

## Gourmet 701

### Chapter 701: The Ten Plagues

The Masserati Kingdom, led by the Absolute God Class Absolute Monarch Richard, had been expanding their influence and power recently.

Several guilds already came under the command and rule of Absolute Monarch Richard, as the players were fascinated with his special power that could promote their growth. There were also many high-rankers that came knocking on their doors, judging that they would soon overtake the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom due to their development.

Absolute Monarch Richard possessed the skill 'Talent Search', which helped him discover and awaken people with amazing potential, as well as the passive skill 'Supreme Submission', which won the hearts of many legendary NPCs. With these two skills, he was able to increase the pace of development of the Masserati Kingdom.

But right now, the Masserati Kingdom was facing an unprecedented, and the greatest, disaster since their founding.

"Mages! Do you not have any magic anymore?!"

"My MP is all out!"

"We've used up all of our arrows too."

"Ugh, aaaaaaaack! My eyeeeeees!"

They had been holding out in Esser Fortress for two weeks straight and their situation was turning for the worst.

Richard watched the battlefield with a grave look on his face. *'We cannot let them take over Esser Fortress.'*

Esser Fortress was a strategic point. If this fortress got taken down, the enemies would only need four hours to reach the capital of Masserati Kingdom. Simply put, once this place was conquered, the Imperial Army would be able to take their territories one by one.

*'I never expected the Imperial Army's power to be this overwhelming.'*

Richard was already familiar with the Imperial Army's reputation. However, he possessed plenty of passive skills that could stimulate the growth and raise his soldiers' powers. Because of that, Richard was confident that his soldiers could be considered as the strongest and the best troops in the continent.

However, the story changed when the Imperial Army brought out their elite troops.

*'An ordinary knight is at the same level as rankers at the top 100,000.'*

As for the elite knights? They were either on par or stronger than rankers at the top 30,000.

*'How am I supposed to deal with troops at such a crazy level?'*

At this moment, Richard realized why the empire was the center of attention for Athenae's second era.

*‘Fighting them with numbers is meaningless.’*

If he decided to do that, the only one that would be weakened was his Masserati Kingdom.

*‘Then, does that mean that I can only give up Esser Fortress to the Luvien Empire?’*

No. He could not do that. If he gave in at this point, then the Luvien Empire would just continue to gnaw at and devour his Masserati Kingdom. In fact, what the empire was using as a pretext for this war was that the Masserati Kingdom had set foot and took root in a land that was originally theirs.

*‘There are 70,000 troops from the Imperial Army.’*

As for the Masserati Kingdom? They had around 110,000 troops. However, the number of their soldiers had dropped significantly over the course of this war.

At that moment, a voice rang out.

“You must never back down, King of the New World.”

Richard turned around to look at the source of the dreary and gloomy voice. When he turned, he saw the figure of a middle-aged man wearing a black cape on his shoulders and a helmet that seemed to have been modeled after a dragon.

*‘Black Dragon...?’*

Richard was very familiar with that black helmet and that rumored dark, chuuni-like way of speech. This man was the father of Beyond the Heavens’ King Minhyuk, also known as the chairman of the global corporation, Ilhwa Group.

Black Dragon crossed his arms on his chest and looked at the enemies arrogantly. “I have received the calls of the souls of the dead and had come running to this place.”

“Nice to meet you.”

Black Dragon was also a world-renowned figure so Richard could not just easily ignore him and send him back to where he came from.

Then, Black Dragon said, “With my eyes that can see over a thousand miles, I can see that the enemy reinforcements are already on their way here.”

“...!”

Richard’s face had turned ugly. Those words only meant one thing. Black Dragon had received information that the enemies would receive reinforcements.

*‘Damn it!’*

In fact, in a way, he should have expected that things would turn out like this. Ever since the beginning, the empire had been ready to take down the Masserati Kingdom at any given moment. However, they had efficiently distributed the Imperial Army troops to cover several continents so it was just taking a bit longer. The fact that they were going to send reinforcements, no matter how little, would still be too much for the kingdom to handle.

*‘If they came at us in full force, our kingdom would have already collapsed in a day.’*

Thankfully, the story team had arranged it in a way that they would not be annihilated without even being able to fight back. However, the fact that the empire could bring the Masserati Kingdom down at any time with just the slightest bit of effort from their emperor would always remain true.

Masserati Kingdom now had only two ways to survive. One was to abandon their current land and find a new one to live in. The second, fight until the end and get their lands taken over anyway.

“Did he tell you to come and inform me?”

The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and the Masserati Kingdom were neither allies nor enemies. Simply put, they could not expect to receive a huge favor from them, like support without any consequences.

“We came here in case you needed help.”

The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had been attacked by the Hell Corps not too long ago. This meant that they did not have plenty of troops available at the moment, especially since there was a chance that they would also make a counter attack.

“I see. You want something in return.”

Black Dragon nodded silently.

“I would like to hear it.”

“First would be hints for God-grade ingredients for our dear Majesty.”

“...As expected of your information network. Amazing.”

Beyond the Heavens had Informant Abel, who ranked fifth in the Assassination and Informant rankings in Athenae, and he had an impressive information network. Not too long ago, Abel had found out that the Masserati Kingdom had acquired God-grade ingredients.

Meanwhile, there was a man that stood next to Richard and listened to his conversation with Black Dragon.

*‘Why is His Majesty allowing this trivial conversation to go on?’*

The man was Ricor, and he was working under the name ‘Mask of Disaster’. Naturally, this was because he had the special class ‘Disaster Specialist’, a class that also used swords.

Every year, in Athenae, the most anticipated players with the fastest growth would be hailed as the Five Promising Prospects. Disaster Specialist Ricor was one of those five, rumored to be the best among them.

In fact, he was able to catch up with the ordinary high-rankers, achieving a high position in the Masserati Kingdom. That was why Ricor, although only twenty years of age, was very arrogant.

Under Absolute Monarch Richard’s command, he was able to grow even faster. Believing in the power that he and Richard had, Ricor thought that the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would soon be overtaken by the Masserati Kingdom.

Hence, he could not understand why Richard was bothering with this trivial conversation. Then, more shocking words were exchanged.

“How many support troops will you send?”

“We have a little more than ten people. We have already set up a team and I assure you that it’s a very great team.”

“...”

Ricor was very stunned when he heard those words.

*‘He wanted God-grade ingredients for the support of just ten people?! These crazy bastards!!!’*

However, Ricor tried to stay calm and just stood there watching the situation on the sidelines.

“Second, hints for the Absolute Demigod classes.”

“...!!!”

“That guy next to you, I seem to recall that his name is Ricor? He will soon become the next Absolute Demigod after the first Absolute Demigod Asura, right?”

The information network of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was truly beyond incredible. The reason why Ricor had a great attachment to the Masserati Guild was because Richard had personally visited him and told him that he would make him into an Absolute Demigod, just like Ascar, who became one earlier.

“You probably know a few more methods to become an Absolute Demigod.”

The Absolute Monarch was supposed to be a figure that could go against Nerva Sephiroth. That was why there should be several Absolute Demigod-class players beside him.

“One spot. We only need that one spot that is suitable for one of our guild members.”

Richard continued to listen to the demands.

“Third, a promise to send support troops. In the future, when something happens to the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, you will have to send support troops no matter what.”

“What in the world...!”

Ricor completely lost his temper. They were imposing too many demands.

*‘Besides, even if Richard agreed, do they think that they can turn the situation around? Just ten high-ranker class people? No, there should be at least a hundred to even be worthy of such demands!’*

“...I will think about it.” Richard answered with a grave look on his face.

Ricor felt extremely frustrated.

*‘Why is he even considering those audacious demands??’*

Black Dragon just nodded. “You won’t regret asking for help from our Team Darkness. *Fufufu.*? Can’t you feel the being on your right arm about to go berserk too?”

Ricor felt goosebumps on his skin. ‘*Darkness? Did he go crazy with his power?*’

It seemed like Black Dragon was just like how the rumors claimed him to be. He truly was the King of ‘Chuunis’.

Then, the enemy reinforcements arrived.

[Sword of the Gods Elainey has appeared on the battlefield!]

[Elainey is someone that has borrowed the power of God!]

[Those that can kill him will be able to obtain rewards.]

[Sword of the Gods Rend has appeared on the battlefield!]

[Those that can kill him...]

The wall of the fortress instantly collapsed after one of the Sword of the Gods, Elainey, hurled his huge spear with all his might.

Rumbleeeeeeee—

“...!”

Rend immediately joined in, throwing several axes that exploded like bombs and killing hundreds of soldiers at a time.

“...Ugh.” Richard could not help but groan especially after he saw the Hundred Battle Knights that followed right after the two.

“Keuhaaaaaack!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

“...!”

Richard’s face turned ugly. The tide of the wars had instantly turned the moment the Swords of the Gods and the Hundred Battle Knights appeared on the battlefield. They were leading a large army of 100,000 behind them. Now, the ones at a disadvantage when it came to numbers were them, not the enemy.

“Keuhaaaaaack!”

“Long live His Majesty Richard!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaack!”

“...”

The soldiers were being swept away so easily, dying in vain to the point that Richard had to wonder if this was truly a war and not just some one-sided slaughter. Even the Masserati Kingdom’s elite

knights, who Richard had tried to nurture as hard as he could, were nothing but mere children playing around in front of them.

Just like that, the troops blocking the enemies' advance toward the fortress continued to be pushed back.

"Hiiiiik...!"

Ricor, along with several of the Masserati Guild's marquises, were deployed to the field. All of the prominent high rankers of the guild moved to block the advancing enemies. Ricor, in particular, stood out the most among them.

*'This is already a losing battle. Getting help from the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom...'*

Ricor bit his lips tightly. He might be an arrogant ranker, but he was one of the few that did not look at the NPCs as mere artificial intelligence. That was why he was feeling desperate.

[Disaster of the Sky.]

Baaaaaaaaaaaaang—

A huge meteor fell from the sky and crashed on the site that Ricor aimed for the moment he swung his sword. The meteor easily devoured several of the Hundred Battle Knights.

Bzzzt—

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

A huge tornado appeared in the sky and devoured the approaching enemies as Ricor appeared in the sky in a flash of lightning.

Vwooooooooooong—

The tornado was also accompanied by a powerful typhoon that raged amidst the enemy ranks and forced them to hold on for their dear lives.

Tighten—

The typhoon grew more intense the moment Ricor tightened his palms into a fist. The ordinary enemy soldiers could not even control their bodies as they got swept away. This was Ricor's power, as someone that would climb the ranks of the Absolute Demigods.

"Ricor, come back here!!!" Richard called Ricor back.

However, Ricor could not hear his king's commands.

*'Hans, Veron, Neva, Karn...'*

They were the people that accompanied him. Although they were artificial intelligence, Ricor treated them as his friends. He did not want to see them die.

"Uwooooooooooooo!"

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

Bzzt—

Ricor used his pinnacle skill and triggered one of the Five Disasters. Even though the skill meant that he would have to incur a -2 in all stats, Ricor did not hesitate to use it. That was how much panic he was feeling.

[The God of Disasters' Wrath.]

First, hundreds of lightning bolts fell down from the skies.

Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack—

Then, it was followed by an area of one-kilometer radius twisting and shaking as lava spurted out and covered the ground.

Rumbleeeeeeeeeee—

But that was not the end. The strong winds blowing around them turned as sharp as swords, tearing apart the enemies.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaa—

There was also a huge tidal wave that suddenly appeared and devoured the enemy troops.

“Uwooooooooooooooh!”

*‘I’ll protect them! I’ll definitely protect them!!! They are my precious people, the people of Masserati!’*

Ricor was confident in his power. After all, he was one of the Five Promising Prospects and was also one of the next generation Absolute Demigods.

“You have an interesting skill there, huh?”

Sword of the Gods Elaine easily maneuvered along the twisted ground, his spear dancing through the blade-like storm and before piercing through Ricor’s heart.

Staaaaaaab—

“Keoheooooooooook!!!”

“We should nip them in the bud.”

One of Rend’s axes flew down from the sky at the speed of light and slashed Ricor’s shoulder, forcing him to slowly fall down to the ground.

‘No...’

Ricor’s head turned blank. All he could do was gaze at Richard’s panicked gaze. He could see his king shouting his name frantically while looking at him, who had rushed out recklessly on the battlefield.

“Ricor!!!”

*‘If only I were stronger...’*

He was supposed to become an Absolute Demigod, but he had not even changed his class yet. There were some pointers he had heard from Richard before.

*‘The way for you to change class to the Absolute Demigod Class is simple. All you have to do is meet and face this era’s transcendental strong men and you will be able to gain Class Percentages. If you fill that gauge, you will be able to change classes.’*

However, what was strange was the fact that the percentage gauge did not increase even though he was face to face with two of the Sword of the Gods.

*‘What rank should I meet for it to change?’* That question flashed in Ricor’s head as his body got close to the ground.

Then, he saw Richard’s mouth open. “I accept your conditions!!!”

Elainey and Rend were already shooting down toward him. That was when he saw Black Dragon, who was riding on Britney’s back, descend from the sky with his arms crossed over his chest. Then, he slowly raised his left arm as a powerful black energy appeared and swirled around him.

Roaaaaaaaaaar—!

“I am granting you the permission to awaken the power sealed within you and go berserk!”

Snap—

Ricor felt like everything was in slow motion as he watched the man snap his fingers and say those words. However, the sight also invoked one thought.

*‘What the hell? What kind of f\*cking r\*tard\*ed line was that...’*

However, the outcome was completely different from what Ricor expected. A woman with red hair fluttering underneath her helmet and a sword in her hand appeared just above the falling Ricor. The woman had a bewitching look, despite the cold and sharp glare of her eyes.

“Red Flame Swordsman Ellie, go wild!!!”

“...”

At that moment, Elainey’s spear and Rend’s axe struck the woman that was blocking Ricor. However, the woman just swung her sword lightly and she was able to easily block both weapons of the two beings that were hailed as the Swords of the Gods.

“Burn, Sword of White Flames.”

Flash, flash, flash, flash, flash—

The woman once again swung her sword lightly. However, both Elainey and Rand’s bodies got slashed and torn apart.

Thud—

Ricor finally landed on the ground, his eyes staring directly at the back of the woman that landed in front of him.

[You have met the Sword Emperor, the Continental Emperor and Team Darkness’ ‘Red Flame Swordsman’!]



[She is one of the Supremes of the current era!]

[You might experience something special!]

For the first time, notifications relating to his class change rang in his ears.

Ellie swung her sword and said, “Everyone is equal in front of me, the Red Flame Swordsman.”

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

At the same time, a powerful force erupted from her sword and swept away the enemies in front of her.

For the first time in Ricor’s life, he thought, *‘It might sound r\*ta\*\*ed but it’s still so cool...’*

Indeed, it was.

Chapter 702: The Ten Plagues

The Masserati Kingdom’s troops were reeling from despair.

*‘The enemies are too strong.’*

*‘Even their numbers are higher than ours.’*

*‘Our best and strongest are already exhausted.’*

*‘Are we going to die today...?’*

The number of enemies was far too overwhelming. It was not just that. The strength of the enemies’ reinforcements was much better than the troops before. In fact, the troops of Masserati Kingdom were all fighting, knowing that they would die by the day was over.

They all tried to do their best for their kingdom but their enemies did not even give them the opportunity to do so. In the end, even Ricor, the commander of Masserati’s Fifth Knight Order, was about to be thrown down on the ground.

That was when a distinct voice rang out.

“I am granting you the permission to awaken the power sealed within you and go berserk!”

A man’s voice rang above them as a woman appeared in front of Ricor in a flash. At the same time, an unidentified voice rang in the ears of both the troops of the Luvien Empire and the Masserati Kingdom.

[The Red Flame Swordsman. She is someone that will unify the continent with her sword.]

[She might even split the sky with her sword.]

[She has wielded her sword for the Masserati Kingdom that has been thrown into the pits of despair.]

[The enemies standing in front of her will have no choice but to submit in front of the ‘Red Flame Swordsman’s sword.]

“...?”

“...?”

“...?”

The notifications sounded very chuuni-like. However, the moment the woman, who was glaring at the approaching enemies, brandished her sword, the heavens and earth were overturned.

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

“Keuaaaaaaack!”

