

Gourmet 491

Chapter 491: The New Tower Masters

[You have finished the construction of the building in honor of King Valex.]

[The building is grander and nobler than any other architecture in existence.]

[The building's level has exceeded Level 9.]

[As the building's foreman, you have acquired the rewards for the successful build.]

[You have gained 100 DEX.]

[You have gained 100 REP.]

[You have gained a 1% increase in all five basic stats.]

[Please determine the status of the people that can enter the newly completed building.]

[Slaves. Commoners. Lower Nobility. Higher Nobility. Royal Family. Imperial Family.]

These were the notifications that rang in Minhyuk's ears the moment the construction for the building was finished. After enjoying his meals, Minhyuk finally came back to the Five Stars for a discussion.

"King Valex treasured his people, and that includes the slaves."

"He was the first ever king to abolish slavery. Of course, the complaints of the other nobles about this all amounted to nothing."

The decision was made easily.

[Anyone that wishes to enter the building commemorating King Valex can enter the building.]

[Please set an entrance fee.]

When it came to entrance fees, Minhyuk suddenly became very indecisive. Of course, he wanted to get less from the slaves and more from the nobles. But if he did that, then many would protest.

At that moment, Star Strategist Jarrod said, "Then, let's just make it so that everyone can enter with the same entrance fee."

"But, doing that would make our efforts insignificant, right? The weight that this building will carry might become too small if we did that."

"The public is willing to believe in a lot of rumors and fake stories," Jarrod said, which made Minhyuk confused, as he looked at the building with a soft smile on his face, "We can spread rumors. A commoner paid a higher amount than the entrance fee and he became lucky that day. A lower noble paid an amount that was several times over the entrance fee to honor His Majesty Valex and was promoted to a count later in the same year. Some wouldn't bite it, but there would be a lot of people who will pay more, just because of these stories. In fact, it would be more profitable to do this instead of setting different prices."

“Ah...” Minhyuk gasped in admiration. It was not the slaves nor the commoners, but the rich and the nobility that had always lived a life of luxury and contentment. They might also pay a hundred, perhaps even a thousand, times more than the entrance fee just because of a few simple words.

And once they took a look inside?

‘There’s no way that they would think that it’s a waste of their money,’ Minhyuk finally decided.

[You have determined the entrance fee for the building commemorating King Valex.]

[The building’s entrance fee is 5,000 gold.]

[Anyone, regardless of their status, nationality or continent, can enter the building commemorating King Valex.]

[The building commemorating King Valex is built in Eto Kingdom’s territory, it will receive a 60% tax.]

[The expected return of profit for the building materials, labor, maintenance and building foreman is 2%.]

Minhyuk smiled in satisfaction. Although Minhyuk headed the construction and everything was shouldered by him, they built it in Eto Kingdom. Also, the Five Stars still belonged to the kingdom during the construction process, so it was only natural that they pay a 60% tax. Besides, he would still be able to get a 2% return profit for all of his efforts. That amount was already huge enough for any ordinary player to sit back and relax for life.

Just when everyone was wondering how marvelous the building was after seeing the kings and emperors burst into tears, Minhyuk announced that they could finally enter. Hearing that, everyone hurriedly dashed forward and lined up! The line even exceeded seven kilometers!

However, some nobles began to protest, “Do we have to stand in line with these slaves?”

The ones that they hired for the management and maintenance of the buildings began to flap their tongues, following what Minhyuk and Jarrod told them, “Count Ken, this is a building in honor of King Valex. Because you’re waiting in line, His Majesty Valex will definitely reward you and turn your future around.”

“Ho?” The nobles looked at the building in contemplation as the assistant continued to speak, “Count. I heard that one of the counts that visited yesterday was able to give birth to a bouncing baby boy after he came back to his territory. There was also a knight named Perle. I heard that he has been granted a title and became a baronet.”

“Is, is that true?! Alright, I will wait. Haha!”

The rumors began like that but over time, these rumors started to become a ‘fact’. The people then began to say this every time they got lucky, *‘You know, it’s because I waited five hours in line to*

visit the building in honor of His Majesty Valex. But that's not all! I also offered a platinum to honor His Majesty. And His Majesty in heaven helped me!

'Are you telling the truth?'

People would always get envious when someone was doing well! Just like that, word passed through one noble's mouth to another!

[Count Erthe offers 3 platinum to honor King Valex.]

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[Marquis Kennon offers 20 platinum to honor King Valex.]

[Allod of the Royal Family offers 100 platinum to honor King Valex.]

There were also the players and ordinary guardians that visited the building. Among them, there were those that looked sullen after being dragged by their girlfriends.

"Oppa~ I heard that this building is a hot topic these days!"

"Do we really have to wait this long?"

But not long after, the man exited the building with tears in his eyes while saying, "*Cough*— I have never seen such beautiful architecture in my life. Want to line up again?"

"I like that! I will recommend this to my parents as a must-see travel destination!"

Everyone was constantly walking to and fro. After all, just looking around the building along with its paintings and sculptures could give them a buff effect. The building garnered an outstanding 2,100 platinum as its highest profit. Calculating Minhyuk's share, he would be able to get around 40 platinum.

Ah, such is the life of a building owner!

The tower that attracted the most number of people in the Barras Kingdom of the past was the 'Fisherman's Tower'. Even if all of the fishermen living in all of the other kingdoms were taken into account, their numbers were still significantly lower than the number of fishermen residing in the Barras Kingdom.

But now, no one was coming and going inside the Fisherman's Tower of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. This was because these fishermen classes all left when Barras Kingdom fell. The biggest reason was because of the departure of the Legendary Fisherman Eck.

Legendary Fisherman Eck had a very lively and free personality. He often went out to sea to teach his tricks and secrets to both players and guardians alike. Oftentimes, he would make sashimi with the rare catches that they caught on that day. Because of that, plenty of the players liked him and followed him.

However, the stories about Fisherman Eck were wrong. Lively and free? Kind and good-natured? Teaching others how to fish? Not at all. Those were things that Eck had planned. He deliberately went out to sea to revive the Fisherman's Tower and attract people. Eck was also one of the people that immediately left the kingdom the moment the king changed.

Eck grinned deeply, *‘The kingdoms are finally making their move.’*

Eck had just attended a major meeting between the kingdoms. The main topic of their meeting was the ‘Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’. The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was a kingdom founded by the foreigners. That fact in and of itself ticked them off and all of them hoped to drag the kingdom down.

To do so, they all made a plan. They wanted to bring away the remaining personnel of the towers that were still in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. That was not the end of their plans. They also planned to take away all of the production class players and guardians in the kingdom. Their method was a bit barbaric, but they were certain that it would bring about the results that they wanted.

‘The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s towers should realize how helpless they are without us, the tower masters, there, right?’

That was right. All of the tower masters left the kingdom. Not only the most famous Fisherman’s Tower’s tower master, but even the tower masters of the Painter’s Tower, the Sculpture’s Tower, the Blacksmith’s Tower, the Commander’s Tower and all the other towers. These posts were only currently being supported by the deputy tower masters.

So, what would happen if they took down those deputies and showed the foreigners what true helplessness was?

‘Then, the remaining people in the towers can only choose to leave. After all, they only stayed because of their lingering attachments to Barras Kingdom.’

It would only be a matter of time. Once the previous tower masters proved their greatness, these people would realize how weak they were as they served this king that could not show them a higher level. And once they took them away, they would create new towers and gather more people together. This would definitely force the collapse of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s towers, while the towers that had moved to other kingdoms would revive and return to the way they were before.

“Long time no see, Eck.”

“How have you been, Gebry?”

Not long after, a carriage and a parade of troops stopped and lined up in front of Eck. Inside the huge carriage rode the past tower masters. Eck greeted the central figures of each kingdom with his eyes as he entered the carriage naturally.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve been to Barras Kingdom... no, Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Valencia,” Eck said with a smile as the others nodded in agreement.

Then, one of the kingdom nobles said, “I’m sure you’ll all do a great job. We will definitely show those foreigners that dared to create a kingdom on their own a very scary and painful sight.”

“You don’t have to worry about a thing, you know?”

“The current tower masters of Beyond the Heavens Kingdoms are nothing but mere fools.”

“I heard that there are temporary tower masters that stepped up? From what I heard, they were people that the king used to take care of?”

“Ah. So, you haven’t heard of it.”

“Heard of what?”

The past tower masters, who were giggling to themselves and ignoring the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, turned towards the kingdom diplomats when they heard their words.

“The Beyond the Heavens Kingdoms have already appointed new tower masters. The Blacksmith’s Tower and Commander’s Tower had been abolished and replaced with the Tailor’s Tower and Tower of Knowledge. Not only that, they have also appointed new tower masters for the Chef’s Tower, Painter’s Tower, Sculptor’s Tower and Fisherman’s Tower.”

“What?”

“Puhahahahahahaha!”

“That’s completely ridiculous. They’re just filling up those seats by bringing in people with some power. They’re probably in a hurry?”

All of the previous tower masters just laughed. The reason why they were the tower masters that all of the kingdoms and empires coveted was simple. It was because they were publicly recognized as the best in the Asgan Continent. There was no one greater than them, at least in Asgan Continent.

Before they could burst out in another fit of laughter, Fisherman Eck, as if he had a brilliant idea, said, “You might know this already but even though I’m already out of the tower, I’m gathering a lot of people for my new fishing ground and these people are now working their hardest to learn under me. Can I call them? I’ll make it so that they know who I am and what I can do. That way, they will trust me more and follow me wholeheartedly.”

The nobles reacted positively after hearing Eck’s words. They all thought that it was a good idea.

“I believe that’s a great idea.”

“We can secure their hearts and even bring the ones remaining in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s tower with us.”

“That’s the best!”

“A very splendid idea indeed.”

They stopped their procession for a moment in lieu of calling their men. Not long after, each of their kingdoms brought a variety of production classes, ranging from fishermen, sculptors, painters, tailors, blacksmiths and many more. Their number totaled 2,000. They were the elites of the

production classes. Then, the carriage procession set off again. However, among them, there was one particularly anxious man.

“Marquis Arna, the thing that happened in the founding ceremony won’t happen again. Don’t worry too much.”

“Ah. Yes. Worry. Haha.”

During the founding ceremony, Marquis Arna, terrified after seeing Sword God Valen and Saintess Loyna, peed in his pants and was hence dubbed as Mister Bed Wetter. He was also one of the diplomats sent to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom this time.

In a blink, the carriage procession that was ‘packaged’ as a group that was sent to ‘celebrate and congratulate’ Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, entered Valencia.

‘Nothing will happen this time.’

But Marquis Arna was left unaware that today was the day that he would experience that humiliation a second time.

Chapter 492: The New Tower Masters

Minhyuk, the king of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, had just returned from his long journey. He hastened his travel so he could welcome the diplomats and the former tower masters. Haze was currently guiding them as they came to visit the kingdom. Minhyuk sat on his throne with a soft smile while six other people stood behind him. They did not have any time to do anything else, since they had just returned so their hair and clothes were quite dusty and unkempt.

“These are the new tower masters under my rule. I hope you don’t look down at them.”

“Haha. Is that so? Don’t they look too bad? Still, they look very healthy,” Eck burst out in laughter, the rest immediately following after him. This was because the newly appointed tower masters looked too inferior to them with their shabby and unkempt appearance. Eck and the former tower masters were all trying their hardest to hold back their laughter at the sight.

‘They dare to put these unknown people in front of us, the best in the Asgan Continent?’

‘It’s obvious. They’re putting anyone, someone, in those empty seats. Then, they will announce that they have already appointed new tower masters and gather people.’

‘Even the Beyond the Heavens’ King looks so dirty and shabby. Since they’re appointing these incompetent people as the new tower masters, everyone will definitely leave once their skills have been revealed later.’

At this moment, the former tower masters firmly believed that the rumors that they have heard about Minhyuk being a smart and gracious ruler were just that, rumors.

Then, Marquis Arna, one of the diplomats, threw the bait, “The former tower masters came with us to see the disciples that they had raised in the past. That’s why we’re hoping that Your Majesty will understand their feelings and allow their previous disciples to join us in this banquet.”

“Is that so? Very well, the more the merrier,” upon hearing Marquis Arna’s words, Minhyuk readily agreed and sent people to the towers to call for the former tower masters’ disciples.

“Tower Master Eck! It’s been a long time!”

“Tower Master Ruger! Sir, we missed you!”

“Hahahaha! Is that so? Yeah?”

The number of people left in each of the towers was only enough to fill in around 2,000. Counting them in with the new disciples that the previous tower masters had recently raised, their number should be around 4,000. However, despite their numbers, the party hall was large enough that none of them felt constricted. In fact, there were also the broadcasters and reporters that Minhyuk had called in among them.

‘From what I heard, those that aren’t present here can still see what’s happening here through those foreigners with the small lenses hovering around them.’

‘What was it? I think they called it a broadcast?’

‘We can certainly bring the Beyond the Heavens’ King to his knees!’

The moment the diplomats and the former tower masters saw these people, they thought that it was a godsend. After all, it was like hitting two birds with one stone. Even the foreigners that chose to remain in Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would witness how weak and pathetic this kingdom was, with this broadcast.

Then, the former tower masters approached the newly appointed masters and tried to gauge and ascertain the kind of people they were. The first to move was Annod, the previous tower master of the Commander’s Tower.

The Commander’s Tower was different from the other production class towers. They train those that dreamt of becoming centurions and knights, and even taught them manners and etiquette. In fact, it was the tower with the lowest influence among all of the towers in existence.

“You’re the tower master of the new Tower of Knowledge, right? Nice to meet you.”

Even though Annod said that, he did not like the man in front of him one bit. Especially because the Commander’s Tower was abolished and changed into the ‘Tower of Knowledge’.

“Yes, that’s right,” Jarrod, one of the Five Stars, nodded. But just when Annod was about to ask Jarrod again, Jarrod quipped, “By the way, do you know what a strawberry that was fired from the kingdom troops is called?”

“...strawberry syrup?”

“That’s wrong. Strawberries are fruits, hence they won’t be fired from any job!”

“Ha, haha... ha?”

“Keuhahahahahaha!”

Jarrood bursted out in a rambunctious laughter the moment he saw the incredulous look on Annod’s face, and said, “Do you know what the fastest chicken in the world is called?”

“Hu, hudadak...?”

“Wrong! His Majesty has already eaten it! Keuhahahahahaha!”

“...”

Annod was left speechless.

*‘What the hell is wrong with this f*cking bastard? How can a person like this be the master of the ‘Tower of Knowledge’?’*

Incredulous laughter naturally bubbled out of Annod’s mouth. When he looked around, he realized that the situation was not different from the others.

Elise, the one going to be the tower master of the Painter’s Tower, was pouring tea for the former tower master, Grein. Then, Grein said, “Since you’re appointed as the tower master of the Painter’s Tower, it means that you have created and seen a lot of paintings in your life, right? Hoho. I wonder what kind of paintings you are working on these days?”

Elise smiled at Grein’s words and said, “These days, I’m busy painting food for His Majesty. Pizza, chicken, rice cakes... ah! And takoyaki.”

