

Gourmet 891

Chapter 891

Minhyuk prepared to return the day after Dwarf Vernon proposed to High Elf Allei.

‘The power of the Beef Shank of Growth needs to seep in through their bones and would take two weeks before it could show its full power.’

In other words, it would take two weeks before the dwarves grew in height. Only after that time would they be able to get the Black Hammer Dwarves’ help. So, for the time being, Minhyuk had to return to the Beyond the Heavens Empire and make preparations.

At that moment, Black Hammer Dwarven King Vernon appeared hand in hand with High Elf Allei in front of Minhyuk. There were also a few Black Hammer Dwarves carrying their black hammers right behind them.

Minhyuk could see that the dwarves carrying black hammers looked five centimeters taller than when he first met them. This was all thanks to the magic tool that Minhyuk had handed them to complement the Beef Shank of Growth. What was the magic tool in question? It was none other than *insoles*. And the dwarves that were given these insoles looked very, very satisfied.

“These dwarves are the best-armored weapon craftsmen among the Black Hammer Dwarves. They will be able to help you complete Bless’ blueprint and make additional armored weapons for you.” Vernon smiled.

Vernon was very grateful for Minhyuk’s help. Because of this man, he was able to overcome his inferiority complex. It was also thanks to Minhyuk that Vernon realized that Allei truly loved him and that getting taller and everything else was just because he lacked the confidence and felt he did not have the qualifications to receive her love.

On the other hand, Minhyuk was very happy. He initially thought that the Black Hammer Dwarves would only help them recreate Bless after their heights had increased. But now, Vernon personally said that they would help him create additional armored weapons.

Minhyuk reached his hand out and held Black Hammer Dwarven King Vernon’s stubby hands in a handshake.

This story happened after Beyond the Heavens Empire sent Locke to negotiate with the Black Hammer Dwarves.

Whenever Athenae was in danger, the high-rankers of the virtual reality game Athenae would stand at the forefront of the battlefield and lead all the other players to fight on the battlefield. Seeing this scene, Ethan would always recall the dream that he had dreamt at least once in his life.

Ethan had hoped that one day, he would climb the robot’s cockpit, the robot he had dreamt of since he was a child, hold a fantastic sword in his hand, and stand at the forefront of the battlefield to defeat the enemies. Yes, this was the dream of Ethan, the number one ranker in the *Armored Pilot* rankings.

Ethan wanted to pilot an armored weapon with a stronger fist and a defense that was sturdier than any other player so that no one could stop him. However, his dreams were shelved, and was left gathering dust in the corner when he became one of the lowest-ranking knights of the Luvien Empire.

Thud, thud, thud– thuuuud–!

“Ack! Kghhk! St- stop– stop!”

Well, he was one of the knights of the Luvien Empire up until yesterday. However, today, his qualifications as a knight had been revoked.

The ones that recruited Ethan first were the Luvien Empire. They promised him these.

–We will make your dreams come true.

–We will build an armored weapon for you, put you at the forefront, and allow you to fight in the vanguard of the battlefield.

–We will do our best to help you.

Ethan, a player, had been rolling around, tinkering, and piloting old armored weapons. However, Ethan could not fully showcase his power because the armored weapons were too old and decrepit. At that time, the Luvien Empire came to him and promised to create a new armored weapon. That was why he came here. But what was the result in the end? Just today, he received this notification.

–The plans for the Armored Weapon Knight Order have been revoked.

–The Luvien Empire will not produce any armored weapons.

Of course, Ethan immediately asked the reason.

–Why?

–Of course, it's because making armored weapons is too expensive. And even if we can produce one, it would be inefficient. Then, wouldn't that put us at a loss?

It was expensive, and operating it would be inefficient. Ethan knew that those were nothing but excuses. This was because the Luvien Empire could not make any outstanding armored weapons.

An excellent armored weapon could produce mana on its own. And when an excellent armored weapon met with an equally fantastic pilot? They would create a synergy and become several times more potent than usual.

And that was what the Luvien Empire also had in mind. That was why they recruited Ethan in their knight order. But they abandoned him when they failed to create an excellent armored weapon.

–You are no longer a part of the Armored Weapon Knight Order.

–Then- then where would I go?!

–How should I know?

This was how Luvien was. If they needed you, they would use any means to entice you to their side. However, once you no longer had any use for them, then they would throw you away.

The worst part? The knights of the Luvien Empire mocked and trampled on Ethan, who had been recruited as a part of the knight order because of his superb talent in operating armored weapons.

“What- What did I even do wrong?!”

“Shut up! The fact that a bastard like you with no qualifications joined the Great Luvien Empire is your mistake!”

“I- I am the best and strongest pilot!”

“That’s what they said. Yes. But what’s the point of being the best and the strongest pilot when you don’t even have any proper armored weapon? There’s nowhere in the world that operates and maintains armored weapons.”

“Keooooook!”

They punched and beat Ethan as if he were some kind of dog that did something wrong.

Ethan felt that everything was unfair. He always believed that someday, he would be able to meet an armored weapon that suited him and that he would be able to stand at the vanguard and fight on the battlefield, receiving the admiration of many.

He never gave up on his dreams, and he even continued to work hard and operate the old and decrepit armored weapon given to him when he changed class to Armored Weapon Pilot. Even when a thousand armored weapon pilots ended up giving up on their courses, he continued to increase his level and establish himself as an excellent armored weapon pilot.

‘One day, I will make you regret that you cast me, an armored weapon pilot, away!’

But at this moment, Ethan felt like it was him that was stupid. Even the Luvien Empire gave up on producing armored weapons. So, who in the world would be willing to do so?

Ethan might be the number one-ranked armored weapon pilot. However, with just his old armored weapon in hand, he would not be able to win against the top one million rankers. What use was being excellent and talented when his armored weapon lagged far behind in performance?

“*Sob, sob, sob– Sob, sob, sob–*” Ethan choked in his tears as he got beaten up and dragged like a dog and eventually got thrown out of the walls of the empire.

Ethan clenched his fists. *‘Never again... I will never play Athenae again!’*

This dream started when Ethan first played and put together Lego pieces as a kid and watched the robots transforming on the TV in front of him. He clenched his fists tightly, vowing to make that dream come true. However, Ethan was now entertaining the thought of abandoning his plan.

But at this moment, the figure of a man flashed in his head. Unlike himself, this man stood at the forefront of the battlefield and never backed down, even though he had to face the Luvien Empire. This man was a man who received the respect and admiration of many. And this was none other than Minhyuk.

“Ethan. The best-armored weapon pilot. From what I heard, you are a very skilled and talented man that even the NPCs cannot match, no?”

While Ethan was staring at the ground and sobbing, someone’s voice rang above his head. The voice was booming yet warm; it embraced him as if soothing the exhausted Ethan. However, Ethan could not bear to raise his face, which was covered with tears. The man leaned down and stretched his hand out toward him.

“The Beyond the Heavens... No, I need and covet your talents.”

And when Ethan raised his head? He saw the man he aspired to be, the same man he watched through videos, standing before him. The man even told him that he coveted and needed his talents. This man was the Supreme player and the Beyond the Heavens Empire emperor, the only empire that stood and fought back against the Luvien Empire.

“Will you join my side?”

Ethan was deeply moved. This was the first time that he had heard such heartfelt words during his entire time playing Athenae.

‘I need and covet your talents.’

The crying Ethan nodded as he grabbed the man’s hands.

“Come to the Beyond the Heavens Empire once you’re ready.”

After leaving those words, Minhyuk turned and left with his white cape carrying the symbol of a fork and a knife crossed together, fluttering behind his tall and broad back. Ethan, who watched his sturdy and reliable back, continued to cry.

“Minhyuk-chan! I will live my life for your sake!!! Thank you for believing in me! *Aishiteru!*”

That was right. Ethan was a full-fledged *Gundam otaku*.

Minhyuk looked at Vernon and the Black Hammer Dwarves, smiling happily as they swung their black hammers to reproduce Divine Weapon Bless and created six other armored weapons by themselves.

[You have successfully reproduced Divine Weapon Bless!]

[Compared to the original Bless, this divine weapon performs 25% lower. However, the fact that it is the strongest armored weapon cannot be denied!]

A faint smile curled at the corners of Minhyuk’s lips when he heard the notification. Even though they could not wholly reproduce the Bless of the past, he believed this was more than enough. After all, they had Ethan with them. The same Ethan had closed his eyes and placed his hands on Bless’s body.

“Bless-chan... I can hear your heartbeat. Please take down and tear apart the Luvien Empire with me, okay?”

“...”

The words that Ethan said sounded completely like those cringe-y *otaku* lines. However, they were reliable words. As the strongest and best armored weapon pilot, Ethan could make up for Bless's shortcomings.

While Bless and the other armored weapons were being created, Minhyuk took the time to cook some pretty decent and amazing dishes from the ingredients he had harvested from the Field of the Gods.

At that moment, Haze entered. “Your Majesty! This time, they are attacking the Lonstrei Empire. And that's not all. After observing their movements, we concluded they were moving to invade the Ardan Territory, which our Beyond the Heavens pioneered and opened!”

“...Alright.”

The oppressive acts of the Luvien Empire did not cease. However, the Beyond the Heavens Empire was already fully prepared this time.

“Haze, start spreading the rumors. Say that there is a ‘dungeon’ housing an extremely outstanding and excellent reward.”

Levard, the number four in the Archaeologist Rankings, migrated to the Luvien Empire. When he came to the empire, he heard some information in the streets. From what he had heard, there was an old book amongst the ancient relics that the Luvien Empire had acquired. This book contained detailed information about a place called *The Transcendentals' Holy Land*.

‘They said it was a place where the boss is a transcendental being. However, it was also a place housing a myriad of treasures.’

Immediately after that, the Luvien Empire summoned Levard. He was tasked to lead the minimum number of troops and head to the Transcendentals' Holy Land.

There had been several cases where information regarding dungeons was written in ancient relics and artifacts. However, the information regarding these dungeons was false 90% of the time. And if the information were not wrong, it would usually be cleared by someone else. Because of that, archeologist players, people who could revive even after dying inside those dungeons, were sent to check the situation. Of course, if they were forced to log out, the Luvien Empire would compensate them for as much as they had lost.

‘I'm begging you. Please let this be a dungeon that someone else has not robbed clean!’

Following what was written in the ancient book, Levard led a hundred troops. They took only a short time to reach the dungeon's entrance.

‘Its name is The Transcendentals' Holy Land...’

What were transcendental beings? They were beings that surpassed the limits of a human being and held power far beyond the power that an ordinary god could wield. Knowing this fact, Levard believed that the rewards of this dungeon would be highly excellent and valuable.

The Transcententials' Holy Land entrance was hidden behind a thick curtain of vines, which Levard and his troops easily cut down to enter. Once they stepped foot inside the dungeon...

Rumble—

The ground beneath their feet gave way, and Levard and his men began to fall.

“A- Aaaaaaaaaaack!”

Thud—!

Fortunately, Levard was not forced to log out even after falling from such a steep height. Levard, who returned to his senses after a while, looked around. However, the notifications that rang in his ears shocked him.

[You have entered the Transcententials' Holy Land!]

[The Transcententials' Holy Land is a God-rank Dungeon!]

[You have gained 500 REP!]

[You have gained 50 CHA!]

[The one that can clear the Transcententials' Holy Land successfully will be able to obtain the 'Transcententials' Treasure'!]

[The dungeon has an entry limit. Only one million people can enter the dungeon!]

[The transcendental beings wish to compete with this era's strongest and greatest empire!]

[The transcendental beings hope the Luvien Empire will enter their dungeon!]

[Those that will enter and clear the Transcententials' Holy Land with the Luvien Empire will be able to receive ample rewards!]

Archeologist Levard felt like he was going to choke on his spit. He could not breathe at the fact that the Transcententials' Holy Land truly existed and remained undiscovered and that it was a God-rank Dungeon. Based on what had been revealed to him, he could tell this was the most challenging dungeon among all the dungeons released.

‘And there's also the fact that an episode has been triggered the moment we entered the dungeon.’

However, the most surprising fact was that they could obtain the *Transcententials' Treasure* if they could clear this dungeon. Luvien Empire's Emperor Nerva declared they would use any means necessary as long as they could obtain anything that belonged to the transcendental beings.

‘Isn't this amazing...?!’

The best part? Only players related to the Luvien Empire were allowed to enter the Transcententials' Holy Land.

Levard calmed his tense and excited nerves and slowly entered deeper into the dungeons. However, he only wandered inside the dungeon for a minute before he was forced to log out. Even so, Levard was still very happy.

‘What a challenging dungeon! Hahahaha! Amazing!’

Levard immediately went to report to Nerva when he could log back into the game.

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The entire world was left in a buzz. Everyone, including players, broadcasting stations, and commentators, continued to talk about the episode about the Transcendentals’ Holy Land.

[This is wild. An episode has been triggered just because of one single dungeon? How high is the difficulty of this Transcendentals’ Holy Land?]

[Guys, only one million people can enter this dungeon. However, what’s more surprising is that there was no limit to the level of the one million people that would enter this dungeon.]

[Keke. If there’s no limit for the level, then does that mean that all of the rankers of the Luvien Empire can enter the dungeon?]

[Think about it; this is not just for rankers. The Luvien Empire has the strongest army with the most significant military might. Only the elite of Luvien’s troops would enter this dungeon. The Luvien Imperial Army had recently revamped itself. The minimum level of their soldiers was at Level 560, and their knights have since grown and reached Level 600. But do you know what’s more interesting?]

[What?]

[Almost half of the population of the players in the Luvien Empire are players that have achieved Level 600.]

[I will go to the Luvien Empire once I achieve Level 600.]

[Yep, yep. That’s right. The conditions that they present are just that good.]

Most of the players that have reached Level 600 were people who once represented their countries during the Battle of the Thrones and easily exceeded fifty. And nearly half of that number belonged to the Luvien Empire.

The biggest reason for this was because the Luvien Empire had given their all to help those who had received quests related to achieving Level 600 and those who had already reached Level 600 to gain more power. However, there was something far more interesting than that.

[At Emperor Nerva’s command, a Second Order of the Sword of the Gods has been created.]

And the knights of the Sword of the Gods’ Second Order? They were none other than players. The most surprising fact was that the Second Order did not lag behind the First Order.

The difference between Level 599 players and Level 600 players was like the difference between heaven and earth. The rankers that have achieved Level 600 have proven this fact when they joined the Sword of the Gods’ Second Order.

However, they weren't the only ones who joined the Second Order. Countless players had built their kingdoms, only to join the Second Order by handing over the management of their domains to their successors.

Because of these reasons, the Luvien Empire grew even more powerful.

[The Sword of the Gods' Second Order knights are genuinely impressive. The problem is that I don't want to look at them or see them.]

[What do you mean by you don't want to look at them or see them? They're just taking advantage of their profits.]

[But you know, don't they find it a bit awkward? The Second Order is standing at the vanguard and destroying all of the forces going against the Luvien Empire.]

However, the players that made up the Second Order also had to pay a price. They had to become the dogs of the Luvien Empire and be at their beck and call. And now, they were working with Duke Ruffiso and standing at the forefront of destroying the forces against the Luvien Empire. The players against the Luvien Empire hated them, while those who stood in line with the Luvien Empire strongly supported them.

[Wow, shit. I can't wait to see their dungeon attack strategy.]

[Me too! +2!!! How many strong monsters will be there? Ah, what kind of rewards will be there? How many amazing rewards will they get? Kghhk!]

While the players were having a heated discussion in the community sites...

[Guys! The Luvien Empire has decided to send Duke Ruffiso and all of the Sword of the Gods' Second Order members!]

[That's unbelievable... Luvien is going all out, huh?]