“Aaaaaaaaack!”

The enemy soldiers that got hit by the hundreds of sword lights that she unleashed were easily swept away. Ellie pointed her swords and spoke to her enemies in a nonchalant voice. “Come.”

“...!”

“...!”

*“Hihihihihiiiiing!”* The horses shrieked, their hinds rearing from fear as the soldiers retreated with them. Even Ricor, who was looking at her from behind, broke out in a cold sweat.

*‘This... is the real strongman of this era...’*

Actually, it was not that easy to change into the Absolute Demigod Class as Ricor thought it to be. There were simply not that many people in Athenae that could be hailed as a supreme existence of the era. Simply put, the condition in changing his class required him to meet with existences like the Great Demon or if it was monsters, those at the level of the Six Monster Gods.

As for Ellie, a recognized legend of the current era, she was much more powerful and greater than Ricor had imagined.

*‘I was nothing but a frog in a well...’* Ricor was finally able to realize his own shortcomings.

The woman in front of him stood alone with Esser Fortress behind her, yet in the eyes of the terrified soldiers of the Masserati Kingdom, she was like a mountain: strong and immovable.

Ricor felt his heart shake as he looked at that solid and sturdy back. *‘She’s so cool...’*

Unbeknownst to them, Ellie, who had her back to them, also felt her heart thump wildly. *‘They must think that I’m a cool person, no? Hohohoho!’*

As expected of one of the members of Gremory and the Attention Seekers.

Elainey and Rend, who were sent flying back, finally recovered. If Ellie were to be honest, there was no way that she could handle those two by herself.

*‘They’re much stronger than I thought.’*

She was quite surprised when she felt a much stronger resistance than she imagined when she struck their weapons with her sword. In fact, the only reason why they were stronger than what Ellie imagined was because they had eaten Minhyuk's buffed dishes.

At that moment, Black Dragon slowly landed on the ground and walked forward. Standing around him, the four dragons immediately burst out in a loud cry and glared sharply at the two Swords of the Gods.

"Kihyeeeeeeeeeeck!"

"Graaaaaaaaaaaa!"

"Kihyaaaaaaaaack!"

Covering the left side of his face with his hand, Black Dragon continued to walk with an eerie smile on his face.

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'Father...?'

Previously, Minhyuk had already informed his father, Black Dragon, that he had fed them his buffed dishes. He had also told him that he could take away the power that he had given them and make them weaker.

In response, Black Dragon had an interesting thought.

—*I have a brilliant idea.*

It was basically a ploy to use 'Inversing Giddiness' at the perfect timing to make them look cooler as they say their lines.

'D, dad...?'

'...'

Minhyuk could only shake his head in embarrassment.

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Black Dragon continued to move forward with his four dragons.

He had climbed the ranks and changed his class to Dragon Monarch. However, his original class was 'Destined Chuunibyou'. Recently, he was able to acquire a class-specific item, which was called 'Gloves of Darkness'. The item was a gauntlet that could only show the wearer's desired effect and had no practical effects. It could not even inflict any damage against his enemies. However, it was perfect for the idea he had.

Vwoooooooooooooooooong—

A fierce and vicious black energy swirled around Black Dragon as he raised his right gloved hand in front of him. His face was grim and fierce as he gathered the energy in his palms.

“My comrades have died by your hands.”

“...”

“...”

Rend and Elaine were aware that the man in front of him was Beyond the Heavens’ Black Dragon. They watched as the face of the man named Black Dragon turned grimmer with every step he took.

“Someone was the father of a newly-born child, someone else had to leave behind a grieving wife.”

Grit, grit, grit, grit—

Black Dragon gnashed his teeth. He had no doubts that they would not even be able to recall the faces of the people and soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom that they had killed. In fact, it was likely that hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, perhaps even hundreds of thousands of people, had already died under the hands of the Swords of the Gods.

“Those people, whose wives and children were waiting for them to come home, were killed by you!!!”

Rumbleeeeeeee!

Crackle, crackle, crackle—

The heavens suddenly rumbled as a huge and dark cloud appeared and hovered above their heads. At the same time, black sparks began to appear in Black Dragon’s arms.

“A young man that dreamt of becoming a soldier and even a soldier that hoped to get married, they all died.”

“...”

“...”

Elaine and Rend listened silently to Black Dragon. In fact, the two of them were nobles, and felt that they were superior to others from birth.

“Why would we care about the life of an insect?”

“Emotions are only a distraction in war.”

“Besides, we don’t even know who you’re talking about.”

The people and the soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom were nothing more than bugs in front of their eyes. Why would they even bother to remember them? The only thing that they could remember was the thrill and joy of cutting down their terrified enemies!

The words triggered an even more intense reaction from Black Dragon, the sparks that appeared in his arms growing more wild as his eyes turned entirely black. While he had his chunni side, he was not doing this just so he could look cool. Black Dragon truly felt sorrow for those people that had lost their lives.

Then, Elaine and Rend continued.

“Moron.”

“I’m pretty sure even your king does not want you to openly reveal your identity like that.”

“I heard that you’re the father of His Majesty Minhyuk. Get lost. Since we have eaten his dish, we don’t really want to cut you down right now.”

Rend and Elaine’s favor toward Minhyuk had reached a high level. That was why they did not want to touch the crazy moron in front of them.

The words and actions that Black Dragon uttered had revealed his identity and was completely contrary to what the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had wanted him to do, which was to move in secret.

“In the first place...” Black Dragon glared sharply at them as he slowly and carefully uttered his next words. “I have no intention of leaving a single one of you alive.”

“...”

“...”

*Rumbleeeee—*

The black energy that surrounded his body grew fierce, swirling rapidly like a raging typhoon. Black Dragon looked at the two Swords of the Gods with a cold gaze before snapping his fingers once again.

*Snaaaaap—*

“This is for the people that died under your hands. I bring judgment upon you in the name of Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.”

[Inversing Giddiness]

[The buff effects that you received after eating the Duck Jumulleok have disappeared!]

[Your stats and skills will decrease by the amount equivalent to the buff effects that you have received.]

[You have lost 13% of your STR, 10% of your STM and 8% of your AGI.]

[Your physical and magical attack have decreased by 20%.]

[Your physical and magical defense have decreased by 20%.]

[Your God’s Axe Technique’s level has decreased by 1.]

“...!”

“...!”

Only then did they realize that the Beyond the Heavens King already knew that they were a part of those that invaded their lands. That gentle and kind smile as well as the words that he wanted to be friendly with the empire, all of it was false.

“Hiiiiik...!”

“Damn it!”

The swirling black energy formed powerful, swirling tornadoes that made the troops of the Luvien Empire feel flustered.

[Look. This is the power of the man that became a king with his power alone.]

“Summon, Darksword.”

A huge and bulky man wearing black armor emerged once one of the tornadoes disappeared. This man was a supreme NPC that reached the ranks of the Absolute Supreme NPC on his own.

Crackleeeeeeee—

At the same time, blazing flames shot out of the man’s sword. The heat of the flames was so intense that the Imperial Army troops felt like their armor was melting.

“Die.”

The huge flame, brought about by the man’s Overlord’s Technique, devoured thousands of the Imperial Army troops and turned them into ashes. ‘Darksword’, or Overlord Raldo, shot forward and struck Rend on the shoulder with his sword.

Slaaaaaash—

“Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

Elainey hurriedly tried to stab Overlord Raldo with his spear when he heard Rend scream, but Ellie was there to stop him.

“I will also bring punishment upon you in the name of the people of the Eivelis Empire and Sword Emperor Ellie.”

Tingle—

For the first time in his life, Elainey felt a bone-chilling dread creep up his spine.

Thousands of arrows rained down from the sky and swept away the Imperial Army troops as another tornado disappeared out. At that moment, the enemy troops wondered, ‘*Are there thousands of archers behind that tornado??*’

The truth was there was only one person, to be exact, one elf that came out of the tornado. He was none other than Elven King Argon, who received the codename ‘Phoenix’s Incarnation’ this time around.

Just like that, the Imperial Army troops were pierced through by his arrows, every single one of them striking their target true. Even Elaine and Rend did not escape the onslaught of attacks, their bodies pierced through by countless arrows.

“Keuaaaaaaaack!”

Overlord Raldo dug into the gaps of Rend’s defenses fiercely, his sword going straight through the chest. He even went so far as to cut his Achilles’ tendon one after the other, before slamming his face with the hilt of his sword.

Stab—!

“Uwaaaaaaaaack!”

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump!

On the other side, Ellie ran forward and expertly avoided Elaine’s spear.

Baaaaaaaang—

Swoooooosh—

Ellie brandished her sword, throwing it in the air before taking a dagger out and cutting her opponent’s wrists.

Spuuuuurt—

She immediately grabbed the falling sword, using it to slash Elaine’s chest as she passed by.

“Keuhaaaaaaaack!”

Ellie also kicked the back of Elaine’s knee, forcing him to kneel down as she poked his *qi*, or acupuncture, points with the tip of her sword.

Ping, ping, ping, ping, ping—

Unable to move, Elaine looked at Ellie with fear. “This... this is impossible...”

Ricor, who had finally returned to Richard’s side, looked at the scene incredulously. Every single time a member of them appeared in front of him, these notifications rang in his ears.

[He is one of the Supremes of the current era!]

[You might experience something special!]

[He is one of the Supremes of the current era!]

[You...special!]

[He is...the current era!]

[He is one of the Supremes...!]

Richard looked back at Ricor. “Among all of Athenae’s players, Beyond the Heavens’ Minhyuk is the one with the most connections.”

This was the reason why Richard had hesitated even though Black Dragon had only said that there would be ten people that would come to help them.

“He has the power to attract people to his side, always caring for and loving those that come under his wing. Perhaps one might call him sentimental, but it was through all that that he was able to become a real king.”

“...”

At this moment, a new name was engraved upon Ricor’s heart. It was none other than Beyond the Heavens’ Food God, Minhyuk.

“So, you better remember this clearly.”

“...”

“That man, with the support of his comrades, will likely be the first user to become the emperor in Athenae.”

The fact that Richard said this himself meant that he was sure that Minhyuk would become emperor much earlier than him. Ricor felt a shiver run down his spine at the thought alone.

Meanwhile, Elaine and Rend, the two people that cut down others like they were killing bugs, knelt on their knees in dumbfounded despair, while Overlord Raldo and Continental Emperor Ellie’s swords were raised above their heads.

At that moment, Black Dragon declared, “Bring judgment upon them.”

Slashhh—

Slaaaaaash—

The heads of the Swords of the Gods Elaine and Rend fell and rolled on the ground at the same time.

## Chapter 703: The Ten Plagues

The Swords of the Gods were chosen from among the humans and there had been only two candidates for the Battle God’s Sword. Of those two, Nerva Sephiroth was the one that was considered to be infinitely lacking.

Compared to Nerva, the other candidate was virtuous. That was not all, his abilities and charisma to command his men was far superior than Nerva’s, or any other else’s for that matter. However, the one that eventually rose to the position of the Battle God’s Sword was Nerva Sephiroth.

Nerva Sephiroth has betrayed his friend, his rival, and succeeded in getting what he wanted. He could not help but recall the voice that he heard on the day that he inherited the power of the Battle God.

[As the Battle God’s Sword, you must not be shaken by any kind of turbulence.]

[The Battle God’s Sword shall be the master of the entire continent. Everyone will kneel down in front of him, even the descendants of the other gods.]

[The Battle God’s Sword must trample on everyone, even the successors of the Absolute Gods.]

[The Battle God’s Sword is the supreme existence.]



Nerva could not forget the joy and delight that he had felt back then. He was very happy that it was him that inherited the Battle God's power, and not that outstanding and virtuous person.

But today, the Luvien Empire had suffered shame and disgrace.

“...”

Sitting on his throne, Nerva Sephiroth turned to look out to the sky. He saw clearly how two stars had fallen to the ground. The stars were the symbol of Elaine and Rend. Two of the Swords of the Gods had met their deaths.

At the same time, the catastrophe that was falling and wreaking havoc in the Luvien Empire disappeared completely. The livestock, which they thought were already dead, and the infectious disease, which they believed to be spreading around, disappeared in a moment. It was like everything that had happened was a lie. There were no casualties. However, it had completely tarnished Nerva's pride.

Nerva Sephiroth rose from his throne and opened the huge doors of the audience hall. There he saw thousands of the Luvien Imperial Army's troops lined up outside.

The Luvien Imperial Army never stopped growing stronger. They would all grow every time they cinched a victory. Of course, the Battle God would always give Nerva rewards with every win too. That was right.

*‘Everything will be done smoothly. All of the empires and kingdoms will kneel down before me.’*

This was because they were continuously getting stronger. Suddenly, the words of the other candidate for the Battle God's Sword, the same man that was considered for the God's Sword position, flashed in Nerva's head.

*—Nerva. One day someone will bring upon you severe punishments. I will never forget your evil deeds. It will always be recorded in history.*

The voice of the friend and comrade that Nerva chose to betray for power made his chest throb with pain.

*‘Do you think someone will dare to punish me? Preposterous,’* Nerva thought, looking straight ahead at the 40,000 troops lined up with the twelve Swords of the Gods at the vanguard.

They might just be 40,000 soldiers, but they were the finest and greatest of the Luvien Empire. All of these men were knights, even the one with the lowest level was at Level 500. They had also learned and grown under the Swords of the Gods' careful nurturing. Just 10,000 of them were strong enough to easily make a kingdom fall.

Wearing black helmets, black armor and riding on black horses, the army had a total of 150,000 knights in their ranks, and was called ‘Nerva's Black Knights’, the army that represented the Luvien Empire.

Nerva had quickly called back the Swords of the Gods and the Black Knights that he had dispatched to invade the other kingdoms and empires. But what was more surprising was the fact that some of the players had heard this notification:

Of course, it was a quest that only players that had joined the Luvien Imperial Army could receive. However, the most important take-away here was that 15% of the world's leading high-rankers had already migrated to the Luvien Empire. They had deemed that the Luvien Empire was safe. It was safe from the dangers of war and they could safely grow their strength here.

In the Luvien Empire, possessing a title, even that of a baronet, would be treated courteously and could receive huge sponsorships from the empire. Nerva Sephiroth would also give them the foothold to grow even further with his power.

Currently, even if the players were high-rankers, they could not easily get a title. But with this single announcement, it was possible to become a Count as a reward. In other words, this was the high-rankers' greatest opportunity, especially for those that held a grudge against the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and the Masserati Kingdom.

Just like that, an additional 20,000 high-rankers gathered in the Luvien Empire. There were players among them that were considered as the strongest in their respective countries and had even participated in the 'Battle of the Thrones' as kings before.

*'Did you think that I quibbled with you to create an excuse, Beyond the Heavens' King?'*

Nerva had seemingly argued and asked Minhyuk those questions back then. But the truth was, he could easily mobilize a huge force at any given moment. The only problem was that the Battle God had placed a restriction upon him and could not abuse that authority. This time, Nerva ignored that restriction and mobilized his army despite the penalties.

As for why Nerva did not go against the restriction and instead swallowed the other kingdoms and empires step by step, it was because of something else.

*'If you eat too much then you'll get sick.'*

If he brought all of the empires and kingdoms to his feet at one go, it would be hard for him to take control over them. That was why he was conquering them one by one.

*'It would be difficult for the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom to gather their troops since they just experienced a war not too long ago.'*

In addition, no other empire or kingdom could participate in this war and help them. The same was true for Ellie and Raldo, who loved that king so much. The moment they moved their troops, their nations would be placed on the path to destruction.

According to the spy that he had planted in the Masserati Kingdom, Ellie, Raldo and some of Minhyuk's other friends were gathered there.

*'All of them will die because of you today.'*

Once the Masserati Kingdom fell, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would soon follow.

.

*‘You’re an immortal that will continue to live even if you get killed? Then, I’ll just kill you over and over again.’*

Nerva soon gave his orders. “We will now bring upon severe punishment to the Masserati Kingdom for illegally occupying our territory.”

“Uwaaaaaaaaah!!!”

He looked at his troops that roared with all their might and continued to give his orders. “Advance.”

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In the underground prison located beneath the Luvien Empire’s imperial castle.

Minhyuk had finally realized why Nerva Sephiroth had told him to go to the underground prison himself to free his men.