“Yes?”

“Ah. But I’m in a bit of a pinch. Every time I draw them, drool always seem to drip down my mouth... *Sluuuuurp!*”

“...”

At that moment, Grein wondered if they really placed a woman that was good at painting food as the tower master? But from what he heard about the king of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, it was a possible feat. Even Ellen, the Tailor’s Tower’s new tower master, seemed to be a unique person.

At the very least, they thought that the man who was set to be the Chef’s Tower’s tower master was normal. Alas, they were wrong on both counts.

“I have already received His Majesty’s orders. I’m set to open a store in the market and sell a variety of dishes. It’s a bit unfortunate, but the Chef’s Tower already has a tower master.”

“Is, is that so?”

‘The man’s not going to be the tower master but someone that would sell street food?’

Finally, there was the previous Fisherman's Tower's tower master Eck. The most important person out of all of them. This very same Eck approached the Fisherman's Tower's newly appointed tower master.

'He looks very handsome up close.'

Despite the new tower master's disheveled and unruly hair, his white skin, straight nose, glinting eyes, and sharp jawline gave him an unnatural beauty.

"I'm Eck, the previous tower master of the Fisherman's Tower. It's a bit abrupt but do you mind telling me what you did before you came to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom?"

The man, Gorfido, glanced at Eck then gulped the remaining alcohol in glass before spitting, "Pirate."

"Did, did you just say pirate...?"

The people that remained in the Fisherman's Tower, as well as the fishermen that came with Eck, all looked at Gorfido incredulously. Then, they all guffawed.

"No, are you telling me that a pirate is going to lead the Fisherman's Tower?"

"The Fisherman's Tower is the most famous tower in Beyond the Heavens Kingdom but you're telling me that a pirate is now in charge of it?"

"You, you impudent bastard!"

"How dare you answer the Legendary Fisherman Eck so rudely?!"

The people either laughed mockingly or jumped up in absurdity. The same was true for those that had stayed in the Fisherman's Tower because of their lingering attachment to the previous Barras Kingdom.

'Do we have to serve a pirate?'

'What kind of bullshit is this...'

'This is ridiculous...'

Eck, a former noble with the title of a count, looked ugly after hearing Gorfido's answer, "How, how dare you?! How dare you, a pirate, become the tower master of the Fisherman's Tower?! Are you out of your mind?! And you, a criminal at sea, how dare you speak rudely to me?!"

Despite his outrage, Gorfido just replied nonchalantly, "Yeah, idiot."

"...?!"

Gorfido was an untamable beast. He was, in fact, being a tad bit polite because he was in the presence of His Majesty Minhyuk. It was as though a speech patch was suddenly applied to his character. If it was his original way of speaking, then he would have definitely said, *'Do you want me to pluck your eyes and feed them to the crows?'* or something like that.

In the Athenae worldview, it was still impossible to jump continents, that was why most of the NPCs did not know. Even some of the players might still be unaware. However, almost none of them should be unaware of Gorfido's existence.

Meanwhile, Eck, who heard the words 'Yeah, idiot.', became furious.

"Hey! You goddamn pirate! Get down on your knees!!!"

With Eck's words, the knights around him pointed their sword at Gorfido. At that moment, Gorfido's eyes turned fierce. Eck's breath got stuck in his throat as Gorfido said, "Hey, you idiot. Can you stop making a noise in front of His Majesty?"

"..."

For a moment, everyone wondered what was up with Gorfido and his kindergarten-like curses. However, being on the receiving end of his childish curses, it was just very, very annoying. Even Gorfido himself was very frustrated at being civil. The knights kept their swords pointed at Gorfido. If they were at the Japanese Server, everyone would most definitely be shocked at this sight. But then...

"Former Tower Master Eck."

"...Yes, Your Majesty!" Eck's head quickly bowed down until it reached his stomach the moment he heard Minhyuk's dignified voice. It did not matter if the king in front of them was unkempt, a king was still a king. No king would tolerate anyone pointing a sword at the neck of their retainer.

"For, forgive me. I deserve to die...!"

"That's true."

"...!"

Eck's mouth suddenly stopped, his body trembling in fear, after feeling the sincerity and obvious intent in the tone of Minhyuk's voice.

"I have seen everything. Tell me, what is the difference between you laughing at the retainers that I brought forward, and you laughing at me?"

Step, step, step—

Minhyuk stepped forward and pointed his sword at Eck's neck, "Raise your head."

The cold and sharp sword grazed Eck's neck as he raised it.

Drip, drip—

Eck's blood dripped down his body as the sharp edge of the sword cut his skin from his movement.

'This, this crazy bastard!'

Eck felt both afraid and angry. No matter who it was, most kings and emperors were desperate to recruit him. But the man in front of him was truly intent on killing him.

Suddenly, a lifeline appeared.

“What are you doing?! Is this how you treat the Legendary Fisherman Eck? The moment you take his neck, all of the kingdoms will attack you!”

It was none other than Marquis Arna. Minhyuk stared at him with a grin before drawing his sword back.

“Heok, heok!”

“My retainer has been a bit rude so let’s stop it here. Gorfido’s civil speech is still a bit wonky, after all.”

Eck, who was released from Minhyuk’s sword, felt shame and disgrace wrap around his body. He wanted to rip apart the pirate in front of him. At that moment, Minhyuk said, “You look furious. Then, how about this?” He turned to look at the people around him as he proposed, “Compete with my retainers. If you lose, you will wear the ‘Shackles of Control’.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

The Shackles of Control was an item that has been passed down since ancient times and were used for punishing criminals. The moment they had been shackled, their most important abilities would be sealed and they would become nothing more than ordinary people for two straight years. For people with high DEX, these two years would spell the end of their livelihood.

However, Minhyuk’s words were not yet over, “I have been watching and lately, I noticed that those that remained in the towers long to be with the former tower masters. If they remain unsatisfied with the newly appointed tower masters in this competition, then they are free to go. However...” Minhyuk narrowed his eyes at Marquis Arna and the former tower masters, “...if your new disciples express their desires to join our current towers, I hope that none of you will stop them from doing so.”

After leaving those words, Minhyuk turned to look at Marquis Arna and Eck, “Also, I would like Marquis Arna and Former Tower Master Eck to keep this in mind. It would not be strange for me to take your necks right here and now.”

“...”

There was no denying Minhyuk’s words. If they did this in front of Eivelis Empire’s Ellie, their entire bloodline would have been wiped out already.

“The diplomats represent their kings and have the authority to decide, am I right? Are you willing to partake in this?”

In the first place, they came here to show everyone how weak the current tower masters were. They did not have any reason to refuse. Besides...

‘It would be utterly ridiculous if we lost against this bunch.’

‘We can completely bring the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom to their ruins!’

‘The Shackles of Control! Keuhahahaahahaha!’

‘He said it himself! He’s telling us that it’s okay for us to take away the remaining people in the towers!’

All of them cheered deep inside. And these people, who were given full authority to handle the matters in this place by their kings, nodded in agreement.

“We have to make it clear that none of us would be held accountable for whatever may happen in the future.”

“Of course.”

And with that, all of them stood up and moved to the place where the competition would be held. Unbeknownst to them, Minhyuk’s face was displaying a very vicious smile.

Legendary Fisherman Eck boarded a huge fishing boat and went out to sea near the borders of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, together with his new disciples and the remaining personnel in the tower.

“You should know this already but there are Dragon Fishes living in these waters.”

Dragon Fishes were gigantic fishes that closely resembled dragons, with an average length of nine meters. Once every two years, ordinary fishermen would get a chance to catch them. However, these fishes also had high levels so ordinary fishermen would usually die on the spot if they tried to catch them.

The only one that could catch the Dragon Fishes in the entire Asgan Continent was the Legendary Fisherman Eck. The moment Eck threw his line and bait...

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

...the bait started to bob madly in the sea. This was Eck’s specialty, fish tracking. The bait would follow and point in the direction of the fish that he wanted to catch. Around five minutes later...

Twitch, twitch—

The fishing line twitched and became taut. Eck immediately tugged the line. The fishing line flew to the skies and pulled out a Dragon Fish on its own. And finally...

Puhaaaaaaaaa—

[You have caught the legendary Dragon Fish!]

A huge Dragon Fish appeared in the skies. It was well over eight meters long with a beard that was as long as a dragon’s beard and a colorful array of scales!

“U, uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

“Crazy! This is crazy!!!”

“So crazy...!”

Truth was, Fisherman Eck also could not catch the Dragon Fish well. This was because he still had to fight against the ferocious beast despite catching it. But the reason why he opted to catch it despite knowing that it was too much for him, was so that he could show the pirate rat how weak he was.

Not long after, the knights pulled the Dragon Fish on board and knocked it out.

“Make it into sashimi so everyone can have a taste.”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaah! Can, can we really do that?”

“Of course. Ah, you know that Dragon Fishes taste different depending on their color, right? Their colors range from red, blue, green, to even black.”

“Ye, yes.”

The fishermen onboard were in awe and admiration. Meanwhile, the people that were still part of the Fisherman’s Tower thought...

‘As expected, I have to leave the Fisherman’s Tower, huh?’

‘It’s only right for us to follow Sir Eck, right?’

‘He’s really incredible...’

‘My goodness! This blue Dragon Fish is really priceless, right?! I can’t believe he gave us a chance to taste this.’

The people that stayed in the tower felt their will shake. But then, at that moment...

Rumbleeeeeee—

The sea suddenly churned as a rainstorm fell down from the skies above. Gorfido then moved towards the stern of the ship and stretched his arms forward to control the seas. The sea followed his whims, moving to where his hands were pointing at. And finally...

“Kieeeeeeeeeee!”

“Kkiiiiiiiiiiii!”

“Kiriririririri!”

Dragon Fishes of varying colors suddenly popped up on the surface of the sea and jumped on board by themselves.

“Kyaaaaaa!”

“Kyaaaaaa!”

“Kyaaaaaa!”

They even followed the movements of Gorfido’s arms, sticking themselves to the ships. Yes, the Dragon Fishes were showing their reverence as they worshipped Great Pirate ‘Gorfido’. Then, Gorfido turned to look back at the fishermen and said, “Choose whatever you like and have a taste.”

His words sounded strangely like, *‘I don’t know what you like so I bought each of everything.’*

“...!”

Eck was left speechless.

‘How could this be?! He’s just a measly pirate!’

Since Minhyuk was not here, Gorfido spoke in his usual tone and manner of speaking, “If you don’t want to be skinned then don’t even try pigging out.”

This was the start of the story of the Fisherman King.

1. The dragon they’re referring to here is the asian dragon.

Chapter 493: The New Tower Masters

Fisherman’s Tower’s Eck was the best fisherman in the entire Asgan Continent. He started fishing at the young age of five and had always won an award at every fishing competition in Asgan Continent. Although incomparable to those legends of the combat classes, Eck’s commercial value far surpassed anyone. But right now...

“Is, is this a dream? Am I seeing this for real?”

“How in the world...”

Those that remained in the Fisherman’s Tower that felt frustration at the fact that they would have to follow a pirate, as well as the new disciples that Eck brought to flaunt his greatness as he smashed the proud nose of the new tower master, were all staring wide-eyed at the scene in front of them. They all could not believe it, despite witnessing everything with their own eyes.

“You’re not eating? I don’t know what you prefer so I just grabbed one of each kind.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

Dragon Fishes of each color were flapping on the deck! And these were fishes that the man in front of them brought out because he did not know what they preferred!

‘Are you telling me that we can eat each kind of Dragon Fish if we stay with this person?!’

‘And that’s not all! This man is completely different from an ordinary fisherman! He’s the ruler of the sea himself! I want to learn his skills!’

‘In front of this person, Mister Eck is but a speck of dust!’

The remaining people in the current tower, as well as Eck’s new disciples all looked at Gorfido with eyes filled with longing. Did his identity matter? No. They might argue with him if he was just slightly better at fishing. But he was not. His skills were not just a little better, they were completely outstanding. His power was great enough for anyone to completely dismiss the fact that he was once a pirate.

Eck immediately realized that something was wrong. So, he tried to show everyone his newly found powers, “Actually, catching a Dragon Fish is not that special.”

What happened about the fact that he was worried about the shame that would come after catching the ‘Dragon Fish’ and getting attacked? He was spitting words that were completely contrary to his original thoughts. Despite his shamelessness, he continued to say, “This time, I’m going to show our dear fishermen the new power that I have acquired.” Eck smiled softly as he watched everyone’s attention turn back to him, “It’s none other than my Little Sea Creation.”

Blue light glowed from Eck’s hands as water started to flow in the skies above him. The water slowly gathered until it formed a little sea. Not long after, dozens of salmon appeared and jumped around, as his little sea stretched forward and turned into a ten meter long river.

“There, there’s actual fish inside?!”

“Uwaaaaaaaah...”

“If we have that ability, then we can just fish at home, right?”

“Ho~”

As their gasps of admiration entered Eck’s ears, he turned to Gorfido with a smug smile on his face. However, Gorfido was just wiping away the tears out of the corners of his eyes after a huge yawn. Then, as if finding the whole matter troublesome, he lazily stretched his hands out in the direction of the sea as...

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

...a tremendous amount of seawater shot out of his hand. The small sea that Eck created was instantly destroyed from the force of the seawater as it spread widely in the skies above them. It stretched to an area of about a hundred meters and made everyone feel as if they were being sandwiched by the sea below them and the sea above them. The scene of the seas above and below them was both mystical and shocking. And what was more, inside the sea above...

“Aren’t those Dragon Fishes? There’s a lot in there.”

“Hiiiiik!”

“Crazy! Truly and utterly crazy!”

At that moment, Eck finally tasted the true feeling of despair. Then, as if to nail that despair even further, his new disciples sneakily glanced at each other. When they thought about it, His Majesty

Minhyuk had made it easy for them. After all, he made it so that they would easily be able to switch sides and determine who they could serve. Knowing this, they all quickly made their decisions.

“Please, please take us in!!!”

“We want to be with you!!!”

“We will even swear our loyalty to you!!!”

Hearing those words, Gorfido looked at the people that suddenly knelt down in front of him. Some of them were people that remained in the current tower while some of them were the new disciples that Eck had brought here. There was only one thing that Gorfido said to these people, “Keep this in mind. The one that you will swear your loyalty and sacrifice your life for, is not me, but His Majesty Minhyuk.”

“We will keep it in mind!”

“We will keep it in mind!”

At the same time, Minhyuk, who was sitting happily and relaxed on his throne, heard a series of notifications.

[873 Fishermen have decided to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.]

[With the fishermen’s migration, the reputation of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom will spread to other fishermen.]

[The Fisherman’s Tower’s fishermen’s loyalty to you has dramatically increased.]

A relaxed smile formed at the corner of Minhyuk’s mouth. However, it was immediately replaced with a frosty expression as he thought, *‘You want to try me? I will take everything of yours and bring you down to your destruction.’*

Those that tried to bring down and touch the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would face frustration and helplessness soon.