[Wow. Are Duke Ruffiso and the Sword of the Gods' Second Order going to fight together? Keke. That's going to be freaking amazing. I've heard that Duke Ruffiso's level is over Level 800.]

[I think his level is really over Level 800, though. If you watch his videos, you can see that Duke Ruffiso is very strong.]

[Since Duke Ruffiso will be there, don't you think the Transcententials' Holy Land is already in the bag?]

[Well, that's not for sure, right? The Transcententials' Holy Land's boss, the 'Transcendental Being,' might be stronger than Duke Ruffiso. After all, this dungeon is already an episode, right?]

[Hmm. Is that so?]

[They're going to enter the dungeon tomorrow at 6:00 PM.]

With Duke Ruffiso and all of the Sword of the Gods' Second Order members added to the mix, more players, commentators, and broadcasting stations began to pay attention to the Transcententials' Holy Land.

Minhyuk, the Transcententials' Holy Land's boss monster that received the attention of many, was busy checking the authority's rules to run a God-rank dungeon.

1. The Manager who used the right to run a God-rank dungeon can receive help from players. The manager has to be the lord of a territory or the ruler of a kingdom. If you're an emperor, you can get your vassals' help.
2. Players participating as dungeon monsters will receive 50% of the forced logout penalty upon death. In the case of NPC vassals, they will be revived outside of the dungeon and will receive no penalty whatsoever. However, the dungeon manager would shoulder the penalty the vassals would receive. The penalty would depend on the level of the vassal and is mostly just a loss of EXP.
3. The players and vassals that will follow the manager and participate in the dungeon will appear as monsters following the settings of the dungeon. You can only have three exceptions to this rule.
4. When the dungeon's difficulty is set to the highest, the total number of players, vassals, and soldiers can participate is 200,000. According to the dungeon settings, you can also use 300,000 monsters as mobs.
5. The Dungeon Manager can also weaken the enemy using the debuffs provided by the dungeon. The manager can only use this once.
6. The Dungeon Manager can give buffs to his allies using their abilities. However, the buffs that can be applied must only be up to the extent permitted by the dungeon.
7. The Dungeon Manager will become the boss monster and must set the rewards corresponding to their capabilities. If the rewards are insufficient, the dungeon will not be produced.
8. As for the monsters provided by the dungeon, they will have their respective rewards. However, for players and vassals brought by the manager, the manager has to set it so that the appropriate rewards corresponding to their abilities will drop whenever the enemies hunt them.
9. When hunting enemies, the manager, the vassals, and the players can acquire EXP and loot.
10. The Dungeon Manager can modify and set the contents of the notifications sent out.
11. The Dungeon Manager can set their appearance as they appear in the dungeon.
12. The Dungeon Manager, vassals, and players' skills will change according to the changes made to their appearance.
13. The Dungeon Manager...
14. The dungeon's difficulty can only be set to the highest level if it approves it. Upon confirming the approval and operational status of the dungeon, the manager can trigger an episode related to the dungeon and set a restriction on the number of people that can enter the dungeon.
15. Vassals can also enter the dungeon and become mini-bosses. Only three vassals can act as mini-bosses.
16. ...
17. ...

Minhyuk, who looked through the explanations, smiled faintly when he saw the 15th clause.

‘...I don’t know when you’ll be back, but I’ll always leave a spot for you, Conir.’

Conir, the boy with an intellectual disability, left the nest to become stronger. Minhyuk wanted to leave a spot open for him. After all, he might come back at any given moment.

The boss monster, the *Transcendental Being*, sitting at the end of the Transcendentals’ Holy Land, was now waiting for his enemies to come.

Boom—!

Boom—!

Boom—!

The booming sound of the drums echoed loudly worldwide as the long procession of the Luvien Imperial Army started their march. The procession was spearheaded by Duke Ruffiso, one of the Stars of the Luvien Empire. He was immediately followed by the members of the Sword of the Gods’ Second Order and the countless numbers of rankers, knights, and soldiers that belonged to the Luvien Empire.

The Transcendental Being was not a god. But he might just be someone who wielded power that was beyond that of a god’s own. This was why the Great Luvien Empire was very interested in the Transcendentals’ Holy Land.

Meanwhile, Duke Ruffiso led the long procession with a blank expression.

‘I couldn’t wring and snap all of the necks of the people of the Beyond the Heavens Empire and the nobles and aristocrats with a friendly relationship.’

Duke Ruffiso was the one who personally chopped the heads off of the nobles of the Lonstrei Empire, the empire that forged a friendly relationship with the Beyond the Heavens Empire, and hung them on their walls.

‘But since this place is called the Transcendentals’ Holy Land, I hope to obtain the transcendentals’ weapon. If I get that, I will set out alone and punish the Beyond the Heavens Empire. Perhaps I will also be able to unveil the secrets behind my birth.’

Once Duke Ruffiso cleared the Transcendentals’ Holy Land, he would become the major contributor and would be able to obtain one of the dungeon’s rewards. If that happened, Duke Ruffiso, who held the slightest sway and influence in the empire, might become the most influential among the three dukes.

[I feel like I’m choking just by looking at Duke Ruffiso’s momentum and dignity.]

[To be honest, Duke Ruffiso could be considered the real transcendental being of this era, no?]

[There are a lot of stories about transcendentals in Athenae. There’s a story that says that they are human beings who have refused to walk the path of a god but eventually surpassed them. There was also a story that says that they are born with the body of a transcendental and have already exceeded the limits of a human and a god at birth. I have also heard a story about a kingdom where all the transcendentals have gathered. Overall, there are plenty of stories about them and their origins.]

[I have heard the story about Duke Ruffiso's birth. It goes, 'On that day, the sky opened and the angels, with their wings spread out, came down to Luvien with him in their arms.']

[Duke Ruffiso is so powerful that he can be considered someone who has exceeded the limits of a human being and a god. There are a lot of assumptions and speculations regarding Duke Ruffiso's birth. There are even rumors about how he was born from transcendental beings.]

[Perhaps the secret of Duke Ruffiso's birth will be revealed inside the Transcendentals' Holy Land.]

[As we speak, the Luvien Imperial Army has now arrived before the Transcendentals' Holy Land.]

[They did not even hesitate. With one gesture of Duke Ruffiso's hand, the knights and soldiers began to enter the dungeon!]

[At this moment, ATV Broadcasting Station's viewership ratings have reached 30%!]

[That's how many viewers pay attention to the match between Athenae's most challenging dungeon and the Luvien Empire.]

[The broadcasting stations' cameras and drones are now coming in. We will now show you the inside of the dungeon with the highest level of difficulty in the history of Athenae.]

The total number of the knights of the Luvien Empire's Sword of the Gods' Second Order was sixteen. By partnering with those that were somewhat lacking, like the 15th and 16th places, Duke Ruffiso could divide the imperial army into ten divisions. Each division was led by the knights of the Second Order and had around 100,000 soldiers each.

The Tenth Division was led by God of Shields Valentino and Mage Alex, who were in 15th and 16th place in the Second Order. Even though they were just in 15th and 16th place, the combination of these two high rankers was enough to take down and trample on the order's 5th place. The Tenth Division was marching forward and acting as the vanguard.

[Abyssal Knight. Level 586.]

[Abyssal Mage. Level 599.]

Just as expected of the dungeon with the highest difficulty level, their basic mob's level was already very high. The more shocking part? Almost 20,000 Abyssal Knights and 5,000 Abyssal Mages appeared at the same time.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

Valentino stood at the forefront and defended against the Abyssal Mages' high-tiered magical attacks.

"Don't let them reach us!"

But it was not just him. Several tankers built a wall with their square shields and blocked the enemies from advancing further. At the same time, Alex led the other mages and began to cast their magic.

"Fire Storm."

"Fire Storm."

“Fire Storm.”

Rumble—

Countless magical attacks poured down upon the charging Abyssal Knights and inflicted them with constant damage.

“This is just the beginning, so this should be more than enough.”

“Even so, the damage the enemies can deal is much higher than we expected. Please be careful.”

This was the conversation that unfolded between Alex and Valentino. Just when they hunted nearly half of the 25,000 enemy knights and mages and finally moved forward gradually, they were greeted by a terrifying sight.

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

“Woaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Around 30,000 more Abyssal Knights ran out from the dungeon's depths and began to charge toward them. At that moment, Valentino immediately used the strongest shield he had acquired when he reached Level 600.

[Bentino's Wall.]

[Bentino's Wall, the size of a castle's wall, will protect you and your allies!]

[You have an additional 8,000% defense!]

[Bentino's Wall has a duration of three minutes.]

[Using the skill will destroy 1 point from your STM.]

Valentino had already decided to risk his life early during this dungeon's attack. After all, he would receive a considerable reward from Nerva if he could become one of the contributors to the clearance of this dungeon.

Bentino's Wall, as large as a castle, rose inside this vast dungeon, preventing all enemies from charging forward. No matter how hard the knights charged at Bentino's Wall, they could not pierce its defenses.

“Kehahahahahahaha!” Valentino cackled.

Viewers! Are you watching me?! Duke Ruffiso! Can you see this?! His laughter seemed to convey those words. It seemed like he was boasting that only a single player was blocking the mobs of the most challenging dungeon. Of course, the troops did not stay idle. They took the time to take down the knights with their arrows and magic.

Meanwhile, all the commentators were watching Valentino, who was laughing like crazy, in awe.

[The knights and mages close to Level 600 continuously launch attacks, but Bentino's Walls remain impregnable!]

[It still has around 50% of its durability left!]

[That's truly amazing! This proves that Italy's God of the Shields, Valentino, is worthy of his position as one of the knights of the Luvien Empire's Sword of the Gods' Second Order...]

But then, at that moment...

Baaaaaaaaaaaaaang—

The sound of an explosion rang in everyone's ears. Valentino's eyes immediately turned to follow the sound of the blast and were greeted by the sight of a *bloody and hideous spear* stuck gobsmack in the middle of Bentino's Walls.

Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack—

At the same time, web-like cracks appeared all over the shield's surface.

Swoosh—

The bloody spear pulled itself out of the wall and flew back to the hands of someone. Like that, Bentino's Walls, which still had 50% durability left, began to fall. A man carrying the bloody spear from earlier was right beyond the collapsing wall. The man rode atop a ten-meter horse. Both beings were sporting scorched skins and a grotesque appearance.

[A fragment of the Transcendental Being has appeared!]

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Hanu. Level 654.]

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Bein. Level 774.]

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The commentators immediately turned their attention to the new arrivals. Even the viewers were very interested in the Transcendental Being's Fragments, Bein and Hanu, which appeared in the form of a man and a horse, covered with skin that was scorched and burnt to coal.

[This was the first time since the release of the virtual reality game Athenae that a dungeon, the Transcentinals' Holy Land, with the highest difficulty level has appeared.]

[And inside this dungeon, mobs called quasi-bosses or mini-bosses have appeared.]

[Their momentum is jaw-dropping. And with just one spear, that man broke the number one in the tanker rankings, the Level 600 God of Shields Valentino's Bentino's Walls.]

[That man's skin is scorched and bloody. He looks very grotesque. However, the most important thing to note is that he has the words 'Transcendental Being's Fragment' in his name.]

Everyone was nervous yet thrilled, including Valentino and Alex, who were present on the battlefield. What made them nervous was that the man could break Bentino's Walls all at once. However, the mere thought of the *rewards* they would obtain once they killed this man thrilled them.

'And it's just a fragment of the Transcendental Being's Fragment.'

'I wonder how high the EXP and how awesome the drops would be from the most difficult dungeon's mini-boss level mob monster would be?'

Alex and Valentino looked at each other, sweat trickling down their spines. As if on cue, Valentino immediately cast a shield while Alex bombarded the two with his AOE magical attacks. And with them at the lead, the Luvien Imperial Army would pour attacks on them and push them back.

“Now...!”

Just when Valentino was about to cast another skill, Bein, sitting atop Hanu, pulled the reins and ran away.

“...?”

At that moment, Valentino and the other troops were left in a trance.

[The Transcendental Being's Fragments that have appeared just a few minutes prior are set up as the mini-bosses of the Transcententials' Holy Land. Because of that, I believe they were made to show some of their prowess at the beginning before returning.]

[Ordinary dungeons would usually have one or two mini-bosses in them. This means that the existence of these fragments is significant to the Transcententials' Holy Land. Perhaps this outcome was only natural.]

[My heart is already trying to get out of my chest. The Transcendental Being's Fragments Bein and Hanu's levels are already impressive. I wonder how strong the Transcendental Being truly is?]

[However, according to experts: “The levels of these mini-bosses are quite disappointing, especially since this is the dungeon with the highest level of difficulty in Athenae.”]

[Once one reached Level 700, a ten-level difference would mean the difference between heaven and earth. The experts had assumed that the level of the mini-bosses in the Transcententials' Holy Land should have been around Level 785 or higher.]

Knowing that a dungeon should only have around one or two mini-bosses, the viewers and commentators believed that the Luvien Empire would be able to clear this dungeon. After all, the level of the mini-bosses that appeared in front of them was much lower than they had expected.

Meanwhile, the Tenth Division, led by Valentino and Alex, continued to march forward. And, of course, their hunting method remained the same. Valentino would cast a giant shield to stop their enemies, while Alex and the mages would bomb them with their magic. It was a method that allowed them to nibble away at their enemy's numbers. However, a variable had suddenly appeared.

Baaaaaaang—!

A bloody spear was once again lodged in the giant shield that Valentino had just created.

Crack, crack, crack—!

Bein's bloody spear, boasting massive damage, instantly smashed the newly erected shield.

“Hiiik...!”

Then, just like before, he immediately ran away. The two fragments of the Transcendental Being would appear every time Valentino cast his defensive skill and turn them into smithereens. And the more they did this, the more Valentino grew worried. After all, he was losing out while utilising his essential skills one after another.

As for the commentators? They quickly began to analyze the situation.

[From what it looks like, there will be at least two or three Transcendental Being's Fragments here in the Transcendentals' Holy Land.]

[Because he's an essential factor in this battle, I think the fragment that uses the spear is attacking Valentino, who is responsible for setting up the troublesome shield.]

[Since there would be only three zones for this dungeon, it is best for the fragments to defend the first area as much as possible!]

After witnessing the appearance of the first fragments, many judged that it would be easy to conquer the Transcendentals' Holy Land. Then, another commentator shared his analysis.

[In fact, most dungeons are accessible to players and NPCs alike. If they entered a dungeon and died every time, then who would want to join it, no?]

[That's right. To be honest, I think there's an 80% chance that this attack would be successful. There's nothing much we can do about it unless this is a unique dungeon.]

As the commentators said, the attack rate of the dungeons in Athenae was usually around 80% or higher. This was because the players used these dungeons to level up and grow. What would happen if a player's probability of successfully attacking a dungeon fell below 80%? The answer was simple. The players would immediately lose interest in the dungeon. As for those who wanted a higher level of difficulty in dungeons? They would often just go and find a dungeon with a higher ranking.

The intense heat and excitement finally cooled down. Although the Tenth Division suffered considerable damage, they could still advance safely. At that moment, a notification rang in their ears.

[You have successfully hunted 10% of the monsters inside the Transcendentals' Holy Land!]

Valentino and Alex laughed.

"It seems like the number of monsters inside this dungeon is around half a million, huh?"

"We've killed around 50,000 while we were advancing. So, I think your estimate is correct."

On the other hand, the Luvien Empire had brought in troops that numbered no less than a million. Easy. Conquering the Transcendentals' Holy Land, a dungeon they believed to have the highest difficulty level, was much easier than they thought.

"No. Isn't it because the Luvien Empire is the one that stepped up to conquer this dungeon?"

"There's a high probability that that's the case."

They finally entered a vast hall, discussing how easy it was to conquer the dungeon. And what greeted them inside the hall were towering walls. However, they were not ordinary walls. The towering walls were moving and shifting constantly.