[An unidentified power has suppressed you!]

[You will not be able to leave this place for 30 hours!]

[You cannot use any kind of movement scroll or magic like teleport or a return order!]

This was quite an unexpected situation. However, Gremory and the Attention Seekers were able to behead Elaine and Rend just like they had planned.

“...Nerva has sent his finest men to Esser Fortress. Hmm,” Minhyuk mumbled.

This happened three hours ago. Nero, who was looking at his king, could not understand why the man in front of him did not do anything.

“That... Your Majesty...”

“Yeah?”

“Aren’t you worried?”

“Worried?”

Minhyuk did not look extremely anxious or nervous for someone that had heard something so urgent. In fact, he had eaten thirty-five chickens and twenty-one pizzas in the three hours since he received that message.

“I’m very worried, Nero.”

*‘But... didn’t you just say ‘This pizza is so delicious!’ while eating happily?’*

Nero had only heard rumors about His Majesty Minhyuk’s appetite. However, he could not help but be amazed after witnessing it in person. No matter how hard he looked at him, Nero could tell that Minhyuk was not truly that nervous.

“Your Majesty... Please excuse my rudeness. The recent war had left the people and the soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom devastated. It would be impossible for us to rally our troops. On top of that, the other kingdoms and empires would not dare to help us due to the threat of the Luvien Empire.”

Crunch, crunch, crunch—

Minhyuk munched on a chicken leg while nodding. “I know, right?”

“And there were even the words that Your Majesty had mentioned earlier. If Nerva’s Black Knights came, there would be no one in the entire world that could rival against them.”

“Isn’t that the truth? Hey, if you don’t like chicken, then how about dried meat?”

“...But will it really be alright?”

“Hmmm.” Minhyuk rubbed his chin in thought.

Nero and the soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom were looking at him nervously. Minhyuk just sat there, eating his chicken legs nonchalantly.

Then, at that moment, a pigeon flew inside the underground prison.

“...!”

Nero and the soldiers looked at the pigeon in shock.

Meanwhile, Minhyuk performed his very own magic trick, putting an entire chicken wing in his mouth, only for bones to come out.

“Have you ever seen anything like this?”

“...”

His people were at a loss for words when they heard their king ask them somberly about something so trivial. Then, Minhyuk proceeded to read the letter with a wry smile on his face.

*‘This is a special letter. After all, how can something enter this place when Emperor Nerva is here?’* Nero thought, showing how quick-witted he was.

Then, another pigeon flew in. After reading all the letters, Minhyuk nodded quietly and said, “I am aware of your worries, Nero.”

“...Yes, Your Majesty.”

“They have killed the people and the soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. That’s why I came here.”

Nero was aware of the disasters that fell on the Luvien Empire.

*‘No way, did His Majesty do that? What an amazing person!’*

Minhyuk grinned and said, “But Nero...”

“Yes, Your Majesty?”

“The resentment of our people and soldiers has not been resolved yet, don’t you think so too?”

“...What do you mean by that?”

*‘Did he mean that their revenge is not yet over?’*

“Our reinforcements have already arrived in our world.”

*‘Our world...? What in the world does that mean?’*

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Swords of the Gods Elaine and Rend’s heads fell down. Without realizing it, the morale of the soldiers of Masserati Kingdom soared.

With the help of just the Red Flame Swordsman, Darksword, and Phoenix’s Incarnation, the Masserati Kingdom was able to compete against the Luvien Empire.

Ricor, who was taking a brief respite with Richard, turned to his king and asked, “Your Majesty, Black Dragon said that ten people will come. Why are there only three?”

“...I also don’t understand.”

The two could only look at them in confusion.

Not too far away from them, the first Absolute Demigod Class, Ascar, was looking at Gremory and the Attention Seekers bickering with each other with a dark look on her face.

“Ellie and Raldo had made a very cool and splendid appearance,” the Dragon King spoke with a serious expression on his face.

Gremory also nodded along. “I completely agree with you. If we make our appearance right now, then we will receive less attention... No, there’s no need for us to make our appearance right away.”

“Why don’t you go and help them now...”

“Do keep quiet. We are having a very serious discussion right now.”

“Asura brat, this is a very serious matter. Ha... How should I make an appearance and get the most attention? Should I ride a black carriage and shout ‘The Demon has descended!’?”

“No. Please, now...”

“Won’t you please stay quiet?”

“Shut up.”

“Shh!”

“...”

Ascar, who had unexpectedly become the God's Voice Shuttle, felt her expression morph into a very ugly and dark one.

*'I will definitely take revenge.'*

Ascar was Asura, the Goddess of the Battlefield and the very first Absolute Demigod. She did not come here to become their God's Voice Shuttle. The 'revenge' that she mentioned would definitely terrify anyone, especially for those that had seen how merciless she was on the battlefield.

Finally, Gremory decided to go to war.

"Alright. I'll ride my black carriage and make a splendid appearance. Asura brat, you have to make a good introduction. Understand? One that will make everyone remember my entrance, something that will go down in the annals of history."

Ascar's cold and frosty gaze was glued on the back of Gremory, who rode her black carriage and disappeared from her sight.

*'I will definitely not let this go.'*

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A black swirl of energy suddenly appeared between the Masserati Kingdom's troops and the Luvien Imperial Army, who were in the middle of a tense confrontation.

Gremory, who was riding on her black carriage, appeared with a proud and cold look on her face.

"You pitiful souls. I am Team Darkness' Evil Goddess," Gremory declared, raising both of her arms gracefully as black energy wrapped around her. Not long after, God's Voice rang in everyone's ears.

[The Evil Goddess has appeared!]

"...?"

"...?"

"...?"

Those that had heard the God's Voice doubted their ears for a moment. Gremory, whether she was aware of it or not, gracefully declared, "Die."

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

[The Evil Goddess used her skill. It was very effective.]

"...?"

"...?"

"...?"

[Everyone, please act surprised.]

"...Wow, Waaaaaaah..."

“Team, Team Darkness’ Evil Goddeeeeeeeess~”

“That’s, that’s a very splendid appearance...”

“Uwaaaaaaaaah...”

“Very strong...”

The Imperial Army troops just shook their heads blankly.

God’s Voice was something that everyone could hear. However, the user could also designate it such that some could not hear it. In other words, Gremory was the only one that could not hear Ascar’s voice.

Gremory, who was still unaware of what was happening, was reveling in the ‘attention’ that everyone was giving her, her arms still raised up high as she took a deep breath.

“Fwaaaaaaa.”

Ascar looked at her and thought, ‘Hehe. *Revenge is a success.*’

She was showing her unexpectedly cute side.

#### Chapter 704: Support Troops

The entire world was in a buzz.

[The Luvien Empire had sent 40,000 of Nerva’s Black Knights and 20,000 rankers to Masserati Kingdom’s Esser Fortress.]

[Esser Fortress is a very strategic point for Masserati Kingdom.]

[From the quest that opened just now, it seems like Nerva Sephiroth is very determined to kill both Richard and Minhyuk all at once.]

[According to the correspondents that we have sent to various parts of Athenae, the kingdoms and empires are ‘not making a move’.]

[Do you know what this means?]

[No nation is moving to help the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and the Masserati Kingdom.]

Even the viewers were making a fuss.

[Where are all those nations that used to flatter the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom? They have grown close with Minhyuk, right?]

[Ellie, Raldo, Dragon King, Gremory, Saintess Loyna and even the other popes, they all are close to him, right? Amazing.]

[But now that he’s in danger, you can’t even see a strand of their hair there. Haha.]

[Don’t state the obvious. Just think about it. That’s the Luvien Empire. Anyone that dares to stop the advance of the Luvien Empire will find their nations destroyed in just a matter of days. As for Saintess Loyna, she’s supposed to be a neutral party.]

[Then, just like usual, there will be no nation that will support the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom? I’m pretty sure their troops are all exhausted too.]

[What in the world did the Food God do to Nerva...]

[Haven't you heard the rumors? Minhyuk was the one that brought the ten plagues to the Luvien Empire.]

[For real?]

[Yep, yep... Hey, why don't you know about this? Haha. Moron.]

[Anyway, that's the reason why Nerva is hell-bent on destroying the kingdoms created by 'foreigners'.]

[GG, Beyond the Heavens. There are even country-level rankers among the high-rankers that joined the war. From what I heard, Vietnam's Miao has become really strong thanks to the 'God-rank Bow' that she got recently.]

[I heard that France's Callauhel now has two god-rank artifacts, is that true?]

[Didn't China's Xu Jiaqi also get stronger?]

Just like what they said, it was not just the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom that had grown stronger. The other players had also continued to grow. Because of that, country-level rankers that had participated as kings in the Battle of the Thrones before were confident that they were now strong enough to take them on once more.

God of Archery Miao stroked her white bow and thought, *'I'm very sorry to you, Minhyuk. But I really want to get that title in the Luvien Empire.'*

*'It will be very hard for the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom to survive this time.'*

For them, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was a nation that would have to collapse one day. Miao walked with the troops and looked at the man named Venteio, who was at the vanguard and leading Nerva's Black Knights.

*'The Luvien Empire's power is truly amazing...'*

Miao was left speechless after seeing the current Mercenary King, Mercenary King Venteio, in front of her. This man had suddenly appeared, took down the Mercenary King and united all of the mercenaries in the continent. From what she knew, he was also one of the Absolute Supreme NPCs too.

*'And there's also the Swords of the Gods. They are a force to be reckoned with but they're still acting like that.'*

Even though Venteio was not one of them, the Swords of the Gods all acted courteously toward him. It seemed that strength was respected, and he was very influential.

Venteio also brought along his mercenary troops and incorporated themselves among the Black Knights.

*'Wolf Mercenary.'*

Including Venteio, there were only less than thirty members. However, from what Miao had learned, they had named themselves 'Wolf Mercenary' in honor of the man that they all admired.



*‘They are at a level that even a decent ranker would not be able to fight against them.’*

That was just how powerful the Wolf Mercenary was. In fact, the mercenaries were all ranked. Those in Wolf Mercenary were all strong people that could rival those at the top 1,000 rankers.

*‘But in the end, they still became Nerva’s dogs.’*

There was no helping it. Athenae’s Second Era only had one outcome, and that was the entire continent being devoured by the Luvien Empire.

In no time at all, the Esser Fortress appeared in the eyes of the imperial army.

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For a moment, the battlefield turned silent and calm. Even though they were from the same army, the soldiers of the Luvien Imperial Army could not help but gulp when they saw Nerva’s Black Knights approach. It was only natural. After all, they were of different levels.

The feelings were more intense for the Masserati Kingdom troops.

*‘What the hell is in front of us? A raid?’*

*‘We have crossed a mountain yet we are faced with another mountain?’*

“Why did the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom provoke the Luvien Empire?! Shouldn’t you have expected something like this to happen?!”

Richard was furious. He glared at Black Dragon fiercely while venting his anger. Did Minhyuk not expect this to happen? However, even if he could, in the end, Minhyuk was still a player.

“I’m sorry. Hooo.”

Richard realized that he had acted rashly. The one that moved his army was Nerva, not Minhyuk. Besides, this was not the time to determine who was right or who was wrong.

However, Richard could not help but feel ashamed at the delight that he had felt when they initially got the upper hand against the Luvien Empire. After all, his name would be even more known to the world with this.

*‘I... In the end, Masserati Kingdom will still be destroyed...’*

A bitter aftertaste lingered in Richard’s mouth. Many of the people that believed in him would perish today.

“...Soon.” Black Dragon looked at the horizon that was now covered with their enemies. “Endure. Hold on until the sun goes down.”

“...?”

Richard looked at Black Dragon in confusion.

*‘Until the sun goes down...? What?’*

Then, Ellie approached Black Dragon and asked, “The situation is not looking too good. I did not expect that Luvien would send another army.”

Even Raldo hurriedly returned to their side and said with an ugly look on his face, “I never expected them to send the Black Knights...”

*‘What? What did they say just now?’*

Black Dragon had implied something earlier. From what he could see, it was something that only he and his son, Minhyuk, knew.

*‘By any chance... will support troops come...?’*

No. Richard had judged that to be virtually impossible. Any kingdom or empire that dared to send support from this land would definitely be pulled out from their roots. However, he could finish pondering over the matter.,

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

“Keuaaaaaaack!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keheooooook!”

“W, what?!” Richard shouted in surprise. Dozens of arrows pierced through the mages’ shields and stabbed into the hearts of their troops that were above the ‘centurion-rank’.

“Hoooo,” a woman spat out a breath as she pulled the strings of her bow once again. This woman was none other than God of Archery Miao with her newly acquired class-specific item, the Abbas’ Bow. She had actually used the ‘Enemy Commander Search’ skill that was attached to the bow.

Dash, dash, dash, dash, dash—

Immediately after that, the Black Knights’ cavalier charged toward the walls of Esser Fortress that housed the nervous and tensed Maserati troops waiting for them.

Baaaaaaaaaang—

[Sword of the Gods Bella has joined the battlefield!]

[Sword of the Gods Locco has joined the battlefield!]

[Sword of the Gods Pero...battlefield!]

[Sword of the Gods Amber...battlefield!]

There was only one Sword of the Gods that ranked in the top ten among them, the rest were all ranked in the 20s. However, there were a dozen of them. On top of that, Luo, the Sword of the God that ranked in the top ten, was special.

[Sword of the Gods Luo. Level 701.]

Elaine and Rend were only at around Level 680 or so. One would say that the twenty-level difference was not that huge. In truth, it was a deep chasm that separated them.

In Athenae, new skills would appear or they would receive additional stats whenever they increased their level by a hundred. There was a high chance that Luo was more than twice as strong as the other Swords of the Gods present here.

The arrival of the additional enemies plunged the troops of the Masserati Kingdom into fear and terror.

Sword of the Gods Luo was an assassin-class. One move and he was able to slash the necks of the executives of the Masserati Kingdom.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—

Spurt—

Splash—

Fwooosh—

“...!”

Richard’s pupils were shaking as he looked at Luo. In just an instant, the man in front of him was able to force his guild members, the pillars of his kingdom, to log out.

“Right now...” Richard hurriedly gave his orders. “Send the NPCs back and bring all of the players to the vanguard!!!”

“Yes...? But...”

“Now!!! Even Team Darkness! Please fall back and stay in the rear!!!”

Richard remembered that the NPCs of Masserati Guild were also here. That was why he made the choice to send the NPCs back and brought only the players forward.

He quickly looked at the time. *‘Time before the sun sets...’*

There were still thirty minutes left.

“Hold on!!! You have to hold on and defend the fortress one way or another!!!”

That was right. Richard decided to put his trust in them. Hearing the words of Minhyuk’s father made him realize why he admitted that he was glad that Minhyuk was the first player to become king.

As for Ellie and Team Darkness? They did not completely fall back to the rear, instead, they kept on sending them support from the walls of the fortress.

Richard grabbed the ring in his hand tightly.

“Your Majesty...!” Ricor called out to him in a hurry, he was one of the few that knew what that ring was for.

During the time when class-specific items were rapidly spreading in Athenae, Richard was able to get his hands on the ‘The Ring of the King’s Blessings’, an item that could dramatically increase the stats and skills of the guild members that were within Richard’s two kilometer radius. However, there was a side-effect.

*‘He won’t be able to level up for two weeks... even his level will drop by one.’*

Even though he would face such a huge penalty, Richard still asked his guild members to fight for him. “Our names will be written in history if we win this war today!!!”

Putting all his hope and faith in those words, Richard tightened his hold on the ring.

[You have activated the Ring of the King’s Blessings!]

[All of your stats have increased by 21%!]

[All of your skills have increased by one level!]

[Your fear has disappeared, replaced by courage and bravery!]

[Your skill cooldown has decreased by 20%!]

[Your resistance to abnormal status has increased by 20%!]

The guild members of Masserati Kingdom had come from all over the world. They all followed Richard because of his ‘Power of Growth’. As they continued to live under his rule, they realized why he became the second king of Athenae. He was someone that truly cared for his guild members, while sometimes being more cruel and tough than anybody else.

“As His Majesty commanded!!! Let’s hold on!!!”

“Endure it!!!”

“Attack!!!”

A troop made entirely of players squeezed the last of their strength and charged toward the Black Knights.