The truth was, there was no way for the Tower of Knowledge’s new tower master Jarrod and the Commander’s Tower’s former tower master Annod to compete. They were paired up mainly because Jarrod, as the new tower master, took in the commanders that Annod had raised before. Annod asked sharply, “I cherish and love this tower deeply. It is to the point that I can safely say that I and this tower share the same life. But you changed it to the ‘Tower of Knowledge’. This means that you are very confident enough to take that name. What strategies and tactics do you have for this tower and its future?”

At Annod’s questions, the people that remained in the now Tower of Knowledge also turned to Jarrod wondering about his plans. In fact, they were already wondering if they should leave this tower because it was no longer the Commander’s Tower. Then, Jarrod answered, “It’s actually simple. I plan on teaching both foreigners and guardians alike about the attack patterns and methods of whatever they wanted to deal with. Of course, they’ll either have to pay or do me a favor for them to get this knowledge.”

It was literally knowledge about quests. In other words, the tower would become one that solves quests. However, did they need to come to the tower for something like that? There were plenty of quests all over the continent and for this method to succeed, the solutions and methods that they had to give should be excellent enough to charm people to flock to their tower.

But then, a notification rang for the players currently in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

[The Commander's Tower has been changed into the Tower of Knowledge!]

[Star Tactician Jarrod has been appointed as the Tower of Knowledge's Tower Master.]

[You can acquire the method of attacking a quest, monster or dungeon that you can't complete from Jarrod in these three days for free!]

As soon as the notifications rang, the players without any money and still had quests at hand flocked over upon hearing the words *'free for three days'*. Annod snorted. How could this man contribute to the country's development if he only gave advice? Annod was someone that had raised commanders! At this point, Annod firmly believed that this new tower would definitely lose popularity soon. On the other hand, Jarrod greeted one of the players and listened to his story.

"There's this bastard called Steel Monkey, you know? It's very hard to land an attack on it. As long as I can hunt it or pass it, I can complete my quest. But I haven't been able to complete my quest for thirty days because of that bastard. Is there any other way for me to complete my quest?"

Jarrod rubbed his chin in thought while Annod looked at the two of them incredulously, *'So he's out of his mind. This guy's power is definitely not enough to finish the task. No matter what happens, it will be hard to complete that quest.'*

As for Jarrod, he just said, "That's simple. You know about the snake called Tail Rattlesnake, right?"

"Yes, I know about them. I used to hunt them from the hunting ground that I came from before."

"If you collect the 50 'Tail Rattlers' from the Tail Rattlesnakes and make it into a large tail rattler and shake it in front of the Steel Monkey, it will run away. That guy is scared of loud sounds."

"Re, really?!"

"Yes. Well then, next please."

The people continued to line up in front of Jarrod. Up until that point, Annod was still relaxed. No, in fact he was denying the truth of the reality in front of him, *'Helping someone overcome their insurmountable hardships with just a few words? Is that even possible?'*

Alas, just four hours later...

“I, I was the person that couldn’t complete the quest because of the Steel Monkey earlier. I came here to thank you. Thank you Tower Master, it’s because of you that I was able to complete my quest safely!”

“I also got back after finishing my quest!”

“I was able to hunt the Swift-footed Lizard that I could not hunt until now!”

“The, The Tower of Knowledge is tried and tested! It’s real!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

The reason why Jarrod was equipped with those facts was because of the tremendous knowledge and information that he had gathered during his time as a strategist. With that, rumors would start to spread among the players and they would begin seeking him out to find ways to complete their unfinished quests, or kill those difficult boss monsters. Once the free-trial period ended, the people would have to pay a huge amount of money to receive advice from Jarrod, which would in turn reap tremendous benefits and profits for the Tower of Knowledge.

“...!”

Annod, who watched everything, was aware that all of the pieces of advice that Jarrod had given, were completely spot on.

‘At this rate, even emperors will seek him out for advice, right?’

Although Annod was still teaching his disciples, he was someone that had not yet migrated and swore his allegiance to any kingdom. He was actually still testing the waters. With this, he realized, *‘I can’t leave this place. I must stay close with this man!’*? Only then would he be able to break through his limits.

Annod immediately abandoned his arrogant attitude as he knelt down before Jarrod, “Please, please forgive my impertinence! I don’t care even if it’s a deputy tower master position, please, I beg you! Take me back!” He realized that he could grow stronger if he stayed with this man.

“You should pledge your loyalty to His Majesty Minhyuk and not me,” Jarrod said. He believed that it was not bad to take Annod in. This was because he would be able to bring in the ones that dreamt of becoming commanders if the tower master of the Commander’s tower was placed as the new tower’s deputy tower master.

Annod, together with his new disciples and the remaining members of the previous Commander’s Tower, swore their allegiance, making the notifications ring in Minhyuk’s ears once again.

[571 Officers of varying commanding positions have decided to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.]

[With the commanding officers’ migration, the troops of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom will become 5% stronger.]

[The commanding officers’ loyalty to you has dramatically increased.]

The smile on Minhyuk's face widened even further. What about the others?

“I, I lost...” Grein, the former tower master of the Painter’s Tower, said.

Elise had decided to compete by painting in front of thousands of people. As for the canvas they used? There was none. The two of them painted in the air. Elise painted the beautiful scenery of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. There was originally supposed to be a vote, but Grein fell into frustration the moment he heard the notifications.

[You have seen Elise’s ‘Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Night’.]

[The ones that have witnessed the painting will gain a 15% VIT, 10% INT, 5% STR and 5% STM increase.]

Just looking at the painting would give a person a buff that would remain for the day. Elise’s painting was both ridiculously beautiful and powerful. And just like the others, Grein also said, “I want to learn more about painting from you. Please allow me to stay by your side!”

[571 Painters have decided to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.]

[With the painters’ migration, the artistic value of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom will improve by 10%.]

[The painters will draw murals all over the capital every day. More people will come to visit Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and spur its tourism.]

Then, another notification rang from another place.

[811 Sculptors have decided to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.]

[With the sculptors’ migration, the artistic value of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom will improve by 8%.]

[The sculptors will create various sculptures every day and sell them all over the continent. You will be able to take in huge profits from the tax collected from the sales.]

Finally, Minhyuk looked at the terrified diplomats around him.

‘The tower masters that came with us either went back to their towers or were defeated.’

‘How will I face His Majesty like this?’

‘We can’t even complain since we made an agreement with the Beyond the Heavens’ King!’

“I already know what you were planning.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

The fact that the diplomats and the former tower masters came here to steal their talents was something that Minhyuk was already aware of. That was why he instructed the Stars, *‘Act like fools.’*

So, the Stars acted more foolish than usual and even deliberately appeared in front of them without changing their ragged clothes. The Five Stars were existences that had reached the summit not only in their own continent or the Asgan Continent, but the entire world. With their prowess, they were able to take back the talents that left, and even the treasured existences of each kingdom, turning them into assets for the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

The diplomats could only bow their heads in silence as their bodies shook fiercely from both anger and shame.

“Tell this to your kings. Every time you try to shake my Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, our kingdom will only become stronger. Every time you try to take away from my kingdom, we will only grow further. And if you keep on trying to stop us then we will keep on going ahead of you,” Minhyuk said, his eyes glaring sharply at the diplomats.

“Ughhhhh...”

“Huh...”

Then, Minhyuk with his dignified voice declared, “We will destroy all of the enemies that try to go against us.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

His bold remarks shocked the diplomats. Those were words that a new king of a newly established kingdom should not say. However, even if they had two or ten mouths, they could not retort.

Just as they were trying to leave, they could not help but stop in their tracks. This was because Marquis Arna did not move from where he was kowtowing. Seeing his state, the diplomats were shocked.

“He, he did it again...!”

“The Bed Wetter Arna strikes again!”

“I can’t believe it! He fainted...!”

The diplomats, with Marquis Arna on their backs, rushed out of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom as if they were being chased down. Just like that, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom began to grow more exceptional as the days went by.

Chapter 494: The New Tower Masters

The competition between the former tower masters and the new tower masters was spread through the various broadcasting stations, personal BJ broadcasts, and Know-it-all Dictionary, a BJ affiliated with Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. The people that watched the broadcast were all shocked.

[No matter how great the Five Stars are, they should not have been able to beat the former tower masters that easily, right? Is that really possible?]

[It's possible. The Five Stars are the greatest masters of DEX in the entire continent. Even though they are all legends, they're probably on different levels.]

[Shit. I also want to go there and learn painting...!]

[I'm a player who moved out of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom before and migrated back. The moment I migrated, I received a 15% buff increase in my DEX and DEX-related skills. It seems like it's because of the appearance of the Five Stars.]

[Did you just say that you received a 15% buff increase in DEX? OMG...]

Those that left the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom felt their hearts and bodies shake as they watched the competition between the former tower masters and new tower masters. On top of that, they were informed that they would immediately receive a 15% buff increase in DEX the moment they moved to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom?

Furthermore, with the exception of Fisherman Eck, the tower masters that left before and their disciples all decided to swear their loyalty to Minhyuk.

[I'll go back to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom again.]

[I think I may have to go to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom...? After all, moving to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would definitely allow us to improve on our production skills more quickly than our current state. There's no way I won't go.]

And the most important factor...

[Did you see how Gorfido fished? Shake, shake~]

[Kyaa! If Gorfido views me in a good light, then I'll be able to eat dragon fishes, right?]

[Gorfido's power is out of this world, right? Maybe we'll be able to get some hidden quest that will make us stronger if we can get close to him?]

...the ones that left the tower once hailed as Barras Kingdom's representative tower, the fishermen, had started to come back to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was definitely a budding country. However, even after knowing that, the benefits and merits that they could gain from the kingdom far outweighed that. That was why they moved back again.

In just a few days, a large number of production class players began to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. Just like that, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom grew rapidly.

Mercenary King Brod was an existence that had traveled through all of the continents. He was a legend among all of the mercenaries.

The twinkling stars in the dark skies illuminated the bitter smile on Brod's face as he walked through the territory.

‘They would definitely not let His Majesty go,’ Brod thought, his fists clenching tightly to a fist. Minhyuk was very active as he moved forward with his plans. That was why Brod felt both terror and desire, a desire to protect him, rise in his heart.

That meant that it was time for him to leave for a while.

“Oinky, you should remember to eat well. You too, Cluck-cluck.”

“Hwiiiiik!”

“Cluck, cluck!”

Brod greeted the livestock that he trained and raised before walking once again. Then, he stopped in front of a large mansion whose lights in the mansion’s attic were still on. That was the place where Best Selling Author Aruvel created his works. He then looked at the farm teeming with cats that was littered with various instruments and tools to maintain the ‘scent of coffee’ in them. There, he saw Ghost Spear Ben training, despite it being late in the night.

‘I’ll leave His Majesty to you.’

Although Ghost Spear Ben’s black hair was a source of laughter, he was the most fashionable out of everyone in the territory. He was also a warrior that would give his everything to protect His Majesty. This time, Brod passed by Conir’s Ramyeon Handcart Shop and the central plaza where Paladin Corr gave his speech and teachings. After walking like that, he sat next to Elpis, who was humming on one of the benches with his earphones on.

Elpis took off his earphones and asked, “You’re leaving?”

Brod smiled as he nodded in answer.

“Don’t worry. I’ll protect His Majesty while you’re away,” Elpis said. His words that usually stuttered and stopped at awkward moments had already improved by a lot.

Brod believed that Elpis would be able to protect His Majesty. He also felt that it was fortunate that Gorfido, the new tower master of the Fisherman’s Tower, appeared just recently. Before he left, Brod handed three old parchments to Elpis.

[You have acquired three Demigod Training Parchments.]

Elpis looked at Brod in doubt as Brod clarified, “Give that to those that wish to become stronger in our territory. However, make sure that they are careful. Using that means that they’re prepared to face death. After all, there’s a high chance of dying the moment that parchment is used.”

Truth be told, Elpis could feel the danger emitting from the items in his hands. However, there were still people in the territory that would willingly risk their lives just to get stronger. The biggest example was Ghost Spear Ben, who was training instead of sleeping at this late hour. This was Brod’s gift to them.

“Where did you get this?”

“I picked it up somewhere.”

“You stole again?”

“Cough!”

This was Brod’s bad habit! After all, he was someone that stealthily stole the Dragon Lord’s egg, and even extorted and took away the summoner’s summons during the war with Barras Kingdom! It seemed like Elpis knew Brod well. This was because the item was something that Brod had stolen from the world above them. Just when Brod stood up from the bench to leave Valencia capital...

“Have a safe trip, Brod.”

Brod, with his lonely departing back, suddenly stopped in his tracks. When he turned around, he saw the sweaty Ghost Spear Ben, who he thought was training up until now. There was also Sword Saint Conir, who was rubbing his eyes to stay awake and stave off his fatigue.

Grrrrrr—

There was also Cerberus, who had a stronger love and hoped for his happiness, crying out for him. Right next to them was Aruvel, the author that vowed to create a wild and steamy story about the Mercenary King, and Corr that forced him to believe in Talmor by saying that he lacked hair on his head.

And in the middle of them all, stood one person. The one and only ‘king’ and ‘friend’ that he swore his loyalty to: Minhyuk.

Brod immediately knelt down, “Your Majesty! This vassal of yours, Brod, will definitely come back one day, to be by your side!!!”

“That’s more than enough for me,” Minhyuk said, smiling softly. He knew that it was a promise, Brod’s promise, that he would come back alive to them. In the first place, Brod was a man that had dreams. He was meant for greater things. When Queen Iris asked Minhyuk to take care of Brod, he already guessed that Brod would leave one day. It was not the time for them to hold him back. It was the time for them to set him free and let him soar. After kneeling for a long time, Brod finally stood up and turned around.

But what Minhyuk did not know was that Brod was leaving not for him, but for others.

‘I will protect you, Your Majesty.’

As he left the capital, his memories with Minhyuk surfaced in Brod’s mind.

‘Brod, can’t I just have one of the Oinkys?’

‘You can’t! They’re my precious Oinkys...!’

‘Then, let’s just eat chicken with the Cluck-clucks! How about half-fried and half-seasoned?!’

‘How, how can you say something so barbaric...?!’

‘Brod, you’re so mean!’

‘Brod, I feel so safe and secure with you here!’

‘Our Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Sword, Brod!’

‘Brod?!’

‘Brod!!!’

During Brod’s short stay here, he was able to gain precious memories and Minhyuk’s trust and faith in him. And that was how Brod left to protect Minhyuk.

The kings of Asgan Continent had once again gathered together. However, they were all grimacing after hearing the reports of their diplomats.

“The number of people migrating to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom is increasing.”

“Our people started this and stood at the center of the disturbance so there’s no way we could stop those foreigners from migrating.”

“The fishermen from all over the continent had started to migrate to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom the moment Legendary Fisherman Eck lost his fishing abilities to the Shackles of Control.”

“If things continued at this rate, Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would continue to grow rapidly.”

Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was a nation founded by foreigners. The kings present had shown the world that they did not recognize the Beyond the Heavens kingdom, by refusing to engage in diplomatic discussions. They even sent the former tower masters and their own diplomats to take them down this time. However, the plan that they thought was perfect collapsed easily in front of that king.