“...Everyone! On guard!”

Everyone sensed that something strange and unusual was about to happen.

[The Labyrinth of Death has been activated!]

[All people who entered the Transcententials' Holy Land will simultaneously be warped inside the Labyrinth of Death!]

[You can only escape the Labyrinth of Death in two ways. One would be dying, and the other would be clearing the labyrinth itself!]

Flash—

Flaaaaaaash—

Flaaaash—

A blinding light enveloped the entire Luvien Imperial Army.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

Valentino and Alex immediately changed their tune as they looked ahead of them.

“Alex.”

“Stop calling my name. I'm agitated and nervous here.”

“Even though it is said to have the highest difficulty level, don't you think this is too high?”

“Yeah. That's really how it looks. But if you think about it, these guys are only half a million in numbers while we have a million on our side.”

“But this is still a bit...”

The two were still left speechless. Some beings resembled the earlier bloody and grotesque Transcendental Being's Fragment. One of them looked ordinary. However, the two bloody red daggers hanging in his hands made those who looked at him shudder in fear.

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Rho. Level 756.]

In other words, this being was different from the fragment that wielded a spear they saw earlier.

The Tenth and Ninth Divisions had appeared together in this place. The remaining divisions leading the 800,000 remaining troops were also probably left dealing with a fragment of their own. This meant at least eight Transcendental Beings' fragments were inside this dungeon. It was a number that went far beyond their expectations. However, that was not all. There were more things that they had to worry about.

[Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Arie. Level 601.]

[Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Ruk. Level 599.]

[Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Hydra. Level 586.]

There were too many broken fragments. The broken fragment named Arie held a staff, indicating that he was a mage. On the other hand, Ruk had a massive axe in each hand while sitting on top of one of Hydra's enormous heads.

At that moment, Fragment Rho made a move.

"Damn!!!"

The Labyrinth of Death was a terrible place. This was because there were towering walls blocking their paths. They could also expect countless Abyssal Knights and Mages waiting for them throughout this labyrinth. However, they had a bigger problem to worry about. The labyrinth most likely sent them to fragments after assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each of their groups.

The Tenth Division comprised mages and tankers, while the Ninth Division had a proper balance of archers and knights. However, the greatest nemesis of all archers, mages, and tankers were assassins. Tankers were generally slow and were unable to keep up with the speed of the assassins. Archers, conversely, would find it difficult to hit the assassins with their arrows. As for mages, they had lower physical defenses and HP levels, so they were highly vulnerable to the assassins' attacks.

Flash—

At that moment, Fragment Rho's figure disappeared from their very eyes. At the same time, dozens of mages in the rear collapsed with blood spurting out of their necks. One strike, and they were dead. However, Rho's attack seemed to be the first shot.

[The Transcendental Being's Wrath!]

[You have been subjected to abnormal statuses after being exposed to the Transcendental Being's Wrath!]

[All of your stats have dropped by 15%!]

[Your physical and magical defenses have dropped by 20%!]

[Your skill casting time has increased by 20%!]

[You cannot use any parchment or potion!]

[The Transcendental Being's Wrath's duration is twenty minutes!]

"...!"

One look and they could tell that the Transcendental Being's Wrath had engulfed all of the Luvien Imperial Army. A notification rang in their ears while Alex and Valentino were staring at the debuff in horror.

[1,311 troops from the Ninth and Tenth Divisions have died!]

"What?"

"This is crazy...!"

Everywhere the Transcendental Being's Fragment was in the form of an assassin passed by, blood would spill and rain. It all happened in the blink of an eye. However, shockingly enough, the power that the fragment was showing was far stronger than his level, which was Level 755.

They might not know this, but the Transcendental Being's Fragment they were facing now was Minhyuk's Shadow Luo. And Luo had eaten a dish made with the ingredients harvested from the *Field of the Gods*, which boosted his AGI significantly.

However, it did not end there.

"Kihyeeeeeeeeeeck!"

"Kihyaaaaaaaaack!"

A pillar of blazing flame and a stream of bone-chilling frost shot out of the mouths of the Hydra that the Fragment Ruk was riding on.

Crackleeee—!

The blazing flames melted the mages, while the bone-chilling frost froze the archers.

Crack, crack, crack, crack—!

Then, at that moment, Ruk jumped from above the Hydra.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

With every swing of Ruk's axe, the knights fell one after another. But the disaster that the Luvien Imperial Army faced had not yet ended. But what was it? *A tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye?* Arie, the broken fragment wielding a staff, then raised his staff to the sky.

Rumbleeeeeee—!

The most extraordinary AOE magical attack, Meteor, began to fall.

"...Ha- haha." Alex could only laugh at how absurd the situation was.

Before they knew it, another one of the Sword of the Gods appeared beside them.

"Can you break this?"

The Second Order's Sword of the God that appeared in front of them was none other than the 8th-ranked God of Archery Miao.

At the same time.

Duke Ruffiso, sitting atop a horse, looked at the Transcendental Being's Fragments in front of him with a lofty expression. The two fragments had massive builds and tall statures.

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Brood. Level 779.]

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Effis. Level 754.]

At that moment, the fragment named Brood leaped forward, a powerful sword light shooting out of his sword and annihilating 20,000 of the imperial army in this narrow labyrinth in one go.

Duke Ruffiso climbed down his horse while analyzing the current situation that they were in. *‘I don’t know why, but the number of fragments is larger than expected. They’re even stronger than their level.’*

However, after thinking about it deeply, he realized it did not mean they had to be nervous just because the dungeon’s mobs and monsters were strong. The bosses and mini-bosses of most dungeons were much stronger than usual. Even so, the attack rate of dungeons was maintained at 80%. Why was that the case? Well, the reason was very, very simple.

‘Anyone that entered the dungeon can use potions and parchments’—on the other hand,—‘Mobs are not allowed to use any of that.’

This was an established law and was the reason why the dungeons’ attack rate was very high. Just when this thought flashed in Ruffiso’s head, the other tall fragment moved. No, it was not correct to say that he *moved*. The space behind the fragment ripped open, and countless high-level monsters poured out. Their number? It easily exceeded 100,000.

‘A... summoner?’ Duke Ruffiso thought.

But at that moment, the fragment that summoned the hundred thousand monsters suddenly shielded his sword.

‘Splitting the Devil.’

The sword, which was not as powerful as the swordlight that Fragment Brood had released but was still powerful enough to cut down the Sword of the Gods, engulfed thousands of the troops of the Imperial Army.

‘...Attacking this dungeon will not be easy.’ This was Duke Ruffiso’s honest assessment.

Chapter 894

Bastien, the number one in the summoners rankings and the seventh among the Sword of the Gods’ Second Order, had recently drawn the attention of the masses. Why? Because he achieved Level 600 and obtained a God-rank monster. This God-ranked monster was none other than a Divine Dragon. The Divine Dragon boasted a tremendous attack power, with its level surpassing Level 660.

However, other things drew the attention of the masses. Bastien was a summoner, and summoners specialized in large-scale battles. He could summon the Divine Dragon and countless other high-level monsters.

‘This is an opportunity. I will show the Great Luvien Empire my greatness and make them remember my face. I will also use this opportunity to show the other players what I am like.’

The Luvien Empire had immediately approached Bastien the moment he achieved Level 600. They offered to help Bastien, who struggled with the challenging Level 600 quests. And thanks to their help, they were able to obtain the Divine Dragon.

So, Bastien wanted to show the world once again how he was after achieving Level 600 and obtaining a Divine Dragon! However, Bastien faced a significant challenge inside the Labyrinth of

Death. The Transcendental Being's Fragment wielding the spear, the same one they saw earlier, was before him.

But that was not all. A Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment sporting a large horn that could rival the Demon Lord and a scythe in hand had also appeared.

[Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Deis. Level 609.]

Standing atop an Evil Dragon, the level of the broken fragment was not that high. However, the space behind him suddenly opened, and more than 100,000 demons poured out. Their numbers already far exceeded the number that Bastien could summon. The worst part? They were stronger than his summons, too.

"Kihyeeeeeeeeek!"

The Divine Dragon he acquired was not shining as brightly as he imagined. However, the surprise was not yet over.

Baaaaaaaang—!

When Bastien turned his head, he saw 20,000 of the Luvien Imperial Army slowly melting into nothingness. The sight was utterly unbelievable. Bastien knew that the level of Fragment Bein was high. But was this feat even possible? Although the knights in Bastien's division were the most outstanding in existence, Bein was able to slaughter hundreds of them per second.

"Kghhk!"

However, Bastien did not have the leisure to care about them. The demons looked like they had lost their sanity as they mindlessly slaughtered the monsters that were in their vicinity.

At that moment, Bastien triggered his Divine Dragon's ability. The Divine Dragon could trigger a Breath with four attributes. However, it was an ability that was accompanied by a considerable penalty. Bastien did not plan to show off all of his cards in this dungeon. But the Transcendentals' Holy Land had gone beyond his expectations. So, he immediately changed his mind.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—!

The Divine Dragon's four-attributed breath devoured the demons charging towards them.

"Our viewership ratings have reached 45%!"

ATV Broadcasting Station's viewership ratings were only 30% when the Luvien Imperial Army first entered the dungeon. This rating fell to 26% when they saw how easily the Luvien Imperial Army had taken care of the dungeon's mobs.

The players tuned in because they were excited to see the most challenging dungeon. However, they immediately changed the channels after seeing how disappointing the true level of the mobs inside the dungeon was.

However, when they entered the Labyrinth of Death, everything was turned upside down.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—

Fwoosh, fwoosh—

The first camera showed the scene in the labyrinth where the Ninth and Tenth Divisions, led by Miao and Valentino, were. It showed how the Ninth and Tenth Divisions, made up mostly of mages, archers, and tankers, struggled hard against the dungeon elites and mini-boss.

With every flash of Broken Fragment Arie's staff, hundreds of magical attacks would appear and rain down on the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army. Fragment Rho, an assassin class, also swept away the archers and mages with low HP volume. Rho moved like the wind, blood spurting out like fountains everywhere he passed. There was also Ruk, the broken fragment wielding axes in his hands, sitting atop Hydra. The two combined their powers and melted away the troops of the imperial army.

The second camera showed the scene where Bastien, the number one in the summoner's ranking, ordered his Divine Dragon and blasted 30,000 demons simultaneously with its breath. It was a jaw-dropping force. However, surprisingly enough, the broken fragment called Deis summoned another wave of demons and dragged Bastien to the pits of despair.

Slaaaaaash– Slash–

Fragment Bein was also wielding his spear and slaughtering the best knights of the Luvien Empire with skills that could be said to be on par with the Spear God's own.

With the sudden increase in difficulty, the viewers that left in disappointment quickly came back. Then, at that moment, a notification flashed on their screens.

[213,677 of the Luvien Imperial Army troops have died.]

The Luvien Empire lost around 20% of its troops in just ten minutes. Because the Transcendental Being had not yet appeared, the Luvien Empire might be in a crisis.

At the same time, on another screen. A dungeon expert invited by the ATV Broadcasting Station was conversing with an announcer.

[As you can see, the Transcententials' Holy Land is a rare dungeon. There has never been a dungeon with more than seven mini-bosses beyond Level 700.]

This was a fact. The strength of the Transcendental Being's Fragments, a mini-boss level monster, easily went beyond Level 700. But was that all? Of course not. The Transcendental Being's Broken Fragments were also on par with the Sword of the Gods' Second Order members, with more than ten of them in that dungeon.

[Then, there's a chance that the Luvien Empire might fail to attack the Transcententials' Holy Land successfully?]

This was what one would think of when viewing what was being broadcast on their screens. PD Kim Daeguk and the rest of the viewers also shared that thought.

[Ten minutes.]

The dungeon expert repeated his words.

[The flow of the game would change in ten minutes.]

[Yes? But looking at the current situation...]

The announcer looked at the expert in confusion. And the same was true of PD Kim Daeguk.

[Because the Transcendental Being's Wrath will end after ten minutes.]

[Ah...]

The announcer nodded. The debuff from the Transcendental Being's Wrath left the Luvien Imperial Army miserable, mainly when the debuff was applied to all of the troops of the imperial army. However, it still made everyone tilt their heads in confusion. Was the release of the debuff truly enough to change the game's flow?

[The most important thing to note is not the Transcendental Being's Wrath's debuff effect. Once the Transcendental Being's Wrath is released, the restriction on using parchments and potions will also be lifted.]

The announcer's eyes grew wide when he heard those words from the dungeon expert. PD Kim Daeguk also had the same reaction.

[You should know that the players had a high rate of attacking dungeons, right? Usually, the dungeon's boss mobs had higher levels and were stronger than players. However, a dungeon's attack rate remains at 80% or even more. Players and NPCs can use potions and parchments, unlike dungeon mobs.]

This was the truth. The dungeon's attack rate would drop below 50% if the players could not use potions and parchments.

[And you have to know that each of the soldiers and knights of the Luvien Empire would drop something whenever they died.]

[What do they drop?]

[It's 'Elven Tears.' Elven Tears can restore 30% of one's HP and MP and slightly increase one's defensive power. Its effects can be duplicated. However, one could only consume two bottles. It is a very precious resource. Even high-rankers would be unable to finish something like this because one bottle costs hundreds of platinum.]

However, that was the case for players. PD Kim Daeguk thought, *'But if it's the Luvien Empire, then...'*

[The Luvien Empire is the richest and the strongest nation in Athenae. And it shows. After all, it distributed Elven Tears to its ordinary soldiers and knights. That means they would have also paid the price for excellent parchments. Of course, among the potions in existence, a few rare ones are far superior to the Elven Tears. However, it would be difficult for them to arm the high-rankers and Duke Ruffiso with that many high-grade and rare potions.]

The dungeon expert's words were very convincing.

[The Luvien Imperial Army has sacrificed a lot; most are severely injured. So, what would happen if the Transcendental Being's Wrath is released? Would the situation remain the same as before?]

The announcer thought for a moment before replying.

[The Transcendental Being's Fragments would be exhausted. Since they are mobs, they wouldn't be able to take potions. So, the flow of the game would change.]

[That's right.]

However, a quick-witted announcer was able to pick one point and ask.

[But Mr. Expert, there's something that I don't understand. Why didn't the Transcendental Being's Fragments attack the Sword of the Gods from the beginning?]

It was a very sharp and to-the-point question. Wouldn't the fragments have a higher chance of winning if they first attacked the Sword of the Gods?

[They are doing their best to attack. However, they also know it would be difficult to kill them while dealing with hundreds of thousands of troops simultaneously.]

The dungeon expert took a sip of water and continued to explain.

[For example, the Ninth and Tenth Divisions face the assassin class fragment, Rho. He could attack Miao, but he's not doing so. Why? Because he instinctively knows Miao has a skill that can deal with assassins, no?]

[Ah...]

[They would die the moment they focus on them. The Transcendental Being's Fragments were not tasked to hunt the Sword of the Gods in the first place.]

While the expert was explaining earnestly, a notification rang in the ears of everyone present.

[The Transcendental Being's Wrath has ended!]

At that moment, the screen captured the small smiles on the faces of the Swords of the Gods. Then, the dungeon expert ended his explanation.

[Their mission is to stop the 'small fries' from reaching the 'Transcendental Being.']

By the end of his words, the situation with the Ninth and Tenth Divisions had turned around. Miao, who endured the occasional attack from Assassin Rho, consumed the Elven Tears while tearing a *parchment* at the same time. At that moment, her arrows's attack power increased by 40%.

"Guided Lethal Shot," Miao said while pulling her bow strings.

Baaaaaaang—!

An arrow flew like light and followed Rho, who was running around the mages, and stabbed through his back.

Staaaab—!