“...What an amazing fellow.”

“We have no choice but to acknowledge him, eh?”

Ellie and Raldo looked at Richard in admiration. For a long time, it had been very hard to unite the foreigners. After all, they solely lived for profits and gains. Yet, these people were now working together and making a sacrifice for the king of their nation.

*‘I can now see why he became the Absolute Monarch.’*

*‘Minhyuk, make that person your rival and continue to grow and move forward.’*

Ellie and Raldo even entertained those thoughts.

Ricor also went out shouting, “Uwooooooooooooooh!” as several disasters fell down from the sky.

Even though Ricor’s disaster had become much stronger, there was not much damage on the Swords of the Gods and the Black Knights.

*Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—*

“Keuhaaaaaack!”

God of Archery Miao’s arrows flew and stabbed through Ricor’s chest.

The guild members, who had regained their courage, charged forward but the problem was the Black Knights were too strong. Richard could clearly see that even his strongest guild members that ranked at the top of their guild were no match against the Black Knights. Even the Swords of the Gods were easily stabbing through his members' chests and chopping off their heads as if it were a game.

‘...’

Twenty five minutes later.

[90% of the Masserati Guild's members that had gathered in Esser Fortress have been wiped out.]

[Your qualifications as a king are being questioned.]

[You might incur the resentment and grudges of the people if you lose this war.]

“...Ah.”

Richard clearly felt the difference in their class. The best members of the guild fought with all their might yet they were easily wiped out, leaving only 10% of their forces behind. Their levels went down and they even dropped their artifacts. Although they were not really dead, Richard was sure that they would most definitely shed tears of blood at the loss.

‘However...’

The reason why they would be sad and in despair was because today was likely the fall of the Masserati Kingdom. In the end, Richard drew his sword with Ricor, who was covered in blood, escorting him.

Shwaaaaaaa—

In just a blink, the walls of Esser Fortress were being occupied by the Black Knights.

“Kill their king!!!”

“Die!!!”

“Ugh!!!”

Richard became aware of his limits as he tried to cut down their enemies.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

Ellie and Raldo also jumped in and escorted Richard.

“Go. Quickly go back to your kingdom and empire.”

“That is for us to judge,” Ellie said, looking at Richard with a wry smile on her face. Ellie was known to be a cold empress. She did not show any emotion to any other king in her presence. “The Masserati Kingdom will become stronger.”

However, her words showed that she evaluated the Masserati Kingdom highly. Still, everything would be for naught if their kingdom perished. They had to survive this day.

Then, Black Dragon appeared, looked over the horizon and said, “The sun is setting.”

“Uwaaaaack!”

“Keuaaaaack!”

“Keheoook!”

“Pl, please. Don’t come here. Hiiiiik!”

As the desperate screams of his dying guild members rang in his ears, Richard could not help but look at the beautiful scene of the sun setting down the horizon.

*‘What the hell is over there?’*

They did not have any allies and support troops. Richard had no doubt that the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom would also face the same situation soon.

*‘Why did Black Dragon say those words?’*

“...”

Then, at that moment, the setting sun illuminated the figure of two men walking slowly forward.

[The Legends of the Land of the Forgotten Heroes has appeared!]

[He is a living and breathing legend in the Land of the Forgotten Heroes, a man that is skilled in cloning techniques and someone that could make the Jade Emperor tremble in fear!]

[He is someone that has become a king in the Land of the Forgotten Heroes. He has rectified the shaking and collapsing kingdom and is writing the story of a new legend!]

[This Legend’s name is ‘Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal’, the king of the Kingdom of Rama!]

[This Legend’s name is ‘Aaron’, the king of the Kingdom of Eden!]

Vwoooooooooooooong—

Boom— Boom— Boom— Boom—!

The loud beat of the drums and the blare of the horns resounded on the battlefield as another man appeared in the middle of the two men, the three of them slowly walking forward once again.

Two large armies, with one holding the symbol of a two-legged bull while the other bore the symbol of the ‘Ruyi Jingu Bang’, appeared right behind them, spreading around the horizon. Each army had around 40,000 soldiers.

Finally, Richard was able to see the face of the man that was walking at the forefront. This man was none other than Beyond the Heavens’ King Minhyuk.

Richard could only gulp dryly while thinking, *‘...You brought support troops from another world?’*

He was truly in a different class.

Chapter 705: Support Troops

Luvien Imperial Castle.

Nerva was sitting leisurely on his throne, enjoying a glass of champagne. It had been a long time since he last felt this good.

Although the two kingdoms that would disappear within this week were nothing but small kingdoms, he felt satisfied and good about it.

He quietly took a sip of his champagne as he watched the situation on the battlefield through the crystal ball.

*‘Ah. The sunset looks beautiful.’*

That was when Nerva saw three silhouettes on the horizon with the sunset on their backs.

“...”

Right behind them were 80,000 strong troops, marching with powerful momentum and an overwhelming aura.

Clatter—!

“What the...?!”

Nerva knew who these people were. They were the kings in the Land of the Forgotten Heroes, Edea. He was also aware that the kings of Edea looked upon this world in a very bad light and the fact that the troops from that world were *extremely* strong, to the point that none of the armies in this world could go against them easily.

Of course, Luvien Empire’s Nerva’s Black Knights did not fall behind them in terms of power and would not be easily pushed back. However, he had realized right at this very moment that the situation that he envisioned would not be achieved as easily as he thought. Nerva did not stay idle either.

*‘Why the hell is that bastard there?!’*

How in the world was Minhyuk over at that place? He was sure that he had trapped the man inside the underground prison.

Nerva headed for the underground prison swiftly, looking at all of the captives and prisoners of war that they had locked up inside. However, no matter how hard he looked, ‘Minhyuk’ was nowhere to be found.

*‘This is impossible.’*

There was no way that the man would be able to get out of this place. It did not matter how resourceful one was, they would not be able to escape once the restrictions were in place.

*‘Unless they did not exist from the very beginning? Don’t tell me...’*

The figure of the Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal flashed in Nerva’s head, rooting him in his place with a stunned look on his face.

Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal, Sun Wukong, was a master of cloning techniques.

*‘From the very beginning, that bastard...!’*

It was not Minhyuk that had come here, but his clone.

“Eeeeeeeeeek...!”

An unbearable rage overcame Nerva. It was so overwhelming that he quickly wanted to vent it somehow. That was when he caught sight of the prisoners of war from the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

“You bastards...!”

As his hands reached toward the prisoners, he recalled something.

[You have made a vow with the Beyond the Heavens’ King to release the prisoners safely under the name of the emperor!]

That was right. Nerva had made a vow in the name of the emperor. Because of that, he could not do anything to the prisoners in front of him.

“Damn it!!! Beyond the Heavens’ King, you f\*cking bastard!!!” Nerva’s screams echoed loudly in the prison cells.

\*\*\*

The one that entered the underground prison was not Minhyuk, but his clone. If that was the case, then where was his main body? Of course, it was in Edea.

Minhyuk had gone to Edea to ask for help from Sun Wukong, the king of the Kingdom of Rama, and Aaron, the king of the Kingdom of Eden. The two kingdoms immediately approved his request for support, a feat was much easier than he thought.

Minhyuk had actually thought of two possible outcomes after he secured help from them. Either Nerva would stay still, or he would bring his troops out. If it was the former, then it would not be too bad. After all, Minhyuk had already taken everything that he wanted from Nerva. However, what he hoped for was the latter.

He believed that Nerva would try to make an example out of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. After all, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had just ended a war against the Hell Corps. They were currently an easy target to gobble up.

Just as he hoped, Nerva opted for the latter.

[The Land of the Forgotten Heroes is an unknown land. It is a place where only a few of the players have been in.]

[According to rumors, there are many beings in Edea that are at a higher level than the beings in the world that we play in.]

[Even the level of their knights and soldiers are far higher than the level of those in our lands.]

Of course, the viewers were also in a buzz.

[No, how in the world did he get support from the kings of another world?]

[And it’s not just simple support. Even the kings themselves came here? At this point, we should call Minhyuk the King of Networking, no?]

[From what I know, Great Sage, Heaven’s Equal is a very powerful being in the Land of the Forgotten Heroes. He’s basically a living and breathing legend in that world.]

[Freaking amazing...]



The viewers all over the world watched in surprise and admiration. However, they were not the only ones that were surprised. Richard, the Masserati Kingdom, and Ricor felt like their breaths had been stolen.

[You have met the king of the Kingdom of Rama; Edea's Legend, also known as the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal.]

[He is the Supreme among all of the Supremes of the current era!]

[You might experience something special!]

Ricor's percentage bar experienced a huge increase. However, that was not what surprised him.

*'How... why... why did it increase because of a player...'*

What surprised him were the unbelievable notifications that rang in his ears.

[He is the King of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, the God of Minhyuk Religion, and the one that received the blessings and protection of the Sword God and the Evil God.]

[He is the one that received the blessings and protection of the Dragon King, the Saintess, the Elven King, the Great Demon and the Continental Emperor.]

[He is someone that is receiving the attention of various Absolute Gods.]

[He is the first human to become a candidate for the Eight Pillars...]

[The system cannot measure him!]

[You might experience something special!]

“...!”

Ricor's percentage bar did not increase that much, since Minhyuk was not that strong compared to the other NPCs as of now. However, it was also the truth that the system refused to measure the man in front anymore. And Ricor could tell.

*'There's a high chance that he... stands above everyone...'*

Ricor felt goosebumps rise all over his body as he watched the man glare sharply at Nerva's Black Knights.

Then, he opened his mouth and said, “Today is a very sorrowful day.”

At the same time, in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, Minhyuk's clone that was created using Sun Wukong's Cloning Technique Parchment, stood on top of the walls of the kingdom.

Even after they had finished the funeral, his people and soldiers still wept bitterly, grieving for the dead. His clone recited the words that he had uttered on the battlefield to these people.

[Today is a very sorrowful day.]

BJ Know-it-all Dictionary was also there, filming everything and broadcasting it through his broadcasting channel. As for the battlefield, it was being filmed by cameras from all over the world.

[They took a lot from us, killed plenty of us.]

The people's gazes were focused on Minhyuk.

[Everyone felt fear and terror. Although we protected what is ours, we still lost a lot.]

Indeed. The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had done a great job in defending their nation unlike the other nations.

[Even so, those people that died had a home to go back to. In this war someone's husband, someone's son, someone's wife had died.]

Many people from Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had died and many more were still grieving. Even though they won, they would have to live with the pain and sadness for quite some time.

For these people, there was one thing that Minhyuk could do.

[I, the Beyond the Heavens' King, will never forget those that died on that day. And for those that killed many people under the pretext of bringing peace to the continent, I will bring judgment upon you, this I swear upon my name.]

Minhyuk, who was standing on top of the walls of the Beyond the Heavens' Kingdom, held his sword with both hands. The clone was acting the same way that he, who was on the battlefield, was acting. His clone charged forward as hard as he could just like he did on the battlefield. He ran toward his enemies with Sun Wukong and Aaron right at his heels.

Then, a light flashed in front of Minhyuk. This was none other than 'Everyone's Delight'. Minhyuk's dish, a simple toast, appeared in front of Ellie, Raldo, Gremory, Dragon King, Argon, Richard and even Ricor in another flash of light.

Sword of the Gods Luo immediately ran to where the running Minhyuk was.

Vwoooooooooong—!

Luo's dagger turned into black smoke and traveled at the speed of light, almost stabbing into Minhyuk's neck.

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh, swoosh—

Sun Wukong's Ruyi Jingu Bang fell down from the sky and struck Lou several times.

"I believe I am your opponent, boy."

Pooof—!

Hundreds of Sun Wukong's clones appeared around Luo while pointing their own Ruyi Jingu Bang at him.

"..."

Luo's face turned ugly. Minhyuk had already escaped his grasp and was running at the vanguard with 4,000 cavalry men from both the Kingdom of Rama and the Kingdom of Eden close behind him.

Crackleeee—

At the same time, a huge pillar of blazing flames shot out from Minhyuk's sword.

[Overlord's Mana has reached 100%!]

As the number and strength of the enemies increase, the power of Minhyuk's Overlord Technique would also increase. Minhyuk brandished his sword against the Swords of the Gods and Nerva's Black Knights that were fiercely charging at him.

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

The Overlord's Technique finally made its appearance, shaking and flipping over the heavens and the earth.

It was not too long ago when Minhyuk's Overlord's Technique grew stronger after leveling up. With 100% of the Overlord's Mana filled, the Overlord's Technique could now bring devastation and inflict 5,000~7,000% damage to anyone within an eighty meter radius in front of him.

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

Amber, another Sword of the Gods, looked at the raging flames and stepped forward. He was someone that specialized in defense and shield techniques, as he had received the blessings and power of the God of Shields.

Thud—

When he stabbed his sword into the ground, a transparent square shield that was around fifty meters in width appeared around them.

Baaaaaaaaaang—

Not long after, the Overlord's Technique collided with Amber's square shield.

Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack—

“...!”

Amber groaned. He was confident in his square shield. After all, even if Knight Commander Don struck it, it would not break. However, cracks already started spreading in the shield with just one attack.

*‘So, I can still block it.’*

The fact that they could still block such a powerful attack was a good thing for them.

Shwaaaaaaa—

However, to his horror, another wave of Overlord's Technique was cast and it was following right behind the first one.

“...?”

Amber looked at it incredulously. How could such a powerful attack be invoked twice in a row?

“Oiiiiiiink!”

The one that summoned this fire was none other than the baby piggy, Beanie.

Baaaaaaaaang—

Amber's square shield cracked and broke into pieces. Just like that, two Overlord's Technique wreaked havoc and devoured Minhyuk's enemies without mercy.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

It only took an instant for the Black Knights to turn into ashes and disappear into the wind.

“Hiiiiik...!”

Amber managed to hold out for a brief moment using ‘God of Shields’ Blessings’. The Swords of the Gods immediately pounced on Minhyuk the moment the Overlord’s Technique calmed down. Of course, Amber also joined them.

Baaaaaaaang—

Amber deflected Minhyuk’s sword strike and immediately countered with his shield.

“Ugh!”

[Your HP has fallen below 94%!]

A huge damage was dealt to Minhyuk. The only woman among the Swords of the Gods present, Bella, punched Minhyuk in his flank.

Crack—

“Keuaaaaack!”

[Three of your ribs have been broken!]

[Continuous and lingering pain might interfere with your battle.]

Bella was one of the few women among the Swords of the Gods and used close-combat techniques. However, it was said that her power could break even mountains.

Seeing Minhyuk gripping his sides from the pain, Pero immediately charged forward and struck him with his sword.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—

The moment Minhyuk blocked the attack, Bella grabbed him and threw him to the skies.

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

“Ugh!!!”

[Beyond the Heavens’ Food God Minhyuk is being trampled on by the three Swords of the Gods.]

[The three Swords of the Gods’ levels are in the late 600’s. No matter how strong Player Minhyuk is and how good his artifacts and buffed dishes are, it would still be too hard for him to endure the onslaught of attacks from the three of them together.]

That was the unfortunate truth.

The three Swords of the Gods immediately chased after Minhyuk. Just when Amber was about to strike Minhyuk with his square shield from above. He saw Minhyuk’s lips curl up into a smirk.

Grin—

“...?!”

At that moment, Bella realized that something was wrong. However, it was already too late. Minhyuk mumbled, “Intangible Sword.”

[Intangible Sword.]

[Your enemies will be attacked by invisible swords for five minutes. Your attacks will reach everyone within your ten meter radius.]

[You can use Sword Manipulation and send hundreds of invisible swords toward your enemies.]

[Your sword’s attack power will increase by 900%. The movement speed of your Sword Manipulation will also be ten times faster than your speed of wielding your sword.]

Invisible swords slashed and pierced the bodies of the three Swords of the Gods that chased after Minhyuk in the sky.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

Their bodies were all torn to shreds, blood spurting out like fountains from all over their bodies.

Thump—

Among the four of them that were in the sky, it was only Minhyuk that landed with both of his feet on the ground.

Thud—

Thud—

Thud—

The bodies of the three Swords of the Gods were all unmoving as they crashed helplessly to the ground.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

Immediately after that, the skill Intangible Sword continued to sweep away the Black Knights that blocked Minhyuk’s path.