There were even the words that the diplomats relayed, *‘We will destroy all of the enemies that try to go against us.’*

Hearing this, the kings had no choice but to clench their fists in anger.

“I can’t stand this! We should face Beyond the Heavens Kingdom!”

“You want to have a confrontation with Beyond the Heavens Kingdom? Did you not see the Sword God, Saintess Loyna and Eivelis Empire and Collodis Empire’s emperors that attended their founding ceremony?!”

“I’m not implying that we will go to war. We don’t have a justification for that. However, we can’t just ignore those insults and take them lying down.”

They were actually in denial. They were people that did not care whether the empires rebuked them or not. All they cared about was how they could flock like starving hyenas to bite the injured, just like how they planned to do to Barras Kingdom.

Then, one of the kings said, “Lumae Kingdom’s Prince Votto, why aren’t you speaking up?”

Everyone's gaze focused on one place at the king's words. Lumae Kingdom was the kingdom with the smallest population and territory among them. However, none of the kingdoms could ignore the Lumae Kingdom. This was because they were the 'Warrior's Land'.

They might have the smallest population and territory, but all of their citizens were far stronger than any of the soldiers that their kingdoms housed. Their kingdom was even teeming with talents! Baroque Kingdom might have a population and territory that was five times higher than that of Lumae Kingdom, but this small kingdom would not lose any ground against them.

However, Votto, the first prince of the kingdom, just shook his head, "Sorry."

"What a pity."

"Where did the Lumae Kingdom, the kingdom that all the other kingdoms and empires in the past feared, go?"

"As expected, they truly need King Raldo."

The Warrior's Nation's King Raldo was comparable to Sword Emperor Ellie in strength during the time when he was leading the warriors.

But what was happening with him now?

He was stuck in his bed in a deep sleep. Knowing this, the kings tried to take advantage of the prince's clouded judgment to take advantage of their kingdom, but it all amounted to nothing.

Prince Votto, who was riding in his carriage on his way back to his kingdom, thought, '*God damn! If only my father is hale and hearty...!*'

Votto's father was struck with a strange disease that made him fall into deep sleep. Because of this, his father could not continue to train which made him weaker and weaker. And he could tell that the kings intended to shake the Lumae Kingdom's foundation at this very moment.

'If I can do it, then I want to present Beyond the Heavens Kingdom to my father for him to recognize me.' Compared to his father, Votto's reputation was at rock bottom. No, it was just that his father's reputation was just too high. But then, at that moment...

"Bastard!"

"What, what the hell?!"

"Keheoooo! I can't move!"

Screams began to ring from outside the carriage. Votto immediately pulled out his sword and went out. However, the scene that greeted him brought him into a shock. The more than a thousand knights that accompanied him were all in a stunned state.

'This, this is crazy! This AOE magic attack is ridiculous...!'

However, his shock grew further after seeing the presence in front of him. It was because it was none other than a dragon. On top of this dragon was a man covered in a black robe, wearing a skull mask and holding a scythe in his hands. The man slowly descended from atop the dragon's head and said, "I have seen Lumae Kingdom's Prince Votto."

Votto gulped dryly as he watched the man slowly lower his head in front of him. Someone that had a dragon under him was bowing down his head to him?

"I must apologize, I used the dragon's power so we can avoid having a huge conflict between us. It would be convenient if you would listen to my explanation in detail," The man said as he glanced at Votto through the skull mask, "Don't you want to grab Beyond the Heavens Kingdom with your own hands?"

"...?!"

Did he want to grab Beyond the Heavens Kingdom with his own power? Of course. What would happen if he absorbed this newly established and weak country with a rapid growth rate? Then, Prince Votto's reputation and position would grow. And that was not all.

"Do you want to take the kingdoms of this continent under your command?"

"What...?"

It had to be a dream. Votto believed it to be a vain and impulsive dream. But suddenly, a white and brilliant staff appeared in front of the man. Prince Votto looked at the white staff and the eyes of the man beneath his skull mask alternately in suspicion. It seemed like he was confirming something with the man's gaze.

"Ho, how...?!"

After confirming, Prince Votto fell on his back in disbelief. The man's staff was none other than a 'God Artifact'. That was right. There was another person that had achieved something that had almost reached God other than Minhyuk.

This man was none other than Crazy Tyrant Akhan.

Akhan carefully led Votto to a woody and secluded forest. Inside this forest stood countless people. No. They were not exactly people.

'D, Dragon...?'

There were countless dragons inside the forest. Then, Crazy Tyrant Akhan asked, "Will you join us?"

Prince Votto did not hesitate to answer that question, "I will join you."

Chapter 495: Demon Kimaris

After coming out of his Athenae Access Capsule, Minhyuk exercised and ate his salad as usual. After emptying six plates of salad in one go, he stood up in front of the mirror and thought, '*There's definitely a lot of improvement.*'

He was now standing at 185 centimeters in height and 88 kilograms in weight. He had gained some weight after the Athenae: World War, but he was losing weight faster than when he used the drug that they developed for him. In fact, he was already banned from taking any more doses of the drug.

'*The side effects are pretty severe.*'

The drug's side effects included extreme fatigue, arthritis, and dehydration. Lee Jinhwan, his doctor-in-charge, had also advised that there would be adverse effects if he continued to take any more doses of the drug.

'But I'm definitely better than in the past.'

Minhyuk looked at his figure in the mirror as he threw jabs and punches in the air. Compared to when he started Athenae, where he could not even move his body as he wanted, he felt as light as a feather. This meant that there were many changes in his body.

Then, Oh Changwook approached him and said, "You still remember about your physical and medical examination tomorrow, right?"

"Yep, I know."

Minhyuk had taken his physical and medical examination in his home so far. After all, his house was equipped with equipment and instruments that were comparable to the ones in the hospitals. However, the tests that they did at home would eventually reach the limit.

So, they all decided for him to undergo his physical and medical examination at a hospital in America. The main reason why they chose to do it in America was so they could study eating addiction and discuss even further with renowned doctors to find a cure for the disease in the future.

Another reason was to participate in writing theses and papers about the treatment process and give hope to other patients. They could also check whether his high blood pressure, diabetes and arrhythmia had improved with this examination. However...

'I won't be able to access Athenae for two days.'

Minhyuk was already the king of a nation so not being able to access the game for two straight days was a huge deal.

'We need to fill up the spot that Brod has left empty.'

Before he went for his physical and medical examination, there was still something that Minhyuk had to do.

'I have to make Demon Kimaris my subordinate,' Minhyuk thought as he immediately accessed the game.

Great Demon Verus and the 72 Devils were modeled after the Lesser Key of Solomon. Among these demons, Kimaris ranked 66th. He also had the title of a marquis. His ranking was on the lower side and he could even be said to be extremely weak among the demons in terms of force and power.

Minhyuk was able to summon Kimaris thanks to the Demon Summoning Ring in his hands. In fact, he could only summon Kimaris for the rest of the summons since the Demon Summoning Ring explicitly stated that the demon that he first summoned would be fixed. It was also because of that that Minhyuk was able to check Kimaris' status window.

?Active Skill: Dreams of Truth

?Active Skill: Demonic Axe Technique

?Active Skill: Demonic Footwork

?Passive Skill: Unparalleled Bravery

?Passive Skill: The One that Gained Enlightenment

According to the Lesser Key of Solomon, Kimaris was a demon known for making man courageous. Kimaris was also known for being able to locate hidden and lost treasures. There were three skills in his repertoire to prove this.

Passive Skill

Effects:

?Those that fight alongside Kimaris will receive a 15% increase in all of their stats.

?Those that rush fiercely and courageously in the battlefield and have forgotten the fatigue of their bodies and their fears, as if they were never there to begin with, will gain better effects.

‘This is crazy.’

It was out of this world. It was just one of Kimaris’ skills but it was amazing. As long as they got Kimaris on their side, they would become 15% stronger. Also...

‘Those that forget their fears will become stronger.’

The biggest shackle in a battle was ‘fear’. This was something that was deeply ingrained in a man’s instinct when facing something that towered above them. Of course, overcoming and forgetting those fears was not an absolute solution.

But it would be a tremendous help to Minhyuk’s troops and guild members if they could forget that fear as they fought, no matter how slight.

Then, he looked at the next skill.

Passive Skill

?It would help those that wanted to protect something, those that longed to gain victory, those that realized how weak they were and many more to awaken new powers at their most desperate point.?

?For someone to awaken a new power, they must have enough power to grow further.

‘Isn’t this skill crazier than the one before?!’ Minhyuk thought as he clicked his tongue. It was an overpowered skill that granted Kimaris the ability to unlock someone’s hidden power upon their awakening.

‘So it’s true that none of them could ignore him, even if he’s a demon of low rank.’

Sometimes, lower ranked demons had greater value than higher ranked demons. But only after seeing Kimaris’ abilities was Minhyuk able to cement this fact as the truth.

‘Kimaris is a demon that will shine brightly if he is with humans.’

And finally...

Active Skill

?There are times when people forget where they put their things. Kimaris can stimulate that memory by putting them to sleep.

?There are times when people that have made legendary achievements, in fact even gods, have forgotten where they have hid their treasures and powers. If that happened, Kimaris can give them a glimpse of the place where they hid it, however it would be in their dreams.

‘This one’s crazy too...’

A significant number of those that had made legendary achievements or NPCs with incredible power might not remember the place where they hid their treasures, skill books, or other items.

The reason?

It was simple. It was because they were devices for quests. And this power would allow them to get a glimpse of it in advance.

‘There are only three summons left in the Demon Summoning Ring.’

Once the number of summons had been used up, the Demon Summoning Ring would disintegrate. Minhyuk went to an open space somewhere in the vicinity of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. Beside him were Gorfido, Ghost Spear Ben, Best Selling Author Aruvel, Elpis and Beanie. The reason why they went to an open space was because they wanted to avoid incurring huge damages in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom should Kimaris decide to run rampant and plunge the world in despair. They must successfully win Kimaris over in this place. To do that, they needed to come up with a plan.

“What’s a good method?”

The first one to answer was Gorfido, "I think torture is good. Tie both his arms and legs with a rope and..."

"Gorfido. Good thoughts, happy thoughts. Didn't I tell you to only say nice things?"

"I think we should just continuously make him feel hurt," Gorfido said, which made Minhyuk shake his head. They must win Kimaris' heart for him to become their true, trusted subordinate and ally.

This time, Beanie raised his paws. Beanie, who had climbed on Elpis' shoulder, crossed his arms and looked at them arrogantly.

"Oink, oink, oink!" *I have a good idea, oink!*

All of them turned to look at him. Then, Beanie said, "Oink, oink oink, oink!" *Give him chicken then ask him to be our ally, oink!*

"..."

"..."

"..."

"..."

Almost all of them shook their heads at the arrogant baby piggy. They were all dumbfounded at his suggestion. However, there was one person that agreed, "Right. That's definitely the best method. No one refuses chicken."

All of them looked at Minhyuk with gaping mouths.

"Then, our first method is seduction through cooking."

In fact, Minhyuk knew that it might be futile to seduce Kimaris to their side with just chicken. However, he had brought many people to his side with his cooking so far. After all, food was both a necessity and a source of joy for the lives of humans.

And the second method...

"How about making him recognize you through strength and force, Your Majesty?" Ghost Spear Ben said as he handed Minhyuk a glass of freshly made iced americano.

Minhyuk nodded as he drank the iced americano in one shot. That was also true. However, it was also a method that could create hostility. After all, it was impossible for someone that served Great Demon Verus to willingly serve Minhyuk.

Then, Aruvel said, "How about placing him in a small room with my novel. Then, we'll cut it when he's in the final volume and..."

Aruvel's eyes twinkled. It was a very novel idea. However, the funny thing was...

'There are a lot of people who claimed to be Aruvel's fans that actually moved to the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, right?'

Aruvel's novels were far more powerful and influential than they thought. As Minhyuk thought about that, he suddenly realized, *'We don't even know what kind of being Kimaris is, right? So what's the point of talking like this?'*

Nothing would change. It was necessary for them to summon Kimaris for now and see exactly what kind of being he was. With that, Minhyuk declared that he would summon Kimaris. Everyone immediately took caution. The moment he showed hostility, everyone would attack him head on. The biggest problem here would be his hostility, which would only increase the more attacks they used on him.

"Summon demon."

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

[Demon Kimaris has appeared!]

[You have summoned Kimaris through the Demon Summoning Ring. Kimaris is a wild and untameable demon. Keep in mind that he can attack you and your comrades.]

Tremendous amount of demonic energy appeared and swirled in the skies, shaking the trees and grass in the forest. As the demonic energy gathered in one place, the figure of a black soldier with a huge ax hanging on his shoulders appeared in front of them. His eyes that were completely black looked around. Everyone looked at him cautiously. After meeting only once, Kimaris had labeled Minhyuk as a mere human and of course, there was great hostility towards such a measly being.

However, their worries were unfounded. Kimaris only took a deep breath after taking a look around them, *"Fwaaaaaaaaaaa."* As he exhaled, there was a strange sense of feeling refreshed displayed on his face. Then, he trudged forward to sit on top of a small boulder and asked, "Your business?"

"..."

Minhyuk and his vassals were all flustered. They had expected him to show anger and hostility and attack them the moment he appeared. That was the case with the last summon. However, Kimaris was a very clever demon. The fact that Minhyuk could summon him meant that he had sealed 'Great Demon Verus'. This meant that he could not win against them here. So, he believed that there was no need to fight such a useless battle.

Minhyuk spoke in a dignified voice, "Kimaris. Swear your eternal allegiance..."

"Don't want to."

"..."

Minhyuk nodded at his straight up refusal. In fact, he knew that it was pure luck that winning Gorfido and Ghost Spear Ben's hearts and then swearing their allegiance to him was just pure luck. After all, it was very difficult to obtain retainers that way.

This time, Aruvel approached Kimaris. He was a member of the demon race. So, there was a chance that he could decrease Kimaris' hostility. Then, he presented his novel, "It's a steamy novel about a demon's love. Would you like to read it?"

"I don't know how to read."

"..."

The first plan failed.

“How about something to eat...” Minhyuk asked.

“Food? I usually eat centipede brain or elven bones, do you have those?”

“...”

The second plan failed. After all, they could not make elven fried chicken, right?

“Then, how about I make you submit?”

“Too troublesome.”

The third plan failed.

“You bastard, I’ll skin you until you swear that you will obey,” Gorfido threatened.

“Sure. Try it.”

“...”

It seemed like Gorfido would not be able to force him to obey. So, the fourth plan also failed. If he was violent, then they could subdue him since Kimaris was the one that would attack first. But if they were the ones that attacked first to induce obedience then it would be impossible for Kimaris to give his true heart to Minhyuk and live with them. He can’t cook for him and they can’t even make him read Aruvel’s steamy novels because he’s illiterate.

Unbeknownst to them, Kimaris was actually enjoying the scenery.

Tweet, tweet—

“That’s nice.”

The sight of Kimaris enjoying the view of birds flying in the skies was completely contrary to the image of a ferocious and vicious demon. And when the summon time ended...