Rho stumbled after getting hit by the arrow. Then, Miao pulled the strings of her bow once again. This time, her target was Arie, who was bombing them with magic from the sky.

Fwoooooosh—!

Then, another arrow flew out and pierced through Arie's heart. Just like that, Arie fell to the ground.

Thud—

And in another place...

Bastien tore a parchment and immediately jumped on the back of his Divine Dragon. His Divine Dragon began to prepare a lethal skill as he flew above the sky. The moment the Divine Dragon

opened its mouth, the 50,000-strong demons charging toward the imperial army were devoured and killed by the divine power it spewed out.

The Transcenturals' Holy Land's Transcenturantal Being looked at the Labyrinth of Death with a sad expression even though he had already expected this to happen.

The Transcenturantal Being murmured, "Everyone, thank you, and I'm sorry."

Then, he looked at another place. In that place, Duke Ruffiso, Brood, and Effis were there. Duke Ruffiso had been preventing Brood and Effis from working together. Right now, Effis had one of his arms cut off, and he was even coughing up blood. The worst part? Duke Ruffiso immediately recovered his HP and MP by taking potions when the debuff ended and taking down Fragment Brood.

Baaaaaaaaaang—!

Haze was walking with a bitter look on her face.

'Your Majesty...'

She could never forget the expression on Minhyuk's face when he left for the Transcenturals' Holy Land. She knew that he was feeling very sorry for his vassals. However, his vassals only told him.

—I will try to stop the small fries from going deeper.

—We will make sure to kill as many troops as we can and fight for as long as we can.

—Hoho. Please don't worry, Your Majesty. After all, death in that place is not an actual death, right?

Minhyuk could only laugh bitterly as he watched them try to comfort him. However, Haze was still very worried about them.

'Will they be able to do it?'

Even at the expense of their vassals, they were still unsure what would happen in this fight against the Luvien Empire. She regretted, thinking, 'It would be better if we had stronger *people with us*. It would have been better to equip them with stronger power.'

The bitter Haze opened the door to her office only to be met with the back of someone who was waiting for her. The man was around Haze's height. However, he wore a blood-stained robe while holding a sharp and curved katana. The man slowly turned his head, revealing a large bruise marring the side of his young face right next to his eyes. He was the one that Haze missed the most.

And this young man said, "I am the Sword God."

Chapter 895

It was like the dungeon expert said; the game's flow instantly changed. The viewers and commentators all grew excited after seeing the changes on each screen. Right now, the Luvien Empire was fighting back. However, God of Archery Miao could still be seen shaking her head.

‘Why...?’

Miao had hit Assassin Rho with her Guided Lethal Shot. She did not even give him any room to breathe and continued to shoot her arrows through his back.

Fwoooooosh—!

The pain was enough to twist and force Rho to bend back, his face turning toward the sky. However, Rho did not scream or fall even once.

‘Why isn’t he falling?’

Just like archers and mages, assassins also had low HP volume. But more importantly, NPCs and monsters would feel pain, unlike players. It was proven by the fact that Rho’s back bent back from the pain. So, why was he not collapsing?

That was not all; the quick-witted archers had also shot as many as nine arrows on his back during that time. Although Rho reeled back and staggered from the pain of the arrows that almost turned him into a hedgehog, he still jumped back among the mages and continued to slaughter them. The more shocking part? He was moving even faster than before.

“Please! I beg you, fall!” Miao bit her lips tightly as she continued to shoot her arrows.

However, Rho either defended against the attacks or received their brunt. He never stopped moving and continued killing the Luvien Imperial Army troops. Rho, or Minhyuk’s Shadow Luo, recalled the words he told Minhyuk as he continued reducing the number of enemies in front of him.

–Your Majesty, I will never let the small fries get to you!

Luo had promised him. That was why he could live with this much pain. If he couldn’t kill more people here, then they would just come to bite his emperor.

A glint flashed in Rho’s eyes. Like a beast stalking for prey, he ran faster and killed his enemies even quicker.

Baaaaaaaaaaaaang—!

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

Miao turned her head to look at the source of the sound. There, she saw Broken Fragment Arie, who crashed to the ground after being shot by her arrow, receiving the bombing of countless magical attacks. However, when the explosions disappeared, what greeted them was a nightmare.

‘You were casting even while being bombarded like that?’

Broken Fragment Arie was hiding safely behind a barrier. And the moment the barrier lifted, a tremendous amount of mana started swirling around him as he chanted a spell and turned it into magic.

Arie, who was left kneeling on one knee and was supported only by his staff, looked like he was about to keel over. It would not be strange if he died right away. However, he was still holding on and casting hundreds of magic spells with the help of his staff, which was shining brightly.

Arie's real name was Golden Mage Ali. He also hated how tyrannical the Luvien Empire was. He even lost the NPCs that were close to him because of them. So, he wrung every ounce of energy left in his body for them.

“Uwooooooooooooooooooh!!!”

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

Hundreds of magical attacks bombed the enemies.

“...Ha. He- Again?” Miao was rendered speechless.

This time, she turned to look at where the Hydra was. Quite a lot of its head had already been cut off, and it also had quite a lot of cuts and tears all over its body. Hydra was none other than the Cerberus Love, Hope, and Happiness. Even they knew that these people would attack their master if they did not bite them down right here and now.

“Kihyeeeeeeeeeeck!”

“Kihyeeeeeeeeeeck!”

“Graaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

Love, Hope, and Happiness roared and squeezed out the last of their strength to release one final Breath.

Broken Fragment Ruk, who was sitting atop the Hydra, jumped down.

‘*Minhyuk.*’

He smiled bitterly. Of course, he also did not like the Luvien Empire. Sometimes, he also wished to be just like Minhyuk. He hoped to become the best person and receive the love and attention of many people. However, he knew it would not work out for him.

There were times when he would grow jealous of Minhyuk. However, it was fine. It was okay because it was Minhyuk.

‘*I’m leaving the rest to you.*’

Ruk jumped among the tankers as he squeezed the last of his strength to swing his gigantic axe.

Bastien’s body was shaking. ‘*What the hell is that?!*’

His Divine Dragon had melted more than half of the demons with the divine power that it had gathered. On top of that, the most outstanding knights of the Luvien Empire had also recovered their injuries with the help of their potions. Victory was obviously in their hands now.

However, Bastien was left speechless as he watched Fragment Bein, the fragment wielding a spear.

‘*Why aren’t you falling?!*’

Bein had already been slashed a dozen times and stabbed a hundred more by the knights. Yet he was still standing and killing the knights around him.

Staaaaaab—

A young knight successfully stabbed his spear just right next to Bein's heart.

“Ha- Haha. I did it. I finally did it! Now, you'll finally di...” the young man trailed off when he caught sight of Bein's eyes. The fragment still had the same fierce and beastly look in his eyes as he stared at the young soldier.

“Hi- hiiiik...!”

Bein pulled out the spear from his chest and used it to stab the knight in the neck. He knew that he had to kill as many enemies as possible.

‘His Majesty will have a hard time.’

That was his only reason. Bein did not want much. All he wished was that His Majesty would not carry any more burden on his shoulders.

The knight near him hurriedly cried out, “All- All together! Do it all togetheeeeeer!!!”

At that moment, dozens of knights stabbed Bein with their spears. Some of the spears were broken and blocked by Bein, but some could pierce through his thighs, shoulders, and abdomen. However, the look in his eyes as he stared at the knights did not change.

“Hi- hiiiiiiik...!”

“Heok...!”

“R- Run!!!”

The mighty troops of the Great Luvien Empire began to flee. However, none of them were able to escape. Their fate was sealed by Bein's spear that stabbed through their necks. Hundreds of troops died every second under the blade of Bein's spear.

On the other hand, thousands of the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army died with every cast of the Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment's skills. However, what was surprising was the fact that the broken fragment that looked like a Demon Lord already looked like a mess. He had already collapsed on the ground but still struggled to get up, squeezing the last of his strength to summon more demons. And if that failed? Then, he would swing the scythe in his hands to the best of his abilities.

At that moment, the Transcendental Being's Fragment, who had been stabbing the knights of the Luvien Empire, suddenly stopped. Dozens of spears and broken sword blades were embedded all over his body. This grotesque and devilish appearance would scare away most of the knights. However, Bastien could tell that the fragment was already dead. He died with his eyes wide open.

Fwoosh—

Bastien felt goosebumps rise all over his body. *‘What the hell is this dungeon?!’*

At this moment, Bastien firmly regretted ever coming to the Transcententials' Holy Land.

Duke Ruffiso found the situation completely ridiculous.

[A total of 584,341 troops of the Luvien Empire have died!]

His prediction was entirely off the mark. He had expected to lose only around 270,000 troops of the imperial army. However, they have already lost 300,000 more than his estimate. Then, a series of notifications rang in his ears at that moment.

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being's Fragment Rho.]

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being's Fragment Bein.]

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Arie...]

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being's Broken Fragment Ruk...]

[...Transcendental Being's Fragment...]

[...Transcendental Being's Fragment...]

[...Transcendental Being's...]

The notifications were about their successful hunt of the mini-bosses and elites. However, Duke Ruffiso still had an incredulous look on his face. Why? Because he was fully aware of what they had done before they finally succumbed to their death.

'Did these guys fight desperately to reduce our numbers?'

Duke Ruffiso had acknowledged Brood and Effis' prowess and tactics. The two had forced him to take several bottles of potions far more precious than the Elven Tears. Because of that, he could no longer use any more potions.

Brood and Effis looked like they could no longer fight. However, the two endured and persisted, trying their hardest to deal a blow to him.

Grab—

Effis approached and grabbed Ruffiso tightly by the ankle.

Baaaang—

When he kicked Effis away, Ruffiso saw Brood stumbling before him. He knew that he would not be able to win against this man if he fought against him one-on-one and without being able to use potions.

Thankfully, Duke Ruffiso, powerful himself, was leading an army of talents. And with their joint attacks, they could make Brood and Effis suffer miserably.

"Are you doing this for the Transcendental Being?"

"..."

Duke Ruffiso understood even if they did not say anything. After all, Brood's right hand was already crushed and broken, while his left hand was filled with gashes and tears. Yet he still stared at him unblinkingly with his swollen eyes. Even though his face was bloody, battered, and bruised, his eyes were still filled with venom.

"Too bad. I intend to tear apart that Transcendental Being today."

Grab—

At that moment, Effis, who had been kicked away, dragged his body and hugged Duke Ruffiso tightly. Duke Ruffiso had realized he had let his guard down for a moment. He struggled to get out of the firm hold of Effis, who was gritting his teeth so that he could buy one more second.

Brood gritted his teeth, his entire body that was filled with gashes, starting to drip blood once again as he lifted his sword. “You won’t— You won’t be able to beat him.”

Dozens of swordlights shot out of Brood’s sword and shot toward Duke Ruffiso.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—

Blood spurted out of Duke Ruffiso’s and Effis’s bodies. It was a very reckless and stupid move. However, they could still inflict a severe injury on Duke Ruffiso with such a move.

Thud—

The exhausted and drained Effis collapsed on the ground. Duke Ruffiso’s eyes grew bloodshot at the absurdity of the situation. However, when he deigned to look down at Effis, he saw a faint smile on the fragment’s face.

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being’s Fragment Effis.]

Brood immediately collapsed right after Effis. It was only natural. After all, the two were just working on fumes. They had long reached the limits of their bodies.

[You have successfully killed Transcendental Being’s Fragment Brood.]

“...Bastards!!!” Duke Ruffiso roared in anger. However, his roars soon turned into maniacal laughter. “Kihihihhi... kihihihhi... Very well. I will show you two to that Transcendental Being you loved so much.”

Duke Ruffiso immediately pulled out a rope.

“PD! Our viewership ratings have reached 38%!”

ATV Broadcasting Station’s ratings were steadily increasing. Perhaps it was only natural, no? Duke Ruffiso, currently being displayed on their screens, was considered one of the strongest existences in the Athenae worldview. His appearance was more than enough to pique the interest of the viewers.

However, PD Kim Daeguk was now considering whether he should change the view that was being broadcast. Why? Because Duke Ruffiso had dragged the bodies of the already dead fragments, Brook and Effis, while taking out some rope.

*‘What a truly f*cked up bastard.’*

Duke Ruffiso was known for tying up the kings, emperors, nobles, and aristocrats that he had killed and hung them on the walls of the kingdoms and empires that he had successfully invaded. His actions had a lot of intended meanings. One was to sow frustration in the people’s hearts, and the other was to show the end of those who those people had considered gods.

Duke Ruffiso reveled in the frustration and despair that flashed on the faces of the people after he had tied and hung those that he had killed by their necks. And that was what he was trying to do now, too.

‘Of course, the fragments are just monsters. But even so...’ PD Kim Daeguk thought.

Duke Ruffiso, who was very familiar with and skilled in this aspect, did not take too long to finish tying the rope around the necks of Brood and Effis. Then, he dragged them toward the walls and pulled them up as if raising flags on a flagpole.

PD Kim Daeguk shook his head when he saw this scene. *‘This is not it.’*

They might have high ratings, but they would surely suffer from the backlash of presenting such a scene.

“Change the scene...”

However, PD Kim Daeguk could not finish his words. This was because a notification appeared on the monitor.

[The Transcententials’ Holy Land’s Boss Monster, the Transcendental Being, has appeared!]

PD Kim Daeguk could see the man who appeared in the blink of their eyes. The man was around 185 centimeters tall and sporting silver hair that reached his waist. He was also wearing a white robe and holding a single sword. He had smooth and fair skin, a sharp jawline, a straight nose, and a clear and bright pair of eyes underneath his wrinkled brows. The man looked old. However, he was so handsome that even PD Kim Daeguk felt his heart skip a beat.

He appeared in a blink and cut off the rope that tied his fragments, allowing them to lay down comfortably in their eternal rest. Then, he turned his head to look at Duke Ruffiso as he took one step forward. The moment he took that step, the air grew tense and sharp, and the ground shook and trembled. Even PD Kim could feel it through the screen.

‘This is unbelievable... I can already tell that the ratings will soar after this...’

This was the appearance of the Transcendental Being, a man so handsome that even another man could fall in love with him.

Chapter 896

The entire world was stunned.

Some people had already started imagining what the Transcendental Being looked like even though they had not seen even a shadow of him. The Transcendental Being probably sported a lovely figure and handsome face in their imagination. However, what they saw right now was far beyond what they had imagined.

He was an older man, but he still looked 185 centimeters tall. That was not all. His skin was so fair, and even his face was small enough that it complemented his long silver hair and broad shoulders perfectly. Sighs flowed out of everyone’s mouths when they saw the Transcendental Being, wearing a white robe and holding a sword in his hand, take a step toward Duke Ruffiso.

Even ATV Broadcasting Station got a piece of the pie, their ratings increasing significantly at his appearance.

“Our ratings have reached 40%!”

“It has already reached 41%!”

“The viewer’s message board is going crazy!”

“They’re just making a fuss.”

Even PD Kim Daeguk agreed that the figure of the Transcendental Being was indeed too cool and handsome. However, there was something that was far more important than that. Was his strength proportional to his appearance?

Everyone watched with bated breath, waiting for the confrontation between Duke Ruffiso and the Transcendental Being.

Duke Ruffiso stared at the Transcendental Being, who had turned to look at him after gently laying down the fragments that he was just about to hang like a flag with his rope. He gripped his sword tightly.

‘My wounds are burning.’

The injury inflicted by Brood was quite deep. However, Duke Ruffiso felt somewhat disappointed.

‘Is he strong?’

Duke Ruffiso could not tell. He could not feel *fear* just by looking at the Transcendental Being before him. Duke Ruffiso had only felt fear once in his life.

“Finally, the boss monster...” Duke Ruffiso said, wondering if the dungeon attack would end once he hunted the Transcendental Being.

