naturally follow and fall.

Why would these players want something like that? Simple. That was just how people were. If there was someone higher than them, they would not hesitate to kick them in the stomach and step on them just because they were jealous.

Meanwhile, one man suddenly said, "I don't think Kaistra and Player Minhyuk are currently with Legend Guild. I wonder how long they will last?"

It was one of the guild masters who spoke. Just like he said, they believed that Minhyuk and Kaistra were the strongest powerhouses. Since the two of them were not present, Legend Guild would eventually fall. Of course, the guild was still made out of the best rankers, but they did not stand a chance just based on their numbers.

Genie sighed deeply after logging in to the game. Just like she had expected, the Sun Guilds did not have any intention of helping them. She also got a call from Artheon that they wanted to help, but were sorry that they couldn't, since they needed to put a lot of effort into their current defense.

Just then, Ascar approached her with a glow on her face. She said, "Ge...Genie...!"

Ascar usually maintained a calm and composed expression on her face but right now, she could barely contain her excitement.

"S...someone came to help us!"

"How many people?" Genie asked, tilting her head in confusion.

Ascar hurriedly said, "No, not people. Just one..."

“Huh?”

‘Just one? Ascar is so surprised just because of one person?’

Ascar led her to the person so she could check it out for herself. Then, Genie saw the members of Legend and Black Dragon and the Boys gathered around.

“What I’m going to draw for you is our token.”

“Oh, what a cool token!”

“What does this token mean?”

The man standing in the middle of them said, “It means friendship.”

The country’s, no, the best mage in?Athenae, Black Mage Ali?had?appeared.

Chapter 250: Territorial Defense (Top)

Black Mage Ali did not hide the fact that he was the player that entered the Hall of Kings with Minhyuk. He was as proud of what he achieved, just like anyone else, and the people were also proud of him.

Ali was known as the number one mage in the integrated rankings, but plenty of people believed that he was a class beyond that, especially with his use of higher-tiered magic. Some people even started calling him Great Sage Ali, but of course, most of them still refer to him as Black Mage.

However, Black Mage Ali was the only one that knew that Minhyuk had given him the opportunity to enter the Hall of Kings. He had promised Minhyuk before that if he ever needed his help, he would drop everything else and run to him. Just recently, Minhyuk sent him a whisper asking him to help Legend Guild. His meaning was simple. It was because he would take some time before he could arrive to aid them, so Minhyuk had asked him for his help.

‘I’ll protect them. So you don’t have to worry, Minhyuk.’

Ali was now drawing an ‘X’ on everyone’s wrists. To his surprise, the members of Black Dragon and the Boys were all enchanted by it.

“What a brilliant token.”

“Friendship. What a wonderful thing to say. Boy, are you interested in joining Black Dragon and the Boys?”

“Hoo? Black Dragon and the Boys? That’s a nice name, just like Whitebeard and Ace.”

Then, at that moment...

“Whitebeard and Ace... ? You... Don’t tell me...”

Ace’s body was trembling and even his breathing had started to become labored as his eyes reddened imperceptibly.

“Have you seen the Summit War?”

Then, Ali turned to him and solemnly said, "Of course! My goodness, is there anyone who hasn't seen that? I really sobbed when Ace's chest was stabbed. Oh, come to think of it, you..."

Ace looked at him in anticipation as he listened to Ali's words.

"...look like Ace."

Ace's face lit up in joy. He said, "My nickname is Ace too! Ali is the only one who recognized me. Who's your favorite character?"

"It's Zorro."

"Kghhk!!!?You are really knowledgeable."

"Of course, One Diss comics is the best."

Their eyes made eye contact and each of them could tell what the other was thinking even though they did not say a word. The two felt a great sense of camaraderie after finding out that they both liked the same comics.

Black Dragon, who was looking at them, just kept his arms crossed with his infinitely serious expression while mumbling to himself, "Zorro...? I can't believe he knows Zorro at such a young age... Swordsman Zorro Ali...? N...no... Black Mage, you..."

Black Dragon looked at them sourly.

Genie perked up as she looked at this very welcomed reinforcement. It was Black Mage Ali! She did not expect that the world's best mage would come to support her guild.

Then...