“I know that you have two more summons left in the Summoning Ring. Extend my summoning. I want to enjoy this scenery longer.”

Kimaris’ tone when he asked to extend the summons sounded strangely like, *‘Boss, can I get an additional thirty minutes in the karaoke booth?’*

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”

Everyone was left speechless.

1. This probably refers to the phrase “making a man into a warrior of his own likeness” that used to describe Kimaris

Chapter 496: Demon Kimaris

Kimaris was once a human. However, it was such a long time ago that it had already turned into an old story that he could not remember. It was a part of him that resembled Elpis. But unlike Elpis, who was forced to become a vessel for demonic energy, Kimaris willingly became a demon.

.

He used to be a soldier fighting desperately in the battlefield. And on the battlefield, Kimaris was the only black soldier in the entire continent, a continent that he could no longer remember the name of. His efforts in the battlefield were never recognized. Despite being a soldier, his disposition and aura were completely different from the rest. He was also faster and stronger than anyone in the battlefield. There was even a time when he successfully cut off the neck of the enemy's commander, but his deeds were never recognized because of his status. Just because he was black.

Kimaris had lived a life of discrimination. He had always been ignored and trampled on, which made his anger against these people and hatred toward such an unfair world boil over. When he reached that point, Great Demon Verus appeared in front of him with his hands held out.

That was how he became a 'demon'.

The demon Kimaris that everyone feared was now...

'This is nice.'

...enjoying his leisurely outing on earth. His hatred for the world? It had been a long time so he had mostly forgotten about it. For him, it was just so fun and enjoyable to watch the flowers, trees and grass, things that were not present in the Demon World, sway in the wind.

[The Demon Summoning Ring's summoning time has been extended.]

In the end, Kimaris was able to successfully extend his time here by another half an hour. The reason why Minhyuk extended his summons was because, *'Even if we rack our brains right now, there's no chance that we will be able to win his heart.'*? He knew that nothing would change even if they summoned him at another time. Everything had to be settled today.

Hence, Minhyuk cooked a meal for Kimaris. The dish that he decided to make was none other than grilled pork belly, a dish that had an amazing scent when being prepared. He sat in front of Kimaris as he grilled the pork belly.

Sizzle—

He lined up a row of pork belly on top of the hot stone grill, before adding a row of well-ripened kimchi right next to it.

Sizzle—

The enticing sound of the pork and kimchi being grilled erupted as Minhyuk grabbed his scissors to cut the meat. Then, he clamped a piece of pork belly, dipped it in ssamjang and placed it in his mouth.

"Kghhkh~ This is very delicious. I think it's much better than that centipede brain you're talking about~ right~?"

He also chomped on a mouthful of steaming white rice, before following up with a spoonful of soybean paste stew complete with zucchini and tofu. He slowly savored the dishes that he put in his mouth.

Alas, Kimaris was not interested in what he was doing at all. Minhyuk recalled the people that had been seduced by his mukbang as he watched the uninterested Kimaris sadly.

Of course, they did not stop there. They tried a variety of methods.

Tap, tap, tap, tap, tap—

Beanie quickly approached Kimaris. He sat down in front of the demon and looked up at him with his big and shining eyes.

“Oiiiiiiiink...”

Beanie was acting cute and pretending to be pitiful! However, instead of feeling pity, Kimaris just slowly took his axe from his shoulder.

“...hwiiiiik!” Beanie squealed loudly as he ran away at the speed of light.

The clock still continued to tick away but they still could not do anything. Even Minhyuk, who usually did not give up, could not find an answer.

‘Is it even possible to win a demon’s heart in the first place? Also, he doesn’t spend much time with either me or my vassals.’

He only had his third summon left. And it was just for thirty more minutes. It was impossible to change someone’s mind in that short amount of time. Just when Minhyuk and his vassals were about to give up, the most unexpected person made a move. It was Elpis.

Elpis sat next to Kimaris as he handed him his earphones and said, “Do you want to listen to it?”

“...What is this?”

“It’s a tool for listening to music.”

Kimaris was unfamiliar with the term so he just nodded as if he found it alright. Then, a beautiful melody flowed through his ears. The melody was not the usual ‘Swallowtail Butterfly’ that Elpis liked to listen to, but a beautiful and calm classical music. Elpis handed the other earphone so Kimaris could listen to the music fully. Kimaris looked around as he listened to the music. With the calm classical music, the surrounding scenery became more beautiful. It was quite a novel tool. He just put it in his ears yet it made everything around him more beautiful.

Then, Kimaris turned to Elpis with curiosity, “I want to hear your story. Diablo.”

Kimaris was a demon serving under Verus. However, he did not feel as if they were betrayed by Diablo. After all, Diablo was a human and not a demon. Besides, he was forcefully dragged into the Demon World. Minhyuk looked at Elpis worriedly. After all, an unexpected situation might suddenly appear around them.

However, Elpis just nodded at him slightly, *‘Don’t worry.’*

There was nothing for Minhyuk to worry about between Elpis and Kimaris. Because Elpis was not weak enough that he would be beaten by Kimaris. The two of them headed toward the forest.

Kimaris asked, “Why are you serving a measly human?”

Elpis looked over the forest to where his friends were after hearing the question. Kimaris mostly understood Elpis. He understood why Elpis wanted to cut down the demons after they made him into a vessel for their demonic magic and turned him into a lesser demon. He also understood why Elpis was very furious at Great Demon Verus.

But, there was one thing that he could not understand. He did not know why Elpis swore his eternal loyalty to a human. Elpis answered, “Because he taught me how to be happy. And right now, I’m happier than I’ve ever been.”

Kimaris’ face was filled with doubt. So, Elpis smiled and continued, “Look over there. Everyone is different.”

His words reminded Kimaris of the fact that everyone over there was truly different from each other. There was an old man that looked like he was going to have a hard time holding a spear and there was also a pig. There was even a member of the demon race that loved steamy novels and a crazy pirate. And right in front of him was Diablo, the Lesser Demon.

Throb—

Kimaris felt his head ache as memories of the past flashed in his head.

Because of his different skin and race, no one treated him kindly. In fact, none of them treated him like a human. That was why he ran away. The scene in front of him was completely unfamiliar.

“Everyone is different from each other. However, everyone is laughing and enjoying their time together. This is what the king that I serve made happen.”

Kimaris glanced at Elpis after hearing his words, ‘*Kings that walked down this path usually walked the path of downfall.*’? It was only natural. A king that was not cold-hearted, or one who was obsessed with emotions could ruin everything.

“Sometimes playful, sometimes greater than everybody, sometimes like a child, and sometimes stronger than a demon.”

Kimaris turned to look at Minhyuk as he listened to Elpis.

“That’s the king that I serve.”

Kimaris did not feel much or realize anything after hearing his words. However, it made him think that it was ‘interesting’. Then, he thought, ‘*If I served such a man when I was still human then perhaps...*’

Would my life back then change? Would I even be a devil??

Kimaris had lived for hundreds of thousands of years now and living this long was quite burdensome.

‘*A final amusement...*’

He could still have a bit of fun while he was still living. So, Kimaris took a step forward again.

Minhyuk and the rest of his vassals came to a final decision while Elpis and Kimaris were talking. They would put the final summon on hold. No matter what they thought, there seemed to be no way for them to get Kimaris' heart. However, they did not necessarily have to remove the opportunity to summon him like that.

Then, Elpis and Kimaris approached them. Even though he was just walking, Kimaris, who looked like a huge black soldier, was emitting tremendous pressure. Kimaris looked around the vassals before turning to Minhyuk and saying, "I will not serve a human."

Minhyuk smiled bitterly at his words. It was something that he already expected. But then, Kimaris continued to say, "But I want to enjoy the entertainment that your kingdom has for a bit longer."

"...?!"

Minhyuk already realized that Kimaris' words were a precursor to a new quest. Then, the notifications rang.

Minhyuk brightened up after hearing the notifications. The time that they were given during each summon was too short for them to do anything.

But what if they were given a month?

'Are you telling me that I can really make a demon like that my vassal?'

The thought was enough to make Minhyuk's heart pound. However, it was still dangerous to leave Kimaris alone since there was a chance that he would change his mind at any given moment. So, Elpis decided to stay with Kimaris at all times.

Minhyuk immediately logged out, boarded their private jet and promptly fell asleep as they set off for America, completely unaware of the impending disaster that was coming their way.

There was a story about fifty troops from Lumae Kingdom, the Warrior's nation, assassinating and killing tens of thousands of enemy troops that circulated in the continent. This story was considered as a myth by most, but it was actually true. King Raldo and his kingdom knights truly assassinated their enemies with their measly numbers.

Warrior King Raldo was also known as Overlord Raldo. He was a living and breathing legend; even Sword Emperor Ellie could not deal with him easily. He was also one of the Absolute Supreme NPCs, just right below Ellie in terms of position.

King Raldo was the owner of a passive skill that could break the limits of another, which was why the Lumae Kingdom was filled with countless warriors. Even the number of the legends in their kingdom was comparable to Eivelis Empire.

Right now, the three hundred elite knights that Raldo had personally raised were now lurking outside Valencia. Their mission was simple. All they needed to do was remove the core forces of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom in Valencia before Prince Votto made his move. Most of them were guardians and since the guardians' lives were not infinite, they had to make sure that they could take away those guardian's lives and completely remove the core of their power.

There were five leaders that were leading these troops: legendary NPCs hailed as the Undefeated Knights. They were knights that could cut down more than a thousand enemies by themselves. Among them was Arca, the person closest to the Sword Saint in power and was this mission's general commander.

'Beyond the Heavens Kingdom is full of exaggerated rumors,' Arca snickered.

There were many legendary existences in Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. However, the stories that surrounded them were too exaggerated. From what they heard, there was an old man that pierced the body of a black dragon in one go, a young boy that taught the Knight's Tower's tower master swordsmanship, and the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom's shield that even the great demon Verus coveted.

'I'm pretty sure Beyond the Heavens Kingdom created these rumors so they could protect themselves,' Arca thought as he divided his troops into five and sent them away. The Undefeated Knights would lead the knights and do five separate raids.

Just when Arca was about to move with the fifty knights in his troops, they heard the sound of a blade cutting through air. Arca immediately raised his hand to signal his troops to stop. That was when he saw an old man trying to catch his breath after practicing his spearmanship at this late hour of the night.

'How can an old man like that...'

Why was the old man so lively and energetic? In fact, the bulging muscles that were highlighted by the drops of sweat flowing on them were very attractive. Even the old man's gaze was very sharp.

This old man was none other than Ghost Spear Ben. He had been practicing until late into the night after realizing the limits of his power, *'The enemies that we're going to face in the future will only get stronger. However, it's very hard for me to break through my limits if I stay still. I want to get stronger, at the very least as strong as Elpis and Brod.'*

Ben wanted to protect Minhyuk and the kingdom that the boy built. He was aware that his strength was still lacking, that was why he was training and practicing his techniques, even at his age.

Arca, after looking at Ghost Spear Ben, realized that the old man in front of him was the Ghost Spear of the rumors. The very same old man that was said to have pierced through the body of a

black dragon. Arca wanted to duel with the old man. But he held himself back. He knew that the element of surprise was very important in their mission. After all, a kingdom war was already on the brink of breaking out.

‘That old man’s power is just something that those rumors blew out of proportion anyway,’ Arca thought as he tried to look back at his men to give them his secret orders.

But just when he was about to look back...

“I have never allowed you to step foot in His Majesty’s lands.”

Stab—

...a member of the knight order collapsed on the ground.

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

And...

Stab, stab stab, stab—

Five knights fell down one after the other. And along with that, a chilly voice rang behind Arca, the person known to be the closest to the Sword Saint.

“Die.”

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

The spear moved in a ghostly manner as it attacked Arca dozens of times. All Arca could do was swing his sword to block the attack.

Spurt—

Blood spurted out of Arca’s mouth as his body was sent flying back from the impact of one of the attacks.

“Urk!”

The old man, who looked to have wielded his spear for over forty years now, did not lose his ground and was even ferocious as he fought against a knight of Arca’s caliber. That was when Arca realized, *‘Legend...? No, he’s more than a legend. What in the world is that old man?’*

A legend above legends. That was Ghost Spear Ben, Minhyuk’s first vassal and personal barista.

Chapter 497: The Raiders

Ghost Spear Ben was once the eighth-ranked Pinnacle Strong Man. He was also famous for hunting the legendary snake, Ouroboros. All of the spearmen of the continent shaped their dreams after

listening to stories of him. In fact, some were still training in their spearmanship after declaring that they would surpass his achievements.

Initially, Ghost Spear Ben was just a man that held a common legendary title. Perhaps, his name was just one among the many legends when compared to the God classes. But right now, Ghost Spear Ben had become a legend among legends. He was able to rapidly grow after spending a long time with Minhyuk. It was even safe to say that Ghost Spear Ben was now one of the Supreme NPCs.

Arca unknowingly staggered back after feeling the fierce momentum emanating from Ben.

Knights of the Land of Warriors, Lumae Kingdom, were distinctly different from ordinary knights. Years ago, a 'Knight's Great War' erupted in the continent. It was a festival that happened across the entire Asgan Continent wherein all of the empires and kingdoms would send their selected knights to fight a duel in order to select the nation with the strongest knights. All of the kingdoms believed that the knights of Eivelis Empire, the empire that housed Sword Emperor Ellie, would overwhelm the other participating knights.

However, contrary to their expectations, the knights of Lumae Kingdom were the ones that overwhelmed the knights of Eivelis Empire. Since then, the other kingdoms were banned from making a move on the knights of Lumae. That was right. They were the knights of Lumae Kingdom, and each and every single one of them dreamt of that new realm, a realm above the realm that they had already achieved. That was the case for the elite knights that accompanied Arca. Quite a few of them could even deal with three to five imperial knights by themselves.

'He killed six of them...?'

Plenty of effort had been put into raising them! Each and every single one of those knights represented the majesty of Lumae Kingdom.

'But they actually lost to an old man?!?Even I'm?struggling?!'

Arca was the man said to be closest to the Sword Saint. He wiped the blood dripping from his mouth and laughed grimly and said, "So it wasn't all lies."

He still did not believe that all of the rumors were true. However, all he knew was that Ghost Spear Ben would disappear into the annals of history today. This was because he was confident that he and the more than forty knights remaining would be able to deal with a single old man.

A powerful force shot out of Arca's sword and straight toward Ghost Spear Ben. Seeing him launch an attack, the other knights also jumped toward Ben. But Ghost Spear Ben just stood still despite the knights' swords and spears aiming for his neck, waist, forehead, and chest. Then, as if the play button had been pressed to resume a paused scene, Ben first released his left hand that was resting behind him and gently redirected the huge swordlight that Arca sent out to the sides.

Baaaaaaang—

Then, Ben stabbed one of the knights in the neck with his spear, before turning once and slamming his spear to the ground to give him momentum to reach the skies.

Shwaaaaaaa—

Using his ghost-like footwork, he moved in the air and stabbed another knight in the chest all the while dragging another one from the side toward the stabbed knight. Then, Ben threw something in the air.

Swoooooosh—

‘Gold?’