[The Transcendental Being has temporarily left his throne!]

[The Transcendental Being will now return to his original position!]

“...”

The Transcendental Being, who took one step forward, was suddenly engulfed in a bright and blinding light when he tried to take another step forward. But before he disappeared in the flash of light, his fierce and sharp gaze turned to look at Duke Ruffiso.

Duke Ruffiso lost his steam when the Transcendental Being suddenly disappeared.

‘Did he just appear to protect his fragments? It seems like the Transcendental Being is quite an emotional being,’ Duke Ruffiso mocked his enemy while he listened to the notifications that rang in his ears.

[You have successfully killed all the Fragments inside the Labyrinth of Death!]

[The entire Luvien Imperial Army will be warped to the path leading to the Transcendental Being!]

The wide path leading to the Transcendental Being was covered with an old red carpet lined with candles on the sides. The candles, which never go out, were placed every two meters of the path. The walls of the path also lined up several towering statues.

The Luvien Imperial Army appeared in a bright flash of light. Initially, they had marched with one million troops but were left with only around 400,000 soldiers. Fortunately, most of the Swords of the Gods were still alive. And although Duke Ruffiso suffered a grave injury, he was still very much alive.

Thud, thud, thud—

As they continued advancing, the entire Luvien Imperial Army was left nervous and tense.

‘The Transcententials are beings that might have power that went beyond gods.’

‘Perhaps Duke Ruffiso was born from these transcendentals?’

‘I wonder how strong the Transcendental Being is?’

At first, they appeared very arrogant and confident. However, their confidence and arrogance were utterly torn apart after entering the Labyrinth of Death. To shake off their fear and nervousness, the knights immediately tried to talk about something else. The Luvien Empire’s Third Knight Order’s Commander Edgar stood among these knights.

“I wonder what Ethan, that moronic bastard, is doing now?”

“He’s nothing but an armored weapon pilot bastard. He probably hasn’t left Athenae and is still wandering around somewhere.”

The concept of players *shelving the game* was familiar to the NPCs. They were fully aware that some players would suddenly disappear and not return. Hence, they coined the expression *Leaving Athenae* to describe this phenomenon. And most NPCs would consider those that have “Left Athenae” to be losers.

“In the first place, that bastard did not have the qualifications to join the knight order of the Great Luvien Empire.”

There was nothing better in dispelling fear and nervousness than gossiping about others.

Then, Edgar said, “I heard something interesting.”

“What is it?”

“I once spoke with Marquis Ebdaem. He’s the one that recruited Ethan.”

Marquis Ebdaem was in charge of managing the Luvien Empire’s personnel and human resources. He possessed keen eyes and could quickly determine the condition of the empire’s knights and soldiers. He could also see through one’s potential with just one glance. Words were circulating that the Luvien Empire was only filled with talents because of him.

“He said that Ethan is an outstanding armored weapon pilot that even the past or the present Luvien Empire will not be able to produce.”

However, such an outstanding armored weapon pilot was beaten by their hands and thrown by the collar, discarded, and kicked out of their army. However, the most surprising fact was that the knights weren't surprised by those words.

"Well, we already knew it."

But in the end, he was still nothing but a foreigner, a foreigner who piloted and maneuvered armored weapons. He could only grow stronger by borrowing the power of an armored weapon. He was someone who did not use his ability to grow stronger.

Most of the knights in the same order as Ethan had heard about him. He was the man that the Luvien Empire needed. And that was true. The Luvien Empire had tried to promote the production of armored weapons. However, the knights protested and forced the production to stop.

Hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of knights protested, saying that Ethan's behavior was poor and did not deserve such treatment. They even said using that amount of funds to train better knights would be much better. It was a laughable unity created by their jealousy toward *Ethan*, not because they were genuinely united. They did not like him, so they belittled and bullied him.

"Anyway, that fool is just muddying the waters, right? It would be better for us if we didn't have a bastard like that. Am I right?"

"That's right."

"Yeah, yeah. Of course."

"I can't forget how that bastard twitched and wriggled on the ground. Fufufufufufu."

"Hahaha! Yeah. I also feel thrilled whenever I remember that."

"I don't like that bastard and his disgusting manner of speaking. You know when..."
Edgar excitedly slandered Ethan.

Thump—

But then, at that moment, someone suddenly grabbed Edgar's shoulder. Edgar turned his head to check if a superior was sending a signal to them to stop their small talk. However, the one that he saw was a completely unexpected person.

The man was wearing the armor of the knights of the Luvien Imperial Army. However, he had already thrown his helmet and sent it to the ground. This man was none other than the protagonist of their gossip, *Ethan*.

"E- Ethan. Why are you here...?!"

"You bastard! What the hell's wrong with you?!"

"How did you get in here?!"

"..."

The knights who knew him were looking at him in doubt. A million troops were advancing together, and all of them were wearing helmets. That was why they did not know that Ethan was among them. Did he hide himself among them during the battle?

“No way! Did you think that Marquis Ebdaem would recruit you again and bring you back to the knight order if you contributed to this battle?!” Edgar mocked Ethan, his words guessing what the man in front of him was probably thinking.

However, Ethan, who looked at him coldly, said, “Didn’t you say that the Luvien Empire will not make an armored weapon for me because I was lacking?”

Tighten—

Ethan tightened his hold on Edgar’s shoulder. However, Ethan was nothing but a mere armored weapon pilot, and his force was just something that a knight commander like Edgar could quickly scoff at.

“Did you do it because you just did not like me? You ostracized and slandered me for no reason?”

“Why? Are you the commander, huh?”

“You’re nuts.”

Ethan’s eyes turned bloodshot. “You all know it best. When you guys were slacking off, I stayed by that old armored weapon and repaired it myself. When you guys drank, I stayed and trained alone with that old armored weapon.”

Did he behave poorly? Not at all. Ethan had treated them politely. Why? Because he aspired to be like them. Even if they mocked and cursed at him, Ethan tried to get closer to them; he wanted to befriend them.

Since many knights and soldiers were here, Edgar had no choice but to whisper his rebuttal. “In the first place, an armored weapon pilot cannot be an outstanding warrior of the Great Luvien Empire. How dare you show up to fight in this battle?” His words were evil as he continued to whisper in Ethan’s ears, “You? I will kill you. Yeah? Fufufufu. What the hell? I don’t care if you are a genius armored weapon pilot. What’s the point if you do not have an armored weapon? Ahahahahaha!”

Ethan did not expect much from them, especially after hearing that creepy laughter.

To be honest, he did not wish for much either. He just wanted everyone to acknowledge his hard work and the dream that he was pursuing. Ethan hoped that one day he could save the Luvien Empire, which recruited him with the armored weapon they should have produced for him, and fight in the vanguard for their sake.

“I have an armored weapon.”

“What? That hundred-year-old armored weapon of yours?!”

“Ahahahahaha!”

“That junk?!”

The knights laughed at Ethan. The knight standing next to him even pointed at him and hollered at the other knights that Ethan was there, prompting loud laughter, countless jeers, and mockery from the rest of the troops. However, Ethan did not mind them. He just walked forward step by step.

When he heard the commotion, Duke Ruffiso turned his head and tried to keep them quiet. But then, he saw Ethan walk out of the laughing and mocking crowd. He watched as Ethan removed his armor that carried the symbol of the Great Luvien Empire one after another.

Clank—!

Ethan took off the general boots that the Luvien Empire had supplied everyone, the same boots he had worn excitedly when he first received them.

Thud, thud—

He threw away the *Luvien Knight's Ring*, which was only given to the knights of the Luvien Empire.

Clatter—

The troops giggled and laughed when they saw Ethan walking barefoot and without any armor on his body. On the other hand, Duke Ruffiso and some of the Sword of the Gods frowned when they looked at him.

But Ethan ignored them all as he slowly began wearing the new items bestowed and gifted upon him. Now, he was no longer wearing the old armor and gear that the Luvien Empire supplied to everyone in their troops. Now, he was wearing a new sword, shining armor, and a new pair of boots that had never been worn by someone else before. Then, he wore the ring *he* gave him to thank Ethan for coming to his side.

Thud—

Finally, Ethan stopped walking. Then, he turned around and said, “I have an armored weapon.”

Crack, crack, crack—!

Crack, crack, crack, crack—!

Thud— Thud—!

The statutes that lined both sides of the path cracked and turned into rubbles.

Thuuuuuuuuuuuud—!

A black light flashed, and several towering seven-meter-tall armored weapons appeared in front of everyone. The armored weapons stood majestically in front of the Luvien Imperial Army. Then, a huge missile shot out of one of the armored weapons' chests and landed gobsmack in the middle of the troops.

Baaaaaaang—!

“...!”

“...!”

One missile wiped out 2,000 of the Luvien Imperial Army troops and left no trace of them at all. However, that single missile was not the end. Several missiles shot out and bombarded the imperial army and continued to sweep away their troops.

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

“Huh- huh- what...?” Edgar stuttered, unable to form words.

At the same time, the armored weapons finally stopped shooting missiles and pulled out the enormous greatswords attached to their legs.

Swoosh—

Swoosh—

Swoosh—

Then, they raised the greatsword and pointed it toward the Luvien Empire’s troops. At the same time, something huge fell from the sky.

Thuuuuuuuuud—!

Unlike this armored weapon, the armored weapon that fell from the sky was covered with a white light.

[The Transcendental Being’s Weapon has been revealed!]

The armored weapon that appeared looked much bigger and stronger than the other armored weapons.

Fwiiiiiiiish—

Then, the enormous armored weapon’s cockpit opened.

[Only the armored weapon pilot chosen by the Transcendental Being will be able to use the Transcendental Being’s Weapon!]

The white armored weapon stretched its hand out and gently lifted Ethan, allowing him to land safely in its cockpit.

Thuuuud—!

[The Transcendental Being’s Weapon has been activated!]

[With the best-armored weapon pilot of the current era manning the cockpit, the Transcendental Being’s Weapon shows a stronger power!]

The Transcendental Being’s Weapon held a greatsword that was two times larger and sharper than the greatswords in the other armored weapons’ hands. And Ethan, who was sitting inside its cockpit, said, “An armored weapon that is stronger than any other armored weapon in existence.”

Baaaaaaaang—

And the moment he swung the greatsword? A gigantic sword light shot out and ripped apart thousands of the knights who had laughed and mocked Ethan just a few moments prior.

Duke Ruffiso, who found the situation extremely unusual, hurriedly swung his sword and shot a powerful sword light toward the white armored weapon. But then, a hand shield, which was

mounted on the armored weapon's left arm, popped into existence and prevented the sword light from damaging its body.

Baaaaaaaang—!

“An armored weapon stronger than any other armored weapon in existence.”

Ethan had a dream. He dreamt of protecting people and accomplishing great things. He dreamt of standing at the vanguard, saving his allies, and killing all the enemies before him. However, Ethan's dreams had now changed.

“Our goal is to slaughter and annihilate the Luvien Imperial Army.”

Sporting the same arrogant and noble look that Minhyuk wore before, Ethan said, “And I will stand at the forefront of this battle.”

Chapter 897

The knights of the Luvien Empire looked incredulously at the scene in front of them. After operating his hundred-year-old decrepit armored weapon, Ethan could not even beat a knight. However, this was only because his armored weapon was old.

Now? Ethan was operating a new and fancy armored weapon bathed in a white light.

“And I will stand at the forefront of this battle.”

Ethan's charisma instantly overwhelmed his enemies. With his command, the black armored weapons around him raised their left arms simultaneously.

Creaaaaaak—

Clack—!

Their left arms were fitted with a crossbow loaded with thousands of arrows. And these crossbows immediately shot out dozens of arrows every second.

Fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh, fwoosh—

The crossbows that shot arrows like machine guns began to sweep away the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army.

“E- Ethan... You bastard!!!” Edgar shouted in fury when he saw the knights standing right next to him fall one after the other. It was only natural. After all, the person he used to ignore and mock threatened his existence with an excellent armored weapon.

“How dare you put your trust in a mere armored weapon? You bastard! You're nothing without that armored weapon!”

Ethan could hear Edgar's shouts. He turned his cold gaze toward him and said, “I am nothing without my armored weapon.” This was the truth; Ethan did not deny it.

“But I am the only one in the world that can operate and man *this* armored weapon.”

“...!”

Swoooooooooooooosh—!

The Transcendental Being's Weapon that Ethan piloted slid forward, the wheels on its feet helping it to move at high speeds. The gigantic greatsword in Ethan's armored weapon's hands swung and sliced through the disoriented knights, finally falling down upon Edgar's head.

"A- aaaaaaaaaack!"

Fwoooooosh—!

The Transcendental Being's Weapon's greatsword easily split Edgar in half.

Fwiiiish—!

Fwiiiiiiiiish—!

Fwiiiiiiiiish—!

After finishing all the arrows loaded in their crossbows, the other armored weapons immediately grabbed the greatswords in their hands and slammed them firmly on the ground.

Boooooooooom—

The vast wave created by the swords instantly separated the knights.

"Mages!!!"

"Fire!!!"

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

Explosions from the magic that the mages of the Luvien Empire sent devoured the armored weapons.

"Hi- Hiiiiiiiiiiiiik!"

"They- they're too hard!"

"I can't even leave a scratch!"

However, the armored weapons were unexpectedly formidable. This was more so the case for the Transcendental Being's Weapons that Ethan was manning. Since it was the recreation of the *Divine Weapon Bless*, it was far superior to the other armored weapons.

Swoosh— Swoosh— Swoooooooooooooosh—

With every swing of Ethan's greatsword, dozens of the imperial army troops would be swept away.

[A total of 732,716 troops of the Luvien Imperial Army have died!]

After seeing the number of their troops decrease rapidly, the knights finally felt regret.

'We should never have ignored Ethan.'

'The armored weapon is truly a weapon of war with amazing power.'

'If the armored weapon pilot like Ethan stood at the forefront of our troops, then the Luvien Empire would have become a more outstanding nation.'

However, it was far too late.

Clack—

A colossal force started to gather in front of the now-opened chest of Ethan's armored weapon. This was none other than the Transcendental Being's Weapon Breath.

Vwoooooooooooooooooong—

A light stretched out from the armored weapon's chest as Breath was activated. It instantly burned down 4,000 of the Luvien Imperial Army troops to nothingness. Perhaps the only thing that could quickly create so much damage and devastation was armored weapons like these.

Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz—

Then, God of Archery Miao made a move. She pulled the strings of her bow and shot arrows that stabbed through the spinal area of the armored weapon. Sparks flew all over the place when Miao's arrows pierced the armored weapon, forcing it to stagger and almost lose its balance. In the end, armored weapons were *machines*. If something went wrong in one portion of its body, then malfunction would happen all over its body.

The Luvien Imperial Army had learned how to fight against armored weapons. Of course, the combat methods used against armored weapons were something that they had all neglected back then. However, they could still turn the tides of war in their favor just because they had the most basic knowledge of dealing with these weapons of war. And what was the most basic knowledge? It was none other than attacking the *cockpit*.

Crack—!

The transparent glass that protected the cockpit of one of the armored weapons broke apart, taking down the pilot that operated it and forcing it to a stop. The Luvien Imperial Army did not let go of the opportunity and immediately moved to destroy the armored weapon.

The Sword of the Gods and the Luvien Imperial Army began to work seamlessly together to pull down more armored weapons and reduce the number of their formidable enemies. And the appearance of one man also helped accelerate their pace.

Blink—!

The man swung his sword while looking at the armored weapon's pilot.

Crack, crack, crack, crack—!

The swing of his sword quickly broke the transparent glass that protected the cockpit and also killed the pilot inside. This man was none other than Duke Ruffiso.

'These things are all the same,' Duke Ruffiso thought as he hurriedly moved to reduce the number of armored weapons in front of them. And amidst the destruction and chaos around him, another thought flashed.