Chapter 706: Support Troops

‘Intangible Sword’ was a skill that allowed Minhyuk to use sword manipulation to send hundreds of swords with ten times the speed of an ordinary sword strike against his enemies for five minutes. Whenever the invisible swords pierced through the Black Knights, the Knights would turn into ashes and disappear into the wind.

[You have killed the Sword of the Gods Bella.]

[She is one of the Luvien Empire’s greatest warriors.]

[You have gained 1,713,223,413 EXP.]

[You have gained 2,392 platinum.]

[You have obtained the Sword of the Gods Bella’s Best Close Combat Book.]

[...killed the Sword of the Gods Amber.]

[He is one of the Luvien Empire's...]

[...gained 1,641,313,100 EXP.]

[...gained 1,976 platinum.]

[...obtained the Sword of the Gods Amber's Best Shield Technique...]

The Swords of the Gods were a testament to the power of the Luvien Empire. They were absolute beings that even the global players dared not dream of fighting against them in their current state.

[Food God Minhyuk is really, truly crazy... Not too long ago, Volfo Kingdom, who fought with the Imperial Army for two weeks, immediately collapsed with the appearance of one of the Swords of the Gods but...]

[What the hell is that skill? The Food God is obviously just standing still but all of the enemies around him are being swept away.]

[It's probably a god-rank skill...? F\*cking amazing...]

The viewers watched the scene in amazement.

Minhyuk was using the Intangible Sword to control the movements of the Swords of the Gods for its entire duration of five minutes.

*'As expected. They will work on them once but you can't use it on them again a second time.'*

Minhyuk was appalled to see the skills of the Swords of the Gods. The fact that they could block the invisible swords on reflex or by listening to them was shocking.

"Uuuuugh!!!"

"..."

Minhyuk looked back only to see blood spurt out from Sun Wukong's thighs.

*'Even the Great Sage, Heaven's Equal is having a hard time against Luo?'*

Of course, it seemed like Sun Wukong had also dealt huge damage to Luo. Minhyuk felt a sense of urgency at the thought of the two being equal in power. There was even a chance that Luo was stronger.

*'You have to eat everything quickly...'*

It was only an epic-grade dish. However, it would still be of great help to Gremory and the Attention Seekers.

Slash—

Raldo, who was eating his own meal in a hurry, tried to eat everything in one go but a dagger shot through the toast and knocked it to the ground.

"..."

He could not help the flash of irritation and frustration when he saw the toast fall on the ground, its ingredients scattering all over the place.

What was the biggest disadvantage of buffed dishes? It was the fact that one had to eat everything before the effects could be triggered. Unlike artifacts, even a five-year-old child could ruin the dish because it did not have the concept of durability.

Luo was taking advantage of that fact, moving around swiftly and stopping Minhyuk's allies from eating the dishes that he gave them.

*'...Damn it.'*

Even Minhyuk did not expect that Luo would use this method. The worst part was that the effects of 'Intangible Sword', which were preventing the enemies from moving forward, had now disappeared.

Minhyuk originally planned to let Gremory and the Attention Seekers eat while he was holding off the enemies with 'Intangible Sword', that way they could become stronger once they fought together with him. However, that plan completely fell through.

There were still eight surviving Swords of the Gods together with God of Archery Miao, Callauhel and China's Xu Jiaqi.

"His Majesty Nerva would confer the title of a Count to the one that will kill the King of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom!!!"

"...!"

"...!"

"...!"

The Luvien Empire's Count was different from any other ordinary count title. Perhaps the benefits that one would receive when they became one would be similar to the benefits that a player would receive if they became the king of their own kingdom.

Minhyuk just looked at them sharply and provoked them even further. "My head? Take it if you can."

"Exploding..." God of Archery Miao aimed her bow at Minhyuk using her god-rank bow. "Shot."

Baaaaaaaang—

A powerful wind accompanied the shot that was going straight toward Minhyuk.

Master Reflector Xu Jiaqi had a special power that could allow her to absorb her opponent's skill and turn it on her enemy once. When she faced one of the Six Monster Gods, she was able to absorb one of its skills. Of course, she was forced to log out right after. Right now, she used this skill and struck her sword into the ground.

Baaaaaaaang—

The ground twisted and turned as a force that was more powerful than Minhyuk's Overlord Technique fired back toward Minhyuk. The other high-rankers also unleashed their Pinnacle Skills and sent them towards Minhyuk. Even the Swords of the Gods used their own Pinnacle Skills.

Rumbleeeee—

Rumbleeeee—

No matter how strong and powerful Minhyuk was, there was no way that he would not die if he was buffeted by a rain of pinnacle skills. However, instead of defending, what he took out was a bowl and mixer. He silently placed some whipping cream in the bowl and turned the whisk.

[Cancel.]

[Cancels and nullifies all skills and magic within a five meter radius of the item user.]

“...?”

“...?”

“...?”

“...?”

The high-rankers were shocked. The seemingly trifling bowl and mixer were able to nullify all of the skills and magic that entered his five meter radius.

As for the Swords of the Gods, they were all stunned silly.

*‘No, why...’*

*‘He just turned the whisk of the bowl and mixer...’*

*‘All of the power that we used is being canceled...?’*

It was something that was beyond comprehension.

Ellie, Raldo, Dragon King, and Argon all promptly gave up eating their dish, opting to join the fight to restrain the Swords of the Gods and the high rankers. Even the elite forces of the Kingdom of Eden and the Kingdom of Rama charged forward and began to push the enemies back.

The soldiers of the Kingdoms of Eden and Rama were all very strong. Not losing any ground against the Black Knights was proof of their power.

*‘There are too many Swords of the Gods. And they are very powerful.’*

Unfortunately, there were way too many country-level rankers.

The Swords of the Gods continued to slaughter the soldiers of the two kingdoms, narrowing the distance between them and Minhyuk. Minhyuk prevented the attack of one of the Swords of the Gods and stabbed him through his chest with ‘Rampant Sword’.

Baaaaaang—

The moment the opponent flew away, another sword flew toward Minhyuk’s chest.

Stab—

[Your HP has dropped below 60%!]

“Kghhk!”



The Swords of the Gods immediately surrounded Minhyuk.

Slash—

Baaaaaaaang—

Whenever Minhyuk successfully connected an attack, a bolt of lightning would fall down and wreak havoc in the surrounding area. However, the Swords of the Gods' magical defense was just far too high. It seemed like there was not much damage even after being struck by those lightning bolts.

*'This is dangerous,'* Minhyuk thought, drops of cold sweat dripping down his back as the onslaught of attacks continued.

[Your HP has dropped below 40%!]

Seeing his rapidly depleting HP, Minhyuk decided that he had to pull back for now. However, as he tried to use 'Like the Wind' and fly back swiftly, a man suddenly appeared to chase after him.

The man was none other than Mercenary King Venteio. He was the one that united all of the mercenaries from the four continents and was someone that was in the rank of the Absolute Supreme NPC.

*'Were those rumors truly a lie...?'*

Mercenary King Venteio was actually looking for a man. That man had raised and nurtured him, someone that was infinitely weaker compared to the other children, and made him stronger than everybody else. But one day, that man suddenly disappeared.

Then, one day, he showed up once more. From what Venteio had heard from a foreigner, the man that he was looking for was living for someone else. Venteio wanted to find him and ask him why he just disappeared without even saying a word to them.

Mercenary King Venteio dug up all kinds of rumors and followed them just so he could find this man.

*'This man can't be it.'*

The man that he knew would never live for a man like this.

Venteio became one of the Luvien Empire's Black Knights because he received a promise from Emperor Nerva Sephiroth that he would not hunt down mercenaries. For the mercenaries of the entire continent, Venteio willingly became the Luvien Empire's dog.

Baaaaaaaang—

Mercenary King Venteio's heavy greatsword slammed into Minhyuk's body.

"Ugh?!"

Minhyuk looked at the man in shock. *'What the hell is this?!'* The damage that he received was completely ridiculous. It was just one attack but his HP had fallen by 10%.

Venteio was actually called by another name, which was 'Superhuman Mercenary King', as he wielded a powerful force and had become stronger over a short course of time.

## “Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship. Chapter 1.”

“...!”

Minhyuk’s eyes grew wide at the very familiar swordsmanship name. It was something that he knew better than anybody else. However, the technique that Venteio used was slightly different. Unable to absorb and learn the entirety of the power, he changed the original ‘Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship’ and made it his own.

“Herculean Wolf.”

Baaaaaaaaaang—

Minhyuk felt his limbs bend the moment the sword struck his body.

[Both your arms have received a huge shock. It would be very hard for you to control and move them for three seconds.]

Minhyuk felt his arms shake at the unbelievable force that traveled down his body from the strike. He could also see the Swords of the Gods that were quickly rushing in from behind the man.

He had to quickly avoid them. So, he tried his best to raise his trembling hand and put something small in his mouth.

Clang, clang, clang, clang—

Clang, clang, clang, clang—

Clang, clang, clang, clang—

The mercenaries that came with Mercenary King Venteio, who were now acting as Black Knights, threw several chains to restrain Minhyuk.

*‘Damn it...’*

Minhyuk found everything completely ridiculous. Who in the world was that man? He obviously was almost or at the same level as the other Swords of the Gods.

*‘So, why...?’*

But why was it that the man was stronger than them? First, Venteio’s master was very excellent. And second, compared to ordinary imperial troops or kingdom soldiers, he had lived almost every single waking moment of his life walking the tight-rope of life and death.

*‘He’s stronger than... Luo...’*

Minhyuk was also aware that one’s level was not everything in Athenae. It was just presented more clearly to him today.

[Your entire body is being restricted by huge chains!]

[You cannot break the chains easily!]

This was a method that the mercenaries often used when hunting huge and powerful monsters. Powerful beings could break these chains in ten seconds. However, ten seconds in a battle like this was more than enough time to deal irreparable damage.

Weapons aimed at Minhyuk's body as they started to cast their attacks, pummeling him. Venteio looked at Minhyuk and convinced himself that there would be no connection between this man and the person that he was looking for, murmuring to himself, "A person like you..."

Crack—!

"S...mon."

But before Venteio could finish his words, his eyes grew wide as he noticed something.

"...!"

At that moment, a gigantic man with a cloak bearing the symbol of a fork and knife crossed together descended in front of Minhyuk. The man triggered the true manifestation of the skill that Venteio had been trying to imitate.

"Mercenary's Pinnacle Swordsmanship, Final Chapter."

Venteio knew that power really well. In the past, that power had slaughtered tens of thousands of imperial troops sent by various empires that had started the mercenary hunt.

The man standing in front of them was their king, their god, and the model of many mercenaries in the world.

"Wolf of Death."

Thousands of red sword lights shot out from the man's sword, turning into wolves that charged forward and swept away the Swords of the Gods.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

"Keuaaaaack...! Ab, Absolute God's Sword?!"

What kind of existence was the man in front of him? Venteio did not know. Just like they said, he might be someone that was called the 'Absolute God's Sword'.

"Your Majesty, are you alright?"

Perhaps, he was just someone's retainer and vassal. But for Venteio, he was his master and teacher.

"Master..."

## Chapter 707: Support Troops

At one point in time, mercenaries were viewed as tools for war and used as such. In exchange for cash, they would die for those that hired them, sometimes even becoming their meat shield.

All of the empires and kingdoms across the continents paid no heed to the mercenaries, until an incident happened. A member of the imperial army fought against one mercenary, which resulted in the death of the imperial army soldier.

Upon investigation, the imperial army soldier tried to take advantage of a woman and take her home. However, the mercenary that witnessed the scene tried to scare the soldier away, only for it to end up in a physical brawl that cost the life of the soldier.

However, the empires and kingdoms from all over the continent were of the same mind and declared this:

*—We will use this as an opportunity to teach those rough and unruly mercenaries a lesson.*

Afterward, an era of slaughter, the Mercenary Hunt, began.

Any mercenary that did not join the ‘Latona Mercenary Alliance’, created by several kingdoms and empires, was labeled as evil and killed. However, the Latona Mercenary Alliance was not favorable to the mercenaries. A deeper look at their system and one could see that the Alliance prioritized the imperial and kingdom armies, and even forced the mercenaries to become tools of war.

The world had turned into one where mercenaries were persecuted. It was quite ironic. All they wanted to do was earn money. Since most of them had a family to support, they went to the battlefield to kill and be killed. However, they were treated as if they were dirty.

*‘I was born in such a world. However, I met a hero.’*

Venteio clearly remembered how mercenaries were treated like dogs. Although he was nothing but the lowest of mercenaries, he still hoped to straighten and correct this world.

Venteio was considered the lowest of the mercenaries, with poor swordsmanship and poor physical conditions. However, he started to change after meeting that man.

Prior to the man’s appearance, there was a former Mercenary King, who had become the dog of the empires and the kingdoms and burned at least 5,000 mercenaries at the stake. The man dethroned the former King, and created the ‘Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship’, spreading it for all the mercenaries that did not use any system when practicing swordsmanship, archery, spearmanship and the likes.

*‘He is a legend.’*

At first, the mercenaries under that continent united and flocked to his side.

*‘He is a myth.’*

Over time, mercenaries from around the world started to gather around him.

*‘News of their victory spread all over the world.’*

News about how mercenaries, who had always suffered defeat, won against the empires and kingdoms that persecuted them spread and allowed the mercenaries to stand tall and proud. Those who had nowhere to go started to flock together until millions of them had gathered and bowed to him.

\*\*\*

Standing at the center of the battlefield was Brod.

“Master...”

Brod smiled bitterly at Venteio when he made eye contact with him.

\*\*\*

The first time Venteio met Brod, he was training alone in the training grounds after lights out and was blaming himself for being weak. While trying to catch his breath on the ground after collapsing, he heard a murmur in his ears.

*—Simple, fast and accurate. You know where to attack the enemy but you don't have enough strength in your body.*

The man slowly appeared from the darkness, a smile on his face as he looked at the exhausted Venteio. From that night onward, Venteio continued to hone his swordsmanship and increase his physical strength under Brod's watchful gaze.

*—Why is such a great and outstanding man like you, Sir Brod, wasting your time watching over someone like me?*

Brod looked up at the sky and smiled lightly after hearing the question.

*—It's a pleasure for me to spend time with the young man that will become the Mercenary King in the future.*

*—...!*

*—You're the only one, you know?*

*—...Yes?*

*—The only one that trained every single night for two straight years.*

That was the first time that someone recognized Venteio. After all, in everyone else's eyes, he was just Wimpy Venteio, Foolish Venteio, or Porter Venteio. The other party was the Mercenary Emperor that had united all of the mercenaries in the world, the one that led their victory against the various kingdoms and empires, ended the 'Mercenary Hunt', and was hailed as a legend.

Venteio, however, could not fully comprehend the complexities of the Mercenary's Pinnacle Swordsmanship despite learning under Brod's tutelage. So, using his own understanding, he transformed the skill into something that he could call his own. After completing the first chapter, Venteio immediately headed to where Brod was, delighted to report his progress.

*—Master!*

However, no one was there when he had gone to Brod's quarters. He was also not in the place where he usually gazed at the stars in the sky. Brod completely disappeared overnight. It was as if he was nothing but a mirage, an illusion that did not truly exist.

Then once again, the mercenaries' era of slaughter began. A new mercenary king arose, and grew friendly with the kings and emperors, and banned everyone that used the 'Mercenary Pinnacle Swordsmanship'. However, even if that was the case, there were still plenty of them that silently continued to train in the skill all throughout the continent.

Over the course of time, the memory of the man that they hailed as Mercenary Emperor grew blurry. As for Venteio? He followed his will and aimed to become the Mercenary King, uniting the mercenaries from the four continents once again. Soon, they would elect the Mercenary King, their continent's supreme ruler. And Venteio would be the one to sit on that throne.

\*\*\*

“Keuaaaaaaaaaack!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keheooooooooook!”

The Swords of the Gods screamed and shrieked at the bloody red swords that rained down on them. The scene of beings at Level 700 or higher being swept away so easily was nothing short of spectacular.

“Your Majesty, we don’t have much time.”

Summoning Brod here was naturally just based on pure luck. In the end, he would have to go back to where he was. Minhyuk actually felt sorry for always calling him like this.