The things that Ghost Spear Ben threw were a few pieces of gold. He used the gold as a springboard to fly even higher in the skies. And the gold that he stepped on...

Thwack—

“Keuhaaaaack!”

“Ack!”

“Keok!”

“Ugh!”

...accurately struck the eyes of four knights, who he stabbed with his spear right after. His appearance was almost like the descent of the Spear God!

“Do you think I’ll leave you as you are?!” Arca chased the running Ghost Spear Ben. Unfortunately, it was useless.

Stab, stab, stab, stab—

“K, Keuaaaaaack!”

“Aaaack! My eyes! My eyeeeeees!”

“Keuaack! Aaaack!”

Ben’s movements were ghost-like as he evaded Arca’s attacks, while cutting and stabbing the necks of the knights that blocked him. His bulging muscles and beautiful spear movements made it seem like he was one with his spear. The scene was beautiful, to the point that it could bewitch anyone watching him.

Stab—

One of the knights successfully landed a blow on Ghost Spear Ben’s back. Seeing this, Arca, with a deep smile on his face, hurriedly rushed in to attack too.

‘He’s slowly starting to fall apart.’

However, that was a complete miscalculation on their part. As if he did not feel any pain, Ben twisted around to blow off the head of the knight behind him. A knight’s sword slashed at his leg while a knight’s spear stabbed at his abdomen. But instead of Ben dying, the screams and deaths of Arca’s allies were what greeted him.

“Hiiiiiiik! G, ghost... it’s a ghost...!”

“Ugh. Aaaaaaaah! Don’t, don’t come here! Please, I’m begging you not to come here!!!”

The knights stepped back as Ben continued to cut down their comrades. Their actions were even immediately followed by a ridiculous notification.

[The morale is dropping rapidly.]

[Your allies are losing their will to fight.]

[All of your allies’ stats will decrease by 25%. Their successful attack rate will also decrease by 35%.]

The knights that had been training since a young age to forget their fears, the very same knights that were braver than anyone else in the battlefield, were now terrified. Fear clouded their minds as Ben approached them. Some even peed their pants while some knelt down to beg for their lives. The same was true for Arca. He felt goosebumps rising on his skin as a chill crept up from the base of his spine.

Ben was relentless. Despite bleeding all over, he continued to cut down the knights in front of him, whether they peed themselves or knelt down to beg for their lives. He even sneered at them deep within his heart.

“S, stop...” Arca finally realized that he provoked someone that he should not have. He also knew that there was a chance that they could kill the man in front of them if he and the remaining knights joined forces. However, doing so would result in plenty more casualties from their ranks.

“We, we’ll retreat. We’ll leave so stop!”

Arca did not want to carry this disgrace on his back. However, he believed that the lives of the knights that their kingdom had raised were far more precious than any treasure or gold.

“Wh, why is someone like you staying in such a small nation like Beyond the Heavens Kingdom?!”

Arca could not understand at all. If this man went to Eivelis Empire then he could easily become the Knight Commander of the Spear Knight Order under Ellie. He might even be able to become the Commander-in-chief if he went to Collodis Empire.

So why?

‘Wait, perhaps he’s the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Hidden Troops’ commander...!’

The commander that hid secretly to protect the territory. If it was that, then it was worthy of a man of his stature. Perhaps, it was even an opportunity for Arca’s kingdom.

“Come, come to our kingdom! You’re probably the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Hidden Troops’ Commander right now. If you come to our Lumae Kingdom, you can become the commander-in-chief of hundreds of thousands of strong troops!”

Lumae Kingdom was definitely a better choice than Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. But Ghost Spear Ben just tilted his head at him and...

“...?”

...twisted the neck of one of the knights near him.

“Wh, what...?!”

Ghost Spear Ben looked at the remaining knights with a cold expression on his face, “I have no intention of sparing the lives of those that intended to bring harm to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. Also...”

Arca realized that their battle was not yet over when he saw Ben take one step closer to them. He could also tell that Ben was also about to reveal his original position in the kingdom.

Then, Ben continued, “I’m His Majesty’s personal barista.”

“...?”

Arca was shocked when the words registered in his head, *‘Wh, what the hell?! How many strong people does Beyond the Heavens Kingdom have to make a man of his stature a barista?!’*

Arca developed a deep fear toward the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom as their ‘barista’ moved to slaughter them.

Count Forlo was the commander of the tamers of the Lumae Kingdom. Since Lumae Kingdom was hailed as the warriors’ nation, Count Forlo, despite being a tamer, was far stronger and better than the other tamer commanders from a decent kingdom or empire. He was even able to tame the Drake Lord, a ferocious monster that no one in the continent had ever tamed before.

This very same Count Forlo was extremely excited, *‘I can’t believe I’ll be able to manage a dragon in my entire life...!’*

Crazy Tyrant Akhan and Prince Votto were secretly working together. They were preparing to make a move with their troops. But before their troops and the dragons joined forces, there were a few people selected to carry a secret mission. They were none other than the undefeated Knights, which included Arca, the kingdom’s elite knights, and Count Forlo and the dragons as support.

The dragon that was partnered with Count Forlo was at the bottom of the rankings of the dragons. The dragon was also someone that had received the punishment of the previous Dragon Lord for the crimes that he committed in the past. From what he knew, the dragon could only exert 90% of his powers and abilities. On top of that...

‘From what I heard, restrictions will be forced upon the dragons that crossed the continents and their power would be reduced by 30%.’

...the dragons had received huge penalties for crossing to a different continent. However, even if that was the case, the dragon in front of Count Forlo was still extremely powerful. The dragon was also very high-leveled.

[Cursed Dragon Arcana. Level 684.]

‘Amazing...’

They were tasked to do two things in Valencia. One was to cut off the guardians that protected Valencia Capital. And two, was to steal the existence that hatched from the Dragon Lord’s egg. During this process, Cursed Dragon Arcana would shower the capital with magic bombs to help the ones that sneaked in to escape safely. A dragon’s bombardment of magic was more than enough to bring down buildings, burn all of the humans on the ground and bring the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s capital to ashes. Just when Count Forlo was vibrating with excitement...

“I’m hungry.”

“Ah. Is that so? Haha. Please hang in there a bit more. Those that went to the capital will send their signal soon. Once we finish our job, we will immediately serve you a delicious meal.”

Although Count Forlo was a tamer, he was actually turned into Dragon Arcana’s servant. Most of Dragon Arcana’s magic had been restricted after receiving his punishment so he could not polymorph into a human form. That was why he was curled up in a forest near the beaches of Beyond the Heavens’ Kingdom hiding from everyone’s view.

“Didn’t you hear me say that I’m hungry?”

Count Forlo trembled when Arcana focused his yellow eyes on him. The reason why Arcana was punished was because he ate up thousands of humans without any rhyme or reason.

Gulp—

Count Forlo gulped dryly as he tried to find a solution to this problem and avoid becoming Arcana’s prey. That was when a solution appeared in front of them.

A handsome man sat in front of a huge wagon. The man was wearing a pair of boots and a jacket to protect him from the cold. The jacket carried the symbol of a fork and knife at the back. The man was looking at his notebook while mumbling, “This idiot. Moron. Poopy... Uhm... cursing should leave a savory taste in your mouth. Do I really have to do something like this?”

The man was obviously a fisherman from Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. From what it looked like, the fisherman was trying to abandon the harsh and infuriating curses and actions in lieu of beautiful swear words and manners. The wagon that he was driving was filled with dragon fishes.

‘That, that’s it...!’

Count Forlo had never seen a dragon fish in his life so he did not know that such a fish was a legendary one. All he knew was that he could just take away the things of a mere fisherman from the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

“Lord Arcana. How about the fishes in that fisherman’s wagon?”

“Ho?” Arcana mumbled, eyes glinting sharply as he looked at the fish. Dragon fishes were fishes native to Asgan Continent. That was why Arcana did not know what kind of fish it was. He was just feeling delighted at the thought of tasting a new variety of

fish. Arcana had already moved before he could even discuss it with Count Forlo. It was a part that showed his ferocity and viciousness. Arcana spread his wings as he flew swiftly to where the fisherman was.

Forlo silently mourned, *‘I’m sorry. I know that we should never touch the lives of civilians in a war but this is for my own safety too. Consider this as offering yourself as a sacrifice, fisherman.’*

In the end, Count Forlo was a noble, a count that also viewed the lives of common people lightly. Forlo clicked his tongue as he watched Arcana send a fireball toward the man on the wagon.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaa—

Count Forlo squinted through the thick layer of dust. It seemed like Arcana was wolfing down the fish to fill his stomach as quickly as he could. It looked like he was wagging his tail in delight.

Baaaaaang—

But then, the ground shook as an unexpected bang rang out.

“...?!”

Count Forlo, with a cigar sandwiched in his lips, turned around stiffly. The scene in front of him once the dust settled down made him drop the cigar.

Thump—

A dragon was hailed as the strongest existence on earth. Even though the dragon Arcana was the weakest among the dragons, he was still a ferocious and outstanding being. But this very same Arcana was being trampled on by the fisherman. The fisherman even stepped on Arcana’s head with his boot with one of his hands in his pockets.

The fisherman looked at Arcana as if Arcana was an insignificant existence. He spat out, “B*tch. F*cking ***-sized lizard.”

“...!”

Count Forlo trembled at the sight.

Chapter 498: The Raiders

NPCs and players reacted to rumors quite differently in Athenae. For Athenae players, all they needed to do to verify any rumors was to search the person involved or watch Ztube videos related to them.

This was the case with the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

When they were still Legend Guild, the players had repeatedly watched the videos of their legendary battle in the Continent Cloud. There were also videos of their battle against Black Dragon Vormon and Great Demon Verus.

Most of the NPCs, on the other hand, could only listen to stories and they did not have any way to confirm it. They did not have a way to watch videos like the players, which was why the other kingdoms and empires labeled the rumors surrounding Beyond the Heavens Kingdom as fake.

An intellectually disabled boy was the Sword Saint? A best-selling author of erotic novels was strong enough to crush legends? Also, the Great Demon had become jealous when the Lesser Demon had decided to follow the Beyond the Heavens King, so he had staged an attack?

Just listening to any of these was enough for the NPCs to label these news as exaggerated rumors that were created by the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom! They all assumed that the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was spreading nonsense as legends so that other kings and their subjects would not ignore the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. After all, the stories that surrounded them were completely beyond anyone's common sense.

But right now, Count Forlo's thoughts were about to change. A tiny human was pressing down on a mountain-sized dragon, stepping on the dragon's head with his boots. Moreover, the man was just a passing fisherman.

"How, how can this..." Forlo mumbled, his body trembling from shock.

As for Dragon Arcana? His entire body was covered in shame and disgrace, a feeling that he had never felt in his entire life.

'How dare a measly human put his muddy boots on my head?!'

"How dare youuuuuuuu!!!" Arcana roared out in anger, a series of explosions blooming around his body.

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

But what happened next was even more shocking.

"Hey, f*cking pint-sized lizard..."

The man had just called a dragon, one of the largest beings on Earth, 'pint-sized'. Was that expression even appropriate? But seeing the man press down on Arcana with his feet, Forlo could not deny his words.

Then, the man continued his words, spitting out coldly, "...shut up."

Crack—

The man, who ignored the explosions that ravaged his surroundings, lifted his foot and stomped it down on Arcana's head again, causing the dragon to plunge deeper into the ground.

"Grrrrrrrrrr!" Arcana growled angrily, but for some reason he looked pitiful, with his head buried in the ground as he sent out another wave of explosion. However, the man just waved his arm nonchalantly and summoned a huge barrier made of water. He easily fended off the explosions that appeared around him once again.

Suddenly, another explosion, this time a thundering one, bloomed from Arcana's body.

"Ugh!" The man groaned as he flew back from the impact. Despite being caught unaware, the man was able to easily regain his footing in the air.

Arcana, who pulled his face out of the ground, was extremely furious. He had been in a daze for a moment because the sight of fish had muddled his head, his eyes blinded with greed. That was why he did not care about the man and had only sent a nonchalant attack toward the man.

In the end, Arcana was bitten by his own carelessness and was caught offguard, the man easily forcing his head into the ground. But not anymore—he was now free from the man's hold, and was cautious and vigilant.

“Graaaaaaaaaaaa!” Arcana roared as hundreds of spells came to life around him and shot straight at the man. A dragon's magic could easily ignore their opponent's magical defense. That was why it was far more powerful than other magic.

‘Yeah. If you got struck by that magic then...’ Count Forlo believed that the crazy fisherman bastard would be burned to ashes and disappear from this world.

But then, at that moment, a gigantic long chain appeared on the fisherman's left arm, while a huge curved sword appeared on his right. Fisherman Gorfido's chains were made from the world-renowned ‘Ten-thousand-year-old Cold Iron’, a material that had a ridiculously high durability and could endure anything for a long period of time. It also had an unbelievable amount of magical defense that could allow Gorfido to ignore and nullify all of the magical attacks sent his way.

Rattle—

All of the magic that had appeared in the air was absorbed into Gorfido's chains the moment they made contact.

“...?!” Arcana looked at the scene in doubt.

The reason why Great Pirate Gorfido had been able to torment Baal, the first ranked devil, in the past was all thanks to the chains in his hands. Gorfido found the name of his chains annoyingly long so he just named it ‘Ten Thousand Chains’. It was an item that had the effect of absorbing the enemy's magical attacks, special attributes, and abnormal states.

It also had a paired item with an equally annoying name, which Gorfido had conveniently named ‘Ten Thousand Sword’. This sword had the effect of sending the absorbed power, multiplied by 1.3 times, back to the one that had sent it.

“I'll give it back to you.”

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

When Gorfido, whose hands were occupied with his chains and sword, sent back the attack...

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

...a more powerful magic bombarded Arcana, which promptly sent him flying into the skies.

“Hiiiiiiiiik!” Count Forlo shrieked, his legs stepping back from the scene. However, the attack was not yet over.

Gorfido was hailed as the Sea Demon because his swordsmanship was both cruel and vicious. However, he was very lazy, so he named his attacks with whatever came to his mind.

“Tidal Knife.”

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

A gigantic blue tidal wave soared and devoured Arcana, who fell down after being hit with the magic attack. More than five hundred blades hidden in the depths of the tidal wave wreaked havoc and tore the scales off of Arcana’s body.

Ping, ping, ping, ping, ping, ping—

“Aaaaaaaaargh! Ugh! Aaaaaaaack!”

The once blue tidal wave was now dyed red. It did not matter who saw it, the scene would forever remain grotesque and gruesome.

Gorfido approached Arcana while swinging his sword as he pressed the dragon down again.

“*Pint-sized dragon bastard. Go to hell! Go to hell! Kahahahahaha!”

Count Forlo, who watched everything happen, could not endure it and vomited at the gruesome sight, “Urrrk!”

‘Who in the world is that fisherman?!’

Of course, Arcana was not the only one that received damage. His physical damage reflection and AOE magic attacks also affected the man. But the man continued to press Arcana down as if he did not feel any pain.

‘We—we need to get it together,’ Forlo thought, despite the chaos brought about by the mysterious fisherman.