'The pilot named Ethan is not a monster.'

Anyone who was not a fool would realize this matter. And Duke Ruffiso was no fool. He understood that something was wrong with the Transcendentals' Holy Land.

‘Come to think of it, the bond between the Transcendental Being and his fragments runs ridiculously deep.’

Could monsters genuinely have such a deep and lasting bond? At the same time, Duke Ruffiso coveted Ethan and his talents.

“Did you say your name was Ethan?”

Duke Ruffiso looked around. Before he knew it, there were only approximately 190,000 surviving Luvien Imperial Army troops.

“Come back to the Luvien Empire. I will let you be a member of the knight order under my command.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

Under Duke Ruffiso’s command, this order was known as the *Star Knights*, second only to the Sword of the Gods. That was how powerful they were. But his offer did not end there.

“I will also grant you the title of a count.”

Any player would dream of being granted the title of a count inside the Luvien Empire.

Ethan had once hoped that he would stand at the forefront to defend his allies, kill all of the enemies, lead them to victory, and receive the praises and love of the many. Perhaps Duke Ruffiso’s offer was a reception worthy of his talents and would allow his dreams to come true. However, something far more important than that dream had appeared for Ethan.

‘The only person that reached out a hand to me when I was at my lowest.’

That man handed over the ring to Ethan and told him.

–I know that I’m just me. However, thank you for choosing to stand by my side, Ethan.

His eyes were filled with sincerity. He was different from those people who coveted his talents yet despised him.

The only one that held me tight in his embrace.

Ethan had now realized that protecting the man who put his trust and faith in him was more enjoyable than pursuing wealth, fame, honor, or even his own precious dreams.

Baaaaaaang—

Missiles shot out from all over the Transcendental Being’s Weapon’s body and rained down upon Duke Ruffiso.

Dash, dash, dash, dash—

Duke Ruffiso moved like a ghost, rushing forward while evading the missiles aiming for him.

“The biggest problem with armored weapons is their reaction speed.”

Duke Ruffiso was fully aware of the problems of the armored weapons. No matter how outstanding its pilot was, the armored weapon's reaction speed would never be as good as that of a person's reaction speed.

Boooooooooom—!

Duke Ruffiso evaded the armored weapon's swinging greatsword and used this opportunity to plunge his sword into the Transcendental Being's Weapon's arm.

Craaaaack—!

Then, Ruffiso ran along the armored weapon's arms and completely smashed the arm until it was no longer functional.

Bzz, bzz, bzz, bzz—

Sparks once again appeared all over the Transcendental Being's Weapon's body. Although it grew stronger after meeting an excellent master and pilot, the fact that it could not produce a power that was as strong as its power in its heyday remained.

Although Black Hammer Dwarven King Vernon could choose to make it so it would have a greater force and power, he decided to do something else. Vernon chose to recreate Bless to completely restore itself in two weeks, even if it were smashed and broken to smithereens. Instead of having enormous power, Bless was able to be functional forever.

Vwoooooooooooooong—!

Although Ethan controlled it so the armored weapon in his hands could swing its arms, it needed to be faster.

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

Every swing of Duke Ruffiso's sword would create sparks and break a portion of the Transcendental Being's Weapon's body. However, Ethan had never even entertained the thought that he could defeat all of them here.

“Emergency Power Operation.”

Vwoooooooooooooooooong—!

Bless, already left staggering and creaking by its joints, suddenly regained vitality and original speed. Then, Ethan pulled one of the levers inside as hard as possible.

“Accelerate.”

Fwiiiish—!

Blazing flames shot out of Bless' vents. And at that moment, the *armored weapon's slow reaction speed*, the weakness that Duke Ruffiso was talking about, disappeared. Bless moved so fast that it only left afterimages behind.

Baaaaaaaaaaaang—!

Bless punched Duke Ruffiso with its remaining hand.

Fwoooooooooosh—!

After sending Duke Ruffiso a bit further away, blazing flames shot out of Bless' vents again.

Baaaaaaaaaang—!

The weapon in Bless' hands slammed straight into Duke Ruffiso.

Baaaaaaaaaang—!

“...!”

“D- Duke!”

“Dukeeeee!”

The entire world was left in shock after seeing Duke Ruffiso get beaten up by someone. No one in the Luvien Imperial Army could even land a strike on the man, but here he was getting beaten up.

Creaaaaaak—! Clank, clank, clank, clank, clank—!

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

They watched as the armored weapon clenched its only remaining fist and quickly punched Duke Ruffiso.

Thud, thud, thud, thud—!

Duke Ruffiso was furious after being forced to kneel on one knee. He was fully aware that this was Ethan's final struggle. However, he grew angry at the fact that the man was trying so hard to stop him, even until his very last breath.

Booooooooooom—!

The power Duke Ruffiso could use because he was born from transcendentals was triggered at this moment.

Cliiiiink—

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

With just one light swing of his sword, a powerful force born from the divine energy he had triggered slammed straight into Bless.

Creaaaak—! Creaaaak—!

Sparks appeared all over Bless' body. At this point, Ethan knew that he could no longer operate Bless.

Clank, clank—!

Although Bless staggered back, there was a bright smile on Ethan's face.

[A total of 904,513 troops of the Luvien Imperial Army have died!]

Why was Ethan smiling? Because he had completed his mission. All of the armored weapons, except Bless, had already been destroyed.

‘However, it's not over yet.’ Ethan had something else that he needed to do.

Duke Ruffiso walked toward the staggering and reeling Bless. “I will hang you alive.”

Ruffiso wanted to interrupt Ethan's glorious end.

[The Transcententials' Holy Land's Boss Monster, the Transcendental Being, has appeared!]

At that moment, the rusty door at the end of the red carpet slowly creaked open. The boss appeared behind the armored weapon before Duke Ruffiso could reach Ethan. Then, with his long silver hair, the Transcendental Being swung his sword.

Vwoooooooooooooooooong—!

A fierce wind engulfed Duke Ruffiso and the entire Luvien Imperial Army behind him.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaaa—!

The entire world was watching the situation inside the dungeon with rapt attention.

Duke Ruffiso was sent flying backward, his body easily torn and ripped apart when the Transcendental Being appeared. All the viewers held their breath as doubts flashed in their heads.

[Why did a player like Ethan appear as a mob inside the Transcententials' Holy Land?]

[Don't you feel that there's something wrong going on here?]

[If there's something wrong, then... Do you think someone made a dungeon?]

[Guys, just think about it. Even if someone made a dungeon, do you think a player can make a dungeon with such difficulty?]

That was right. Common sense would dictate that it was impossible. Even the commentators denied this hypothesis. It was just that impossible.

At that moment, the Transcendental Being's Weapon finally started to collapse. However, before it could completely collapse, Ethan did the last thing he needed to do. Ethan took something out of the collapsing armored weapon. He squeezed the last of his strength and put it on his back. He smiled faintly as he looked at the Transcendental Being behind him. After that, the armored weapon collapsed utterly.

“...”

“...”

“...”

Everyone was left speechless at that moment. The thing that Ethan took out and put behind his back was none other than a white cape carrying the symbol of a fork and knife crossed together, a white cape that symbolized the empire that everyone was very familiar with.

Then, at that moment, the Transcendental Being's Weapon exploded.

Baaaaaaaaaang—!

The Transcendental Being walked through the blazing flames caused by the explosion. And when he appeared, the symbol of the fork and knife crossed together appeared on the back of his white robe.

Chapter 898

The entire world was now thrown into deep chaos.

The Transcentinals' Holy Land was the dungeon with the highest level of difficulty ever recorded in the history of Athenae. But at the beginning, everyone dismissed it, saying, '*It's nothing.*' after seeing the level of its mini-bosses. However, their thoughts immediately took a complete 180° after seeing the Labyrinth of Death.

After seeing the Labyrinth of Death, they firmly believed that this dungeon, with its elite mobs and mini-bosses with ridiculously high levels, was the most difficult. After all, it was a place where even the Great Luvien Empire was suffering.

However, something extraordinary happened. *Player* Ethan suddenly appeared and led a group of armored weapons to attack and slaughter the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army. Because of that, there was a lot of buzz among the viewers.

[Ethan is one of the Transcentinals' Holy Land mobs?]

[No. Ethan is an armored weapon pilot. He is a player.]

[So... why is he leading those armored weapons inside that dungeon?]

There were quite a lot of speculations going around. However, this one stood out the most among the people's wildest beliefs. Why? Because it was the most realistic.

[Ethan had been kicked out of the Luvien Empire just recently. However, he wasn't 'removed and excluded' as a member of the empire just yet. After being kicked out, Ethan wanted revenge and probably searched for armored weapons.]

Everyone turned their attention to focus on this story.

[Ethan, who searched for armored weapons, found them inside the Transcentinals' Holy Land and signed a contract with the Transcendental Being.]

[Oh. That makes sense.]

[Yes, that's the most realistic explanation.]

[Ethan's not yet excluded from the Luvien Empire. Yes. That explains why he can enter the dungeon and why he is standing among the Imperial Army.]

[He must have been hiding among them.]

However, that theory was soon torn apart. Why? The last thing Ethan did before he collapsed was put on the cape carrying the Beyond the Heavens Empire symbol.

[...?]

[...?]

[...?]

Everyone was at a loss for a moment. They just could not understand what just happened.

Then, the Transcendental Being that appeared and sent Duke Ruffiso flying away with one swing of his sword emerged from the flames left behind by the armored weapon's explosion. And just like Ethan, he was also wearing the Beyond the Heavens Empire symbol.

[Don't tell me...]

[Ey.]

[That's impossible.]

[That's a bit...]

[No. That doesn't even make any sense.]

[Then, let's all think about it for a moment. Does this mean that Beyond the Heavens' Emperor Minhyuk also came to the Transcendentals' Holy Land and signed a contract with the Transcendental Being?]

[Didn't we discuss that the Transcendental Being signed a contract with Ethan?]

[That's right.]

[I'll just believe this one and leave it be.]

[No. I'm telling you, this is impossible!]

The viewers went wild and flooded the comments section as they focused on their screen to watch the confrontation between the Luvien Empire and the Transcendental Being.

Everyone was tense and nervous. The 185-centimeter tall and silver-haired Transcendental Being looked like an older man. However, he gave off a fresh and energetic feeling with the white robe on his body and the sword in his hand.

Gulp—

Bastien gulped dryly and asked the man standing beside him, "How high are the chances that the guy over there is Minhyuk?"

"Maybe 15%? No, 20%? Ah, no. Maybe 4%?"

"What bullshit are you talking about?"

"I don't know either."

"Right. To be honest, I also don't know."

All of them were left in doubt with the situation in front of them. They almost entertained the idea that Minhyuk might have accidentally received a quest related to the Transcendentals' Holy Land, which was why the Transcendental Being was wearing a robe carrying the Beyond the Heavens Empire pattern on his back.

'No. That doesn't make any sense.'

However, the theory that Minhyuk was the Transcendental Being also did not make any sense.

The Sword of the Gods looked around. They saw that approximately 15,000 troops of the Luvien Imperial Army had disappeared from the Transcendental Being's previous attack. Now, there were only about 80,000 troops left. However, thankfully enough, the remaining forces were the most prominent figures of the empire. Most of the Sword of the Gods were also alive and well.

"It's impossible to be Minhyuk, right? Even if Minhyuk is very strong, do you think he can deal with Duke Ruffiso and us alone?"

"Right?"

Although they did not know why the Transcendental Being wore a robe carrying the Beyond the Heavens Empire symbol, this fact remained.

Meanwhile, Duke Ruffiso was frowning. '*What the hell is happening?*'

There were quite a few things that Ruffiso could not understand. However, he decided that killing the Transcendental Being was far more critical than figuring it out immediately.

Bastien, the number one summoner, rode on top of his Divine Beast.

"Let's beat him up first!"

With those words, more than 30,000 summoned beasts jumped out and charged forward to kill the Transcendental Being.

Click—

"Yeah. It's not that important. We just have to kill whoever's in front of us," God of Archery Miao was already prepared for battle. Then, she explained, "It's either one of the two. If we can kill him easily, then he's Minhyuk. If it's difficult, then he's the Transcendental Being."

"...!"

That was right. That would give them the most evident answer. This was because Minhyuk was just a lone player. No matter how strong he was, there was no way that he could deal with all of the Level 600 Sword of the Gods present here, together with Duke Ruffiso and the almost 80,000 surviving Luvien Imperial Army troops. Besides, the Transcendental Being only had one advantage over them right now; he was not exhausted.

Then, at that moment, the Transcendental Being made a move. A blazing hot flame shot out from his sword and covered the sky.

'*Sword of Absolute Death.*' This was the skill that Minhyuk used. However, because he became the Transcendental Being, the way his skill manifested changed. At that moment, hundreds of feathers made from light turned into sharp knives and rained down upon the Luvien Empire's troops.

Ping, ping, ping, ping, ping, ping—!

The sharp feathers made of light pierced through the bodies of the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army.

Staaaaaab—!

“A- aaaaaaaaaack!”

“Keuaaaaaaaaack!”

“My- my eyeeeees!!!”

But that was not the end; the feathers immediately exploded when it made contact with something.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

Powerful explosions engulfed the army one after the other.

“Huh...” Valentino uttered in a daze. “I vote for him being the Transcendental Being.”

Even if Minhyuk was strong, Valentino had judged that there was no way for the man to deal such a tremendous amount of damage by himself. There was no way that Minhyuk could release an attack that could easily kill these high-leveled and outstanding tankers all at once.

“You should consider Minhyuk’s buffed dishes, too,” Alex piped up.

However, Valentino thought differently from him. No matter how fantastic the effects of the buffed dishes were, there was no way to bring this much effect. He could tell the opponent’s basic power was much stronger than they had imagined.

However, It wasn’t really that impossible. After all, Minhyuk had cooked dishes using the best ingredients he had harvested from the Field of the Gods and had received the buff effects from these dishes.

After unleashing those sharp feathers and devouring thousands of the Luvien Imperial Army, the Transcendental Being leaped forward and began to cut them down one after another. The Transcendental Being looked so cool and handsome with his silver hair and white robe fluttering with the wind that everyone could not help but sigh in admiration.

Baaaaaaang—

However, God of Archery Miao and Alex immediately shot their arrows and magic toward such a being.

Baaaaaaang—

Valentino also slammed his shield down while Bastien commanded his Divine Dragon to release its Breath, which could melt tens of thousands of enemies in one go upon the Transcendental Being.

Shwaaaaaaaaa—

However, the Swords of the Gods were left stunned and speechless when they heard a voice coming from the thick cloud of dust that bloomed from the explosion caused by their attacks.

“Disappear.”

“...!”

“...!”

“...!”

Disappear was the Supreme Overlord’s Technique. Because Minhyuk became the Transcendental Being, the Overlord’s flames changed in appearance and turned into white flames that exploded and devoured its surroundings.

Baaaaaaaaaaaaang–!

The mighty white flames exploded and spread in the area, devouring the Swords of the Gods and the troops of the Luvien Empire.

“Keheuuuk!”

“Keheup!”

“Keok! *Cough, cough*– That’s not Minhyuk. That’s the Transcendental Being.”

[A total of 954,513 troops of the Luvien Imperial Army have died!]

With just one attack, 25,000 of the Luvien Imperial Army disappeared. The worst part? Transcendental Being Minhyuk suffered no damage because he used *Absolute Defense* on time.

Crackle–

Crack, crack, crack, crack, crack–

The white flames licked the area clean and revealed a harrowing scene. However, Minhyuk, standing at the center of it all, knew he was running out of time.

‘If I fail to kill as many as I can with the little time I have left, then that means I lose.’