*‘Where exactly are you going, Brod?’*

However, Minhyuk was aware of how much Brod cared for him.

“Five minutes. We only have five minutes then I have to go back.”

Their time was tight. No matter how strong Brod was, there were still far too many Swords of the God left alive. Then, Luo suddenly appeared amidst the rain of bloody-red sword lights and moved to stab Brod through the heart.

Baaaaaang—

Brod easily blocked Luo’s sword, laughing as he said, “You bastards...” his eyes turned sharp as he looked at them. “It seems like I have no other choice but to punish you with my own hands.”

“Do you believe that’s possible, Fallen Wretched Emperor?”

Minhyuk, who watched the interaction between the two, could tell that there was a story that he was completely unaware of. Especially after hearing the Swords of the Gods calling Brod the Fallen Emperor.

Luo did not dare to relax. *‘The Absolute Gods’ Sword...’*

The other half of the Two Suns in the Sky. It was something that he could not forget along with the orders that Emperor Nerva had given him back then.

—...*Kill Brod’s Knight Order. All of them.*

There were two Suns that competed for the sky. Each of them had a knight order that followed them. Blinded by greed, Nerva poisoned the meal of his rival and competitor, as well as everyone that followed him. Then, he took that opportunity to kill everyone, who had vomited blood from the poisoning.

Just like that, the colleagues that laughed and fought alongside Luo all died, by his hand no less. As for the man that he chose to serve? He became the emperor while the other Sun disappeared from existence.

But today, he came back. Brod's sudden appearance here brought shock to a lot of people. The other Swords of the Gods might not know much about Brod, but that was not the case for Luo.

Bang, bang, bang, bang—

“You got injured back then and have lost a lot of your power,” Luo said, his attacks getting faster while the other Swords of the Gods jumped toward Brod. In fact, he could tell that Brod's condition was not the same as before from the attack that he had received earlier.

*‘It was a long time ago since he was the Absolute Gods’ Sword.’*

Since Brod had lost some of his power, Luo firmly believed that his strength, together with the other Swords of the Gods, was enough to deal with him. Besides, they had Mercenary King Venteio with them so it would be easier.

“Lord Venteio! Quick, join us in attacking!!!”

“...”

Venteio, the man that gathered and united the mercenaries from across the four continents, had joined them under the condition that the great Luvien Empire would not carry out a ‘Mercenary Slaughter’.

However, all he could do right now was look at the back of the person that he admired and resented.

Clang, clang, clang, clang, clang—

The assault continued on. The people in the area looked in admiration at Brod, who parried the attacks of five Swords of the Gods by himself.

Slaaaaaaash—

However, after cutting down one of the Swords of the Gods, a gap appeared in Brod's movements. Luo, who moved like a ghost, used this opportunity to aim for his back.

Twitch—!

Venteio's body reacted.

Staaaaaab—!

“Your Majesty!!!”

However, the one that was stabbed by Luo's sword was not Brod, but Minhyuk.

[Your HP has dropped below 20%!]

[You have received a fatal blow. Your body cannot move.]

“Kghhk...!” Minhyuk groaned, his body stumbling from the impact of the blow.

Venteio's pupils shook at the sight that unfolded in front of him.

*‘They're supposed to be nothing more than a king and his vassal!’*

Yet, the king willingly sacrificed his body for his vassal. Venteio looked at his master, the person that he longed for and always thought about, stopping the enemies in front of him.

“Lord Venteio!!! Have you forgotten your vow with the empire?!!!”

Luo thought that this was an opportunity. If they could not seize this opportunity, Brod would continue to become an obstacle for the Luvien Empire. They had to hurry up and finish dealing with him.

*‘I did not expect that he would be this strong...’* Luo thought, completely dumbfounded. How come the man in front of them was not being pushed back despite fighting against several Swords of the Gods?

*‘You’re doing this much even when you’re protecting your king?’*

Then, what would happen if Brod was not protecting anyone? They would most likely be wiped out already. That was just how strong and powerful Brod was.

Swoooooosh—

Using Absorption Conversion, Minhyuk recovered his injuries by eating chocopie.

“Sword of Absolute Death.”

Stab—

Minhyuk stabbed his sword through the heart of one of the Swords of the Gods that tried to slash Brod’s neck.

Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

But it did not end there. Hundreds of sword lights appeared and fell down like rain, keeping the others at bay for a brief moment.

Seeing this, Luo moved swiftly. This time, he aimed for Minhyuk. *‘He will definitely use his body to protect his king.’*

Staaaaaab—

Just like he expected, Brod used his abdomen to block the blow that was aiming for Minhyuk. Luo laughed at the sight of Brod stumbling back from the injury. Of course, the Swords of the Gods did not miss this opportunity, leaving behind cuts and stabs in Brod’s body. Even the country-level rankers moved to join the hunt for Brod.

Minhyuk felt his heart squeeze. *‘Damn it! I did not expect that I would become a burden like this!’*

Just like Luo thought, they would truly not be Brod’s rival if Minhyuk was not here. However, that was when Minhyuk noticed something.

*‘Why is his body covered with injuries? And he also looks exhausted.’*

Brod looked exhausted from the moment he summoned him here. It seemed like he was fighting something before he got called here. Every nook and cranny of his armor had some sort of damage. There was even blood that had already turned dark, as more continued to flow out.



Stab, stab, stab, stab, stab—

“Ugh...!”

Various weapons pierced through Brod’s body.

‘No...’

Minhyuk sensed a great sense of danger. Brod was his vassal and his friend. He was someone that Minhyuk did not want to lose. One could say that Brod was also one of the people that made the current Beyond the Heavens Kingdom what it was today.

Brod looked back at Minhyuk and said, “...Your Majesty.”

Minhyuk was able to see something in those eyes as he watched the man jump up to the sky.

‘Don’t tell me...’

Minhyuk did not know where Brod had been or what he had been doing. He did not even know what kind of growth he had achieved so far.

‘I can restrain them once I use this power.’

Brod knew that he would also be hit by their attacks the moment he used this power to stop them. However, it was fine. As long as he could protect his king, then it was fine.

“Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship.”

Vwoooooooooooooooooong—

A red energy burst out of Brod’s body as he continued to float in the sky, his head calculating the movement speed of Luo, the most agile among the enemies.

‘The moment I use this power, all of their bodies will be pierced through. However, their attacks will also pierce through me.’

Nevertheless, he still chose to use this power. It was the new chapter of the Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship, something that he had not shown to anyone yet.

“The Wolf King’s Hunt.”

Roaaaaaaaaaaaaar—

A roar resounded loudly in the area as a gigantic red wolf manifested from his sword. This wolf would bite down and tear apart the necks of the enemies that surrounded him. Unfortunately, he needed at least 0.1 seconds for the skill to be completed. However, all of Brod’s hopes were dashed when he saw Luo.

“...Luo.”

Luo used his ‘Quick Leap’ and increased his movement speed by four times. Brod’s face turned ugly. He could not bear to look at Minhyuk.

“Brooooooooooooood!!!”

At that moment, he knew that he would face death. However, his only regret was that he could not protect His Majesty and solve the problem that he needed to solve.

*‘Your Majesty...’*

Brod slowly closed his eyes. However, unbeknownst to him, someone else was already preparing their own skill.

“Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship.”

He became the empire’s dog to protect the other mercenaries. However, his master had told him this in the past...

*—The good thing about being a mercenary is the fact that you can be free.*

That was right. They were free because they were mercenaries. After learning from his master, he tried to understand it himself and ended up creating a new Mercenary’s Pinnacle Swordsmanship.

“Final Chapter. Howling Wolf.”

Awooooooooooooooooooooo—

While Brod’s wolf was red, Venteio’s wolf was black. The black wolf rushed at Luo and bit his neck.

Crack, crack, crack, crack—

The wolf continued past Luo, devouring two more Swords of the Gods along the way.

Brod slowly opened his eyes only to meet with Venteio’s ones.

“This idiot...”

It seemed like the bastard from back then had already grown up well. However, Brod also knew that Venteio had to live for the empire. The actions that he took would most definitely fan the flames of the empire’s ire. They would most likely get purged once again.

However, Venteio missed him as much as he resented him. So, he could not help but struggle to spit out the words that he wanted to say. “Thank you, my hero.”

“...”

Finally, Brod’s skills, the Wolf King’s Hunt, was successfully completed and activated.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—

The wolf, which was much bigger, much stronger and had much sharper teeth than the black wolf, charged forward and collided with the Swords of the Gods. It was so powerful that it instantly tore apart the armor and weapons that they used.

At the same time, several weapons pierced through Brod’s body. Thankfully, Luo’s attack, which would have been fatal, had been avoided so his life was still secured.

After the five minutes was over, Brod, who was still bleeding all over, disappeared from sight. However, his eyes did not leave Venteio.

*‘You will probably die because of me.’*

That was what was conveyed in Brod's look. However, Venteio just responded with a bright smile on his face and uttered the words that Brod once uttered to him, "The good thing about being a mercenary is the fact that you can be free."

Chapter 708: Support Troops

*'Brod...?'*

That was the first thing that came to Minhyuk's mind when he saw Venteio. The impression that he had of Venteio was similar to that of Brod when he first saw him. Then, some notifications rang.

[The Man that Will Become the Greatest Mercenary King in History.]

[Venteio. He is one of the Absolute Supreme NPCs.]

So far, the only Absolute Supreme NPCs that Minhyuk knew were Sword Emperor Ellie and Overlord Raldo, who recently climbed to that rank. In fact, Venteio's existence made Minhyuk feel extremely nervous.

However, Venteio had displayed his powers to help them. Because of that, Brod was able to use his 'Wolf King's Hunt' and strike the Swords of the Gods directly, leaving them either dead or groaning from their serious injuries.

"Sir Venteio! How dare you betray the empire?!"

"The young mercenaries that follow you will definitely get killed!"

"The empire will make sure to purge you!"

The Black Knights expressed their wrath toward Venteio. The Great Luvien Empire had shown them mercy and made them into Black Knights, but he had chosen to cast aside Emperor Nerva's good grace.

At that moment, another set of notifications rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[The story of The Man that Will Become the Greatest Mercenary King in History might change.]

[You are greatly involved in this story.]

Minhyuk watched as Brod looked at Venteio. He could see that Brod's eyes were filled with pain and sadness.

Meanwhile, thirty of the Wolf's Mercenaries stood around Venteio and supported his will.

"The will of Mercenary King Venteio is our will."

"It's an honor to meet with the father of the mercenaries and our legend!"

"We have made our choice and we do not regret it."

Brod could not hide his regret as he looked at those men.

*'...How... How are you going to walk this thorny path?'*

Brod was like a father and a teacher to these people. He was the one that taught them and gave them pride and dignity. He watched as they all drew their swords with firm determination in their eyes,

well-prepared to die on this battlefield. As he slowly disappeared from sight, he turned to Minhyuk and called out, "...Your Majesty."

This was the first time that Minhyuk had seen such a bitter smile on Brod's face. Then, the man told him, "On the day when a person recognized by the God of Mercenaries becomes a Mercenary King, God will bestow very rare and special cooking ingredients."

"..."

Minhyuk, more than anybody else, knew the meaning of those words.

"There's no way that I will let such rare ingredients pass by me, no?" Minhyuk smiled softly at Brod's request. Besides, Minhyuk felt a familiar feeling from Venteio. Perhaps a good relationship might form between them.

After that, Brod completely disappeared. The Black Knights all showed resentment toward Venteio and the Wolf Mercenaries. However, Venteio and his men just stood still. They did not attack Minhyuk and also did not attack the Black Knights.

*'I have protected my master and that's more than enough.'*

Venteio used his power to protect Brod, and not Minhyuk. Now that Brod had returned safely, he would not do anything. Of course, he also did not have any intention to harm Minhyuk, the one that Brod tried to protect with all his might.

*'We have received the ire of the Luvien Empire. Nothing good will ever come out of it.'*

Venteio was fully aware that the Mercenary Elders would be hell bent on removing him now.

As for the Black Knights? They could not attack the honest and blunt Venteio, as well as the Wolf Mercenaries, who had taken the opportunity to walk through the gaps between them and leave the battlefield. This was because many of the Swords of the Gods had either died or had been seriously injured.

Among the wounded Swords of the Gods was Luo. He had been forced to kneel, his body torn to shreds. In fact, even his left arm had disappeared. All he could do was show a helpless expression on his face as he vomited a mouthful of blood.

"Urk..."

However, the images that flashed in front of him were the faces of Brod's knights, the very same knights that he once competed with before.

—*Yo, Luo! How about getting some cold and refreshing dark lager with me after training?*

—*Good, hahahaha!*

A faint smile flashed on Luo's face at the memory. Everything had been great back then.

Back then, there were two Swords of the Gods' Knight Order. One had been wiped away, by the hands of the other no less, just to make the man that they serve the emperor.

Luo did not want to ask for atonement.

*—What will happen if... I refuse?*

Nerva replied coldly to Luo's question.

*—Are you thinking of disobeying the orders of the Absolute God's Sword?*

Luo instantly understood the underlying meaning of those words. He would die if he refused. And it was not just him. Even his wife and child would die. He feared death and he hated the thought of his wife and child dying because of him. However, Luo still tried to stop the other knights.

*—Even so, how can you kill them just like that?! We have to tell the Battle God!*

*—Luo, don't think about doing anything stupid.*

*—No. I'm leaving.*

Nothing had been cleared up between them. Brod only saw Luo as his enemy, nothing more and nothing less. Seeing the cold look on Brod's face made Luo's heart break. After all, he had always admired and looked up to the man.

Luo did not actually participate in those gruesome murders. In fact, he even tried to prevent their deaths. However, when he woke up the next day, he learned that only a few Swords of the Gods had made a move. They killed them all using poison. Even if he was not involved directly, he could not wish for forgiveness and atonement.

*"...Beyond the Heavens' King. Urk."*

Luo actually still wanted to live. His desire for survival was great, as great as his anger toward Nerva Sephiroth. However, he was forced to become Nerva's loyal lapdog because he had people to protect. He had to protect his wife, who had now become a wrinkled old woman, and his son, who had just become an imperial knight. Tears dripped down his cheeks and blurred his vision.

"Before I leave, I... will give this final gift... to you." Luo looked at Minhyuk, his eyes dazed.

At the same time, a very shocking set of notifications rang in Minhyuk's ears.

[The death of Sword of the Gods Luo is just right around the corner.]

[The Sword of the Gods Luo wants to leave the Assassination God's Book with you.]

Minhyuk could not understand why the man, the enemy, in front of him was trying to leave something precious to him. However, Minhyuk did not really care, as it was not his business to pry. There was no need for him to consider his circumstances. Besides, Luo had killed a lot of people.

He took a step forward. Minhyuk only needed to strike once and he would gain victory. However, at that moment, his steps suddenly stopped.

"..."

He could not move at all after reading the notifications that rang in his ears.

"Damn it. Even at times like this... I still want to live..."

Luo looked at Minhyuk bitterly, his body flinching whenever Minhyuk's hand, which was holding his sword, twitched.

Why did Luo want to live? After all, his wife had already become an old lady and his son had become a knight. It was because of the guilt, the guilt of his comrades taking away the lives of his precious friends, the other Swords of the Gods, and failing to avenge their death. He could not even kill Nerva Sephiroth, who had climbed to the position closest to the Battle God using an immoral method. That was why he wanted to live. He wanted to avenge them.

As for why Minhyuk stopped in his tracks and hesitated, he received notifications, and he could barely believe them.

*'No. Why should this bastard...'*

[A great being has randomly activated the Origin Authority 'God and Knight'!]

*[The Origin Authority God and Knight will help you win the loyalty of the God-chosen knight.]*

The God and Knight was the 'Origin Authority' that helped Minhyuk make God of Snakes Elizabeth into his vassal.

Origin Authority

?Sealed.

?Sealed.

?Sealed.

?If you are placed in 'that situation', this power will be triggered randomly and without your knowledge. This can only happen once in three months.

?There's a chance that you will be able to control God and Knight once the seal has been lifted.

?You can have more than five God level NPCs once the seal has been lifted.

?You can have more than twenty Legendary level NPCs once the seal has been lifted.