From the way things were going, it was nigh impossible for them to help those that sneaked in Valencia. However, the mission would still be successful. The fisherman in front of them was just one miscalculation on their part. No matter what happened here, the Undefeated Knights and the 300 elite knights that raided the other areas would have most definitely turned the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom into waste.

‘Even if I die here... the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would collapse.’

At that moment, the bead in Count Forlo’s hand vibrated fiercely. The bead was a ‘War Communicator’, a device that could allow troops separated by a distance to share a few words in between them. After the words were transmitted, the bead would then be destroyed. This was so no one else could hear what they were talking about.

‘Right. Of course. We succeeded...!’

Originally, Count Forlo and Arcana would bomb the capital once they received the signal. Then, there was a buzzing sound that rang from the War Communicator.

[This is Arca. The First Elite Troops that I am leading have been wiped out. I repeat. The First Elite Troops have been wiped out. And from what it looks like, I'm also going to die under the spear of Ghost Spear Ben. Glory to Lumae Kingdom... hiss, hiss, hisss—]

“...?!”

Count Forlo was shocked.

‘Im—impossible...!’

The Warrior's Nation's Sir Arca might only be one among the countless talents in their kingdom but he was a rare genius that almost reached the ranks of the Sword Saint. But, he was defeated and killed by an old man by the name of Ghost Spear Ben?

Then, another transmission came through the War Communicator...

[Hiss, hiss, hisss— This is Bent, the commander of the Third Elite Troops. The Third Elite Troops have been annihilated... The Third Elite Troops... have been wiped out by an intellectually disabled boy...]

[Hiss, hiss, hisss— This is Armstrong, knight of the Second Elite Troops. The Second Elite Troops have been wiped out. Sir Rudel, the commander of the Second Elite Troops, has been killed. I believe I will soon follow Sir Rudel. Glory to Lumae Kingdom...]

[Hiss, hiss, hissssss... wiped out. Wiped out...]

[We've been wiped out...! Retreat. The legends about Beyond the Heavens Kingdom... hiss... they're... true... hisssss.]

“...!”

Count Forlo's expression turned ugly at the words he heard. “They're... all true?”

‘Those ridiculous legends?’

Then, at that moment...

Baaaaaaaang—

The loud thud of Arcana's body slamming down on the ground filled the area. Then, the Ten Thousand Chains in Gorfido's arm stretched out and wrapped around the collapsed dragon.

“Hmmm~ I wonder if His Majesty would like to eat dragon meat.”

The fisherman literally fished Arcana. He was also aware of Count Forlo's existence, so he slowly approached Forlo.

“I—I won't say anything. Just kill me!”

At this moment, Count Forlo believed that he would be taken in as a prisoner of war to get as much information that they could get from him.

“Right.”

“...?”

But Gorfido was someone that never took in prisoners of war. Hearing his light-hearted reply, Count Forlo felt his confidence waver. But then, at that moment, the War Communicator sent its final message.

[Hissss— This is the warrior's disciple, Renzie. I have succeeded in capturing the hatchling and the Food God's aide, Haze. I am now on my way to Crazy Tyrant Akhan.]

“...!”

A delighted smile sprang in the count's face. Most of them have been wiped out, but Renzie, the only warrior's disciple and the one that moved alone, was able to succeed. He was able to take the hatchling that had hatched from the Dragon Lord's egg. They had originally only meant to take the hatchling, but they were even able to take away the Food God's aide!

“Keuha... hahahahahahaha!” Count Forlo burst out in laughter after knowing that they had succeeded in the most important part of their mission. However, his laughter slowly died down after realizing that there was a cruel slaughterer standing in front of him.

Thump—

Count Forlo's head rolled on the ground as Gorfido rushed back to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom with all his might.

‘Haze and Luna have been kidnapped...?!’

The biggest crisis since the founding of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had fallen upon them.

Ghost Spear Ben was certainly blessed with a strong body and a strong will, but he still collapsed on the ground and gasped for his breath after cutting down Arca and the rest of his troops. He literally did not have any power to move his finger, let alone his whole body, anymore.

But then, he saw a horse rushing from across the field. On top of the horse was a woman whose face was covered in black cloth and a wriggling bag. When the horse passed by, he was able to get a glimpse of the badge on the woman's chest. That badge represented the woman's position as an aide.

That woman was none other than Haze. Then, the wriggling bag also cried out, “Hiyeeeeee~?”

The voice sounded both pure, innocent and happy. At that moment, Ben realized who the owner of the voice was. He did his best to squeeze out the last of his strength. However, out of stamina, he ended up losing consciousness for about thirty seconds.

Even though he fainted, Ben was still able to awaken with his strong will and mental power. He immediately staggered to his feet after recalling what he had seen. The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was now in the middle of a war. All of the troops were busy and no one was aware of what happened here. Also...

‘It will be too late if I go ask for help.’

It would take him around three to five minutes to get support. By that time, they would have already lost them. Ghost Spear Ben staggered to his feet, grabbed a bucket of water and poured it over himself.

“Puhaaa!”

The red blood that covered his body was washed away by the water. After slinging three spears behind him, he gulped down the strongest and best potion with him, before tying his Terrius-like black hair.

‘Another minute has passed by.’

The gap between him and the kidnapper that took Luna and Haze was two minutes. He had to narrow that gap somehow.

“Hiya! Hiyaah!” Ghost Spear Ben, now riding on a horse, galloped across Valencia Capital in pursuit of the enemy.

On this day, the myth about the bloody veteran soldier that fought tens of thousands of enemies alone to protect his loved ones, the story of a demigod becoming a Spear God, had begun.

Chapter 499: The Raiders

Baroque Kingdom was the kingdom closest to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. It had maintained a close relationship with the Barras Kingdom in the past, sending support to Barras Kingdom in the form of troops in exchange for the various items and products that they created.

But that was not the case anymore.

The Baroque Kingdom had cut off all ties and exchanges with the newly established Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. Because of that, they lost the supplies that the Barras Kingdom sent as support and their kingdom was now plunged into heavy financial burdens and difficulties. The fact that they maintained a close relationship with Barras Kingdom meant that they were only a bit better than them in terms of influence. In other words, their influence, when compared to other empires and kingdoms, were abysmal. Thankfully, the number of territories under their kingdom’s rule and the people that they governed was on the higher side so they were still able to hold out for a bit longer.

Lance, a sentry guard stationed at Baroque Kingdom’s southernmost city Erdejid, yawned loudly, “*Fwaaaaa*. How about having some beer after our shift for today?”

“Beer sounds nice.”

He chatted together with the people on duty with him. But while they were doing so...

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud—

“...?”

Lance felt the ground rumble and shake. The vibrations passing through the soles of his feet told him that it was definitely caused by something so he hurriedly took out his magic telescope and peered at a distance.

What he saw made him shriek in shock, “Hi, hiiiiiiiiiiik?!”

There were roughly 20,000 monster corps advancing towards where they were. The problems that they were about to face did not end there. The monsters in the monster corps were all at Level 450~490. There were even masked knights riding on top of these gigantic monsters. Then, an even more shocking fact presented itself in front of the soldiers.

“Th, that...!”

Lance’s expression turned ugly after seeing the figures of creatures that were as big as mountains with the faces of a lizard and shiny scales covering their bodies. They were all flying through the skies while flapping their wings strongly. Then, one of the beings sent out a huge hellfire that devoured and slaughtered Lance, along with more than 200 troops stationed at Erdejid and its walls.

Vwoooooooooooooong—

The loud blare of the horn from the intelligent monsters rang loudly as the monster corps began to advance towards Erdejid.

Notifications began to ring for the players present in Erdejid.

“What, what the hell?!”

“A kingdom quest?! Wait. Erdejid is in crisis?!”

“Dra, dragons...? Is this for real?”

“I heard that the unknown assailant is Crazy Tyrant Akhan.”

“That crazy bastard came to our server again?!”

The players trembled. Crazy Tyrant Akhan was originally from the American Server and was hailed as a lunatic that should never, ever be touched in Athenae. The problem was that Crazy Tyrant Akhan’s power was comparable to the power of those world-renowned players. Especially because he was a player that showed great advantage and force when it came to large-scale battles.

Just when the players were plunged into great confusion...

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

“Uaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuhaaaaaaaack!”

...screams rang loudly in the area. When they turned their heads, all they saw was the collapsed walls of the fortress and monsters running rampant. In a blink, 20,000 of Erdejid's troops gathered. Then, the commander cried loudly, “Foreigners, please! Join us in this battle! Those that can fight! Join us!!!”

For a brief moment, the players felt terror and fear. However, they still joined the war at the behest of the 20,000 kingdom troops. Then, notifications began to spread in the entire continent. Kingdom quests were like that. They were amazing in a way that there would be no requirements and anyone could accept, whether they were from a different empire or kingdom.

And now, the best guilds of Korea had gathered together: the Iris and Ares Guilds, together with Avalon Guild, the guild that replaced Artheon Guild from the top 4, after they became subordinated to Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. At the same time, countless players and kingdom troops moved to protect Erdejid.

Alas, in just three hours after the war broke out, the story of Erdejid being taken down had started to spread in the continent.

Iris Guild Master Callian, Ares Guild Master Ares and Avalon Guild, the guild that emerged as one of the four major guilds, Master Gorilla Musk or GoM for short, were all riding on horseback in front of around 70,000 player troops and waiting on the decision on who would become the commander.

“Gorilla Musk. I can do... *Hoo...* Why the hell do you have to use Gorilla as your nickname... *Hoo...*”

“*Cough.* Will Athenae roll out the *change nickname* feature soon?”

GoM wanted to be special. So, he set his ID like that. It was like he wanted to show off that anyone that heard his name would feel like they could smell him as if they were next to him. However, his face still could not help but turn ugly after hearing those words. Still, it was not the time for them to talk about this. The current situation that they were in was just that serious.

“This is an opportunity. With the monster corps already occupying Erdejid, they would definitely make haste and aim for Baroque Kingdom's capital, Evond. If we can stop them, then not only will we be able to get the king's enormous rewards, our names will also remain in the history of Athenae forever.”

Crazy Tyrant Akhan was definitely the craziest out of all the crazy bastards in the world. However, not only were their guild members present, each of their guild's high rankers were all here. There would also be 30,000 kingdom troops arriving soon, which would bring their total to 100,000.

The guild leaders also received a new quest notification. The quest was none other than ‘Saviors of Baroque Kingdom’. Through this quest, they were able to acquire the information about the

dragons. According to the description, the dragons' power had been reduced by 30% since they forcibly came over here from the American Server. That was why they thought that it was worth a try. Also...

'From what I heard, Black Dragon is extremely powerful to the point that the power that ordinary dragons could wield are only half as powerful as his.'

The guild leaders believed that they were more than enough to kill their enemies. Since the Food God did it, why couldn't they do the same?

Then, GoM said, "According to rumors, the monster corps' main goal is the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and they only passed by the Baroque Kingdom."

"Hmm."

Ares rubbed his chin in thought.

'Why did they even have to do something that troublesome? Do they really have to do something like that?'

But just when he was doubting their enemies' motives, Callian suddenly added, "I heard that Valencia, Beyond the Heavens' capital, has been attacked at the same time. This info must definitely be true since I heard it from one of the players in Beyond the Heavens Kingdom themselves."

Ares' face turned more serious when he heard Callian's words, *'Don't tell me...!'*? Then, his mouth gaped open, "Crazy bastard...!"

Ares' face turned ugly. There had to be no other reason except for the fact that Crazy Tyrant Akhan was showing them that he had enough power to trample on Baroque Kingdom and head towards Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. He was underestimating the other players, which made them feel that their pride had been trampled on. Ares hated Beyond the Heavens Kingdom but this was a separate matter altogether.

"A player from another country came to our own country to wreak havoc. I can't wait to see how we'll trample on him."

They could see the faint shadows of the remaining monsters from the 20,000 strong monster corps appearing in their field of vision. At the same time, the 30,000 kingdom support troops also arrived.

"For victory!!!"

"For victory!!!"

Shiiiiing—

Shiiiiing—

Nearly 100,000 troops rushed towards the 20,000 monster corps and the unknown masked men.

[Breaking News. The alliance created by the allied forces of Korea's best guilds—Ares Guild, Iris Guild and Avalon Guild—and the kingdom troops have been annihilated.]

[Breaking News. Around 5:00 p.m. yesterday in Baroque Kingdom's Eneth, the allied forces that fought against Crazy Tyrant Akhan and his army were wiped out.]

[Breaking News. The 20,000 strong enemy troops are currently heading towards the capital of Baroque Kingdom.]

[According to rumors, the 20,000 strong enemy troops will head straight towards Beyond the Heavens Kingdom after taking over Baroque Kingdom.]

[This is the worst disaster that has ever hit the Asgan Continent yet Joy Co. Ltd. remains silent.]

[According to reports, Baroque Kingdom's King, Lloyd de Barread, has convened an emergency meeting.]

Although they were late, the Athenae players hurriedly went to Ztube to watch the reruns and confirm the authenticity of the reports, once they heard the rumors. The situation was completely horrendous. There were the knights wearing masks that were riding on the monsters. Each and every single one of them held tremendous power. They were working with the monsters seamlessly to cut down several players in one strike. And that was not all. There were also dragons hovering in the skies above them that added to the chaos by bombarding everyone below with their magic.

While everything was plunged into great chaos, the 20,000 troops continued to march forward. Shockingly enough, there was a huge blue shield that surrounded the bodies of every single member of the monster corps. Even their weapons, fists and feet would glow red whenever they attacked. From what it looked like, the attacks were 1.3x stronger than usual.

However, as their HP and defense had plunged to a lower level, the players could easily hunt them once the shields that covered them were broken. The only problem here was that the shields were very difficult to break.

Even though high-rankers have stepped forward, everything that they did was still useless. With the masked knights cutting down the small fries, the clever dragons focused their firepower on the high-rankers. It was different from the situation with Black Dragon Vormon before. After all, Black Dragon Vormon was alone back then. Right now, several dragons were working together. There were even masked knights and an entire monster corps joining the fray.

The viewers that watched the video were all left speechless. The only thing that they could do was use their keyboards and express what they felt about the situation.

[Everything would be over if they can't stop them...]

[This is crazy. Is the Athenae Management doing its job?! How can they let a player do that?! Dragons on top of a monster corps?! And what are those masked knights?!]

[Athenae should explain this. ASAP.]

[F*ck! At this rate, Akhan will devour the entire Asgan Continent, right?!]

Everyone was hoping that they would quickly fix this.

Joy Co. Ltd.'s president, Kang Taehoon, felt an incoming migraine as his head throbbed fiercely. The conference room was covered in a thick layer of silence.

‘How did this situation come to be?’

In fact, they believed that the situation was impossible. That was why none of them had expected it to become a reality. The first thing that they pulled up was the information about Akhan’s staff.

?All stats increase by 39%.

?Commanding Abilities increases by 200%.