Minhyuk had received special privileges by becoming the boss mob. This unique privilege was a 1.5x increase in his total HP and MP. However, that was all. This meant that he had a clear limit to how much damage the enemies could deal upon him he could endure.

At that moment, Minhyuk heard Valentino’s voice.

“If that guy’s Minhyuk, then I will become Minhyuk’s dog from now on!”

“We already know! So, shut up for a bit! Ugh...”

Minhyuk did not blame them for their choices. After all, a player would always take the path that would bring them the most significant benefits. However, the problem was that they were now clearly standing on the side that opposed the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

‘Let’s take out the Swords of the Gods first.’

For Minhyuk, the most difficult enemy to deal with was Duke Ruffiso. However, if he dealt with Duke Ruffiso, he would be unable to deal with the Swords of the Gods simultaneously.

Thousand Swords. The skill that could release a thousand swords that would target the enemies’ vital points. And it was not just that. It could also determine who was strong among the enemies and concentrate the attacks upon them. Just like before, the manifestation of the skill changed. Instead of a thousand sword lights, a thousand awls made of stone appeared. But a powerful force came behind him just before these thousands of awls rained down upon the Luvien Empire.

Slaaaaaash—!

It was Duke Ruffiso.

‘Ugh!’

It seemed like it was timed perfectly when the duration of the Absolute Defense was lifted. Minhyuk immediately turned around, his sword clashing against Duke Ruffiso’s own. The two engaged in a fierce clash of swords.

‘I already received the effects of my buff dishes, but I still can’t overwhelm you?!’

The power that one of the strongest in the world, Duke Ruffiso, could wield was stronger than Minhyuk had expected. However, there was a bigger problem at hand.

Staaaaaab—

An arrow stabbed through Minhyuk’s back as he fought against Duke Ruffiso.

“Ugh!”

Duke Ruffiso quickly took advantage of the moment Minhyuk’s balance was broken to drive his sword through him.

[Your HP has dropped below 65%!]

Alex and the mages immediately followed up with a bombardment of magical attacks.

Bang— Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang—!

[Your HP has dropped below 45%!]

If Ruffiso’s power were within Minhyuk’s expectations, then the winner of this battle would most definitely be Minhyuk. However, the duke’s power went beyond his expectations.

‘Damn it! If only I could summon the puppet doll..!’

Viel’s Puppet Doll was Minhyuk’s strongest damage dealer. His presence would be enough to deter and block the Swords of the Gods from interfering with his fight against Duke Ruffiso. However, when Minhyuk became the boss monster, he was only allowed to get the help of the players and his vassals. Even though his puppet and pets were under his ownership, he still could not use them inside the dungeon.

Although he was stuck in a very desperate situation, Minhyuk could not back down. Why couldn’t he back down? This was because some people tried their hardest for his sake and endured being called the awkward name of *Fragment* in this place. And if they could not win this battle, then there was a high chance that the Beyond the Heavens Empire would continue to be pushed back by the Luvien Empire. If that happened, the only future for them was their downfall.

Baaaaaasaaaang—!

Minhyuk was sent rolling on the ground after he received another bombardment of magic.

[Your HP has dropped below 30%!]

[Controlling your body will become harder!]

Duke Ruffiso knew that victory was close when he saw his enemy stumbling and struggling to stand. “Don’t give him any room to breathe! Just push him a bit more, and this battle will end!”

As long as they did not give the Transcendental Being enough room to cast his skills, they could kill him. However, at that moment, a notification rang in Minhyuk’s ears.

[...has entered!]

“...!”

A smile slowly formed on Minhyuk’s face, a smile that appeared on the old face of the Transcendental Being. He squeezed the last of his strength and ran in the middle of his enemies. Then, he immediately cast the *Supreme Overlord’s Technique* that he had saved using his Save skill.

Baaaaaaaang—!

At that moment, another storm of blazing white flames engulfed the enemies around Minhyuk.

[A total of 979,890 troops of the Luvien Imperial Army have died!]

Hundreds of cameras turned to focus on the white flames that appeared once again and devoured the Luvien Imperial Army. The camera showed how the fire killed 20,000 of the troops all at once. However, the flames soon died down and disappeared.

Seeing this scene, the commentators hurriedly shouted at the top of their lungs.

[Look! The Swords of the Gods escaped the attack's aftermath by squeezing behind Valentino’s massive shield!]

[They are high rankers! They are not fools that would be hit by the same attack twice!]

[The Transcendental Being has burned tens of thousands of enemies. However, you have to know that the only thing he could do was reduce the number of his enemies. Nothing more, nothing less.]

[Duke Ruffiso was able to pull himself out of the range of the flames quickly!]

[Now, all that’s left is to wait for the death of the Transcendentals’ Holy Land’s boss monster, the ‘Transcendental Being.’]

That was right. They could tell that the Transcendental Being had squeezed the last of his strength to burn tens of thousands of the imperial army’s troops. However, this previous hurrah did not damage the Swords of the Gods or Duke Ruffiso.

“It’s only a matter of time before we kill the Transcendental Being.”

The remaining Swords of the Gods ultimately agreed with Valentino’s declaration. However, at that moment, the hundreds of cameras floating all over the place caught something entering the dungeons in a flash.

[Wh- what was that?!]

[What was that thing that moved so swiftly like that?!]

The commentators could only catch the flash of movement because they could see the overall situation with the cameras. As for the Swords of the Gods? They were utterly clueless, waiting quietly for the white flames to disappear around them.

Spurt—!

Then, at that moment, blood suddenly spurted from all over God of Archery Miao's body.

"Huh...?" Before she could even realize what happened, Valentino appeared right in front of her.

"What's the matter...?"

Spurt—!

But before he could even finish his words, blood had already started spurting out of his body. Well, to be exact, blood spurted from the bodies of the Swords of the Gods hiding behind Valentino's huge shield.

The cameras did not take too long to show the figure of the unknown being that attacked the Swords of the Gods in a flash. Just like the Transcendental Being, the man, whose face was covered except for his eyes, had long black hair that reached his waist, was wearing a white yet blood-stained robe, and held a sword in his hand. However, they could tell that the man was relatively short compared to the Transcendental Being, reaching only 160 centimeters in height.

Meanwhile, these notifications rang in the ears of the Transcendental Being.

[‘Sword God Conir’ has entered the Transcententials’ Holy Land!]

[Sword God Conir is recognized as a mini-boss level being!]

[Transcendental Being's Fragment Goneir. Level 776.]

Through the gaps in the mysterious being's long black hair, they could see that his eyes were cold and sharp. He glared at the enemies and said, "I am the Sword God."

Chapter 899

The Sword God was a symbolic figure in Athenae. The Sword God was the one that appeared suddenly when the entrance to the Demon World opened. He swept away the rampant demons, closed the entrance, and promptly disappeared. And because of this feat, the Sword God became Athenae's symbol of peace. Almost 50% of the players in Athenae used the sword to follow the Sword God's example.

Valen was fully aware of this fact. He looked at Conir, who descended from the massive fortress, and asked, "What will you say when you appear in front of Minhyuk?"

"I am Conir! Let's eat ramyeon!"

"..."

Valen looked like he wanted to cry. This was the spectacular appearance of the new generation Sword God, but would he shout, "Let's eat ramyeon!" to announce his presence? This could not happen at all.

Then, at that moment, Valen looked up at the broad walls of the fortress before him.

‘He’s quite amazing,’ Valen thought in admiration.

Valen was looking at the *Fortress of the Transcendental’s Fantasy*, which housed a monstrous man. Valen could only meet this man after a series of fortunate events while he was still wandering around the world. However, the most shocking part was this.

‘I never expected that I would lose against him.’

Valen lost against that monstrous man by a minimal margin back then. However, it must be known that the Sword God was the strongest god among all of the Continental Gods. As for this fortress, if one successfully cleared its gates, the transcendentals living inside would help them gain whatever they wanted.

‘I did not expect that he would be able to clear the Second Gate,’ Valen admired Conir. *‘I don’t have the power to let you grow.’*

The power that Valen used to get the position of the Sword God was a power that he nurtured and grew with the help of this very same fortress. Although only a day had passed in the outside world, for Conir, who stayed inside the fortress, five years had already passed.

And that brought Valen back to his problem. How could someone who gained the qualifications to become the Sword God return handsomely yet say, *‘Let’s eat ramyeon!’*?

So, Valen tried his hardest to explain calmly, “Conir. Why do you want to become stronger?”

“Conir! Because Conir wants to help hyung!”

“That’s right.”– Valen smiled at the boy’s pure and noble heart. –“Right now, your hyung might desperately need your strength. However, listen to me carefully; people would only believe what they see.”

“What they see?”

“That’s right, Conir. If you can make a cool and outstanding show when you appear, it would be a great help for your hyung. Now, follow me. *‘I am the Sword God.’*”

“Conir! Conir will do it! I- I am the Sword God!”

The only person in Conir’s mind, while doing his best training inside the fortress, was his hyung, Minhyuk. Conir looked very excited that he would be of help to his beloved hyung.

“When Conir meets hyung, Conir will make hyung his favorite dish from *Gimbap Heaven!*”

Why was Conir mentioning *Gimbap Heaven*? It was because he heard Minhyuk mumbling to himself before he left.

–Kghhhh. I want to go to Gimbap Heaven. Jjolmyeon, ramyeon, tteokbokki, tuna gimbap, tonkatsu. I want to order several servings at the same time!

Conir had always remembered those words that Minhyuk uttered to himself. He initially only liked to cook ramyeon. But before leaving, he tried to learn how to cook these dishes. And he practiced making these dishes in the five years he trained inside the fortress.

“Let’s go. It’s time to go back. I have a feeling that your hyung needs you.”

“Conir! Conir will help hyung!”

“I am the Sword God.” As Conir finished uttering these words, the notifications that Minhyuk could not hear before began to ring one after another.

[You have several unread notifications from your vassal Conir. You couldn’t hear the notifications because Conir stepped inside the ‘Unknown Land’!]

Minhyuk had absolutely no idea where Valen took Conir. Vassals at Conir’s level would usually be linked to Minhyuk. This meant that Minhyuk would hear notifications whenever they grew or leveled up.

[Conir has leveled up!]

[Conir has leveled up!]

[Conir has leveled up!]

[Conir has leveled up!]

[Conir...!]

[Conir...!]

[Conir has gone beyond his limits and has exceeded the ‘number listed in his potential’!]

[Conir has gone beyond his limits and has exceeded the ‘number listed in his potential’!]

[Conir...!]

[Conir...!]

[Conir has taken over the position of the Sword God!]

[Sword God Conir. He is the Sword God that has received the respect and admiration of many and will cut down the world with a single swing of his sword!]

Minhyuk smiled faintly when he saw Conir sporting a similar smile, looking back at him through the gaps of his long, dark hair.

Meanwhile, the Sword of the Gods were all left flustered.

[Your HP has dropped below 60%!]

This notification rang in the ears of God of Archery Miao. However, considering her HP was initially 72% before the attack, the damage was considerably huge. Even though her HP was lower than close-combat class players at her level, she wore many high-leveled and high-quality artifacts. So, this amount of damage was unreasonable.

And she wasn't the only one panicking. God of Shields Valentino and the number one summoner, Bastien, were also panicking. However, Valentino gritted his teeth and slammed his square shield down.

“Bastard! What the hell is this again?! Get behind me! Bentino's Final Shield!”

The Swords of the Gods were also very tired now. And that was not all; most of their skills were still in cooldown. And Valentino's Bentino's Final Shield was a shield skill that could ignore the skill cooldown. However, it would use 50% of his current MP to be cast.

[Final Shield.]

[You have consumed 50% of your current MP to cast the Final Shield!]

[Your current MP is around 62% of your total MP volume.]

[The Final Shield will have an additional 4,100% defensive power and can protect you from attacks by dragging it to the shield!]

The most significant advantage of this skill was that it could draw all of the attacks in the area toward it. In other words, if the enemy's attack was aimed at Valentino's waist, it would swerve and hit his shield.

However, there was one thing that the Swords of the Gods were not aware of. And that was the fact that the Transcendental Being's Fragment that appeared in front of them had inherited the position of the Sword God and had also thoroughly learned the skills of the said god. That was not all. Conir had also received the training of the unknown man inside the Fortress of the Transcendental's Fantasy. These were some snippets of what happened during Conir's training.

–Conir, you will not be able to fully digest all of the skills of the Sword God yet. Even if you can learn it now, they will be sealed, and you cannot use them.

–I am Conir! Conir needs to become stronger!

–However, there is always a way. All you need to do is make it your own. I will help you with that.

Conir was taught how to turn the skills of the Sword God into his own.

The Transcendental Being's Fragment, with his long black hair, raised his sword and cast his skill.

[Hundred Swords.]

[Enemies within a three-meter radius will receive a hundred sword strikes with an additional 10% attack power when you swing your sword. The strikes will cover a hundred meters and wreak havoc upon your enemies.]

Although it only had 10% additional attack power, the hundred strikes more than made up for it. It was already a very overpowered skill.

At that moment, a white light flashed from Conir's sword as he swung it toward the Final Shield.

Booooooooooom–!

Then, a hundred consecutive strikes began to rain down upon the shield.

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

“Heok! Wh- what the hell?!” Valentino shouted in shock as he watched the durability of his Final Shield drop rapidly.

Ultimately, the Final Shield broke down, and its aftermath wreaked havoc and attacked everyone within a hundred-meter radius.

The Luvien Imperial Army had gathered behind Valentino. This formation was easy enough for the Conir-style Hundred Swords to deal with. Just like that, the troops were torn and ripped apart.

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

“Keuaaaaaack!”

“Uwaaaaaack...!”

“Keheuk!”

“Keheok!”

Screams rang rampant among the Swords of the Gods and the troops of the Luvien Imperial Army.

[Sword of the Gods Miao has been forced to log out!]

[Sword of the Gods Alex has been forced to log out!]

At that moment, Miao and Alex, the ones with the lowest HP, were hit and forced to log out. This made the faces of the surviving Swords of the Gods grow ugly.

“It’s already within our reach...”

“We were just about to succeed in killing the Transcendental Being!”

However, they remembered that they still had Duke Ruffiso on their side. They believed that Duke Ruffiso would have already taken the head of the Transcendental Being by now. But when they turned their heads, they were all left in shock. The Transcendental Being, who had recovered from his injuries, fought on equal foot with Duke Ruffiso.

‘Wasn’t the Transcendental Being inferior to Duke Ruffiso?’

However, as they thought about it, they realized that the Transcendental Being was only in a disadvantageous position earlier because he had to deal with his enemies alone. But now? He was dealing with Duke Ruffiso alone. The problem was Duke Ruffiso was also very exhausted since he had to deal with the joint attacks of the fragments Brood and Effis earlier.

Baaaaaaaang—!

At that moment, Duke Ruffiso made a careless mistake and was pushed back by the Transcendental Being’s attack. When Minhyuk looked at Duke Ruffiso, he realized he no longer had to hide his identity.

‘There will be repercussions if I reveal my identity here after killing them.’

Minhyuk was fully aware of this fact. However, he was determined to kill the most excellent and most brilliant.

‘The longer this drags on, the more disadvantages I will have.’

The Operator’s Voice, or the Battle God’s Voice, was triggered.

[Many had been trampled on.]

A scene appeared on the ceiling of the dungeon. The expression that flashed on the face of Duke Ruffiso, who was wiping the blood from his chin, grew increasingly ugly. And the same was true for the Swords of the Gods.

“Damn it!”

“Where’s the bastard that said that he’s not Minhyuk?!”

“It’s Alex. He’s dead.”

The effects of the Battle God’s Voice were something that everyone was very familiar with. This was the power that only the Beyond the Heavens’ Emperor and Battle God Minhyuk could use. Because of this, the entire world realized that the Beyond the Heavens Empire had played them. However, no one pointed their fingers at him. In fact, instead of pointing their fingers, they were just watching him in awe.