[The Second Attack will begin.]

[The 'War Quest: Advancing Legion' will be created for all players present in Elvenheim.]

Ring!

[War Quest: The Advancing Legion]

Rank: SS

Restrictions: All players in Elvenheim

Rewards:

500 Contribution Points for each common demonic beast or demon that you hunted. (Number of Enemies: 3,351/3,351)10,000 Contribution Points for each Silver Wolf that you hunted. (Number of Enemies: 213/213)300,000 Contribution Points for each Slayer that you hunted. Slayer's Reward. (Number of Enemies: 3/3)500,000 Contribution Points for successfully hunting Commander-in-Chief Rufel. Development Stone. (Number of Enemies: 1/1)Penalty for Failure: You will not be allowed entry to Elvenheim.

Description: The Demonic Legion had started to advance. Stop them and enter the Elven Forest!!!

The notifications did not stop there.

Ring!

[The Guild Ranking Rewards has opened.]

[If your guild achieves the first place in total contributions, your guild members will receive a 20% increase in EXP for one month, as well as Gorn's Treasure Chest (A~SS). For ranks 2~20, please check the official website.]

Ring!

[The Individual Ranking Rewards has opened.]

[If you achieve the first place in total individual contributions, you will receive a 15% increase in EXP for one month as well as Gorn's 'Eye of the Abyss'. For ranks 2~20, please check the official website.]

They were clearly huge rewards. If their EXP increased by 20%, then the members of Legend Guild, or any large guilds that managed to clinch it, would be able to cross the threshold that they would not otherwise be able to climb. This would definitely have a huge effect on large guilds. Hundreds of them would have a 20% increase in EXP for one whole month.

Then, Genie looked at her individual contribution and thought, 'I wonder who's number one in the individual contributions...'

For individual contributions, Genie had heard that even though they had converted them to war points and used them to purchase items, the contribution points that they had earned would still be shown. In other words, all of their contribution points, whether it was untouched or used, would be combined to determine the first in the rankings.

Then, at that moment...

Vwooooooooooong— Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!

...the sound of the trumpets and drums started to ring loudly. Along with them, whispers from broadcasting companies started to come in.

[ATV PD Kim: Genie, we'll start the live broadcast as planned.]

Just like any other guilds, Legend Guild also had an agreement with broadcasters.

[Genie: Yes. I understand.]

The main purpose of broadcasting the guild was simple. It had the effect of promoting the guild, as well as showcasing and certifying the guild's troops and its armed forces. Through that, they could recruit a variety of people and spread their influence.

This was something that Genie had expected.

'Right now, perhaps...'

The station would be talking about how to get higher ratings, and this was how the scenario was chosen.

'Legend must not fall.'

Everyone, everywhere felt the same way. They knew that Legend would fall today. However, a strange smile hung around Genie's lips.

'You think we're going to fall that easily? Didn't they say this as soon as we received Philip Village? That we could change the village into a bunker if we used 250,000 contribution points?'

Genie had already checked the information.

'We won't fall as easily as you think.'

With those thoughts, she saw the bone wyverns flying from afar.

ATV PD Kim Dae-Guk looked at the incoming Demonic Legion through the screen with his crossed arms and serious expression.

"It's a good thing that Callian Alliance had taken out about 1/3 of their forces... but it seems like they can't stop them with just their elite minority... Too reckless..."

PD Kim Dae-Guk had said these words coldly. He liked a big hit and high ratings and he believed that Legend Guild might be the guild that would give him those numbers. Of course, even if they did not get those numbers, their ratings would still be fine.

Twenty elite members of Legend Guild would be defending against the Demonic Legion. Although their numbers weren't huge, he had been cheered up by the thought of those rankers' strength. However, he still had many concerns.

'If you're not able to last at least ten minutes...'

Their ratings would be high, but it would still be a loss for ATV, since they would not be able to maintain it. So, instead of asking for their help to broadcast, ATV had provided huge funds to Legend Guild. The contract was signed when they entered Elvenheim so they never thought that something like this would happen. In fact, it was even an exclusive broadcast.

Then, he heard the voice of the relations people.

"The current audience ratings are at 4.3%."

"...It's lower than what we thought?"