As mentioned in the description, it was almost impossible to guess when it would be activated, being completely random. The most ironic part here was the part where he did not have any inkling as to how the Origin Authority would help him win the loyalty of the chosen knight. Simply put, there were many ways, but they were not mentioned.

*'Am I supposed to spare this bastard?'*

The God and Knight's notification obviously said that it would help him win the loyalty of the God's chosen knight. But Minhyuk did not choose the man in front of him. This could only mean one thing. Athenae, the original owner of the Origin Authority, had deemed that Luo's existence would be very beneficial to Minhyuk.

If it would be left to Minhyuk, he would have killed Luo already after receiving the God of Assassination's Book. However, another set of notifications stopped him from doing so.

[The Seed of Growth has reacted to Soldier 'Nero'.]

[Nero was born with the talent to become an assassin.]

[However, just because one has talents does not mean that one could become one. Sometimes, one needs to be reminded and taught for them to realize their true talents.]

Minhyuk had met the soldier named Nero in the underground prison just recently. The man had the gift to become an excellent assassin. However, he did not know his own value and had decided to live as an ordinary soldier.

Of course, the Seed of Growth would definitely release some of that talent and allow him to gain some power. But Minhyuk knew that Nero would eventually hit his limits if he continued to live as he was before. Nero could read the 'God of Assassin's Book' and grow further, but he would still eventually hit another threshold without the help of a mentor.

The question was, was there anyone that could help Nero grow? Naturally, the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom had Abel, although he was more of an informant than an assassin. Furthermore, he was already swamped trying to find information that would be very helpful to the kingdom.

Even though Luo had lost an arm, there was a chance that he could become a person that would be able to help Nero grow further. He might also be able to help nurture assassins for the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. If Luo helped Nero and allowed him to grow?

*'Another god might be born in the kingdom right after the Spear God.'*

However, Minhyuk judged that Luo needed to die. Just when his sword was about to stab Luo in the heart, he received another notification.

[One of the Swords of the Gods, Luo, hates and resents Nerva Sephiroth.]

[Deep down in his heart, he was searching for the person that would stand up and fight against Nerva Sephiroth.]

The God and Knight could suggest many ways to gain the loyalty of someone and turn them into Minhyuk's knight. At this moment, the reason why he should spare the man in front of him was finally revealed.

*'Luo hates Nerva?'*

Perhaps this was also the reason why Luo deliberately left behind his God of Assassination Book with him. This fact complicated things. With a cold look on his face, he forced himself to think rationally and objectively.

What would the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom gain if he brought Luo in? If Minhyuk killed him right here and now, then it was nothing but mere revenge. Finally, Minhyuk made a decision.

Meanwhile, Luo had been subjected to the influence of the 'God and Knight', which had caused his anger and desire to live soar dramatically within him. The faces of the knights that Nerva had killed, as well as the faces of the people that he cared about the most, flashed in his head.

Nerva was a terrible demon. He was sure that once he was dead, the man would just say, ‘...*How dare you put a stain to the name of the Great Luvien Empire! Pathetic.*’

Luo was seething in anger. He desperately wished for someone to stand up and fight against Nerva.

“...Do you want to kill Nerva?”

The Beyond the Heavens’ King, who was standing in front of him, asked. However, Luo did not answer. “I understand that my question is very ridiculous. However, I want to know. Do you want to see Nerva’s downfall?”

The man was nothing but the king of a small nation.

“I will make that happen. In return, you will have to become my dog.”

Even if Luo lived like a dog, he would still want to see Nerva’s downfall.

“You will die the moment you become useless to me. Your duty is to raise a group of assassins for the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom and make Nero a worthy successor after you. I will kill you after that. The moment you try to betray me, you will die. Will you still choose to be my dog?”

Luo did not answer as Minhyuk passed by him. The choice was now up to him. Besides, the vow between a king and his vassal was absolute. Just like Minhyuk said, with that vow, if he tried to betray his king then he would die. In fact, as long as his king wished for it, he would die.

Luo, who was kneeling on the ground, looked at the man. He was wearing a cloak that bore the fork and knife crossed together, the symbol of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, and his eyes that were glinting sharply through the strands of his black hair.

The man turned his head and looked at Luo. “The Luvien Empire will never know whether you are alive or dead. After all, I’m going to kill all of them.”

Then, the Beyond the Heavens’ King charged at the Black Knights that were already moving toward him.

‘*How...*’

Luo felt an unknown yet blazing heat run through his veins. Why did he feel this way when looking at the enemy’s general? Actually, Luo knew Brod all too well.

‘...*So, this is the reason why you serve this man? Is it because he’s the only person that can beat Nerva?*’

Winning the war against Nerva was a tall challenge, especially for a mere king of a small nation. Still, Luo grasped the string of his consciousness that was threatening to disappear and get cut off at any given moment, tightly. He forced himself to endure and watched the battle until the very end.

Gremory and the Attention Seekers, as well as Sun Wukong and his troops, were all exhausted. In fact, even Minhyuk was exhausted. There were still 600 surviving Black Knights. However, carrying the name of the Beyond the Heavens’ King, he charged forward and fought alone.



After killing them, he stood among their corpses and raised a white flag. Then, he stabbed his sword on the ground and prayed silently for the souls of the people and the soldiers.

As he watched the scene, Luo vowed, "...I will bark if you want me to bark. I will bite if you want me to bite. I will die if you want me to die..."

Malice and hatred slowly stained Luo's eyes as he continued to focus on Minhyuk's body.

"I will become your dog."

[The God and Knight have succeeded!]

[You have acquired God's Second Knight.]

[God's Second Knight 'Luo' is the one that has inherited the power of the God of Assassination.]

[The relationship between God and God's Second Knight is superficial and is only a relationship based on obedience.]

[God's Second Knight Luo will die if he betrays you.]

[God's Second Knight Luo will die if you no longer have a use for him.]

Chapter 709: Support Troops

The Disaster Specialist Ricor's gaze was blank while his body was stiff.

[The second Absolute Demigod Class has been born to the world!]

[The second Absolute Demigod Class is 'God of Disasters'!]

[There are a total of twenty Absolute Demigod Classes in the world!]

The percentage of his encounters with the powerhouses of the current era had experienced a huge leap, which eventually led to his change of class, when Brod made his appearance. However, that was not the reason why he was all stiff and tense.

*'Crazy... He really killed everyone.'*

This was because Food God Minhyuk truly killed all of the remaining enemies. He fought fiercely against the Black Knights, the very same Black Knights that forced the troops of the Kingdom of Eden and the Kingdom of Rama to step back, and stood all alone in the battlefield.

*'Even if there were quite a lot of Swords of the Gods that died...'*

The Black Knights were known as the elite of the elites of the Luvien Empire. Seeing Minhyuk sweep all of them away by himself, one could not look at him as someone that was simply strong anymore.

*'He is very skilled with the sword, a genius so to speak. He even has outstanding gaming sense and a strong will.'*

Ricor felt something that was far beyond admiration and astonishment.

*'So, this is the reason why he became king before Richard.'*

The arrogant and prideful Ricor, rumored to be the best among the Five Promising Prospects, was left with no choice but to admit this fact. Then, he turned to Richard, who was standing next to him. He could see that Richard was watching the battlefield with a calm expression on his face.

*‘How come he’s still so relaxed despite the situation?’*

Ricor could not help but admire Richard too. How could he remain so calm even after witnessing the power and the connections of his own rival and competition?

*‘As expected of someone that has become a king.’*

His admiration grew even deeper as he watched the man beside him.

“Ricor, gather the spoils of war and inform the people that we have won. I am currently nursing a throbbing headache so I will log out first. I will be back in half an hour.”

“I understand, Your Majesty.”

Richard’s expression was calm and nonchalant as he turned around and stepped away. His back did not even shake even after witnessing Food God Minhyuk’s majestic display of power!

*‘So cool.’*

Today, Ricor’s admiration for Richard reached another all time high.

\*\*\*

Fwiiiiish—

Meanwhile, it was currently night in America. After logging out and terminating his connection, Richard immediately rushed to the bathroom. Seeing his wet underwear, he could not help but cry.

“...I never expected that I would wet my pants.”

The truth was, Richard had wetted his pants when he witnessed Minhyuk’s majestic display of power earlier! He had a problem now, which was that his wife and children were currently sleeping! He would definitely raise suspicions if he did the laundry late at night! At this moment, he remembered the traditional Korean washboard that his wife had brought back when she went on a trip to Korea just recently.

Scrub, scrub, scrub, scrub—

Richard, who was crouching on the floor, looked at his underwear and thought, *‘To be honest, that display is really something that can make one wet their pants.’*

This was the king of the Masserati Kingdom.

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Luo, the tenth among the Swords of the Gods and the person that inherited the power of the God of Assassination, felt that his limbs were as heavy as lead. His last memory was that of the Beyond the Heavens’ King slaughtering hundreds of Black Knights, before standing atop their corpses with his cloak fluttering behind him.

“Ugh,” Luo groaned lightly, but he instinctively jumped up the moment he came back to his senses, his eyes immediately surveying his surroundings. This was an occupational disease. After all, assassins had to always be sensitive to whatever was happening around them.

*‘I can only feel a crude and poor aura from this place.’*

The Great Luvien Empire had plenty of swordmasters and great mages that could easily cast 7th Tier magic. Also, the Swords of the Gods were generally at Level 600 or above. On the other hand, the energy and aura that he could feel in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom was just plain crude.

*‘Can this kind of weak nation even stand against Luvien...?’*

Luo immediately stopped in his tracks when he tried to roll the sleeves of his right arm using his left hand.

“...”

Right, his left arm was now missing. He had lost that arm to Brod. There was a hint of bitterness as he looked at his severed left arm, before using his teeth to roll the sleeves of his right arm.

He was now stamped with the ‘Imprint of Obedience’. The mark must have appeared on both the king and the subordinate when he vowed that he would live and die as Minhyuk’s dog. This mark would take his life if he betrayed his king or should his king willed it. With this mark engraved on his skin, there was no way for him to kill himself. In other words, he had completely become the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom’s dog.

*‘I’m already regretting this choice.’*

It was true that Luo had made this choice because he was greedy. He wanted to live and not die at that moment so he made the choice.

Not long after, a man came inside the room. This man was none other than Park. He said, “You need to go and train the assassins immediately. We have secretly selected several assassins from Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. Please pay more attention to Nero.”

“...”

Luo was once the Sword of the Gods. But now? He was demoted to nothing more than an instructor that would raise future assassins. He was not even given any time to rest.

*‘Ha...’*

He could not help but sigh. If his relationship with Minhyuk was not based purely on the Imprint of Obedience and instead on respect and loyalty, then his treatment would probably be different.

He had been greeted with severe disappointment the moment he woke up in this kingdom. All he could do was go to the training grounds. That was where he saw soldiers and troops infinitely weaker compared to the empire’s forces.

*‘There’s no way that the king of such a weak kingdom will be able to kill Nerva...’*

Once again, Luo felt deep regret at his choice.

The cold and sharp eyes of the people of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom continued to stab into Luo's body as he continued on his way to the training grounds.

Splat—

Someone threw an egg at Luo. However, Luo did not pay it any heed and just continued on his way. When he arrived at the training grounds, he saw the people that he was supposed to train.

*'What the hell is this? Aren't they nothing but f\*cking bastards?'*

Luo was actually very good at teaching assassination techniques. In fact, he was the one that taught and led the Luvien Empires' Divine Assassin Corps. However, the sight in front of him caused him to sigh. He was already thinking of not giving it his all.

*'I'll just live like this and die here.'*

Yes, he would teach them. However, he would not give it his best. They wanted his Secret? Well, he never intended to teach them such a thing. Even if he taught them the basics, he was sure that their levels would not increase by much.

After all, this was nothing but a relationship between a dog and its owner. No, in fact, dogs would always listen to their owners. That was not the case for Luo. He was forced by his circumstances. There was no way that he would give it his all and train these soldiers sincerely.

Meanwhile, an old man watched his figure from afar. This old man was none other than Spear God Ben.

Ben smiled bitterly at him and thought, *'Your Majesty, he will be nothing but a mere puppet. That is unless you win his heart and loyalty. Hoho.'*

On the other side, Luo was very shocked to see the old man smiling bitterly at him. There were quite a few reasons why he was shocked. The first one was because he realized that he could not win against this old man after losing one arm. The second was because he was an old man. And the third, it was a surprising matter.

*'Goodness! He has long and thick black hair at such an old age... Ahem. I want to know his secret.'*

That was right, Luo, who wore a black cowl every day, was in fact also bald.

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Beyond the Heavens Kingdom's walls.

The news of their victory in war spread far and wide. The cheers of the people of Beyond the Heavens shook the world. Although it was already night, the streets of the kingdom were still lively and vibrant. It was as if a festival was happening.

After the war, Minhyuk stood on top of the walls, a small smile at the corners of his lips. *'Fufufufu. There's nothing better than eating something simple like this.'*

Tick, tick, tick, tick—

Minhyuk opened the gas burner stove and placed a nickel pot on top of it. The dishes that he planned to eat this time were none other than ramyeon and gimbap.

*‘The best way to cook ramyeon is to follow the prescribed amount of water in the bag.’*

This was the perfect season for ramyeon, where a cool and refreshing breeze blew. Eating ramyeon while sitting on the walls and looking over the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom. It was simply perfect. Just the thought of it could make anyone’s heart tremble.

Just like that, the ramyeon in the nickel pot started to boil. Then, Minhyuk cracked an egg at the most opportune moment. Minhyuk personally preferred his eggs intact. He did not like stirring them in the soup.

Minhyuk quickly set up the table and served the cooked ramyeon. Then, he placed some tuna gimhap, well-ripened kimchi and some pickled radish along with the pot.

As the cold breeze blew in, he quickly took a big bite of the steaming hot ramyeon from the pot.

*“Hoo! Hoo!”* Minhyuk blew on the mouthful.

*“Sluuuuuuuuuuuurp!”*

The noodles were chewy and the soup was spicy. As expected, ‘Jjin Ramyeon’s Spicy Flavor’ could be described as the way, the truth and the life. Minhyuk lifted another huge mouthful of noodles and placed them in his mouth.

*“Sluuuuuuuuuuuurp!”*

As he chewed the noodles, he quickly grabbed some well-ripened kimchi and placed it in his mouth.

Crunch, crunch—

The kimchi added depth to the flavor of the soup. This time, he took a bite of the gimhap that was filled to the brim with tuna.

*‘Kghhk! I really like the scent of perilla leaves.’*

Minhyuk truly liked the scent of the perilla leaves wafting from the tuna gimhap. It was a unique scent that would waft into his nose and spread in his mouth in one bite. And that was not all, there was also the mayonnaise and the tuna inside, a perfect blend that could make one feel better in an instant.

Next, Minhyuk dipped his tuna gimhap in his ramyeon soup.

Munch, munch, munch—

Whenever he felt like his throat was dry, he would lift the entire pot, blow lightly on the soup and drink directly from it. The spiciness of the soup was able to warm up his cold body.

After a few minutes of eating the noodles and gimhap, Minhyuk started to wonder if he had some cold rice with him. However, he quickly shook his head. *‘Let’s try something new today.’*

Minhyuk only left a small amount of ramyeon soup on the pot. Then, he added some cold rice on top of the soup, where he could see little noodles left behind.

Tick, tick, tick, tick—

Then, he turned on the gas burner stove once again. What Minhyuk was cooking right now was none other than ‘ramyeon porridge’[1].

Ramyeon porridge would taste better if the rice was boiled down together with only a bit of the ramyeon soup left. After the soup has been boiled down, Minhyuk cracked an egg above it. Then, he boiled it for a bit more before turning off the heat.

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Minhyuk quickly scooped a mouthful of the ramyeon porridge, the grains of rice mixed with the small strands of noodles, and placed it in his mouth. All he could do after eating the mouthful that was fresh out of the pot, was to roll it around in his mouth until it cooled down.

The savory taste of the ramyeon porridge was quite a flavor. Of course, he did not forget to scoop another mouthful. But this time, he added some kimchi on top of it.

Crunch, crunch—

Minhyuk smiled happily as he nodded in admiration. He made sure to eat everything, not leaving behind even a single grain of rice on the pot. Then, he let out a sigh of happiness as he looked over the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

“*Fwaaaaa...*

”

As he watched over his kingdom, he recalled the notifications that he received before he came here.