The scene above them showed a family sitting together and eating happily. The scene showed how lively and happy the family was.

[A happy family.]

Not long after, the middle-aged man heard a disturbance outside. He stopped eating and went out of the house with his family. However, the moment they went out, they were greeted with the scene of the mountains of corpses left by the Luvien Empire. When the father hurriedly turned around to urge his family to run, a spear stabbed straight through his heart. The family was helpless and could only watch the father die with their pupils shaking.

[...was destroyed by your hands.]

[The friends who laughed with each other.]

This time, another scene appeared above them. The scene showed someone who seemed to be a player, drinking with NPCs all night. The man’s time with the NPCs flashed and turned into screenshots spread over the ceiling.

The screenshots showed scenes from the first meeting between the NPC and the player, to even when they went on a battlefield together. Then, it showed how the NPC waved goodbye to his friend who was logging out of the game. And the player? He smiled happily and waved his hand vigorously before disappearing.

The next day, the player, who logged back inside the game with a happy smile, found the corpse of his NPC friend. The player embraced the NPC and cried sadly and bitterly, frustration marring his face deeply.

All of these could happen to someone, to anyone, at any given moment. Someone had already gone through it.

[They died at your hands.]

[You took away their laughter and killed them without mercy.]

The scene showed hundreds of nobles from the Luvien Empire watching the cavalry in front of them kill and slaughter the masses. The nobles, who watched the commoners die, covered their noses with their handkerchiefs, only showing their brows twitching as if they found this manslaughter fun.

At the same time, tens of thousands of gold and silver treasures fell from the sky. Some knelt, their eyes glowing green from greed as they smiled at the falling treasures. Some fell crying, their arms hugging the bodies of their loved ones tightly.

And among those that wept bitterly, someone grabbed the spear and slowly stood up. With the old spear in hand, he trudged forward. As he took one step after another, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands of people stood up and held old weapons until they formed a coalition. The man holding the old spear lifted it to the sky.

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

[However, keep this in mind.]

[They will never back down.]

A deafening roar resounded inside the Transcententials’ Holy Land. Then, the scene changed in an instant. It showed the man with his rusty and old spear standing at the forefront and charging toward the walls of the Luvien Empire. And right behind him? Millions of people with their old weapons in hand ran with him.

[Even if they fall, they will continue to stand and rise.]

The scene above them showed how the Luvien Empire swept them away and forced them to fall. However, no matter how often they fell, they stood and advanced.

[They will continue to move forward even if it means they would have to use the bloody weapon their comrades left behind.]

Many ran forward with the bloody weapons that their dead comrades once used.

[They will do so until they finally slit your throats.]

Amidst the countless people being swept away, some were finally able to cut the heads off of their enemies. Then, the scene changed. It showed the Luvien Imperial Army running away from them in fear.

[I, Minhyuk, the Emperor of the Beyond the Heavens Empire, solemnly declare that...]

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

“Waaaaaaaaaaah!!!”

The roars of the millions of the allied forces' shabby and rugged troops that fought against the Luvien Empire echoed. Flashes of light appeared among them.

With his white cape fluttering behind him, the emperor rode atop his white warhorse and raised his sword.

Standing beside him was a gray-haired older man who slammed his sword on the ground, glaring at the enemies.

Two men of huge stature stood on the emperor's other side and stared coldly at the Luvien Imperial Army.

A three-headed beast roared loudly as it stood menacingly at the forefront of the allied troops.

In the sky, a Bone Dragon could be seen flying.

There was also the Dragon Lord descending swiftly to the ground, followed by hundreds of dragons.

The people of the Beyond the Heavens Empire appeared among the allied forces' bare, shabby, and weak troops.

[...I will stand at the forefront of this battle.]

“...!”

“...!”

The Swords of the Gods could not help the shiver that ran down their spines. At the same time, they finally realized why Beyond the Heavens' Emperor Minhyuk lured them here. He wanted to crush his enemies and show this to everyone. He wanted to gather the scattered forces worldwide and gather them by his side.

They knew that they had to stop him. They had to stop the Battle God's Voice. However, the scene above them had already changed. The Beyond the Heavens' Emperor, standing in front of the millions of allied troops that went against the Luvien Empire, was already flying through the sky with his sword, roaring.

Rumbleeeeeeeee—!

A sword that was tens of meters long appeared and split the great wall of the Luvien Empire in half.

Swoooooooooosh—!

As the walls crumbled apart, the scene above them slowly scattered into nothingness. Then, the Transcendental Being, the Beyond the Heavens' Emperor, appeared and said, “To those that wish to tear apart and bring down the Luvien Empire, come to the Beyond the Heavens Empire.”

Chapter 900

When Athenae's Second Era began and the strongest empire, the Luvien Empire, emerged, all players harbored the same dream. They believed that they had the power to protect what was precious to them and that they could win against them.

However, that was their miscalculation. The Luvien Empire quickly devoured Athenae. Since that day, the players had been playing the *Athenae controlled by the Luvien Empire*. Many high-rankers associated themselves with the Luvien Empire to enjoy wealth and honor.

However, many players wanted to stay in the game, where they had memories with their precious someone. They fought against the world, but they eventually collapsed. They realized that they could not compare with the Luvien Empire's power. Ultimately, they were forced to hide like rats and avoid the Luvien Empire.

However, the most important part here was this.

[The Transcendental Being is none other than Minhyuk!]

[Minhyuk is recruiting the players openly.]

[The thing that we need to pay attention to here is the fact that Beyond the Heavens' Emperor Minhyuk has 'betted everything on the line.']

That was right. Minhyuk had put everything on the line. This was an undeniable fact.

Before, the Beyond the Heavens Empire had not shown any hostility or openly antagonized the Luvien Empire. They had always defended against them and waited for them to attack first. Either that, or they would just feed them shit whenever possible. But now? They had openly declared war against them and were trying to do something that no one had ever done, something everyone feared.

"It's time for us to take that step forward instead of running away."

The main reason why they played Athena was because they wanted to enjoy their time. How long would they remain victims?

"It's time to rally our forces and gather our strength. We must fight back, take down the Luvien Empire, and open a new era."

Everyone turned their attention to Minhyuk, who was in the form of the Transcendental Being, as he uttered sharp words directed towards the Luvien Empire.

"Our viewership ratings have gone beyond 50%!"

ATV Broadcasting Station's PD Kim Daeguk's sweat started to pool in his hands.

'Don't tell me... Is this what I think it is? If this is truly the case, then there's no turning back. But why do I wish for him to make it happen?'

"The ratings went beyond 54%!"

"The viewer's comment board is going crazy!"

"Countless comments about joining the Beyond the Heavens Empire started to pop out from community sites worldwide."

"Our commenting rate has increased by around 130 times more than usual!"

"Our servers are paralyzed with all the overseas players trying to access it!"

And Minhyuk? He said, “The Third Era.”

A powerful force erupted from Minhyuk’s sword as hundreds of swords rose to the sky. This was a power that he had never used before to check the enemies. These swords, which contained the power of the Intangible Sword, shot straight towards the Swords of the Gods fighting against Conir and extended towards the Luvien Imperial Army behind them.

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

The outstanding Swords of the Gods were helpless, falling one after the other from the swords. Duke Ruffiso ran and leaped up to stop Minhyuk. However, the dozens of swords pierced through his body and prevented him from going any further.

After swinging his sword and cutting down countless men, Minhyuk said, “The Players’ Era.”

He looked at the hundreds of cameras floating above him.

“We are the masters of this land.”

That was right. It was because they were the masters of this land.

“I, Minhyuk, the Emperor of the Beyond the Heavens Empire, solemnly declare that...”

No one had dared say these words, but someone had to say it.

[The Beyond the Heavens Empire’s Emperor swears under his name.]

“I will tear down the Luvien Empire.”

[The Emperor of the Beyond the Heavens Empire has declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

[Only if one of the two nations surrenders or collapses will this war end!]

[Players that belong to the Beyond the Heavens Empire and the Luvien Empire will not get Chaotic or receive penalties even if they PK each other!]

Valentino, hit directly by the Thousand Swords, fell to the ground, his HP dipping below 5%. Even though he was in a precarious situation, he still looked at Minhyuk and shouted, “Are you nuts...?!”

Declaring a war against the Luvien Empire was suicidal. However, Valentino felt envious.

‘To have the guts to stand up to an empire like that?’

In fact, the Swords of the Gods acknowledged that Minhyuk did not lack any qualities that an emperor should possess. It was quite a strange thing. Although they did not realize it, their heart had already supported him.

By now, the Beyond the Heavens’ declaration of war would have been spread worldwide through a world message. People would either say that they were stupid or admire them. But that was not all. Those who wanted to fight the Luvien Empire but had nowhere else to go would come knocking on the doors of the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

“Ke- kehehehehehehehehe! Keuhahahahahahaha!” Duke Ruffiso laughed loudly and wildly as he stood up from the ground. He laughed like a madman. “Do you think we’re the only ones the Beyond the Heavens Empire has to deal with?”

Far too many people and places wanted to get in the Luvien Empire's good graces.

[The Peiro Allied Nations has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

The Peiro Allied Nations was an alliance made by gathering several small kingdoms that fawned over the Luvien Empire and promised to help them. This was just the beginning. And this would continue to happen with the Beyond the Heavens Empire showing their fangs to the Luvien Empire.

"Your people will blame and resent you."

[The Azmant Empire has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

"Your people will lose their homes."

[The Farrod Kingdom has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

"They will die on the road, not knowing the reason why."

[The Affar Kingdom has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

"Those vassals and retainers that praise and fawn over the Luvien Empire will slaughter you all."

[The Cairun Empire has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[The Ardei Allied Nations has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[The Corrin Empire has declared war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[...declared war...!]

[...declared war...!]

[...declared war...!]

The entire world grew chaotic as countless world messages rang in their ears non-stop. The players that were given a small hope shook their heads when they heard the dozens of empires and kingdoms declaring war against the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

At that moment, the players who chose to side with the Beyond the Heavens Empire all regretted their choices.

"Ke- kehehehehehehehe! Keuhahahahahaha!"

Sword of the God Bastien shook his head when he heard the notifications that rang constantly in his ears.

"You're just one single empire. There's nothing that you can do."

This era was Luvien's era. The entire world would turn its back on whoever turned their back on Luvien.

"Now, the Beyond the Heavens Empire will have nowhere to go." Duke Ruffiso guffawed. He looked like a complete madman. He laughed and jeered at Minhyuk as if he did not expect such a pie in the sky.

“That’s where you’re wrong.”

“...Kiki? Keek?”

“I am not alone.”

Once again, Minhyuk triggered the Battle God’s Voice.

[He has someone by his side who can rally the emperors and kings all over the continent.]

A picture appeared in the air showing the image of a woman sitting on her throne with her long hair fluttering behind her as she held her sword in hand. And right in front of her? Millions of troops stood at attention.

[The Eivelis Empire has declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

The picture immediately disappeared in the air, only to be replaced by another image.

[He is close friends with the one that leads the smallest yet the strongest nation.]

A man with considerable stature jumped in the middle of the Luvien Empire’s army and slaughtered tens of thousands of their troops with his sword, spewing out black blazing flames.

[The Lumae Kingdom has declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

[He has the king of all mercenaries by his side.]

[Mercenary King Venteio and the millions of mercenaries by his side have declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

[He has the purest and most genuine race, the race that could create the most significant weapon and armor by his side.]

[The Black Hammer Dwarves have declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

[The Elves have declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

[The Dragon King has declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

After the notifications from the empires and kingdoms that wanted to buy the favor of the Luvien Empire rang, a new set of world messages resonated worldwide, one after the other.

[Great Demon Gremory has declared war... Luvien Empire!]

[Lu Bai, the leader of the Saviors, has declared war... Luvien Empire!]

[Saintess Loyna has declared that the Athenae Religion will cease all interactions with the Luvien Empire after witnessing their tyranny!]

Duke Ruffiso’s face grew uglier the more the notifications rang in his ears. Finally, after a bit of thought, some of the emperors made their decisions.

[The Ardo Empire has declared war against the Luvien Empire!]

The Ardo Empire was the empire that Hound Amacar nurtured and was the second strongest after the Luvien Empire. The fact that this empire stood by the side of the Beyond the Heavens Empire has given them an enormous boost.

[Bard Erwell has started to sing about the bravery of the Beyond the Heavens Empire!]

[His song resonates worldwide and shakes the hearts of many!]

Erwell was the most famous bard in Athenae. Although he started singing for their sake, Minhyuk did not know him. However, it could also be seen as an act of revolt against the Luvien Empire.

“Bastaaaaaaaaard!”

Duke Ruffiso felt a sense of urgency. He knew that he had to kill Minhyuk right here and now. He feared Minhyuk’s rising status would damage the Luvien Empire’s reputation and prestige. And if he did not trample on him, more empires and kingdoms would join the Beyond the Heavens Empire.

Rumbleeeeeeee—!

Divine power, which belonged only to the gods, could exert a much stronger force than sword lights. Duke Ruffiso, whose one eye had turned black along with half of his body, could release a power equivalent to or perhaps even greater than the divine power. This *ultimate*

power that Duke Ruffiso had just used was why rumors about him being a transcendent started circulating. Duke Ruffiso used all of his power in hopes of erasing the man in front of him.

Baaaaaaaaaaaaang—!

A power that could easily wipe out a 200,000-strong army without leaving any trace erupted inside the dungeon. Everyone turned their attention to the power that extended like a sea of black.

Minhyuk stared at that power and said coldly, “You did not expect that, huh? That I will lure you in here?”

None of Minhyuk’s skills could offset the power stretching towards them. However, the power that he acquired recently was different. Using the title God Above Gods, Minhyuk created a new skill. And it has to be known that the title God Above Gods could only combine *God-rank* skills. And the skills that he combined?

[Thousand Swords.]

[Supreme Overlord Technique.]

[Lightning. Crazy.]

Minhyuk was highly delighted when he combined these three skills successfully.

[The combination is successful.]

[The Active Skill: Calamity has been created.]

[The power of this skill cannot be measured!]

[The power of this skill cannot be measured!]

[...cannot be measured!]

[...cannot be measured!]

[You cannot completely use the entirety of this power right now!]

[Calamity has been weakened!]

[Calamity has been weakened!]

[Calamity has been weakened!]

[You can now use the weakened Calamity!]

[The rank of the weakened Calamity is now being measured!]

[The rank of the weakened Calamity...!]

[Using Calamity will be accompanied by a considerable penalty. The higher the level and the skill proficiency, the less penalty you will receive!]

[As your level and skill proficiency increase, you can regain Calamity's original power!]

And this was the very same power that Minhyuk had just used.

[Calamity.]

[All of your stats have decreased by 15.]

[Your level will go down by one.]

[Your total HP and MP volume will decrease by 1% permanently.]

Swoooooooooosh—!

The sky cracked open. And in that crack, a sword engulfed in fierce and blazing flames fell upon the power that Duke Ruffiso released.

Shwaaaaaaaaaaaaa—!

Slash, slash, slash, slash, slash, slash—!

That single sword instantly weakened the power that Duke Ruffiso released. But that was not all. Nine hundred ninety-nine swords engulfed in flames fell upon the Luvien Imperial Army.

Crackle—!

Flames shot out from the swords, engulfing the area around them. They tore and burned everything that was in their way apart. The rank of the skill *Calamity* was then revealed.

[The skill Calamity has power that can overcome an Absolute God's Secret!]

[The Eight Pillars possess a skill that could represent themselves. These skills are called the Eight Disasters!]

[You are an Eight Pillar's Candidate!]

[The skill Calamity can become the 'Ninth Disaster'!]