"It's because the response is not as good as we thought."

PD Kim Dae-Guk hurriedly checked the netizens' response.

[I don't want to see my Legend fall...]

[How long do you think will Legend be able to hold out? 5 minutes? 10 minutes? How can 20 people deal with such monstrous numbers? What's worse, they're all strong.]

[I'm still watching this live. At least we can watch Legend fall down the abyss.]

[What are you saying? Legend Guild is a legend. And they're going to do well. Obviously.]

[Right now, Cane, the strategist Ztuber, is doing an exclusive live broadcast on NTV! He's telling us about dungeons and class-specific targets!]

“NTV is the biggest.”

People wanted to see the battle of the strong. They wanted to see excellent physicals, amazingly ridiculous skills, as well as monstrous stats. But what if they collapsed in vain? Of course, even the viewers would feel empty and at a loss.

Currently, their rival TV company, NTV, was showing Cane, the most popular figure on Ztube. He heard that NTV had invited the Sun Guild Alliance. In other words, once Legend Guild collapsed, then they would immediately send out the Third Coalition's defense. By then, they would get high ratings. ATV might have something far lower than what they had originally expected.

At that moment, hundreds of bone wyverns started to appear in the air. There were even thousands of fierce hellhounds on the ground, along with the occasional Silver Wolf, that was as large as a one-ton truck.

[Keong, keong, keong!]

[Grrrrrrrrrrrr!]

[Kiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiieeeee!]

Philip Village was still standing strongly, albeit stubbornly. Then, he saw Guild Master Genie climbing on top of one of the small sentry towers.

At that moment, the Taming Master, Jan, who was casted by ATV, started her commentary.

[It looks like there are thousands of hellhounds on the ground, while there are some wandering Silver Wolves and Bone Wyverns. I wonder if Legend Guild can hold out? Guild Master Genie is looking at the battlefield with a relaxed expression. Also, inside Philip Village, the members of Legend Guild are all quickly preparing for the incoming aerial warfare!!]

[The guild members are standing close to the village!!]

[It seems like Khan and Locke are the ones in charge of them!]

[‘Marksman Root’ is the one in charge of aerial warfare. He has amazing archery skills, being a former gold medalist and all, so he definitely deserves the title of ‘Marksman’.]

Then, something extraordinary happened.

Crack, crack, crack!

Craaaaack!

The running hellhounds suddenly started digging the ground as they entered it like moles.

Pa, pa, pa, pa!

Pa, pa, pa, pa!

“...”

[D, did you see that?]

[Ah. It's not the anticipated aerial warfare from Commander Rufel!]

[If you look at them now, the hellhounds looked different from the existing ones. Instead, they're exactly like moles.]

[And it seems like they're really fast! They look like they're approaching and entering Philip Village at a breakneck speed!!!]

[The Legend Guild members looked like they're confused!]

[They're done!!! Legend Guild doesn't look like they will last long!!!]

Genie's eyes widened in shock. Just like what the commentators said, she looked like she was confused. However, that was not the reason why she was perplexed. She felt flustered because it was going exactly how she predicted it to go.

Then, a small smile graced her lips as the commentator started to shout again.

[Huuuuuuuh? Is that guy standing much higher than I last saw him?]

[It's Fly!!! But, Legend Guild is known for not having any prominent mage players?]

[The mysterious mage player is looking down at them from a height that is much higher than the height that the wyverns that we saw before flew on!!!]

Then, at that moment, the mage raised his hand. As soon as his fingers flicked together...

Brrrrrrrrrrrrrr—

...the ground began to shake violently, as tree roots and branches twisted out from the ground and trapped hundreds of hellhounds. Then, the mysterious mage unfolded the palm of his hands, before clenching his fist tightly!

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

The hundreds of hellhounds that dug deep in the ground, were popped out by the roots and branches, and exploded.

Fwiiiiiiish—

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

Then, the green gas scattered as explosions started one after the other.

[...!!!]

[...!!!]

The commentators were left astounded. Then, one of the commentators began to say...

[A...a black robe and a black hat... D...don't tell me that's Black Mage Ali?]

[The world's greatest mage, Black Mage Ali, has joined Legend Guild!!!]