*[God’s Second Knight Luo does not have loyalty toward you. He does not harbor any love or hatred toward the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.]*

[The relationship between him and you is nothing more than a master and servant relationship, a relationship based on obedience.]

He was not shocked that Luo did not have any loyalty toward him. However, if this matter persisted, then it would become a huge problem. After all, someone with no loyalty to him was definitely a headache. It was likely that he would do everything half-heartedly. There were no feelings toward Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

Minhyuk scrolled through his notifications that rang in his ears after they won in Esser Fortress.

[The Beyond the Heavens Kingdom has helped the Masserati Kingdom gain victory.]

[You have acquired 40% of the spoils of war.]

[You have gained 8,313 platinum.]

[You have gained 2,411,000,000 EXP.]

[You have leveled up.]

[...leveled up.]

[Congratulations. You have reached Level 570.]

[...acquired Black Knight’s Armor(456).]

[...acquired Black Knight’s Sword(301).]

Although he obtained plenty spoils of war, Minhyuk's attention was solely focused on the 'Class-specific Quest.'

*'There are quite a lot of people that are doing class-specific quests right now.'*

Quests like this often gave class-specific items for God-class players and Legend-class players. The items that they received varied greatly. As for the high rankers? Whether they were swordsmen, mages, necromancers or the likes, only those that had reached the highest level the fastest would receive a class-specific quest.

Finally, Minhyuk had received his own class-specific quest. As expected, the most important part of this 'class-specific quest' was the reward.

Minhyuk stood up and began to make his move.

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The Louvert Guild was a chef's guild that was well-known to the world. However, Black, the guild master of the Louvert Guild, had made a careless bet with the Food God and as a result, came under the wing of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

Right now, the Louvert Guild's Master Black and their eight executives were all sitting together with Minhyuk. Black was no longer surprised because Food God Minhyuk always did something amazing. Rather than thinking, *'What is he going to say this time,'* they all began to think, *'What does he want to eat this time again?'*

Minhyuk said, "Everyone should be aware that the families that have lost their loved ones in this war are still grieving."

Indeed. Although the streets were lively and it looked like a festival was happening in the kingdom, it was nothing but a tool that masked the sorrow within. Once they got back home, they would

definitely be crying and weeping as they hugged the possessions of their loved ones and stared at the empty space that was left behind.

“That’s why I...”

*‘What do you want to do again this time?’* Black asked in his thoughts as he stared at Minhyuk and listened attentively to his words.

“I plan on cooking dishes myself and feeding all of my people for an entire week.”

“...!”

Thud—

Black thought that he would no longer be surprised by whatever Minhyuk decided to do. But the words that rang in his ears made him jump from his seat.

If they combined the number of citizens and soldiers of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, they would have around 700,000 people in total.

*‘Is he crazy...?’* Black thought, taken aback by the words of the rascal in front of him.

## Chapter 710: Abundant Deliciousness

Where can dishes cooked in bulk be found? The most common place would be cafeterias, like office cafeterias, school cafeterias, and even military cafeterias. There had been cases where military chefs had to serve hundreds, even thousands of servings per meal.

*‘Actually, one hour is more than enough to make a hundred servings.’*

It was possible. The person in charge of the soup would focus only on cooking the soup, the person in charge of stir-frying the dishes would only stir-fry the dishes, the person in charge of the vegetables would only season the vegetables, and the likes. However, this estimate was based on the assumption that all of the ingredients had already been processed and that all of the cooking tools were tailored for cooking in bulk.

If one decided to give it their all and cook the entire day, then they would only be able to cook for around 2,400. However, it was a given that a person had to rest. Considering that the person that was cooking was Minhyuk, it would not be too strange if he could only make 1,200 dishes in a day.

*‘Cooking is not just simply about making it. It is a complicated process, an art wherein you have to make sure that the taste is also superb.’* This was the thought that ran through the head of one of the world’s top ten chefs, Black.

“Do you think what you said makes sense?”

He wanted to feed all of his people for a week? Of course, it might be possible. However, it would require the cooperation between the Louvert Guild, Minhyuk, and plenty of other chefs from the Asgan Continent. That alone would cost a huge sum of money.



“Feeding all of the people? I think that’s nothing but a vain thought. Also, for the members of our Louvert Guild, this would definitely feel like a severe punishment.”

Black did not want to participate in something that would bring them no benefit.

“I’m not forcing you to help me. I just wanted to inform you that I will challenge it. I will be cooking large batches of bulk dishes.”

It was the truth. Minhyuk did not intend to ask them for help and was just informing them. He knew that if he asked them for help, then all of them would think that he was nothing but a selfish person.

After all, Black and the members of the Louvert Guild were all busy people. No, to be precise, all of the players that were playing this game were just taking time out of their busy schedules to play around. He could not tell them to help him out just because of some personal agenda.

Black walked out of the door once the conversation was over. The truth was, he still had not fully acknowledged Food God Minhyuk. The reason why he came under Minhyuk’s command was because of a careless bet. Besides, Black, someone that was one of the world’s leading chefs, felt like it would hurt his own pride to make food that would simply fill the stomach.

Just as he was about to step out, Minhyuk spoke once more.

“However, this is mainly because I want to give my people a warm and hearty meal.”

“...”

Black, who already had his hand on the doorknob, stopped in his tracks. He remembered how he dreamt of becoming the world’s best chef when he was still a child.

*—I don’t care whether they are poor or rich! I want to feed everyone with a warm meal that I made myself!*

Black gritted his teeth. He recalled the lost dreams from long ago, after living in a fierce environment, surrounded by vicious chefs.

*—What can a son of the chairman of a conglomerate like you, who did not even have dreams of becoming a chef, know about this, huh? Dreaming such absurd and empty dreams while not having enough skills to do just makes you a very contemptible person.*

Black slammed the door shut. After he stepped out, the eight executives of the Louvert Guild all looked at each other. Even they found Minhyuk’s idea to be quite absurd.

“Ah. Of course, we just have to do our best. If it doesn’t work, then there’s nothing that we can do.”

That was right. There was no way that they could make such a thing happen. This was nothing but Minhyuk’s wish to feed all of his people. It was impossible to achieve in the first place.

One of the executives asked carefully, “So, what do you plan to cook?”

“Spicy stir-fried chicken and buckwheat noodles.”

\*\*\*

There was always something trending on the Athenae community site. Players were often interested in what other players did or what they got, and would often express their thoughts on the matter. At that moment, there was another huge buzz in the community site.

[Did you guys see the news? The Food God said that he will cook for his entire kingdom.]

[Me! Me! No matter how I look at it, it looks like it's a class quest.]

[Food God Minhyuk is going to cook for his people? Kyaa! He's really the Food God!]

[According to the records, the current population in the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom is around 720,000.]

[...Eh? Can he cook for that many people in just a week?]

[Can he even do it? Hahahahahaha.]

[It should be possible, right? Well, the Food God can just stand there and give his orders while the members of Louvert Guild cook.]

[Only the poor and pitiful members of the Louvert Guild will be dying...]

[The Food God is a king. Well, all he needs to do is give orders.]

Minhyuk had been constantly challenging repetitive and laborious quests so far, to the point of recklessness sometimes. A typical example of such a quest was the quest that he cleared not too long ago in the Papal Wall, where he had to harvest crops and chop firewood.

None of them knew how stubborn and strong-willed Minhyuk was when it came to repetitive labor. This was because his endeavors had seldom been broadcasted. Of course, the players would think that only the poor and pitiful chefs would be at a disadvantage.

However, a picture had been released of Minhyuk releasing his huge trailer in the middle of the plaza, as he began his preparations.

[???

[...?]

[Eh? He's doing it himself?]

[...OMG?]

Food God Minhyuk was a very busy figure. He was not only one of the top rankers of Athenae but also the heir to a huge corporation. Not only that, he was also the king of a nation. Yet he was going to cook personally?

[Guys, I bet he will run away after two days.]

[I will bet too!]

[That's just plain reckless.]

That was right. Everyone knew Minhyuk as the best ranker. They also knew him as a kind and virtuous man. However, they did not know that he was strong-willed, stubborn to a fault. Everyone believed that he would absolutely not finish it.

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Central Plaza.

Minhyuk arrived in the central plaza and threw out his toy-like trailer, which eventually grew in size and spat out blazing flames.

Beeeeeeeeeeeeeeep—

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

The Beyond the Heavens' Chef's Tower Master Len, along with some volunteers from the Louvert Guild, came in as assistants. However, Minhyuk would be the only one that would make the main dish. The assistants would only be there to make the buckwheat noodles and the dongchimi. As for the one that would help Minhyuk with the main dish? It was none other than the trailer.

(Cooking Trailer)

Rank: God

Requirements: A DEX higher than 2,000

Durability:  $\infty$  /  $\infty$

Special Effects:

?Your cooking time will be reduced by 60%.

?Your cooking time for bulk dishes will be reduced by 70%.

?The flavor of the dish will be preserved in bulk dishes. No deterioration will occur.

?Automatic cooking function.

?With the stronger firepower, stir-fried dishes will have a 10% increase in buff effects.

?Dishes cooked in the trailer would have a 30% increase in buff effects and a 40% duration reduction.

?The trailer can detect any danger in the vicinity. The higher the level of danger detected, the higher the chances of creating a higher-grade dish that can help you overcome the approaching crisis.

?Attacks and damage will be nullified while you are cooking. However, it is only effective for an hour.

?Active Skill: Double Food

Description: This is a cooking trailer created with an Eternal Flame that has stronger firepower. Cooking will be done much faster than expected when inside the trailer. Even the buffs of the completed dishes will be greater than initially expected.

The only item that Minhyuk had for bulk cooking was the trailer. It was an artifact that could reduce the time it took to cook for a thousand people from an hour to twenty minutes. On top of that, it could even preserve the taste of the dish.

However, even with the help of the trailer, it was still not enough. That was why Hyemin's Daddy came and touched the trailer.

"I think it's possible."

God of Blacksmiths Hyemin'sDaddy had a special skill called 'Artifact Skill Transformation'. He rarely used this skill because the skill transformation was set so that it could not produce a force that was equivalent to the existing skill.

*'This is not to make the buff stronger but to increase the number of dishes that can be produced.'*

That was the reason why he deemed it possible. With his hands on the trailer, Hyemin'sDaddy began to activate his skill.

[You have applied the Artifact Skill Transformation to the Active Skill; Double Food.]

[Double Food is a skill that will allow you to create the same food with the same effect as long as it has been used within ten minutes.]

Double Food was the epitome of an overpowered skill. If he made a god-grade dish, then he could use the skill to make another god-grade dish. However, that was not the effect that Hyemin'sDaddy and Minhyuk wanted.

[Double Food has started to transform.]

The skill began to change in the direction that Hyemin'sDaddy envisioned.

[If you use the skill within ten minutes of the dish's creation, you will be able to get triple the amount of dishes than original.]

[However, the buff effect will receive a significant reduction!]

[With the reduction of the buff effect, the penalty for use of Double Food would be removed and its cooldown will be reduced to thirty minutes.]

"Apply."

[The modifications have been applied to Double Food.]

[The modifications applied to Double Food will remain for one week.]

[After the week has passed, the original effects of the Double Food skill will return.]

Minhyuk, even in his status as a king, opted to wear a chef's uniform bearing the symbol of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom, as he climbed inside the trailer. Everyone gathered to see their king in the central plaza while the assistants continued to carry the ingredients inside.

"Thank you, Your Majesty!"

"Long live His Majesty Minhyuk!"

The people all bowed towards Minhyuk. In fact, they also think that the feat was impossible to achieve. However, they were just very grateful for Minhyuk's consideration towards them.

Minhyuk smiled brightly and asked, "Are you all ready to eat something delicious?"

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Lee Minhwa and Team Leader Park Minggyu were both staring at the monitor.

"Minhwa, you know about it, right?"

“Of course. The Food God class specific items that Player Minhyuk could get are very special.”

Class-specific items were divided into two categories. There were quests that would unconditionally give players their class-specific items, regardless whether they finished their quest in an excellent manner or were only able to barely complete it. There were also quests with rewards that would depend on what one had accomplished during the duration of the quest.

Minhyuk’s quest belonged to the latter, which was quite a rare occurrence. However, there was no doubt that the class-specific items for the Food God were exceptional.

In fact, all of the previous Food Gods had gone through this quest. And now, it had appeared for the current Food God.

“If he can’t cook a lot of dishes, then he’ll only be able to get a set of ordinary cooking utensils.”

Team Leader Park Minggyu nodded.

However, what if Minhyuk cooked more dishes than the previous Food Gods?

“Otherwise, he will be able to get the god-rank tools from ‘Ravier’, the greatest Food God and the God of Cooking of the past.”

\*\*\*

Luo was moving like a machine. His gaze was lifeless, as if he had no soul, while he continued to train the assassins. Even so, the assassins were still happy to be able to learn something new and gain some sort of awakening and realization. Of course, they were still aware of the attitude of Luo.

*‘The Instructor doesn’t like us.’*

*‘I can’t even see any will from him. He definitely will not do anything for us.’*

They could not hide the bitterness that welled up within them.

After training, Luo went back, his gaze lifeless and blank. As he walked home, he heard ridiculous stories through the mouths of the people.

*‘The king will cook for his people?’*

He could not help but laugh at that. That was bullshit. It was nothing but a mere performance. Luo still remembered the time when Emperor Nerva invited poor and pitiful children inside the imperial family with a bright smile on his face while holding hands with them. Why was this scene so unforgettable to Luo? Because the moment they entered the palace, away from the prying eyes of the people, Nerva immediately swatted away the hand that he was holding and looked at the children in disgust. It was as if he was looking at bugs.

*‘He looked like he held something dirty with his hands.’*

Nerva even wiped his hands with his handkerchief. That was what kings and emperors do. They would often do things that would look good on the outside only to win the hearts of the people.

Then, an old man approached Luo. “Are you going back?”

The old man was none other than Spear God Ben. Luo felt his heart shake when he saw Spear God Ben.

*‘I’m so curious. Why does he have so much hair on his head?’*

But he did not bother to ask. Ben just laughed and walked behind him.

“I know that it’s hard to adapt but you will gradually adjust to this place. You must already know that this place is very different from Luvien.”

“That’s right. It’s very different.” Luo nodded. “Your living conditions are infinitely shabbier compared to Luvien. Even the standards of your military forces are low when compared to the empire.”

Ben laughed. “Don’t just look at the kingdom’s shortcomings. Do you not see any good points?”

*‘Who knows if there are advantages here?’*

As Luo continued to walk, he finally realized the difference between the people of the Luvien Empire and the people of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom.

*‘Why do they look happy?’*

Even though they had lost a lot of people in the war recently, the people of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom still looked exceptionally happy. Why did their faces look much brighter than the faces of the people of the empire?

It was obvious that the people of the Luvien Empire were living a much more comfortable life. They did not lack food, had higher wages and compensation for their work compared to other kingdoms, and they also received constant support. They also had the pride of being a part of a strong powerhouse.

So, why did the people of the Beyond the Heavens Kingdom look much happier than them?

“In the end, the Beyond the Heavens King is nothing but a performer. He’s just using the pretext that he wants to feed the people. I’m pretty sure all of the royal chefs are working hard under his command by now.”

“Huh? What do you mean?” Ben asked, his head tilting in confusion. Then, he smiled kindly as he looked in another direction.

Luo also turned his head and followed his gaze. *‘In the end, the Beyond the Heavens King will also...’*

Luo believed that Minhyuk would be no different from Nerva.

Beeeeeeeeeeep—

Rumbleeeeeeeee—

There, he saw a huge trailer spitting out blazing Eternal Flames through a huge vent. Inside was a king, who sweated profusely yet was still smiling happily as he cooked. Meanwhile, the eyes of the people were filled with respect and admiration as they looked at their king.

Ben, with a bright smile on his face, said, “This is the king of the nation that you’re serving.”

“...”

Badump—

Luo felt his heart throb.

*‘I have never seen the image of a king or an emperor like this.’*

Badump—

The other kings and emperors, including Nerva, were nothing more than performers. But not this king.

Badump—

*‘Is this the nation that you want to build?’* Luo turned around, a small smile on the corners of his lips. *‘I look forward to it.’*