?Passive Skill: God of Death’s Blessing

?Passive Skill: Berserk Monster

?Active Skill: One Man Army

?Active Skill: Death’s One Man Army

The Death God’s Ruler’s Staff was an item with ridiculous effects and skills that were overpowered. The active skill: One Man Army was a skill that could allow the staff user to manage and lead monsters that were around 50 or more levels higher than the owner. It was a skill that can support and increase a tamer’s skill by ten more times.

The issue was Crazy Tyrant Akhan’s main class. His class was ‘Death God’s Descendant’, a God class. The Death God’s skills and abilities were extremely compatible with a tamer. In the first place, the number of monsters that Akhan could lead was already tremendous and with the Death God’s Ruler’s Staff in hand, this ability was amplified and made even stronger. The One Man Army skill could also fit perfectly with the higher skill Death’s One Man Army. It was a skill that could allow the staff user to lead monsters thirty times their usual amount.

Because of that, all of the operators of Athenae were very much concerned with the artifact. In fact, even the supercomputer, Athenae, showed great distaste and even felt very repulsed with this artifact. However, time passed by and nothing noteworthy happened. This was mainly attributed to the fact that the God of Death’s Ruler’s Staff would disappear a week after the Death’s One Man Army was used. It was the skill’s severe penalty. After all, no player would be stupid enough to waste one of the greatest artifacts in existence just for a short bout of pleasure and delight.

However, the artifact fell into the hands of Crazy Tyrant Akhan. He even went so far as obtaining around ten of the parchments called ‘Penalty Seals’ from all over the continent. It was a parchment that had an effect that could ignore penalties. In fact, the Penalty Seal could help the parchment user to avoid receiving other penalties for skills with extreme penalties. In the case of an artifact skill, the artifact would be sealed for three months.

But was that all? Of course not.

‘He used the passive Berserk Monsters in a very efficient method.’

The Berserk Monster passive attached to the Death God’s Ruler’s Staff was a skill that increases a monster’s attack power by 25%. However, it had an extreme penalty that reduces the monsters’ HP and defense by 70%.

But Akhan had obtained the treasure, 'Shield's Tears', that the Shield God had left behind in the world. The Shield's Tears was an item that created a shield with extremely high defense around the one that used it. This was not a coincidence at all. All of the items in Akhan's hands were ridiculous, and made him the most absolute existence in the game.

There was only a 0.1% probability of this happening, but Akhan made it happen.

President Kang Taehoon sighed and got up. Team Leader Park Minggyu also got up and followed him to go to the bathroom.

"President."

Kang Taehoon looked back at Park Minggyu. Truth was, Park Minggyu had heard some rumors when he went abroad for a meeting. At first, he thought that it was just a rumor but looking at the situation that they were in, it seemed like that rumor was true.

He looked at Kang Taehoon gravely and asked, "Is it true that Crazy Tyrant Akhan was one of the early developers of Athenae?"

Chapter 500: The One that Became a Demigod

Crazy Tyrant Akhan was a player that dreamt and lived to see the collapse of Athenae, a game that everyone considered to be their second world. Team Leader Park Minggyu was asking if this very same Crazy Tyrant Akhan was one of Athenae's early developers.

President Kang Taehoon, whose expression turned bitter, washed his face with cold water and wiped it dry with a paper towel. He turned to Minghyu, nodded and said, "It's only half right."

"What?" Park Minggyu asked in doubt.

Then, Kang Taehoon started to tell his story in a somber manner, "Akhan is a brilliant developer. In fact, it is safe to say that it's thanks to him that we have the Athenae of today."

Team Leader Park trembled at his words. There were many things that he could not understand from Taehoon's story.

"Honestly, Athenae was born from my friend's and my hands. However, because of an accident, he left and ended up cursing me."

"How, how... that... then why did you not suspend him permanently?!"

Park Minggyu could not understand it. Did it not mean that the player named 'Akhan' knew the entirety of the Athenae worldview?

Kang Taehoon just smiled and said, "I know what you're trying to say. If someone that knows Athenae completely were to play the game, the balance will break."

"If you know, then why...?!"

"First. Among the hundreds of thousands of employees of Joy Co. Ltd., is there anyone that does not play Athenae?"

"..."

Team Leader Park Minggyu was rendered silent at the question. There were countless Athenae operators and staff that played Athenae. Most of them knew about the scenes that would unfold in the future or what went on in what place.

But were there any of the players that revealed their special circumstances?

“Second. I had already anticipated something like this would happen before Athenae’s launch. That’s why I only left the frame of the game. Everything else is new. Everything that Akhan knew has already changed. The Athenae of today is completely different from the Athenae that he knew.”

Park Minggyu was once again speechless. That was right. Considering Kang Taehoon’s personality, doing something like that would check out. There was also one thing that he could tell after hearing the first and second points. Just because one knew about Athenae did not mean that they would awaken or anything.

Even if they knew the mechanics, it did not necessarily mean that they could do something about it. However, there were players that could do so. The greatest example of this was ‘Food God’ Minhyuk.

“Are you telling me that Akhan is also a genius gamer?”

“That’s right. His brain capacity is completely out of this world. As a gamer, he’s someone that is beyond the ones that we call geniuses. He was literally a brilliantly crazy gamer. He does not know anything about the current Athenae worldview, but he was still able to do all of that on his own. What else can I do?”

Everyone was free to do whatever they wanted in the world of Athenae. And Akhan did not break the mold of such a world. However, this time, he broke the balance. Originally, Joy Co. Ltd. would set up a meeting with the player once the balance collapsed and negotiate with them as much as they could.

Unfortunately, it was impossible in Akhan’s case.

Kang Taehoon stepped out and began to move.

“Team Leader Park Minggyu.”

“Yes, President?”

“This will be the first time I’ve brought someone in. Let me show you Athenae.”

“...?!”

Park Minggyu was very surprised to hear Taehoon say those words. Athenae, the Athenae worldview’s Origin God, was a supercomputer in reality. Only President Kang Taehoon has ever met with Athenae. The only reason why Kang Taehoon offered this was because he trusted Team Leader Park Minggyu and his skills.

‘If I went the wrong way, I hope that he can lead me back to the right path.’

Although Park Minggyu was given the position of a team leader, he was very similar to Kang Taehoon in terms of decision making and judgement abilities. With plenty of keys in hand, Kang Taehoon opened a door and entered with Park Minggyu.

There, inside was the gigantic supercomputer, Athenae.

“Athenae.”

[Speak.]

A woman’s voice, a voice that was neither rigid or mechanical, rang out in the room. The voice, in fact, sounded sublime and gentle to the ears. Team Leader Park Minggyu could not help but look at supercomputer Athenae in excitement.

“What’s the probability of Baroque Kingdom overcoming this crisis?”

[It’s estimated to be at 2%.]

Athenae did not spare President Kang Taehoon any manners or courtesy. She might be a supercomputer, but she was also the god of a worldview.

“So, just 2%...” Kang Taehoon mumbled, face turning ugly at the fact presented to him. If Baroque Kingdom fell, then Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would be next. Akhan was showing them that not only Baroque Kingdom, but even Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would be pushed back by him alone. And with the addition of the dragons, was there anything that they could say to that? But then, at that moment...

[The probability has gone up to 8%.]

“...?!”

President Kang Taehoon and Team Leader Park were both shocked. The 6% increase might be small, but the probability increasing like that definitely meant that a variable was involved. So, what caused that variable?

“Please explain in a way that makes it easier for us to understand.”

[Right now, Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s Vice Guild Master Genie has arrived at Baroque Kingdom’s conference hall.]

“Show us the situation,” President Kang Taehoon said, his face filled with excitement. The appearance of one player had increased the chances of a kingdom winning this dire battle, albeit only slightly. Then, a hologram popped up in front of them showing the figure of Genie passing by the murmuring kingdom troops and entering the conference hall with her noble and elegant strides.

Baroque Kingdom’s King Lloyd slammed his fist on the table.

Thud—

“Are, are you kidding me right now? We need more troops. Did you not see those dragons with them?!”

“King Lloyd, calm down. It’s not like we’re saying that we won’t send you support troops, right?”

“Just like we promised, we will send you 10,000 support troops.”

“We’ll be sending you 15,000.”

“What could be the problem when you already have around 50,000 troops with you?”

King Lloyd trembled at the words of the other kings. The troops that they were going to send for support were not even the elites of their kingdom. In fact, most of the numbers that make up these troops were just conscripts. These support troops would not be able to overcome the dire situation that they were in.

In other words, the other kingdoms had no intention of joining forces and helping the Baroque Kingdom overcome this crisis.

According to the rumors, Akhan would target Beyond the Heavens Kingdom next after dealing with Baroque Kingdom. That was why most of the kings here were rejoicing deep inside. They even went so far as to use the guise of doing their utmost for the sake of Baroque Kingdom to send conscripts that would not be able to show enough power to change the situation around.

In truth, they were shaking with anticipation that they could not even attach a proper justification to their hideous actions.

But then, the knights suddenly entered the conference hall and whispered something to the kings.

“What? In an hour?!”

“We have to leave, quick.”

“King Lloyd, may the tides of war turn in your favor.”

“May the gods bless Baroque Kingdom...”

The kings hurriedly got up to leave. Baroque Kingdom’s King Lloyd could only shake and tremble in his seat. Regardless of the situation, they were kingdoms that were connected through an alliance! How come they were acting like this?! This was all because of the appearance of a madman that was threatening them with the downfall of Baroque Kingdom!

Just when King Lloyd was about to erupt in anger...

Creaaaaaak—

...the door to the conference hall opened and a woman with her own entourage walked inside.

“Who the hell are you?!” King Lloyd’s fierce glare turned to the woman. Even the kings that were in a hurry to leave all turned to look at her in doubt.

"I am Marquess Genie of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom."

"Be... Beyond the Heavens Kingdom?!"

"A marquess from Beyond the Heavens Kingdom?!"

Her words brought shock to everyone present.

How could a foreigner from Beyond the Heavens Kingdom enter this place so rudely?!?

But Genie just sat down on one of the chairs and crossed her legs leisurely.

"It's not the Food God, but a marquess that came here?!"

They're a small kingdom, shouldn't their king come here at least to show sincerity?!?

Genie just smiled and said, "Ah. His Majesty is quite busy, you see."

The truth was, they could not reach him anymore. Minhyuk was probably already on his private plane on his way to America for his physical and medical check-up. And since they were in the middle of a flight, their phones were definitely either turned off or in airplane mode.

"What's your business here?" King Lloyd asked. He did not want to pay any more attention to Genie. In fact, his head was already throbbing painfully at this sudden turn of events.

"From the information that our Beyond the Heavens Kingdom has gathered, we know that more than 50,000 troops have been conscripted and are heading for Baroque Kingdom's capital. But your enemy is already right in front of your nose, right? Am I wrong to say that you need to buy some time?"

King Lloyd nodded at her words. Their biggest concern as of the moment was that they would be attacked even before the support troops arrived. Even if they arrived, it would be too late.

'If only we can buy at least half a day then...'

They would be able to come up with something, anything. But no matter what they did, it would still take a long time for the kingdoms and the empires to send their troops. There was no way for them to stop the rushing enemies right now.

"What if we stop them for you?"

"...What?"

King Lloyd frowned.

"We can keep them entangled for more than half a day."

"...?!"

Lloyd and the other kings all stopped and turned to look at Genie. The beings that they had to deal with were dragons. The biggest reason why the other kingdoms were steering clear of this matter was because they risked the chances of being attacked too. But Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, a small country, would be able to block them for half a day? And...

“How many troops are you leading?”

“Right now, we have less than a hundred.”

“Keuhahahahahahahahahahaha! Kahahahahahahahahaha! Wahahahahahahahahaha!”

“Beyond the Heavens Kingdom is really funny?! Huh?! Hahaha!”

“Crazy b*tch?! Do you think it’s the time to joke?!”

The kings guffawed while King Lloyd just stared at Genie. He wanted to cut her neck off but he did his best to hold himself back.

“If you’re going to spew nonsense, just leave,” King Lloyd spat coldly.

Just when he was about to turn around, Genie, with her crossed legs, said, “If we stopped them, then we will take 10% of Baroque’s Kingdom’s taxes this month and you will start your diplomatic talks with our Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. What do you think?”

“What?” King Lloyd looked at her incredulously. Ten percent of their taxes was a huge amount, especially when it included the taxes that millions of people would pay, as well as many other forms of taxes. They even wanted to start diplomatic talks? Doing so would mean that Baroque Kingdom was acknowledging the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

The other kings just watched the scene with mirth. It was as if they found the situation fun. All Lloyd could do was speak nonchalantly and without any expectations, “Do it if you can. But if you don’t, know that I will ask for your head to pay for your crimes.”

“Of course. Ah. These are the people that will stop their advance for half a day,” Genie said, standing up and looking at the people behind her.

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“Them...?” Marquis Arna recognized the people behind Genie as the new tower masters, and uttered in shock. “Ar, aren’t they people with production classes?! How can they stop 20,000 troops including monsters, knights, and dragons for half a day?!”

In response, Genie just said, “Just watch.”

The kings were curious about their ridiculous statements while King Lloyd was fuming with anger.

“Let’s watch them for a moment.”

“We can just use mass teleport anyway.”

“How about taking a look?”

The kings looked like they were enjoying the spectacle. King Lloyd, on the other hand, did not like whatever was happening so he busied himself by arranging their military system and giving orders to his knights and soldiers. Just a bit later, King Lloyd heard the reports of one of his knights, “The

20,000 strong monster corps have reached the vicinity of the capital. They are only five kilometers away from us.”

“Everyone! Prepare for battle! Fortress guards, prepare your weapons, mages prepare your magic on the walls!” Lloyd urgently ordered his men.

An hour has passed since his talk with Genie. He already forgot her arrogant remarks and only remembered it after moving urgently like that. He could not help but burst into an outrageous laughter, “She’s the craziest out of all the crazy people out there. Only less than an hour had passed but the crazy bitch said that they would stop them for half a day?!”

King Lloyd sneered as he continued to move to the ramparts. However, the scene that greeted him brought him into great shock. This was because...

“Graaaaaaaaaaaa!!!”

...one existence was roaring loudly at the 20,000 strong troops in front of them. Genie, who was already standing on the ramparts, turned to look back at him and said, “Baroque Kingdom’s King Lloyd.”

“...!”

King Lloyd felt as if he was caught in a deathmatch, as his body started to tremble. He was speechless at the greatness of the existence in front of him.

“Do you know what kind of nation Beyond the Heavens Kingdom is now?” Genie scoffed at him as she said so. The huge creature roaring in front of the 20,000 strong troops was none other than...

“B, Black Dragon Vormon...?!”

...the greatest being on earth. Black Dragon Vormon had descended!

The 20,000 troops that were advancing suddenly stopped in their tracks. Then, suddenly, a huge force gathered at the mouth of Black Dragon Vormon high up in the sky. It was none other than his Dragon’s Breath.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—

A devastating disaster flew towards the 20,000 strong troops. Genie turned around and looked at the two people behind her. They were none other than the Painter Tower’s Tower Master Elise and the Tower of Knowledge’s Tower Master Jarrod. As it happened, Jarrod was the one that devised all of the strategies that they were enacting right now.